

UNFAITHFULNESS

by Ray Brown
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"God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (I Corin. 1:9).

According to what the Apostle Paul is saying it looks like fellowship depends upon faithfulness. I could try to have fellowship with a man that is unfaithful. But if he is unfaithful to God and to the Lord's house; then the fellowship that we feel,



Ray Brown

hunger for, and long for is superficial on his part because he is not in fellowship with the LORD Jesus Christ. If he isn't in fellowship with Christ then it is very hard for me to try to fellowship with him. The unity is missing, and the sweet love and nearness is not there.

"Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations; And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face. Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day to do them" (Deut. 7:9-11).

God is a faithful God as Paul wrote in I Corinthians 1:9. "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." If God is faithful, and God called us unto fellowship with His Son; then

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

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UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

by John Alber
6935 Dexter St.

Commerce City, Co. 80022

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17).

No other biblical doctrine draws such fire as does this one: Unconditional Election. It seems that man is far more afraid of this biblical doctrine than any other truth that is found throughout the pages of God's eternal Word: The Bible. And yet the Word of God is rich with regards of its teachings regarding the sovereignty of God and our election. As to why man is so afraid of this biblical doctrine can in part only be answered by those who refuse to accept its teachings. But I would suppose that it had a lot to do with the counter part of this doctrine: the total depravity of sinful man. Man does not like to look into the mirror and see what God sees and therefore, he has fabricated a theology that makes him look good in his own eyes.

Nevertheless, whether man likes it or not, the biblical doctrine of unconditional election is a fact. It dawned upon me the other day while teaching my three boys this great truth, that

Fundamental Independent Baptists have always taught the Sovereignty of God with regards to our Lord's coming again. But it seems that they can not or will not allow their thinking to move on over in the area of salvation. And yet they teach that God is omniscient (all knowing — has absolute perfect knowledge of all things), omnipotent (all powerful — His



John Alber

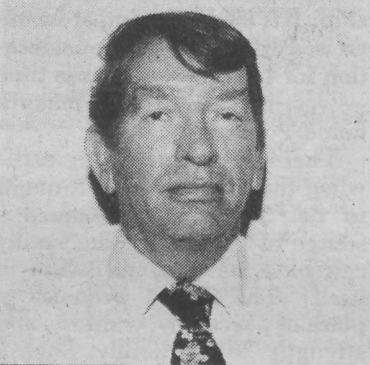
power admits no bounds or limitations), omnipresence (everywhere present), eternal (self-existing one), and immutable (that He can not ever change). Beloved, if all of this be true, and it is, then how can those who claim to believe the precious Word of God, deny the biblical doctrine of uncondi-

tional election? The very attributes of God should and do tell us that the God of the universe is in control and that is one of the main reasons why all things come to pass. Furthermore, it should be carefully noted, these things come to pass if for no other reason than almighty God purposed it to so happen. Beloved, anyone who has any intelligence ought to be able to see that truth. If God can not bring to pass that which He wishes, He then ceases to be what we claim He is: all-powerful, all-knowing, all-wise eternal God.

Remember then, Beloved, that the Bible teaches us very clearly, Man is DEAD in his SIN. That means that he is UNABLE to help himself with regards to saving his own soul. Nail down in your own thinking the teaching of total depravity. Listen. Beloved, if you don't, then you are going to have a great deal of difficulty putting together the biblical picture of salvation. It is either all of God or man has no hope or guarantee of heaven. The Scriptures are clear in both the Old and New Testaments, "salvation is of the Lord." Beloved, you do not

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GOING BAD



Ray Hiatt

by Ray Hiatt

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"For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

In my earlier days in the country, hogs were killed in the fall and the meat was salted with a rough sort of commercial salt. It happened that occasionally someone did a poor job of salting and on entering the smoke house your nose told you that something was "going bad."

There are three essential life forces... generation, degeneration and regeneration. Degeneration is our study. All things not of God go bad. This is readily evident. Nations which forget God go bad. Cultures not built on Biblical principles go bad. Men not born of God are bad and degenerate in a worsening way until their death. Religious structures which Christ did not build are gone bad and grow worse.

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

IMPORTANT THINGS IN PROPER PLACES

"And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well" (Gen. 26:25).

We need to learn what is important and what is not important in our lives. We need this so as to not waste time on the unimportant things. Oh, how much money, time, and effort do men waste because they do not know and understand the relative importance of the matters that occupy their interest. A tragic further result of this is that men waste time on the unimportant matters of life. I think that we might say that this is one of

the real tragedies of the lives of the majority of mankind.

When we have determined the things in our lives that are of real importance, then we need to know the relative importance of each important matter. We need to get our priorities in order. We need to know the relative importance of important things so that we will give the proper amount of time and attention to each one.

There are three important things in my text relative to Isaac. They are given in the order of importance. God is to be first. Our relationship to Him and our proper serving and worshipping of Him is the thing of

first importance in our lives. Home is next in importance. Our business, that at which we make our living, is next in importance. These three things are the most important things in our lives.

God is first in importance in our lives. We should put our relationship to Him first above all else. First place is the only proper place for God. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:3). This is the first of the Ten Commandments - first in order and first in importance. The first four of the Ten Commandments relate to our duty to God. When our

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THE VIRGIN BIRTH

by Doug Newell
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Matthew 1:18-23, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which



Doug Newell

is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which be-

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SOME BLESSED EXPERIENCES

by the Editor

Truly, God is good to Joe Wilson. I praise Him much for His wonderful blessings. He has given me a great church to pastor. May I always consider that my first and most important duty is the church I pastor. He has given me the job of editing a great religious paper, The Baptist Examiner. It is my desire to do a better and better job in this respect. He has given me a tape ministry which many testify is a blessing to them. He has given me a radio ministry. I am not worthy of the least of the blessings that the Lord has bestowed upon me. He has given me the most work to do that I have ever had. Oh, I praise God for work to do and for strength to do it. I hope I can stay busy until I go — in death or in the rapture.

Outside of the work and blessings mentioned above, God gives me, from time to time, the blessed opportunity of visiting and preaching in other places. I love my church most and put it first. But I do delight in meeting new saints, fellowshiping with and preaching to many in other places. Let me tell of some recent blessings God has given me along this line.

I left Ashland on June 2nd very early in the morning. My granddaughter, Heather, was with me, as I was taking her to her home in Tulsa. Jimmy

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The hidden things of God are not discovered until we are treading the path of absolute obedience.

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IMPORTANT

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Lord was asked as to which is the first commandment, he replied, "...Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment" (Matt. 22:37-38).

God is the only one or thing that is qualified to have first place. He is thus qualified because of who He is. He is so qualified because of His attributes of love, power, wisdom, and sovereignty. No other being can come close to God in those qualities that give the right to first place.

He deserves first place. He is our creator and sustainer. All that we have comes from Him and gives Him the right to first place in our lives. He is the lawgiver, governor, and judge. We must give final account to Him. It behooves us thus to give Him first place. He is the Saviour of His elect people. Oh, surely, those saved by the grace and power of God should give Him first place. Surely, the blood of Christ, shed for the sins of His people, secures for Him the right to first place in our lives. We need to remember that, "...ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Cor. 6:19-20).

It is our responsibility to recognize and own Him as having first place in our lives. This is a prominent and oft repeated command of God. We have a wonderful promise tied in with a command to this effect in Matthew 6:33. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these

things shall be added unto you." We cannot lose by putting Him first. We gain spiritually by so doing. This is the only way we can properly serve and glorify Him. This is the only way we can have the best blessings He has for us. And He has given His Word that we will not suffer, even in physical and material things, by putting Him first. Our relationships to other persons and things will never be what they ought to be until we put the Lord first in our lives.

We have many illustrations of this in the Bible. In I Kings 17:8-16 we read of a poor widow woman facing death. She put God first, made a cake for God's prophet and God provided for her throughout a time of severe famine. In Malachi 3:8-10 we learn that if we will put God first by giving our tithes and offerings, He will open the windows of heaven and pour out blessings upon us. No one ever has or ever will testify that he or she lost by putting God first.

The home is second. Isaac first built an altar and worshipped God. Then he pitched his tent there. The home is se-



Joe Wilson

cond in importance. The home is second to God, but is second to nothing else in life. The home is to come before one's job. It is more important that one have time for home and family than that one make more money by working long hours or working a second job. It takes more than money to make a home. Many a home has been destroyed by the father and mother being more interested in money than in having time with one another and time with the children.

The home is to come before other outside activities. Clubs and lodges are to come after the home. In fact, it is highly doubtful, in my opinion, if a man who gives proper time to his job, his church, and his home, will have time for many outside activities. I doubt that any man really has time for clubs and lodges if he gives the important things their proper place. Women who give the time to the home, children, and church they should will have little time for outside social activities. The home will suffer when the man must have a night out with the boys, the women have a time with the women, and the children always on the go. Those who put job, home, and church where they should will have little time for other activities. I do not say that it is always wrong to have such activities, but I do say that it is wrong to let them get out of hand and to demand too much of one's time.

The home is to be more than a house. Oh, there is a vast difference between a house and a home. It takes a father, mother, and children to make a home, at least ordinarily this is so. It takes a father who makes the living and leads the home in its activities. Especially, the father

is to be the spiritual example and leader of the home. He should be a saved man. He should be a good example of moral and spiritual conduct. He should be able to teach spiritual things to others in the home. He should take the lead as to church attendance and activities relative to the family.

It takes a mother to make the home all it should be. She should not work in public. She should be a keeper at home and make the home a haven of rest and comfort, strength and encouragement to the rest of the family. She should be a model of moral and spiritual conduct to the family. Oh, a family needs a mother in the home. No home can be all it ought to be with the mother away in public work. If this be treason, sue me. I think I know whereof I speak, and I think that common sense and the Word of God will back me up.

It takes children to make the home all that it could be. They should be kind to and considerate of one another. They should be in loving subjection to the parents. They should do their part of the work around the home.

It takes Jesus Christ to make the home all that it ought to be. No home can be what it should and could be unless those in the home (at least the mother and father) know, love, and serve Jesus Christ. It is only the home in which Jesus Christ is honored and worshipped that can be the joy, strength, and encouragement that a home should be.

It takes love and consideration for one another to make a home. Each member must submit his own desires to the well being of the whole family. When members of a family do not show love and consideration for one another, the home becomes a battlefield instead of a little of heaven on earth. It takes discipline to make a home. The father must take his place as the authority in the home, and others must submit to his leadership. His leadership must be exercised with love and consideration for the others. It takes time — yes, it takes time to make a home.

There are many rewards when the home is what it ought to be. The home becomes a source of great joy. The family can have its chief pleasures in itself. The home becomes a place of peace, joy, comfort, and strength to the family. Such a home becomes a testimony to others around it. Such homes prove a blessing and strength to the church. Even the nation itself is blessed and strengthened by the right kind of homes. The wreck of morals, the wreck of society, the wreck and decay of our nation, the decline of our churches — all these have been preceded by the wreck of our homes. One of the greatest needs of America is a revival of the kind of homes we once had.

Work is third in importance. After Isaac built an altar and worshipped God, after he pitched his tent, his servants digged a well. This was related to his work, to the way he made his living with sheep and cattle. Work is important. God has ordained work as good for man. God gave man work in the garden of Eden before sin entered the race. God makes much of work in this age. In the millennium men are to labor for their living. Even in God's heaven His servants are to serve Him. Work is always God's plan for man. Listen to some Scriptures. "I went by the field of

the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth; and thy want as an armed man" (Prov. 24:30-34). I tell you that the economic crisis in our nation has come about because of the slothfulness of its inhabitants. Look at II Thessalonians 3:10, "...if any should not work, neither should he eat." If we would apply this verse, we could end our welfare problem.

God has ordained work as good for man and as the way in which man is to obtain the physical needs of his family and himself. The Fourth Commandment tells us that a man is to work six days. I know that in this Union dominated country it is well nigh treason, but I feel that the Bible is opposed to a short work week and to early retirement. Men are to work a full week's work. No one is going to listen to me, but I think I have found in God's Word a sure cure for the economy problem of our country. 1. Fire all the women who have a man working for them. This will end

unemployment as there would be a job for every man. 2. If a man will not work, let him starve to death. This will end our welfare problem. Thus taxes could be greatly cut. 3. Give a man a fair salary so that he can take care of his family with one job and with his wife staying home. Work is important to man, to society and to the nation.

Let me say a few things about work. It should be in its proper place of importance, but not ahead of God or family. It should be at a job of which God would approve. No man should be employed in any job that is sinful in God's sight. All such businesses should be closed and padlocked immediately. A job should be primarily for supplying the needs of the family and not for getting great wealth.

Work is for the purpose of supplying the needs of self and family. Work is for obtaining that which we can use to help others. Work should be for obtaining that which we can give to the Lord and His work. When we have enough to supply the needs of our family, to help others somewhat, and to give our tithes and offerings to God — we have enough. We don't need any more. Any more will likely be destructive to the moral and spiritual character of its possessor. I know that I have written much which will be severely criticized. But I offer it

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FROM THE EDITOR

Let's play "dodge ball." Let's don't play "dodge ball." I am sure that most of us know what the children's game of "dodge ball" is. I suppose that most of us have played this game in our life time. There is surely nothing wrong therewith.

But I want to talk to you about some games of "dodge ball" that many play, but that we should not play. Many play "dodge ball" with the Word of God as to the doctrines they hold and/or preach. Many often make up their minds, influenced by "whatever," as to the doctrines of the Bible. Then whenever they see or hear of a verse that is contrary to what they preach, they play "dodge ball." They make sure that they are not hit by that portion of Scripture. Many hate some of the doctrines that we preach. Whenever we throw a portion of the Word of God at them that teaches these hated truths, they play "dodge ball." Brother, one will never learn Biblical truth until he stands still and lets the Word of God hit him — hit him hard, and hit him often. One will never learn the truths of the Bible so long as he plays "dodge ball" therewith.

Then there are those who play "dodge ball" with the Bible as to the matter of sin. They have their pet, and darling sins. They have (almost) convinced themselves that these things are not wrong. When the preacher begins to give the Word of God against their sins, or when they read Scriptures against them, they begin to play in earnest the game of "dodge ball." They invent to themselves all sorts of ways of "dodging" those Scriptures which condemn themselves. They imitate Saul as he tried to play "dodge ball" with Samuel, God's prophet, in I Samuel 15. These same people can see how God's Word surely condemns those about them. It is amazing how adept some have become at "dodging" the Word of God. One of the difficult tasks of the preacher is to try to hit some of these "dodge ball" experts with the Word of God.

Then there are a multitude who play "dodge ball" in the matter of being honest and facing facts. I have in the file of my memory many examples of experts in this game. Things come up. Differences arise. Charges are made. Counter charges are made. The situation becomes dangerous, almost critical. Fellowships of many years are severely threatened. One seeks to deal with the situation. One presents the facts. One says let us just honestly look at all the facts and make our decisions based thereupon. Then one will begin his game of "dodge ball." He will ignore the true facts. He will deny the truth. More often, he just will not face the truth of the situation. He will begin to pervert the facts. He will begin to deny that the facts are as they are. He just will not be honest with the facts. Others will see the situation as it really is. But this "dodge ball" expert will insist that it is not that way at all.

My brother, I have been greatly hurt by these "dodge ball" experts. I have also, at times, been utterly astounded at their expertise in dodging the real issue; in pretending that the issue is something totally different from what it really is. I have tried to pin down these "dodge ball" men. They are harder to pin down than it is to get a wiggling worm on a fish hook. They simply will not face the facts and deal with the situation as it really is.

Well, these "dodge ball" games are not the harmless fun that the children's game is. Serious matters are involved in these games. When one "dodges" the Word of God as to the doctrines he believes, he will never be able to learn the truth. He will be holding, teaching, and supporting heresy. When one "dodges" the Word of God as to sin, he will lose fellowship with God which depends upon the honest confessing and forsaking of sin and will go from bad to worse in his life. When one "dodges" the true facts and true issues involved in a controversy, he makes it utterly impossible to get things settled and to return to a good fellowship. I would urge the reader to avoid these deadly games of "dodge ball." Go out in the yard and play "dodge ball" with the children if you please. There is no harm in it. But do not play "dodge ball" with the Word of God nor with the true facts in disputes with one another.

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to you for your serious consideration. I think that we would all surely agree that the following of what I have written would be of great good to us all and to all about us. Oh, that we would order our lives according to what is right and what is according to the Word of God rather than according to our own desires, our own thinking, or the standards of those about us.

What I have written is important. We need to learn that which is important in our lives. We need to learn the relative importance of each thing. Then we need to give our time, effort, and attention to each matter according to its relative importance. Nothing is more important to our lives than for us to get our priorities in order. Let us give this matter prayerful consideration.

The thing of most importance to any man is to be saved. Oh, that the unsaved reader would consider this. All the things of time pale into insignificant nothingness compared with the matter of eternal salvation. This is your first need. Nothing else in all your life can be right until this matter is settled. Dear friend, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Then you are in position to put your life in its proper order.

How much better would it be if we would put the important things of life in their proper places. It would be better for you, better for others. It would be better for the country. It would be better for God's work. Is there anything more harmful to God's work in the world today than the fact that even saved people do not have their priorities in proper order? Saved people are not putting God and His work first in their lives. They are taking time, money, talents, and efforts that should be given to the Lord's work and putting them elsewhere. May the Lord use this message to your good and His glory.

BIRTH

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ing interpreted is, God with us."

Isn't it strange to hear a sermon on the virgin birth of Christ in the middle of the summer? The majority of people don't think of this until the Christmas season draws near. My beloved friends, the virgin birth of Jesus Christ has nothing at all to do with that heathen season. The devil through his corrupt and vile religious, organization (the Roman Catholic church and all Protestant churches), has taken away from men the true meaning and purpose of the virgin birth. Now Baptists have been accused of not believing in the virgin birth, because we are not involved in heathen practices.

Let me assure you that we do believe that Jesus was virgin-born. Baptists will not recognize any one as being saved, who does not believe that Jesus was virgin born. Thus you see the importance of this subject. Your salvation depends upon your trusting in the Lord Jesus, the virgin-born Son of God. Now you can see why it is important that this subject be preached all during the year. Satan has succeeded in taking men's minds off God and turning them to idols. Yes, we believe in the virgin birth of our Lord. Yes, we will preach it all during the year, for this is part of the Gospel.

Shame on the Baptist preacher who will only speak of this birth at one time of the year. Shame on that preacher who deprives those who listen to him of this miraculous story. Now to preach on this birth it is not necessary to even mention the heathen holidays. They are not Scriptural and have nothing to do with the Word of God. I have done so in this article to stress a point, but it is not necessary to do so.

The virgin birth of our Lord was a great miracle. It was one of the greatest miracles in the Bible. Our text told us that there was a woman who was engaged to be married, and she was found to be with child. The Bible is very plain in telling us that this child was not fathered by a man. She was found with child of the Holy Ghost. There had never been a birth like this one before, nor shall there ever be one like it again. This miracle came about by the power of God, and Mary was only an instrument in God's eternal plan. Contrary to the Catholic teaching, Mary is not a god. Yes, Mary conceived this child; and she was blessed among women for that, but as far as any worship towards her there should be none for she was a poor sinner as is all of Adam's race.

The text of this article introduces to us many questions about the birth of Christ. Many sermons could be preached on this subject, for there are many things that enter in when we speak of this birth. The first thing I would have you consider is that:

I. Jesus is the eternal Son of God. Jesus did not begin to exist when He was conceived by Mary. No beloved friends, Jesus is the eternal God that has existed forever. Jesus said in John 6:38, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."

Jesus also said in John 17:5, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with thee before the world was." Yes, that very babe that was born of the virgin. Mary was the very Son of God. That child was God Himself. Our text said that His name shall be called Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us. The devil paints you a picture of a helpless, defenseless, little child, who has no real power at all. The devil has succeeded in his plan to keep the truth of the virgin birth from the minds of men. Baptists do not deny that Jesus was born in a manger and that He was wrapped in swaddling clothes. Yes Jesus was born of a virgin, but He was still God. He still possessed all of His eternal glory and all of His eternal power. He was still the eternal Son of God with whom God had fellowship through-out the eternities past.

II. The next thing I would have you consider is the purpose of the virgin birth. It was necessary that Jesus be born of a virgin. Redemption could not have occurred otherwise. Had Jesus not taken on the body of flesh, the elect could not have been saved. Thus you see the importance of the virgin birth. Thus you see why the devil would have your mind on other things. Now the virgin birth was necessary because Jesus needed a body of flesh that He might bodily suffer as a substitute for the elect. The Bible says, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for

our iniquities the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:5). It was necessary that Jesus be born in the flesh that He might make Himself an atonement for the sins of His people. What great love Jesus had for you and me. What greater love could be shown, than the love that Jesus showed us?

It was necessary that Jesus be born in the flesh that He might take our sins in His own body. I Peter 2:24 says, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead unto sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." Yes Jesus who knew no sin took on sin in His flesh that He might save His people. All of the sins of the elect were laid upon the dear Saviour. From Adam to the last that will be saved, Jesus had their sins upon Himself. Can you imagine what Jesus went through. Can you imagine what Jesus must have felt in His flesh. The suffering in hell will be a suffering in a body of flesh. So you see the virgin birth was and is a very important doctrine. You now understand why the devil so hates this doctrine and would have it far from the minds of men.

III. It was necessary that Jesus be born of a virgin, that He might live a sinless life in the flesh. This is very important. The sin sacrifice must be sinless. God would not have accepted a sacrifice that was stained with sin. Jesus therefore, was born of a virgin woman that He might be that accepted sacrifice. II Corinthians 5:21 says, "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." It was very necessary that Jesus be virgin born, and this should be a part of the Gospel that you preach. Men need to know and understand that sins are paid for in the person of Jesus Christ, or they are not paid for at all. Men are preaching works for salvation, and men are believing this teaching and going to hell. The Gospel is that Jesus paid for sins, and only in Him can one be saved. Baptist brethren let's not let the devil and his army rob us of telling of the virgin-born Son of God 365 days a year.

IV. The virgin birth was necessary because blood was needed for the Sacrifice. Notice Hebrews 9:22-28, "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that

look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." God would not have been satisfied without a blood sacrifice. Not only was there to be blood, but it was to be a sinless blood. Jesus had the only blood that would satisfy God. Jesus who was not fathered by a man, but rather by the Holy Spirit was He conceived in the womb of Mary. The virgin birth is necessary because this was the only way that Jesus could have a body of flesh, and that body be sinless and undefiled. I understand that the blood is passed on by the father. Even though Christ was born of a woman His blood still remained pure. He did not or could not have sin from this birth.

It was the blood that cleansed us from our sins. The blood which flowed through Jesus who was God and man at the same time. I John 1:7 says, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Yes that blood, that precious blood, has saved our souls from hell. The virgin birth is a very important part of our redemption. Without the virgin birth where would the blood be?

IV. The whole purpose of the virgin birth was that He might die. Jesus was born to die. The fact that Jesus was born did not save us, nor did just the fact that He died save us; but rather it is the combination of the two. Jesus was the eternal Son of God who came to earth and was born of a woman that He might take upon Himself human flesh. He lived a sinless life, and then offered Himself as a sacrifice for the elect of God. It is all of this that made the atonement effective. You can't ignore the virgin birth, because there are too many important doctrines contained therein. The righteousness and justice of God make the virgin birth a necessary part of the redemption plan. Let us also never forget to tell the rest of the story. Jesus is alive and at the right hand of God. Jesus is not in the grave, but He arose victorious over it.

In closing let me urge you to preach this doctrine of the birth of Christ often. We have let the devil and the heretics of the world rob us of preaching this doctrine as much as we should. Most of us will wait until Christmas to preach on it so that we can blast those who celebrate heathen holidays. Brethren, preach the virgin birth of Christ anytime. Men need to know that the Son of God walked the earth and made an atonement for sin. If you noticed when this birth was studied that man's part was not even mentioned. When you preach the virgin birth you preach all that is involved in the person of Christ to save the elect. Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe. Sin had left a crimson stain He washed it white as snow. Is it any wonder the devil hates for you to preach this kind of sermon? May God bless you all.

BLESSED

(Continued from Page 1)

Swindell, a very fine member of our church also traveled with me on this trip. Jimmy and I have made several trips together. He is a very, very fine Christian and a great blessing to me and to our church. His company has added to the blessings of every trip he has made with me. We traveled to Owensboro, Ky. My son, Joe, and his family live there. It is always a blessing to have a few hours with family. Two grandchildren, Jonathan and Steve,

decided to not make the Tulsa trip with me this year. I hated this as they had added much to my enjoyment of this trip on the preceding two years.

We had a very enjoyable visit with Joe and his family. We had spiritual fellowship along with other blessings. Joe's wife, Karen, Willard Pyle's daughter, is a fine hostess who always goes out of her way to make me feel welcome. Of course, the highlight of any such visit is the time with the grandchildren.

Jimmy, Heather, and I left Owensboro early Wednesday morning. We stopped in St. Louis for breakfast at a McDonald's on a river boat. Having been in the Navy, I am very fond of ships and water. We went up into the arch in St. Louis. This presented a very imposing scene. Soon, we were on our way to Tulsa. We arrived there without much incident.

Tulsa is a favorite place of mine. I pastored there for two brief periods of time. However, during those brief times, I came to love the city of Tulsa and the state of Oklahoma very much. I made some very dear friends there who have meant much to me ever since. It is always a joy to me to be able to visit Tulsa and my friends there.

Our church has three members in Tulsa. We have a mission work there and we hope that some day it will become a sound, true, and strong church. This group meets weekly in the home of sister Jeannie Maddux. This lady is absolutely one of the finest Christians I have ever known, or ever expect to know. She is one of the dearest friends Katie and I have ever had. Brother Murray Tyler is in charge of the meetings there and teaches and preaches the Word of God therein. He is a very sound and able preacher of God's precious Word. Brother Tyler is very strong in the doctrines we believe. We keep hoping that the Lord will bring others to these meetings and that a good work will develop therefrom.

These people are always my main reason for going to Tulsa. I preached in this mission work Wednesday through Sunday. We had good services. The Lord met with us and blessed our meetings. Brother Tyler and I both spoke on Sunday morning. It was good to hear him preach again. We had several visitors in these services and are hoping that some of them will soon become members of our church and work with the mission work there. Pray much for these fine folk and this work. I do praise God that He has made me willing to preach in a home, and to a few people. Oh, I would delight to preach to the multitudes. But thank God, I am willing to preach to the few; and I get a great blessing from this. Brothers and sisters, I count it an honor to be able to go to people who have little preaching and little opportunities in serving God, and to preach to them. When I feel that God has used me to bless such people, I feel deeply humbled, highly honored, and greatly blessed in my soul.

I preached on Sunday afternoon for brother Dwayne Gilliland in Bowring, Okla. I have preached there several times. I am always well received and royally treated by these fine

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Where one evil spirit tempts the busy man, a thousand tempt the idle man.

The Baptist Examiner Forum I

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Explain "almost persuaded" in Acts 26:28.

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Acts 26:28 says, "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

On more than one occasion during my early Christian life, I have heard this verse of Scripture used by an Arminian "evangelist" as a tool, as an argument, or as a persuasive threat to obtain "decisions for Christ." The comparison of King Agrippa's strong conviction to the supposed conviction of all the unsaved in attendance was usually made and the hymn "Almost Persuaded" was usually sung along with an extended invitation. It was usually emphasized that Agrippa resisted his conviction to the ruin of his soul and that the hearers should hasten to avoid Agrippa's unwise resistance. I do not believe that this is the teaching of the verse.

A literal translation of Agrippa's words in this verse would be, "In a little (time) thou dost persuade me to become a Christian." This would not happen in the future, but at the present as the tense indicates. Many people contend that Agrippa is here speaking this phrase to Paul in an ironical tone. Others say that Agrippa speaks seriously. I am one who believes that Agrippa speaks seriously, but only through the intellectual persuasion of his former knowledge of the subject and the explanation of Paul. That Paul thought Agrippa serious is obvious from his reply in Acts 26:29, "And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."

Agrippa was a man who believed the prophets concerning the details of the Messiah. He was the son of Herod Agrippa and had been given the prerogative of appointing the Jewish high priests for a total of 18 years. He appeared to have light and knowledge concerning these things in the Old Testament, as well as the work and teachings of Christ. He seemed to have enough intellectual understanding to be a little way from, almost persuaded to, believing the words of Paul unto becoming a Christian. This persuasion, however, was only of men and intellect, human reasoning, understanding, and conscience. No real change of heart took place as we see in Agrippa's actions following the finish of Paul's speech to him in the verses of Acts 26: 30, 31.

The majority of professing Christianity today, believes that grace is extended to every person who hear the Gospel. This,

of course, is not the teaching of the Scriptures. Only the Holy Spirit can extend an inward call that prompts a person to true salvation. Agrippa is an example of a person under the general, or outward call to salvation. Never effective, this call produces nothing more than "almost" at best. Agrippa had nothing solid, or substantial. He had only the outward desire to believe apart from the Holy Spirit's quickening and revelation.

It is to be remembered that the general, or external call, while it is never efficacious, is always sincere. While I believe that Agrippa was sincere in his statement of verse 28, I believe that he was totally helpless to exceed "almost." Agrippa went away in his lost state because the Holy Spirit had not applied to him the Gospel with His quickening power. The "almost thou persuadest me" spoken by Agrippa could never be more than just that. There was no possibility that he could have gone on to salvation. Sad to say, there are countless numbers of almost Christians even inhabiting the ranks of Christianity today. II Thessalonians 2:13, 14 says, "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ."

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"Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

To understand the meaning of this statement, we need to study that which preceeds. Paul, a prisoner, was making his defense before King Agrippa and Festus, the governor. After giving a statement of his early life as a member of, "the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee," he then tells of his conversion and calling into the ministry of Christ. He then tells how that his message is, "—none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead,—". The resurrection of Christ was too much for Festus to accept. He told Paul he was mad with his much learning. Paul turns to King Agrippa, who was supposed to be an expert on, "customs and questions which are among the Jews", to confirm his statement that the resurrection had been prophesied by the prophets. But Agrippa was not about to side with Paul. To do so, in the sight of Festus, placed him in the

same class as Paul, of whom he had just said that he was mad. To deny knowledge of this fact would do harm to his standing as an expert of things of the Jews. Therefore, he could not admit that he believed the prophets, yet he could not say he did not believe them. So he turns Paul's question, "believest thou the prophets?" aside, and said, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." or as one translation gives it, "In short, you are trying to make me play the Christian." He is not saying that he is almost at the point of becoming a Christian, but that Paul is trying to get him to side with the Christians by getting him to admit that he believed the prophets concerning the resurrection.

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Acts 26:28: "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."

I would urge you get your Bible and read all of chapter 26. Paul being allowed to speak for himself tells the audience of his salvation experience. The response of Festus to this was that Paul was a mad man. Agrippa seems to be somewhat moved by Paul's story. Notice, I said moved, not convicted.

Let me state two doctrines that are taught in God's Word and then use these to answer the question. The first doctrine is that no man can come to Christ of himself. John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." This is a doctrine that most men hate and reject. It is hard for me to understand how saved people can hate a doctrine that so exalts God. The Bible teaches us that the natural man cannot and will not come to Christ by his own will. It is impossible for them to persuade themselves or for anyone else to persuade them to become a Christian. If that statement is not true, then neither is the Bible. The second doctrine I mention is that all Christ died for and desires to save shall be saved. John 6:37 says: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." This verse destroys any theory that would have a person for whom Christ died not making it to heaven. This verse, as well as many others, teaches us that all those who are drawn by the Holy Spirit will not resist and will be brought to a saving knowledge of Christ. Beloved, these are doctrines to rejoice in, not doctrines to deny and get angry about. These are doctrines that give us hope for lost souls. If these doctrines are not true, then there is no hope.

Now let me answer the ques-

tion at hand. Let me first tell you what this verse does not mean. It does not mean that Paul or any other preacher has the ability to persuade men to become Christians. It is not the oratorical ability of a preacher that persuades a man he is lost and in need of a Saviour. One of the major tragedies of our time is that preachers seem to think they have this ability.

We live in a time of preacher persuasion rather than Holy Spirit persuasion. Games, gimmicks, and technique has taken over evangelism. I am afraid there are a multitude of people today who profess to be saved, but have only been persuaded by man and not by God. It is my job to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is the job of the Holy Spirit to bring to Christ. We have too many people trying to play God, and failing miserably. They are only making men two-fold more the children of hell. This verse does not mean that the Spirit was trying to persuade Agrippa to repent and be saved, but Agrippa resisted the drawing of the Spirit. We have already shown that this is an impossibility. Thank God we cannot resist the Spirit. It does not mean that Agrippa has sinned away his day of grace. Isn't it amazing the many heresies that come from Arminianism.

I think a key word in this verse is "thou". No doubt the message by Paul was a influential one. Paul's willingness to speak for himself was impressive. The story of his conversion interesting. Paul's courage causes Agrippa to perhaps even become jealous of something Paul seems to have in Christ. The fact of the matter is that Paul almost persuaded Agrippa, and not the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not almost do anything. What a blatant denial of the sovereignty of God Arminianism is! Almost persuaded means that Agrippa loved the things of the world more than he was influenced about the things of God. Almost persuaded means unless Agrippa was later persuaded by the Holy Spirit, he died and went to hell. I urge you preachers to just preach and let God do the persuading. This phrase does not in any way justify or teach any Arminian heresy. Please learn to interpret Scripture with Scripture. May God bless you all.

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In this 26th chapter Paul is defending his beliefs and what he has been preaching. During his defense he speaks plainly and directly to King Agrippa. "For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of those things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." (Acts 26: 26, 27).

There are two main ideas concerning this particular passage. Some think King Agrippa is saying, "Paul are you trying to persuade me to be a Christian?" Others think that he was saying, "By your fervor and concern you have almost persuaded me to become a Christian."

Personally I think Agrippa is saying that Paul is so positive

and emphatic that he is persuaded that being a Christian is the proper way. We must understand that nobody becomes a Christian because somebody convinces them by their fervor to become one. Agrippa was not almost saved. Nobody is almost saved, then lost. If the Holy Spirit starts working with someone, that person is saved. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6).

The thing that we need to learn from this passage is that no matter what the circumstances are we must be firm and emphatic with our testimony, like Paul.

BLESSED

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people. It was a great surprise, and a real blessing to see and hear Elder Gene Hensley at this meeting. I had not seen Gene for many years. He is doing well. We had some good fellowship with one another and with the church. Gene's wife and a grandson were with him.

My granddaughter, Heather, had an emergency appendectomy while I was there. Since it was going to happen, I am glad I was there to visit with her and pray for her. She got along well, much better than the doctors expected. Such incidents always bring back sad memories to me. It was in this way that I lost my oldest son in 1957. God has been merciful to me, and that wound is almost healed; but such as the above always reopens the wound for awhile. But, even then, I am made to remember God's great grace and help during that sad and trying time.

Brother Swindell, Sister Mad-dux, and I left Tulsa early on June 9th and traveled to Pacific, Mo. We have two members there, Roy and Dorothy Archer. What a precious pair of saints are these two! I visited them for the first time a year ago and had been looking forward to this second visit. Sister Archer is in a wheel chair. Brother Archer has Parkinson's disease and is a sick man. These two have been long time faithful supporters of the work of our church. They are now valued members thereof. The Archers live in a very modest home, but they treated us royally. I could not have enjoyed myself any more in a palace. The Archers had a son, grandson, daughter, and son-in-law in their home for this visit.

We had a service. I preached to this group. I could not have enjoyed this opportunity any more had we been in a fine auditorium with a large crowd. Oh, it is blessed and easy to preach to hungry hearts. My preacher brothers know the difference between preaching to those who are hungry and who seem to drink in every word and beg for more; and preaching to those who seem disinterested or even bored. I don't know when I have had a more interested audience. It was so good to preach to these folk. About all they have in this way is their Bible. The Baptist Examiner, and our tapes. I know that this service was a blessing to them; but I know also that it was a great, great blessing to my soul. We are expecting to gain some more members through this meeting. It is hoped that this whole group will soon be able to visit us in Ashland. Sister Dorothy is in

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The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Does "the disciple whom Jesus loved" in John 21:20 mean that Jesus loved John more than the other disciples?

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I wonder why the querist didn't ask about Lazarus in (John 11:1-3). Mary and Martha approached Jesus and said, "Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick."

God's love is a pure love and is never graded. That is, God does not love one above another. We grade love, we love some above others. The truth is, we don't know the first thing about love. Our love can be turned on and off. Our love can blossom out and die, but not so with God. I repeat, we do not now the first thing about pure love.

God said in Isaiah 55:8, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." V. 9 says, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

When we compare God's love with our so-called love it boils down to the fact that we like, or we have affection toward one another. No beloved, God loves His children with an equal love. His love is for ever, not off and on, not cold and hot. Let us look at Jeremiah 31:3, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." What you see in John 21:20 is John showing his love for his Saviour in action.

If this does not answer your question, perhaps the other forum writers can help.

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Is it true that Christ suffered more for some than He did for others? Men who were not such great sinners Christ suffered less for them than he did for those who were worse sinners, than men who were terrible and wicked sinners Christ suffered still more and greater. There would be thousands of degrees of suffering. If it is possible for Christ to have suffered more for some than for others then I say it could be true that He loved John more than he did the other disciples.

Christ suffered as much as could be possible. No more could be put on Him. If there had been, then the Father would have added that to His suffering for it would have taken that to pay for the sins of His people. Jesus, while in the world and

while in the garden of Gethsemane and while on the cross, suffered infinitely. That which is infinite can not be added to. Our God is an infinite God. He is infinite in wisdom and His wisdom cannot be added to. And so all His other attributes. An infinite God put on Christ infinite suffering.

We read in John 11:3, "Therefore his sister sent unto him, saying Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick." Did this mean that Christ did not love Mary and Martha? I think not. Did it mean that Jesus loved Lazarus more than He loved Mary and Martha? I say not.

I do not say that it is not possible for God to love some more than He loves others. I believe the Scriptures to teach that God the Father loves all His children with an equal love. While it is true that some will have greater rewards than others because of the greater service they give unto the Lord, it is certain that the Scripture teaches differences in rewards.

In John 17:23 we read "...and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." And also in John 17:26 we read "...that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." In these Scriptures we see an equal love, that of the Father's love in the Son may be in the children of God. What a great love we see here. The Father loved the Son before the foundation of the world (John 17:24). God loved Jeremiah with an everlasting love. (Jeremiah 31:3). God loved all His sheep before the world was II Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

The love that God the Father has for the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is a perfect love. The love that He has for all His elect is a perfect love, an holy love.

The statement "The disciple whom Jesus loved," is found five different times in John. (13:23), (19:26), (20:2), (21:7 and 21:20).

In the song "Up Calvary's Mountain," there is a stanza which begins, "Oh, how I love Him," would it not be better if we sang: "Oh, how he loves me." And this is what is meant in the Scripture referred to. Christ loved John, and He loves all His people.

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The term "the disciple whom Jesus loved" was the way John referred to himself. It does not mean that Jesus loved John more than the other disciples. John not only wrote the Gospel of John, he wrote the Epistles,

and the Book of Revelation. In the Gospel he chose to not use his name, but he does state in the last two verses who the writer is. "This is the disciples which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written" (John 21:24-25).

There was a great closeness, a spiritual closeness, between Jesus and all the disciples (I will exclude Judas Iscariot). Another fact that made them close was the belief that the mothers of Jesus and John were sisters. If this is true there would also be the family relationship. John was given the charge of Mary by Jesus just before he died on the cross. "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home" (John 19:25-27). The sister of Mary is believed to be Salome, the mother of John and James. Relatives were also responsible for each other as far as care was concerned.

John's love for the Saviour and Friend was further shown at the time of the resurrection. John was the first disciple to arrive at the sepulchre after Mary Magdalene told them the stone had been rolled away. "Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them. They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they had laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre" (John 20:2-4).

Because of the closeness of their relationship, John was able to recognize the resurrected Lord when the other disciples were not. This event occurred at the Sea of Tiberias. "But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord." (John 21:4-7).

These are just a few of the instances where the closeness of Jesus and John was shown. John knew his position in rela-

tion to Jesus, and as he wrote he could possibly have had the same attitude as John the Baptist when he said "He must increase and I must decrease."

BLESSED

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the hospital as I write this. She will surely be out before you read this, but do remember this family in your prayers.

I should have mentioned this earlier. We have dear friends, Anna and Noah Griffin, in Bagdad, Ariz. I have some good correspondence with them. They are hoping to be able to move to Ashland some day and be a part of our church. I surely do hope this also. I have never met them, but have learned to love them by way of letters. They have a daughter about fifty miles from Tulsa. She called me and we had a pleasant conversation. She and her husband had planned and wanted to attend the meetings in Tulsa, but were unable to do so. I surely hope to meet them next trip.

The three of us traveled to Ashland after the meeting with the Archers, arriving home about midnight. It was surely good to be back in Ashland, to see Katie, and be back in Calvary Baptist Church — but not for long at this time.

Dan Phillips, his wife, and two of our grandchildren arrived in Ashland on Thursday, June 12th. It was very good to see them. No words can tell how much Dan Phillips means to me. He has been to me a friend who has stuck closer than a brother. I count him as one of my closest preacher friends. He is a very fine, sound, and able preacher of God's Word. He has meant very much to me for many years, and even moreso since my coming here. It was good to have a brief time with Dan's wife and two grandchildren. Dan, sister Maddux who was to go and spend some time with my son, Sam, and I left on Friday, June 13th for Mansfield, Ohio for a Bible Conference.

We arrived without incident at the home of Jim Walters who is the very fine and able pastor of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Mansfield. Brother Walters' wife passed away a few years ago. He has a fine young son, Jason. Brother Walters has become a very efficient housekeeper and cook and had a fine meal prepared for us. Some woman is missing out on a good thing here. Brother Walters' mother and dad graciously put sister Maddux up for the conference. Dan was lodged in a nearby motel. I had the high privilege of staying with the pastor during the conference.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church is indeed a very fine church. Brother Oscar Mink pastored this church for many years. Brother Walters has been doing a very able job of pastoring the church since shortly after brother Mink left. This conference began on Friday night and continued through the Sunday morning service. The host church did a very fine job of providing for those who visited the conference. There were many very able preachers on the program of this conference. Brother Walters does not believe in having as many speakers or in as rigid a time limit as I do, but "to each his own." It was my privilege to have fellowship with several preachers whom I had known for some time. It was a further privilege to meet and

hear some new preachers. Oh, I thank God for my preacher brothers, and it is always a special blessing to meet some new preacher who believes as I do.

The conference was well attended. There were many special songs. The services were all good. It seemed that the Spirit of the Lord was present to bless. I thought some of the sermons were simply outstanding. I did not note this feature at our recent conference. At our conference, I felt that we did not have any sermon that was just outstanding; neither did we have a poor one. I thought the over-all totality of the preaching at our conference was good. I did feel that this conference in Mansfield provided a few really specially good sermons. However, I do not mean to disparage any of the preaching. I appreciated each man and each sermon.

I will refer specially to one sermon: a sermon on "Patience" by Elder Kenneth Long. Brother Gordon, a black man who is a powerful preacher, and Ken Long preached on Saturday night. Brother Gordon is a loud, energetic, very mobile, very impressive preacher, and he brought a simply superb message. Frankly, I felt a little sorry for Kenneth Long, who had to follow Brother Gordon. I had heard that Brother Long was a very quiet speaker. (I guess my holy-roller background helped influence me to prefer the loud, enthusiastic type of preaching) Brother Long just stood there and spoke very softly — so softly I would imagine that folk in the back had trouble hearing him. But, he did preach a powerful sermon. I told him later that he had preached the most cutting sermon of the conference, and that if I would listen to it, his sermon would do me the most good. Brother Long just painted my picture as he preached on patience. He did everything but call my name. I told one preacher that Brother Long did not take a sword and hew and pierce and hack; he just took a razor and sliced one to pieces. Oh, that I might apply that sermon, or that the Holy Spirit might it to my life.

This conference closed on Sunday morning. Brother Phillips and I came back to Ashland. Brother Dan preached a fine sermon at Calvary Baptist Church on Sunday night.

I am not done yet. On June 20th, ten of us boarded Brother Carl Connelly's van for a trip to a fellowship meeting in Warren, Ohio. Boy, I am glad Brother Carl purchased a van upon his retirement. We are getting much good out of it. And we can have more and better fellowship traveling together.

Brother Don Pennington is the very sound, fine, and able pastor of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church in Cortland, Ohio, near Warren. This church was started by the church that was in Rome, Ohio, and most of the members to be in that church. I have the high honor and privilege of preaching many times for these people. Some of my favorite people live in Warren, and this church is one of my favorite preaching places. I was honored when they asked me to preach at

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QUESTION: — When did foreigners rank higher than natives in an intelligence test?

ANSWER: — Daniel 1:19, 20... "among them all was found none like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azarish: therefore stood they before the king. And in all matters of wisdom and understanding, that the king enquired of them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers that were in all his realm."

BLESSED

(Continued from Page 5)

their fellowship meeting this year.

We arrived in Warren at the home of Brother and Sister Arvel Waddell at about 5:00 p.m. Sister Waddell had a fine dinner prepared for us. (I hate to say "dinner", I am a "supper" man myself). Several of the folk from the church came over and we had much good fellowship for several hours. Then the folk scattered to their different abodes for the night. Katie and I had the privilege and joy of staying with the Waddells that night, though we would have been happy wherever the folk decided to put us. Brother and Sister Waddell gave up their bed and bedroom for Katie and me. We both had our first experience of sleeping on a water bed that night. We did appreciate these fine friends giving us their bed, but frankly, we were not overly impressed with this first water bed experience. Why, one is afraid to turn over and dreads it when the other does so. One is fearful of drowning in his or her sleep. One dreams of being in the Navy again. I think that the Bible may speak disparagingly somewhere of one sleeping on the waves. Again, we appreciated this fine gesture of hospitality by the Waddells.

Arvel and "Chick" are special friends of the Wilsons. We have known and loved them dearly for many years now. It is always a special joy when we visit them or they visit us. I do not know of folk who will go more "all out" to make one welcome. I do thank my God for the many wonderful friends He has given me through the years. These are two of many such friends, and they are certainly very high on the list of "Wilson's friends."

The fellowship meeting began at 10:00 a.m. the next day. There were three preachers in the morning and three in the afternoon. I had the joy and privilege of meeting a preacher brother Ruel C. for the first time. It was a blessing to meet this brother, fellowship with him awhile, and then to hear him preach God's Word. I had met and heard the other preachers previously, but it was good to do so again. I was blessed by each preacher and each sermon. I felt that the Lord was with us, and that this was a time of blessing to all. The host

church surely furnished a very fine meal for us all. Why, what more can one ask? We had fine food, fine fellowship, and fine preaching. God is good to His people. Thank God for the blessings like these that He gives us to enjoy; and thank God for the spiritual capacity to enjoy such. There was a time when things such as I have described in this article would have been a terrible, almost unendurable bore. Thank God, it's different now.

After the afternoon service, we had another time of fellowship as we ate again. Then, we ten boarded the Connelly bus (Van) and headed for Ashland. We had a good, safe, trouble free trip. Thank God for traveling mercies. Brother, sister, we would not be safe anywhere or at any time except for the merciful providence of our sovereign God. Truly, this trip and this day of special fellowship was a blessed experience.

I am not done yet. On June 28th at about 2:30 p.m., 12 of us met in the parking lot of Calvary Baptist Church to begin a trip to Appalachia, Va. Eight of us boarded the Connelly bus. The other four travelled in the Carter car. We had great fellowship on the 3-4 hour journey to Appalachia. We arrived at about 5:30 p.m. at the home of Elder Reggie Moore where a good meal had been provided for us. Dan Phillips and two of his members arrived there shortly afterward. It was a time of joy as we met old friends, and as folk were introduced to some they had not previously met.

After the meal, I paid a brief visit to the grave of my oldest son. He passed away in 1957 while I was pastoring in Appalachia. I bowed there, as I stood by the grave, and thanked God that there is another day coming — a day of victory over death and the grave — a day when I will see my darling boy again — a day that will begin an eternity of blessedness beyond compare. Praise God that Steve had been brought by sovereign and saving grace to know the Lord. Thank God for hope beyond the grave.

We all then traveled the three miles to the Temple Baptist Church of Appalachia, Va. I pastored this church briefly some 29 years ago. Though my time there was brief, it was blessed. God has kept some ties between this church and me all these years. I have preached there many times in the intervening years. The church is very dear to me. God has used me at different times to be of help to the church, and the church has repeatedly been a great blessing to me. It is a little strange how God has kept us in touch all these years — strange, but blessed. God gave me the privilege of introducing Elder Reggie Moore to this church. They courted awhile. Now they are joined in that relationship so much like a marriage — that of church and pastor. Brother Moore is a very sound and able preacher of God's Word. God has blessed his ministry in this church.

The Temple Baptist Church has weathered many a storm over the past several years. At times it seemed she was up to her neck in the raging waters. At times it seemed certain that she would go under and cease to be. But God has kept this church going. God has given her some members who have been faithful through the years, and

who are still standing true. I have watched in awe at times as I have seen God bring this church through great storm and trial. I verily believe that God has a purpose for this church. I believe that God has preserved her these many years because He is going to use her to be a blessing in the area and to bring glory to His name. Oh, I do hope that the time is hastening on when God will give revival to this church, and will pour out His blessings greatly upon her. I believe the raindrops are beginning to fall. I pray for the shower to come soon.

The purpose of our being in Appalachia was to assist and fellowship with the Temple Baptist Church in the ordaining of a deacon. The church had elected brother Ray Bishop to the office of deacon and had asked that we assist in the ordination if we could.

We had a great service. Why, as we questioned brother Bishop and listened to his answers, I thought to myself that we must be ordaining a preacher. He did a wonderful job of answering the questions we asked. An ordination service is always one of great solemnity and importance. I felt that the Lord was with us as Brother Bishop knelt. Carl Connelly led us in an ordination prayer, and the ordained men present laid hands on this brother. Brother Bishop has been a faithful member of the church there. He is faithful in attendance, in giving, and in working in any way he can in the church. He is a teacher in the Sunday School there. I am glad for the honor the church has bestowed upon him in electing and ordaining him to the office of deacon. I do believe that the Temple Baptist Church has gotten herself another good deacon.

Brother Dan Phillips brought the charge to the deacon. He did a fine job, and I am sure that Brother Bishop will long remember the charge laid on him, the brother Dan's usage of God's Word. I then brought the charge to the church. I felt the blessing of the Lord as I preached in this place that has meant much to me for so long. Many of our readers will remember that I recently reported on a meeting I was privileged to hold for this church. I forgot to tell that our assistant pastor, Elder Doug Newell, led in the questioning of the candidate.

We had a time of congregational and special singing after the ordination service, or at the close thereof. I felt the Lord's presence and power in a special way in this part of the service.

The service was over. Soon we were on our way back to Ashland. We had a good, safe trip home, and good fellowship on the way. Those who made this trip testified of the blessings they had received. I am sure that our attending this service was a blessing and encouragement to Temple Baptist Church and brother Bishop. Brothers and sisters, let us be more willing to go out of our way to encourage one another as individuals and as churches. I do praise my God for the blessed experiences recorded in this article. God bless you all. Now I am done.

GOING BAD

(Continued from Page 1)

What brings all this to mind is a mission board I knew somewhat well in earlier days. I never supported it because I have never supported any parachurch political machine. Yet, this mission board is supported

and praised by some rather good people. All my Baptist life I have preached that any structure which Christ did not build must inevitably degenerate. This board which looked good to some eyes has now degenerated so far into Arminianism that it is unrecognizable.

This board looked good in the beginning. Its official creed read almost like a Sovereign Grace primer. Yet, I preached twenty years ago and yet preach that this, or any, board has no right to exist. All such things are competitors of Christ's churches. I preached of degeneration and men scoffed and said, "look how sound we are." I told them that soundness would avail nothing if appended to a structure which Christ did not design. They were amused where they were not wrathful. Degeneration has worked its work and this board now could easily be mistaken for a liberal structure.

I once wrote papers which said that this board would degenerate in time just as all of men's inventions must inevitably degenerate. That which God did not build is rotten at the base and corruption will inexorably surface in time.

This is not a paper on mission boards but they are apt examples of degeneration. Men's works must degenerate, for life and life forces come from the dispenser of life. The very air and chemicals and spiritual poverty of this world will bring degeneration to anything which does not have the protective covering of God's design upon it.

Good men and good churches were, and are, aligned with the board I mention. They are wilfully blind to the degenerative work presently being worked. They say instead, "We are doing a good work" not realizing that a "good work" must have its base in a godly design.

I have had ministers tell me that they agree the board is wrong in its very existence and yet they cleave to it. One man sat in my home and told me the board was an evil thing and is now a missionary under its supervision. Thus as degeneration corrodes it also blinds.

So then this mission board has followed all others in the natural path of a natural degeneration. Would any deny that every mission board which men have built has degenerated into Arminianism? Name one which hasn't. They have all "gone bad" just as unsalted flesh wastes away in a natural act of degeneration.

Degeneration isn't to be wondered at. It is a natural result of a natural law of God. Sin slays. It corrupts. It degenerates. Such is the power of degeneration that if the Lord had not been pleased to keep the seasons of growth and reaping and renewal upon the earth this earth and all things in it would have long ago followed the natural course of a natural degeneration and wasted totally away as the moon and planets have done.

The only things which shall escape degeneration is that which has a godly life infused within it. All else is a natural, worldly life and will degenerate in due season.

Every religious construction built by man has degenerated. Every church built by man has "gone bad." Would Wesley, Luther or Knox today recognize the churches they had a hand in

building? Would John Wesley be welcome to preach his 18th century sermons in any Methodist church in Florida or would they stone him off the ground?

There is only one spiritual locale where degeneration has been largely stayed... in the Churches of Jesus Christ. The Baptists. Yet, even we are not free from degeneration. Baptist Churches have existed since Judea. How so? They were built by Jesus and so have a godly protection from degeneration. Their errors are not protected, however. When Baptist churches follow false ways they degenerate as all things do. They waste away and perish though their empty shells may remain.

Men began following hardshellism in the last century. They degenerated, yet, the shells of their churches still exist, but they exist without an inward life. A hardshell church is an empty shell with moving parts animated by men but the body itself is dead. How so? Degeneration claimed them when they abandoned the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Some Sovereign Grace Baptist churches have corrupted parts of their body like a poorly salted ham may be partly corrupted and eroding. When any body abandons the way of health, good diet and proper exercise that body begins to degenerate. Our kind of churches are not free from degeneration. We eat well but do we exercise as we ought? What happens to any body which feasts on rich food but which lacks exercise? Does it not bloat? If bloating has arrived can degeneration be far behind? When any church does not have a vital exercise of a vibrant witness for Christ it shall degenerate no matter how correct it is in doctrine. Evangelism shall vitalize a church and without it a lassitude sets in. Laconic churches are soon degenerated churches.

When tumults and strife assail a Baptist church the body degenerates by degree of the infection. When a church becomes hardshell indeed if not in doctrine it "goes bad" by degree. When any error finds place in a church the error acts as a canker and degeneration becomes gradually operative. Surgery is the only remedy for degeneration and if it is not stayed the church shall canker away unto death.

When a pastor is tyrannical or a church misguided, degeneration shall follow. When revels replace preaching, degeneration comes and the church "goes bad." When a church slips into a decaying and enervating rut of repetitive services, which apparently touch neither the mind nor the heart, degeneration is in full force. When churches grow cold, they soon "go bad." Where manifest love is absent, degeneration is very present. Where there is strife and political shufflings for power in a church body, corruption has become a very real thing. Baptist churches may not die with great suddenness but once degeneration sets in and is unassuaged, it shall work as a natural force unto death. Whatever violates Christ's design in His churches shall breed degeneration and the church shall "go bad."

Degeneration is not instant but progressive. A ham does not rot away in a night but once the process is begun it shall work as a natural force. Baptist church

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REVELATIONS

by John R. Gilpin

(Read Revelation 1:9-20). In our last study, I offered some twenty-five contrasts between the book of Genesis and the book of Revelation. One of those points of contrast was that in Genesis we find a paradise that is turned into a desert, whereas in the book of Revelation, we find a desert that is turned back into a paradise.

Now, beloved, this must take place. The first verse of this book of Revelation says that John is showing us those things which must come to pass. I insist then, that eventually this world as a desert, as it is today, will ultimately be turned back into a paradise far more beautiful and far more wonderful than the Garden of Eden ever was. I say then, it is one of those things that must come to pass.

In this study, we will see Him who is to bring to pass this marvelous change within the world. We will get a picture of the one who is to accomplish this change — he one who is to turn this desert back into a paradise of God.

I. The reason God gave this Patmos vision.

We read: "I John, who also am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9).

This verse tells us why the book of Revelation was written. All the other disciples were dead. John himself is shut upon a little isle about 30 miles in circumference — the isle of Patmos — located in the Mediterranean. He was shut up there for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Stephen had been stoned as the first of the Christian martyrs, as recorded in Acts 7. Then in Acts 12, we read that James, an apostle of Jesus Christ, was beheaded. Philip, who had been instrumental of God in a mighty revival meeting in Samaria and who was later used of God to lead the Ethiopian eunuch to the Lord Jesus Christ, had been scourged. He had been whipped within an inch of his life and was thrown into prison, and when he seemingly wouldn't die, history tells us that he was crucified and thus his life came to an end.

Matthew, who wrote the Gospel of Matthew, was already dead. He had been slain with an halberd. That is, he had been run through with a sword in the year 60 A.D.

James, the brother of our Lord, who was the author of the Epistle of James — which I consider one of the most practical books of all the New Testament — when he was 94 years of age, was beaten and stoned by the Jews. Imagine people who had no more feeling than to beat and stone a man 94 years of age, yet when they were not able to thus kill him, history tells us that they finally beat his brains out with clubs.

Then there was Matthias who was chosen as a successor to Judas. Matthias was stoned at Jerusalem and later was beheaded.

Andrew, the man who had a knack for personal work — that man who was known best to us because he was the personal worker of the apostolic band,

had been crucified.

Mark, who wrote the Gospel of Mark, had been dragged to pieces in the city of Alexandria when the heathen people were holding a feast to Serapes, their idol. In order to make their feast to Serapes all the more impressive, they took this man of God, John Mark, and dragged him through the streets until his body was dragged to pieces.

Simon Peter by this time had already been crucified. History



John R. Gilpin

doesn't tell it, but tradition says that he was crucified head-downward. When they came to crucify Peter, he said, "I am not worthy to die like my Lord. If you are going to crucify me, then I ask that you make one exception — that you crucify me head-downward." Thus Simon Peter was crucified head-downward, with his feet extending into the air.

Then there was the Apostle Paul who had already written fourteen books of the New Testament. Paul went outside the city of Rome and on the Appian Way, laid his head upon a block while an executioner stood by with a sharp sword and decapitated this man of God — this man who had written the biggest portion of the New Testament.

There was Bartholomew of whom very little is known so far as the New Testament is concerned. He was one of the twelve apostles, and he translated the Gospel of Matthew into the language of India where he went as a missionary following the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and there by the idolatrous people was beaten and later crucified.

There was Jude who wrote the book which bears his name, who was crucified in the city of Edessa in the year 72 A.D.

Then there was doubting Thomas, who one day said that he wouldn't believe unless he could put his hands into the nail prints of the Lord Jesus Christ. He, too, went as a missionary to India, and it was by his preaching when he told that he had seen the Lord risen from the dead and that he put his hand into the literal hand of Jesus who was now alive after having been crucified, he excited the rage of those heathen idolators of India, with the result that a pagan priest thrust him through with a spear, so that he died.

Luke, who wrote the Gospel of Luke, and the book of the Acts, was hanged on an olive tree in Greece by the idolatrous priests until he died.

Simon was crucified in Britain in the year 74 A.D.

That meant, beloved, that John was the only one of the apostles that was left in the year 90 A.D.

Can you imagine John writing this book of Revelation? Can you imagine what thoughts must have passed through his mind when he recalled how his

brethren who had walked with him as fellow-disciples and apostles of Jesus Christ, had all fallen victims of the rage and the fury of the idolatrous people round about, until now he stands as the only one of the twelve original apostles?

In Mark 10:35-40, we read that James came to Jesus one day and made a very, very ambitious request in behalf of himself and his brother, when he asked that one might sit on the right hand and the other on the left hand, thus occupying the chief positions in glory with the Lord in His kingdom. Jesus said: "...Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized with shall ye be baptized" (Mark 10:38, 39).

Beloved, those two who came to Jesus that day with that request did have a marvelous experience in the fulfillment of the Scripture. The first one of the original twelve apostles that died as a martyr was James, and after that all others are dead. John is still left alive. He had been thrown into a cauldron of burning oil previously, but had miraculously escaped without an injury. Now he had been banished to the Isle of Patmos where he wrote the book of Revelation.

They say that Alcatraz on the West Coast is surrounded by waters so rough that it is impossible for a man ever to escape to the mainland. What is true of Alcatraz was likewise true of Patmos. Patmos in John's day was for prisoners just as Alcatraz is for prisoners of the United States today.

I can see old John as a forlorn prisoner on the Isle of Patmos. There he was, unable to leave the isle, and with all of his friends and fellow-disciples dead. God said to him, "John, if they won't let you leave the Isle of Patmos, then I will just let you come up here and penetrate the very secrets of Heaven itself." Beloved, it seems to me that God just reached down and picked up the Apostle John, and let him penetrate the very secrets of Heaven — not only of that day, but of this day and of the days yet to come. God said to him, "What you see, write it in the book and send it to the churches, that it might awaken faith, hope and courage among all the discouraged Christians."

Beloved, that is why God gave this patmos vision, that it might be a means of encouragement to discouraged Christians. I wonder if you and I are not having too easy a time. I wonder if you and I don't need the very thing that those first century Christians had. They had to suffer for their faith and for their Christian experience. I wonder if it wouldn't be the greatest thing that ever happened to you and to me if we had to suffer a little for the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ today. I think how men and women have suffered down through the ages, and I am amazed that God gives us so easy a time today.

A short time after the book of Revelation was written, old Nero burned the city of Rome and blamed the Christians for

setting fire to it, in order that he might heap persecution upon them. He had some of them sewed up in the skins of wild animals and put into the arena, and then turned mad dogs in upon them to worry them until they were dead. He had others dressed in shirts that were dipped in wax until they were stiff, and then fastened them to posts round about his gardens and set them on fire, that they might illumine his gardens by night.

I think, beloved, how that just a short time after this Cecilia, a young Christian matron, who loved her Lord was put naked into a bath of scalding water to compel her to turn against her own profession of faith. When she endured the scalding water, they took a sword and cut off her head.

I am reminded of Julian who was a native of Cilicia, who was put into a leather bag filled with serpents, scorpions and snakes, and then was dropped alive into the Mediterranean Ocean.

Then I think of that man who, a little while later, became a Roman emperor, called Julian the Apostate. He was nicknamed "the apostate" because he became a rebel to the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ. He had some of the Christians burned alive, some of them he had their brains beaten out, and some were scalded to death. Some had their tongues pulled out, some of the women had their breasts cut from their body with sharp shears, and some of them had their stomachs ripped open and corn and grain put inside, and hungry hogs were turned loose to eat their entrails and the grain inside their stomachs.

Beloved, when I think of this, I am reminded how easy you and I are getting along. Likewise, I am reminded of how apostate and modern we become today when we have an easy time.

Revelation 1:9 tells us the reason why this Patmos vision came to the Apostle John. He was the only man of that original twelve who was left and could write such a book. The church had given freely many, many martyrs by this time, and the Word of God had been plentifully watered by the blood of martyrs. Now John is given this revelation.

Beloved, don't tell me that this book of Revelation isn't to be read. The first chapter of this book tells us that God wanted His churches to read it. He wanted them to have courage and to stand for something. I say then, the man who reads the book of Revelation and studies it carefully and concentrates upon the message thereof, will go out to stand for something, and to be something, for the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. When the vision came.

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea" (Rev. 1:10, 11).

Notice that this vision came on the Lord's Day. It didn't come on the Sabbath. The Sab-

bath was already a thing of the past. Every once in a while I hear someone talk about worshipping on the Sabbath. Beloved, the Sabbath was the seventh day of the week. We don't worship on the Sabbath; we worship on the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, the day that commemorates the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. John said, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day..."

I think I will take a moment time to show you that the Sabbath is a thing of the past. If you will turn to the book of Hosea, you will find that the Word of God prophesies that the Sabbath was to come to an end. Listen: "I will also cause all her mirth to cease, her feast days, her new moons, and her sabbaths, and all her solemn feasts" (Hosea 2:11).

God said that the Sabbath was going to come to an end, and it did come to an end when the Lord Jesus died and rose from the grave, and from that time on, Christians always worshipped on the first day of the week. We have an example of this in the Word of God: "And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts 20: 6, 7).

Notice, that it says that Paul came to Troas and was there for seven days. That meant that regardless of what day of the week he came there, he was there for one of each of the seven days. In other words, he could have preached to them on any one of those days of the week, but on which day did he preach to them? The seventh verse tells us. Listen; "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." (Acts 20:6, 7).

You can see from this experience of Paul at Troas that the Sabbath was done away with. It was completely abolished by this time. The day of worship for Christians was the first day of the week, and it was on the first day of the week that John had this vision in the book of Revelation.

Listen, beloved, I insist that the man who has no Lord's Day is not likely to see visions, and hear voices like John did. The

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"In the LORD put I my trust: how say ye to my soul. Flee as a bird to your mountain? For, lo, the wicked bend their bow, they make ready their arrow upon the string, that they may privily shoot at the upright in heart. If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do? The LORD is in his holy temple, the LORD's throne is in heaven: his eyes behold, his eyelids try, the children of men. The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth" (Psalm 11: 1-5).

REVELATION

(Continued from Page 7)

man who doesn't have a Lord's Day isn't going to have any revelation given to him like that which was given to John on the Isle of Patmos.

I think I have heard about every excuse that Baptists have for not having a Lord's Day. As I look back across my experience in the ministry, I think of people who have told me that they just didn't have time to worship God on Sunday — that they had had rather late hours in their business on Saturday night, or they had to mind the baby, or they had to visit grandma, or they had to cook for company, or they had Sunday sickness. Oh, my brother, woe to that Christian who hears no voices and sees no vision of God's work. In 99 out of 100 cases, Christians are spending the Lord's Day in the wrong manner. I tell you, beloved, if you are going to see visions and to hear the voice of the Lord — if God is going to give a revelation to you, you are going to have to have a Lord's Day when you can be in the Spirit of the Lord.

When I was just a boy preacher, I passed across a corner of Pennsylvania. It so happened that in the section of the state through which I passed they had shaft mines, and I noticed on that late Saturday afternoon they were bringing the mules up out of the mines through the shaft and turning them out in the pastures. I asked someone why they were doing so, and he told me that it was a common practice, that on Monday morning they took the mules down into the mines and they used them all week, but late Saturday afternoon they always brought them up, and turned them in the pastures to let them have a day outside the mines, in order to keep them from going blind. Beloved, I thought to myself, every Christian ought to imitate these mules. If a mule has to have one day in the light to preserve his eyesight and to keep him from going blind, then a child of God needs one day out of the week to spend in the service of the Lord to prevent spiritual blindness.

I like the words of the poem, which says: "A Sunday well spent, Brings a week of content, And joy for the cares of tomorrow. But a Sunday profaned, Whatever be gained, Is a sure forerunner of sorrow."

Brother, sister, I would like to appeal to you to observe the Lord's day properly. I would like to appeal to you to quit your desecrating the Lord's day, and to quit your abuse of the Lord's day, and to use the day of the Lord as a day of worship.

John saw this vision and heard this voice speaking to him in the Lord's day. The man, I say, who doesn't have a Lord's Day is unlikely to hear voices, and unlikely to have visions from the Lord to come to him.

III. The Jesus of Revelation. "And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool,

as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire: And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength" (Rev. 1:12-16).

These verses give us a picture of how Jesus Christ looks today. You know the Xmas crowd makes much ado about the baby Jesus and the Easter crowd speaks a lot about the Christ of the resurrection. A lot of modern preachers speak of Him as the lowly Nazarene, and they dwell on His patience and His peace and good deeds, and they extol these virtues to the sky.

Beloved, that is not the Christ of Revelation. That is not the resurrected Christ. That is not the Christ of this twentieth century. That is not the Christ who is looking down upon you and me today. Rather, beloved, all the way through the book of Revelation the Christ we see is a Christ of lordship, a Christ of power and majesty and glory. Hear me, beloved, He is not just a little above man, but He is God. He is King of kings, and He is Lord of lords. Some speak of him as the lowly Nazarene, but I want you to see Him as the lordly Nazarene.

It was thus that John saw Him in this vision. He saw Him as Lord and King. He saw Him in all of His sovereignty and majesty and glory. When churches see Him in His lordly glory, they serve Him. When Christians see Him in all of His majesty, they attend all services and they read His Word. Christians pray and work when they see Him in His majesty.

I hear somebody say, "If a person believes in election and in the sovereignty of God, he will just sit down and do nothing." No, no, beloved, if a person believes the doctrine of election and the doctrine of God's sovereignty and majesty, he will realize how much of an honor and a privilege he has of being a servant of such a God.

I insist, beloved, whenever a man or a church sees Him as John saw Him on the Isle of Patmos, it will make that man over, and it will make that church or that man want to serve the Lord. If a man believes in a God who is just a little more than man, he won't care whether he goes to church or not. What differences does it make whether he reads the Bible? What difference does it make whether he works or not? But, beloved, when you see Him in all of His sovereignty and majesty and glory — when you see Him as King of kings and Lord of lords, as John saw Him, you will want to serve a Christ like that.

He was standing in the midst of His candlesticks, for the thirteenth verse says, "And in the midst of seven candlesticks." Those candlesticks represent His churches. This would tell us then that He was standing in the midst of His churches.

I needn't tell you that Christ had but one kind of church when He was here, and that was Baptist churches. I needn't tell you that He has but one kind of church today, and that is Baptist churches. Therefore, when John saw this, he saw Him standing in the midst of seven Baptist churches.

Whenever I think of this, I realize that Baptist churches have the assurance of Christ be-

ing with them all the way down through the ages, for when He gave the great commission, He said: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28: 19, 20).

Beloved, that was the promise that Jesus gave to His churches, and I thank God that when John saw Him, as recorded in the book of Revelation, he saw Him still standing in the midst of His churches, assuring us of His presence. I tell you, beloved, every time a church today stands up for the things of God's Book, they can expect that the presence of Jesus will ever be with them.

I wish you would notice that when John saw Him, He had clothes on. God's Word says that He was clothed in a garment down to the foot.

Every time I read this passage of Scripture, I think about those individuals who wear shorts in the summer time. I don't care if it is a man or a woman, you ought to be ashamed of yourself, and you ought to ask the Lord to forgive you for it. I tell you, beloved, I just about lose respect for any man or woman who goes around in public so scantily clothed.

Notice that my Lord was clothed all the way from His head to His feet. I have a conviction that if the saints of God are going to dress like that in Heaven, surely the saints of God down here on this earth, that still have an old carnal nature to contend with, ought to be just as careful how they dress.

I want you to notice also that Jesus' face shone.

Go back to the Old Testament and read the story of Moses. He went up on the mount for forty days, and when he came back he looked just like you and I do. Then he broke those tables of stones and he went back on the mount for a second period of forty days. When he came down after having communed with the Lord for eighty day's time, his face shone. Listen: "And it came to pass, when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him" (Ex. 34:29).

Let me tell you, beloved, if you want to have a shining face, you need to spend some time with the Lord.

Notice that His eyes were as a flame of fire. Those are the eyes that look down upon us every day. Beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ looks at us with eyes that pierce us through like an X-ray. Don't tell me that you can hide from the Lord. Don't tell me that you can do something that the Lord won't know about. Beloved, the Lord sees us every day with eyes that shine like an X-ray. He can pierce us through.

Several years ago, a man came to church two or three times and thus became very much interested. Then one week end he got drunk and he didn't come to church. On the Sunday night he was sobering up, he said that I came in and sat down on the foot board of the bed, folded my arms and looked at him. I wasn't there; that was his imagination. He said that he got up and went into the next room to get rid of me, but when he did

so, he said that I followed him, and that I went every place that he went. He said he went into the kitchen to draw some water from the spigot, but when he went to fill his glass, that there sat John R. Gilpin, with his arms folded, on that spigot.

Now, beloved, I wasn't there in any sense of the word. Rather, it was his imagination playing tricks with him that night. But, beloved, that is exactly the way it is with Jesus Christ. I don't care where you go or what you do, whether it is good or bad, whether it is right or wrong, whether you are in church or whether you are in a poolroom, I don't care where you are, the Lord Jesus Christ looks right at you in just that manner.

Whenever a Christian realizes that the Lord of Baptist churches today is the same Lord Baptist churches had in John's day — a Lord Jesus that has eyes like an X-ray — whenever Baptists realize that, it is going to make a lot of difference in the way in which they live.

Notice that it says that his feet were "like unto fine brass." Those feet picture judgment and purity. It is with these feet that He walks in the midst of His churches, and it is with these feet that He is going to tread down Rome and her harlot daughters and destroy the Devil.

As we study this book of Revelation, I will show you on the authority of God's Word that Jesus Christ is going to destroy Roman Catholicism and all the harlot, Protestant churches that have come out of Rome. I will show you, furthermore, that Jesus Christ is going to destroy Satan. I will show you that Jesus Christ is going to destroy the Anti-Christ. Beloved, with those feet of brass, He is going to tread down the evil of this world and the individuals that perpetrated it.

Notice his voice, for John describes His voice as "the sound of many waters."

Recently, I stood at Cumberland falls and I saw the water pouring over the falls, producing much noise. I have been to Niagara Falls perhaps a dozen times and I have seen the tons and tons of water pour over the falls every minute of every day. What a noise it makes!

Beloved, that is the voice of Jesus Christ. The skeptics defy Jesus now, but as we study the book of Revelation, we find that when Jesus lifts His voice against them, they are going to cry for the rocks and the mountains to fall upon them, to hide them from the face of the Lord and from Him that sat upon the throne.

Notice that it also says, "And he had in his right hand seven stars." Beloved, I am glad that He has the stars in His hand. Do you know who the stars are? If you will read the twentieth verse of this chapter of Revelation, you will see that the stars are the angels of the seven churches. The word "angel" is really the word for "pastor," so that actually it says that He holds the pastors of these seven churches in His hand.

Oh, how little a preacher is, for He holds His preachers in His hand. What a precious place to be! Beloved, a preacher is no more in the sight of God than a ring is on an individual's hand, and yet, at the same time, we are deeply as precious to Him as the ring is to the individual.

I tell you, beloved, I have some problems from day to day. I have some problems that cause

me to wonder just what is going to be the outcome. But I thank God that I can fall back upon this fact, that I am in His hand. Oh, doesn't it make you happy, preacher friends — doesn't it make you happy — doesn't it make you thank Him for the position that you hold in His sight — just to be in the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice also that his countenance was "as the sun shineth in his strength." Beloved, what the sun is to the natural world, Jesus Christ is to the Spiritual world. What would this world be like if it were not for the sun that shines in all of its strength and power. I insist that Jesus Christ is to the Spiritual world what the sun is to the natural world.

What a vision it was that John saw in this first chapter of Revelation!

IV. The Effect of this vision. "And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death" (Rev. 1:17, 18).

What effect did this vision have on John? When he saw this vision, he didn't get up in church and pull his hair, and rant and rave, and run around over the place, and tell the people what a vision he had had of the Lord the night before. Haven't you seen people who did exactly like that? Beloved, I have seen individuals stand up before a congregation and tell them about the vision that they had had of the Lord the night before — how that the Lord came right up to them, and what an experience it was that they had. Beloved, that wasn't the way that it affected John. When John saw Jesus in all of His majesty, he fell at His feet as though he were dead.

In Isaiah 6, when Isaiah had that vision of our Lord, high and lifted up, the seraphim covered their faces with their wings. The word "seraphim" means "a burning one." They burned in their own holiness, yet when they stood in the presence of a thrice-holy God, they covered their faces to keep from looking upon Him, and they cried, "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts." When Isaiah saw it, he cried out, "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips..."

When Job saw the Lord in the book that bears his name — when he came face to face with the Lord, he said: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:5, 6).

Listen, beloved, John came close to the Lord and fell down at His feet. Isaiah came close to Him and cried, "Woe is me! for I am undone." Job saw Him and said, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." What does this tell us! Whenever a holy roller gets to his feet, and brags about how near he has come to the Lord, it just proves in the light of the way that men reacted in the Bible when they saw the Lord, how far he is from the Lord rather than his nearness to Him. In the Bible, the nearer men came to God, the more they abhorred themselves. Therefore, when a man brags and boasts about his experience with the Lord, it proves not how close he

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REVELATION

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is to the Lord, but how far removed he is.

When John saw this vision and fell at the feet of Jesus, Jesus said to him, "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Beloved, a child of God has nothing to worry about so far as Hell is concerned, for Jesus Christ holds the keys to hell in His hand. Are you looking for security? We have it right here in this first chapter of Revelation. Would Jesus Christ allow one of His children to go into damnation? No, no, beloved, Jesus Christ is the one — not the Devil — who holds the keys to hell and death.

Thank God, that is the kind of a Christ we are serving today. We are serving a Christ that is alive. As the song says: "I know that my Redeemer lives."

Notice how we see John when Jesus raised him up. He is ready to write a book. What kind of a Jesus has he seen? He has seen a Jesus of power and majesty, a Jesus who is the first and the last, a Jesus that holds the keys of Heaven in His hand, a Jesus that was dead and is alive — not for a little while, but for evermore.

Beloved, that is the Jesus that I present to you. Do you know Him? Are you acquainted with Him? If not, "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace."

May God bless you!

GOING BAD

(Continued from Page 6)

ches have "gone bad" and corrupted away into confusion in such a gradual way that even the members of the body are not fully aware of it. Some become so dulled to an empty religious routine that when Christ removes the light they don't even know it.

Saints of God degenerate and die terrible deaths when they forsake Christ's directions. The wages of sin is truly death and death is defined as separation. Separation and degeneration may well be thought of as one systemitized action for the purpose of this paper.

A saint of God is a new creature. A new generation. A new beginning. Old things have passed away and a newness and freshness rules. Yet, what if the saint puts his hand to the plow and looks back to archaic things as did the Galatians? Shall he prosper or shall he degenerate? Shall his life be added to or taken from? I know of saints who have degenerated and whose lives have wasted away to nothingness. They hold to true doctrine but they have "gone bad" in one way and another and to such a degree that death would be a benediction for them. They are not "worldly" but you can "go bad" in more ways than the way of the flesh.

What is "growing in grace" if it is not casting off the old and embracing the new? Growth is gradual as is degeneration and like degeneration it is almost unnoticed day by day. I recently took a week's trip to Kentucky and my small litter of kittens had an amazing growth while I was gone. Yet, had I been here day by day I would never have noticed it. A saint shall either grow in a gradual way or he shall degenerate in a gradual way. He progresses or he

regresses and there is no stopping place and no standing place for the Christian.

I know Baptists who are doctrinally correct but who have "gone bad" and don't even know it. They have become Hardshells in deed if not in name. Their lives are merely a well defined round of empty religious activities which seem to have no life in them. They are not excited about Christ and His work. They have no vibrance. They are dull. Dull minded, dull hearted and dull conscienced. Am I judging? Of course I am and I know the penalty. If I ever become dull in Christ's work I would hope some friend would have the kindness to judge me for my good.

The Christian cannot stand still, for still waters stagnate. Stagnation equates with degeneration and both are odorous. Sovereign Grace Baptists are at the head of the class. Oh how folks scream when I say this but it's true... We stand by grace.

Yet, I notice more and more that Sovereign Grace Baptists are degenerative. We are strong on God's majesty, praise God, but are we equally strong on evangelism? Personal evangelism? Personal witnessing? How stand we here? People, if we don't witness the Gospel for Christ how shall God add to our numbers? When I was pastor of a church in Florida, I knocked on every door for many blocks around the church and the members looked at me strangely as though I was involved in an alien activity. Truly we preach. Our services are regular and many times so is the routine dullness of them. Is this heresy? Am I judging? Of course I am. Are Sovereign Grace Baptists truly excited about Jesus Christ? Now don't charge me with Pentacostalism when I talk of "excitement." I hold to "sovereignty" as much as any and more than most. When I speak of "excitement" I am speaking of a vital and vibrant and exhilarating joy of the Lord which empowers our labor. The charismatics are excited about gibberish and the Arminians create a stir but are not excited about the Son.

Of all the peoples on the earth, Sovereign Grace Baptists should be excited about the person of Jesus Christ. My friends, we see God as He is. How many people on this tainted earth really see God as he is? Do the Arminians? Do the hardshells? Do the Protestants or the papists? A view of Jesus as He is should stir our hearts to a pulsing life and energy.

What did the Emmaus disciples say? Did their hearts not burn within them when Jesus met them on the road? How long has it been since our hearts really burned with a love for the Son of God? A vibrant love. A joyful love. Truly we perform the deeds of piety but what of our closeness to the Saviour? Have we not degenerated? Doing our duty is proper and good and knowing the truth is proper and good but does not knowledge without love puff up and does not religious activity become ritualism without a vital and daily closeness to Jesus?

Is there a vitality of joy within your life? If not you have degenerated and "gone bad". Don't plead your doctrine before me. I care nothing for any doctrine which is not accompanied by a vital closeness to the Son of God. What good is a form of doctrine without an at-

tendant empowering joy of Christ? I repeat, knowledge puffs up being alone.

What of you dear friend? Have you degenerated unto a stale and acidulous routine? Doing must be predicated on being. How is your "being" with Christ? Do you know certain truths? Praise God, then know them well. Are you faithful in spiritual matters, praise God. But, is there not something equally as vital as these things and which reaches beyond these things? Does your heart burn or are there dying embers? Have you degenerated? Are your days crowded with exciting things to perform for the son of God? If not you have degenerated. You must grow or decline for there is no other option. You must be renewed in your mind or you shall stagnate in your life. You must grow or you must degenerate. All sin tends to death and death has its wages. Many sound and saved Baptists are even now reaping sin's wages for they have "gone bad." They are sound in doctrine and clean in their lives but they have degenerated. How so? Ritualism has replaced their daily closeness with Christ.

Sovereign Grace Baptists should be for real what the Arminians are in shame. They should be an exciting and an excited people. What of the first Baptist church? Was it not excited about Jesus? What energized its labor and vitalized it with courage? Surely the Spirit empowered them as he empowers us but what was the result of this empowering? Good deeds were done and mighty deeds but how so? Were not Peter (when he grew up) and John and James and Paul vitally excited about the very Son of God? How was it they turned the world upside down in one generation while our churches today are hidden on back streets of our cities and none know of their existence? Have we not degenerated? We say we are Baptists as they were Baptists and truly we are but something vital lacks within us. I will take leave to tell you what it is.

We are a correct people in doctrine. Our practice is largely proper. We hold services in a consistent way. Our pulpits speak the truth. Yet, we are a degenerative people. What has done this unto us? The people and popes of Europe could not destroy us by interdicts or the sword. What has brought our degeneration? One thing. Ritualism.

I say to you that ritualism is our deadliest enemy. Going through the motions of even correct things without a real and heartfelt and daily love for Jesus to motivate us is a deadly thing. It has slain more Baptist churches than the sword. Wherein did Israel fall? Was it not because of empty ritualism? Surely they sinned in going after Molech and the groves and the high places, but what was it that drove them there initially? Was it not a degenerative ritualism which had no heart toward God? Israel degenerated because they cared nothing for Messiah though they preached his advent every Sabbath day.

Those things written aforetime were written for our learning. Seeing ancient pitfalls should alert us. Any eye removed from Jesus shall degenerate and in time go bad no matter what the reason of the removal.

Why do Baptists war on each other? Because of doctrine? It seems so and yet it is so? I have done a rather involved and com-

prehensive study of this matter and I can assure you that Baptists war on each other in the main because they are bored. This is why Israel went to the high places... they were bored with a religious routine which had little meaning to them since their hearts were not turned toward the God of the oracles they possessed. Baptists fight because they are bored. Believe me it is so. Ponder this.

If Sovereign Grace Baptists busied themselves with witnessing for Christ and rejoicing in the salvation of souls they would have scant time to war. Believe me, it is so. This does not say that we should ignore doctrinal irregularities. But, would our hearts not be lightened and more cheerful and would not we manifest a greater directed love toward erring brethren if we had a vital and loving interest in the Son of God.

Going bad! Many have gone. Friends have left us. Revered ministers greatly used in the kingdom work have gone bad. How so? They attended more to doctrinal squabbling than was wont. How so? They were bored. This is perhaps not always the case but I have seen enough of this degenerative activity to certify that it is largely true. If a minister busied himself with leading his church to busy themselves in witnessing incessantly for Jesus then he would have small time for wrangling over refined points of vague doctrines with his comrades. Believe me it is so.

Degeneration is an inexorable law. It cannot be avoided or evaded for sin works death, and degeneration is but a slow death. Veer from the straight way of Jesus in any degree and you shall know degeneration. You shall "go bad" in degree of your straying. Err far from the path and degeneration shall bring you down to death.

Let a deacon become a church ruler and degeneration shall come. Let a woman be displaced in her service and degeneration has arrived. Let a pastor become czar and degeneration shall slay a man gone bad. Anything "gone bad" shall degenerate.

I have in mind a man and a church. The man is yet but the church is no more. First the church. This church I speak of blessed me greatly and perhaps more than any other. I preached from her pulpit and the Bible Conferences held in this church were the greatest by far I have ever attended. This church was a friend to me when friends were scarce.

This was a vital church. A witnessing church. A missionary church. Perhaps it was the most missionary minded church I have ever known. It was a sound church and a loving church. Yet, it is gone. It has vanished away as if it never was. In five years it degenerated unto death.

What happened to this church? What brought its downfall? Degeneration. This church did not die in a moment or a day. It degenerated away. First it was one false and major doctrine which entered. I spoke caution to this church and her pastor of this thing. I wrote of it in public print. I lovingly warned them where this doctrine must lead them. I cried to them that they would degenerate. They persisted. Some believed this doctrine but most followed placidly along without thought.

Time passed. Another false doctrine inevitably surfaced in their midst. An even deadlier doctrine. I lovingly warned of this thing. This church which

was once a vital witnessing church laid aside the Gospel. I wrote a declaration against this new and deadly doctrine. I warned the pastor and the church at large. I told them that they would degenerate as surely as fire brings burning. They persisted. The church died. It degenerated to death. It had to, because degeneration once begun and not treated must kill.

The man, the man was a Baptist preacher. He was a missionary. It is testified of him that he was a good and godly missionary and did an excellent work on the field. Yet, he has degenerated almost to death. How so? Wars and wranglings. A man need not be killed in a war to be slain by it. An argumentative disposition is suicide in the second degree. You simply cannot constantly war on your kinsmen and escape unscathed, even if your kinsmen are wrong and you right. Wars and wranglings, they have destroyed this once fine pastor and missionary. He yet lives but lives a life no saint of God could ever wish for their own. This poor brother has withdrawn himself from so many that he only fellowships with himself and a few outcast men. And yet I rather like this man. I would like to see him blessed anew. If I had the power I would bless and brighten his life. Yet, some people will not receive blessings. If you offer them a cup of water in the name of Jesus they will dash it from your hands. There is an essential bitterness which accompanies degeneration and when men become bitter they snarl at even those who would aid them.

So then a church gone bad and dead and a man gone bad and yet breathing. They both degenerated away. They diverged despite pleas and appeals to God and man. So they are gone down unto death. The church to non-existence and the man unto a deadening bitterness. Degeneration cannot fail.

It is as sure as death when given the proper breeding ground. Yet, degeneration can be reversed if caught in time. It can be severed from a man or a church and life, vital life, can proceed for Jesus. Yet, you must see it and stay it in time. If a gangrenous wound is left too long unattended it shall destroy the body. Degeneration left unattended shall slay whatever life forces it touches.

What of you dear friend and dear church? Have you degenerated? How can you know? Where are you now and where have you been? Are you daily excited and joyful about the Son of God? I am not speaking of Pentacostal hype to the beat of tamborines. I am speaking of the joy of the Lord. What energizes your days? What empowers your life? If you have salvation do you have its attendant joy? Are your eyes fixed upon Jesus and your life infused with him in your daily walk or do you simply go through the motions of pious rituals?

What of you dear church? Are you an exciting entity or a dulled house? I am not speaking of artificial excitement. I mean are you truly excited about Jesus, about His work, His presence and His coming? Or are you as Kipling said "A House of Desolation"? Can a Baptist church be a "House of

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GOING BAD

(Continued from Page 9)

Desolation"? Is not degeneration a desolate thing?

Don't be confused when I speak of "excitement". I am not preaching fleshly gimmickry and Arminian trickery. I am speaking of the vital and essential joy which should be our lot, and which should empower the lives of our churches. When this is lacking, ritualism enters. When ritualism enters, boredom attends our services. When boredom dwells among us, wars and tumults cannot be far behind. When wars and tumults arise, degeneration has proceeded apace.

How do you stand, Christian and church? Are you vital and vibrant or have you perhaps degenerated and don't even know it? How stand ye? Have you "gone bad"?

ELECTION

(Continued from Page 1)

deserve the goodness of God, and furthermore you should never ask for the justice of God. God does not owe you or anyone else His grace. Because God sees fit to save some and not others does not make Him unfair or unjust to the lost. Remember, God's ways are not ours! His thinking does not always agree with ours! God does not have to answer to man for His actions! Does not the potter have power over the clay to do with it as he so desires? Of course so. Then read Romans 9 and you will see that Almighty God is the Potter and man is nothing more than the clay.

Several things ought to be carefully noted at this point in time with regards to the doctrine of Election. Election does not always have to do with our precious eternal salvation. (1). The Apostle Peter teaches to us that our Lord Jesus Christ was God's elect, and that He was precious in the sight of the Lord — "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." (2). The Apostle Paul taught very clearly in the Word of God that the Lord elected certain angels — "I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality" (I Timothy 5:21; I Peter 2:6). (3). The Prophet Isaiah announced that God had elected the nation of Israel as His own very special people — "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me" (Isaiah 45:4). The Apostle Paul taught this very same truth to the synagogue at Antioch in Pisidia — "The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they dwelt as strangers in the land of Egypt, and with an high arm brought he them out of it" (Acts 13:17). (4). The Lord told Ananias of Damascus that the Apostle Paul (then known as Saul the persecutor of the

church of God) as a chosen vessel unto the Lord — "The Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15). (5). Both the Old and New Testament is clear that God has chosen some unto eternal salvation and that that is based not upon man's foreseen faith, but God's sovereign pleasure.

Unconditional election. A Bible doctrine that is too often neglected or sadly enough misrepresented. Elder John R. Gilpin wrote, "Election is a marvelously Scriptural fact." Beloved, he was correct in his analysis. The holy Scriptures can be searched from beginning to the end and one will immediately note that it pulsates with the very thought that the God of the universe elects men unto salvation. Beloved, just pick up your Bible and begin to read it and you will see what I mean. One thing will become obvious to you, at least it should, God has seen fit to choose some unto salvation and the rest He has left unto their own condemnation. Listen, beloved, salvation is of the Lord — Jonah 2:9. It is not of works that man can and does do — Galatians 2:8, 9. Be honest with yourself and search the holy Scriptures and see if they do not teach that God elects some to salvation. Then, while you are doing that, check and see what is the biblical basis for God electing certain ones to salvation. Ask yourself, When did God elect His chosen ones to eternal salvation? When did God place your name in the Lamb's Book of Life? Be honest! Tell me what saith the Scriptures? If you can answer these questions and find one Scripture that supports the thinking of the Arminian, then believe it. But I am personally convinced in my own thinking and study of the Word of God that you will not and can not find ample support for that wicked false doctrine that has plagued our churches across this great land of ours.

What does our Bible teach? Do we who claim to believe in the doctrine of unconditional election have sufficient proof in our corner or are we guilty of creating a biblical doctrine out of obscure proof texts? Beloved, you be the judge as we look at some Scriptures that support this all-important truth. (1). Our Lord Jesus Christ chose the twelve to be his apostles — John 6:70 — "Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (2). The Apostle Paul informed us that we were chosen before the foundation of the world — Ephesians 1:4 — "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." (3). The Apostle John tells us that our NAMES were placed in the Lamb's book of life from before the very foundation of the World — Revelation 17:8 — "And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world." (4). Timothy was told by the Apostle Paul that he endured all things for the elect's sake — II Timothy 2:10 — "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." (5).

Paul, the Gentile Apostle, tells us that we were predestinated according to the purpose of God — Ephesians 1:11 — "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (6).

The Apostle Peter tells us that we were elected according to the foreknowledge of God — I Peter 1:2 — "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied." In light of what we know, that foreknowledge is based upon God's actions, and never man's. (7). Doctor Luke tells us that God will avenge His

own elect — Luke 18:7 — "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" (8). The greatest theologian since the days of our Lord Jesus Christ was the Apostle Paul. He speaks about this issue of election at length, in the eighth chapter of the book of Romans. There the apostle tells us that no one can bring a charge against the elect of God because it is God that has already JUSTIFIED HIS OWN —

Romans 8:33 — "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." (9). The beloved Apostle John tells us that we did not chose God, but that God chose us — John 15:16 — "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." (10). The Apostle Matthew, the tax-collector, the one who wrote the first Gospel account in our New Testament tells us that many are thus called, but few are chosen — Matthew 20:16 — "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen." Beloved, there is a general call that goes out to all men upon the face of this earth, but the effectual call that brings salvation goes only unto the elect of God.

There ought to be no problems with the holy Scriptures just given with regards to what the Bible teaches about unconditional election. There are many more verses found within the Bible that teach us that God has chosen some unto eternal life. (1). The entire sixth and seventeenth chapters of the Gospel of John clearly teach the doctrine of unconditional election. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me" (John 6:37). "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day" (John 6:39). "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him" (John 17:2). "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine" (John 17:9). "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they

may be one, as we are" (John 17:11). "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24). (2). The Lord spoke unto the Apostle Paul while in Corinth and told him that He still had much people in that city that had not yet believed on Him. Acts 18:10 — "For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city." (3). Acts 13:47 and 48 indicate very strongly that the Lord had "ordained" many among the Gentile people to eternal life and that out of that number the Lord saved precious souls. "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." (4) The Apostle John taught right from the very beginning that our eternal salvation was not by the will of man, but God. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13). The Apostle Paul also makes that very clear in the ninth chapter of Romans. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy" (Romans 9:16).

Question. What is the basis of this election? Some would attempt to teach that this was determined by man and his will to choose God. But Beloved, how can a person who is "dead" respond to the blessed gospel message? They can't! Someone once said, "God wants you to be saved and the Devil wants you to die and go to hell. You are the one who elects which place you spend eternity." The only problem with that theory, it just does not hold water, much less find Scriptural support. It sounds good — yes, it even gives some Arminian preachers a little extra to play with as they preach and give their unscriptural invitations. Now do not misunderstand me, I am not against invitations, only there are a lot of them that ought to be done away with because their very nature is anti-Scriptural. Nevertheless, the Bible does not and will not support the idea of election based on man's foreseen faith. Rather, the Word of God will base our election on the purpose and good pleasure of almighty God.

What then is our election based upon? J.P. Boyce in his work, "Abstract of Systematic Theology" writes, "God, of His own purpose, has from eternity determined to save a definite number of mankind, as individuals, not for or because of any merit or work of theirs, nor of any value to Him of them; but of His own good pleasure." Dr. A.H. Strong in his three volume work, "Systematic Theology, has this to say about the doctrine of unconditional election: "Election is that eternal act of God, by which in His sovereign pleasure, and on account of no foreseen merit in them, He chooses certain ones out of the

number of sinful men to be the recipients of the special grace of His Spirit and to be made voluntary partakers of Christ's salvation." Another writer put it this way: "The doctrine of election declares that God, before the foundation of the world, chose certain individuals from among the fallen members of Adam's race to be the objects of His undeserved favor. These, and these only, He purposed to save. God could have chosen to save all men (for He had the power and authority to do so) or He could have chosen to save none (for He was under no obligation to show mercy to any) — but He did neither. Instead He chose to save some and to exclude others. His eternal choice of particular sinners unto salvation was not based upon any foreseen act or response on the part of those selected, but was based solely on His own good pleasure and sovereign will. Thus election was not determined by, or conditioned upon, anything that men would do, but resulted entirely from God's self-determined purpose."

Beloved, our election is not and has never been our salvation. The Scriptures are clear on this matter — it is unto salvation. Compare what the Apostle Paul wrote in Romans 11:7 — "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." One is never said to be in the Lord Jesus Christ until their personal conversion (Romans 16:7). The doctrine of hardshellism can not be found in the blessed eternal Word of God. But just because some folk misuse the Scriptures and make unconditional election something that it is not, does not mean that we should neglect or overlook the Biblical doctrine of election. Listen, the Scriptures are very clear and therefore we should rejoice because our God has not only elected us unto salvation, but by His Holy Spirit effectually brings us unto a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Time will not permit to look at all of these verses of Scriptures, but perhaps you will take your Bible and do as the Bereans did and make sure of our accusations. Deuteronomy 10:14, 15; Psalms 33:12; 65:4; 106:5; Hag-gai 2:23; Matthew 11:27; 22:14; 24:22, 24, 31; Luke 18:7; Romans 8:28-30, 33; 11:28; Colossians 3:12; I Thessalonians 5:9; Titus 1:1; I Peter 1:1, 2; 2:8, 9; Revelation 17:14.

May the God of the Bible bless you and as you study the Holy Scriptures! It is my prayer that the Holy Spirit will illuminate your understanding regarding this wonderful doctrine!

UNFAITHFULNESS

(Continued from Page 1)

there must be faithfulness upon our part. God is faithful in His promises and faithful in what He said in the Word of God.

Unfaithfulness is one of the most outstanding sins today. In the business world a man's word is no longer his bond. In the social world infidelity abounds on every hand. In marriage the sacred bonds of wedlock are broken as easily as discarding an old garment. In the religious realm thousands who say they have been called to preach the truth have no scruples about

(Continued on Page 11 Column 1)

What a man is depends largely on what he does when he has nothing to do.

UNFAITHFULNESS

(Continued from Page 10)

even attacking and denying the truth of God's Word. Therefore unfaithfulness abounds on every hand.

God could not be unfaithful. If God were unfaithful then He would act contrary to His nature. "If we believe not, ye he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself" (II Timothy 2:13). God cannot deny Himself because he is faithful. Faithfulness is one of His glorious perfections. In Psalms 89:8, His throne is surrounded by His faithfulness. In Isaiah 11:5, "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins." He is the faithful witness. Everything about God is faithful.

God is unchanging in his faithfulness. "Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds" (Psa. 36:5). Everything about God is faithful. He never forgets His Word, he never fails, and he is ever faithful to His promises. "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19).

Fellowship depends upon faithfulness. "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Tim. 2:2). He said I want you to commit that to faithful men, those that teach and handle the Word of God, and those that are called to stewardship. God said, "A man must be found faithful." Those that handle the Word of God, those that are in leadership in the church, they must be faithful. It is demanded of God that they be faithful.

The Apostle Paul writing to the church at Ephesus, in Ephesians 1:1 said, "To the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." There is a distinction between the bride of Christ and between a Baptist. Everybody who goes by the name Baptist and thinks that he is a Baptist isn't going to be in the bride of Christ. Jesus has given his church a commission, a great responsibility, and he tells us we are to occupy until He comes. The Bible says in Revelation 2:10: "...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." From the time God saves you until the time you go by the way of the grave, you are supposed to be faithful in all things pertaining to God.

When Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, and the church didn't do what Apostle Paul wrote and told them to do, they were unfaithful. Did they think Paul didn't mean it when he said you're to exclude a member from membership because he committed adultery with his father's wife? No. Paul said you are to exclude him from fellowship and exclude him from the church. He told the women you must have your head covered in services. Did Paul mean that when he wrote to the church at Corinth and told them to do that? Sure he did. These people were unfaithful in the church at Corinth. When you become unfaithful you begin to question God's Word. You say, "Did God really mean for me to do that?" God's church isn't a

social thing. We can not set back and say God's going to take care of it. We have a responsibility, and if we fail in that responsibility, then we have been unfaithful to God.

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful" (Prov. 27:6). If a friend comes to you and tells you you are doing something wrong, or if he has to point out something in your conduct, he has wounded you. He is your friend. He is trying to lift you up, trying to do something that will encourage you and keep you from doing what is wrong. A faithful witness will not lie, the Bible says, but a false witness will utter lies. A faithful man shall abound with blessings. "...But a faithful man who can find?" (Prov. 20:6). Who can find a faithful man? A man that can be trusted with responsibilities? "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming: And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day, when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Mt. 24:45-51).

"His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Mt. 25:21). Isn't it wonderful when we have been faithful to the Lord? If we could hear the words from our Master saying well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter into the joys of the Lord because you stood for the truth, proclaimed the truth, and because you were faithful in all things that I commanded you to do.

Fellowship depends upon our faithfulness. "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full" (I John 1:3-4). What is this verse saying? It's talking about having fellowship in the Word of God. Why can't we fellowship with some of these false denominations? Why can't we fellowship with some of these so-called churches? Because we have fellowship in the Word of God. Verse 5: "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." God is the light of the world. Verse 6: "If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." If we are not faithful, if we say we have fellowship with Him, and we are not walking in the light of the Word and we are not doing what God tells us in His Word, then we are liars. We are telling a lie, and we are walking in darkness. If we are not in the Word of God and doing what God tells us to do then we are walking in

darkness. That's what the Bible says. Verse 7: "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sins." How do we walk with God? How can two walk together except they agree? How can a man and his wife live together except they agree? How can the church walk and fellowship together with Christ unless they agree? It means fellowship, faithfulness in the service of God. Verse 8: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." If we say that we did not fall in Adam, the truth is not in us. We deceive ourselves; also, if we say we weren't born in sin and conceived in sin. Verse 9: "If we confess our sin, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Then faithfulness brings fellowship with God. If you have unconfessed sins in your life, then you are not having fellowship with Christ. You might say you are, you might tell me you are, you might stand up and even argue with me you are; but you are lying. But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. What is faithfulness? Our faithfulness is to confess our sins. We can not have fellowship if we are unfaithful to the Lord's house. People are unfaithful when they don't come to church for three or four months. The fellowship has been broken because of unfaithfulness to the Lord's House. God demands faithfulness, especially for His church because she has a great responsibility. Verse 10: "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." If we say we have reached sinless perfection, we're a liar, and His Word is not in us. Faithfulness to God is a very serious matter.

"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful" (Rev. 17:14). He is dealing here with the faithfulness to the church by those called to be saints of God. He chose them that would seek our Scriptural baptism. It takes Scriptural baptism to be in the Lord's church. Everybody doesn't get Scriptural baptism because everybody doesn't have the authority to give Scriptural baptism. I'm talking about John's Baptism. The faithful in Christ Jesus are the bride of Christ.

What are the qualifications to put you in the bride of Christ? First of all you must be born again, you must have eternal salvation. Secondly, you must be in a New Testament Church to be in the bride of Christ. God doesn't choose just anybody to be His bride. Do you think God is going to choose a woman that's unfaithful to marry His Son? No! Abraham told his servant to go, not to the Canaanites, but to his family to get a wife for his son, Isaac. Abraham pictures God, and Isaac pictures the Lord Jesus Christ. The servant who was over Abraham's household pictures the Holy Spirit. He said, I want you to make sure it is in my household that you choose this bride. She must be willing to come. So what I am saying is if you are in the bride of Christ then it's not forced. What are the qualifications? He went down

and brought Rebekah back to be Isaac's wife. So Abraham chose out of his family. God chooses out of the church for the bride for His Son. Being saved, being Scripturally baptized, and being faithful in the Lord's house puts you in the bride of Christ.

In closing, there are seasons in our lives. It's not easy to believe God is faithful in all things. It becomes difficult at times in our life to be faithful. When hard times strike and darkness comes, it is hard to believe in God and all of his promises and the faithfulness of God. But always be faithful to God and remember Isaiah 50:10. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God."

ANNOUNCEMENT

Elder Sam Wilson is the editor's son. He is a writer in the Forum and a frequent further contributor to the pages of The Baptist Examiner. He is a very sound and able preacher of God's Word. (If needed, pardon a father's pride) Sam will be preaching in revival services at The New Testament Baptist Church of Bristol, Tenn. September 1st through 7th. Services will be at 7:30 nightly. There will be a Homecoming with dinner on the grounds and a special service in the afternoon. This will be on Sunday, 7th. Elder Dan Phillips is the pastor of the church. For any further information, contact him at Rt. 4, Box 378, Bluff City, Tn. 37618, or call 615-764-3771. All readers in this area are urged to attend these services. Let us pray for this meeting.

A BROKEN HEART

O Thou that hear'st when sinners cry,
Though all my crimes before Thee lie,
Behold them not with angry look,
But blot their memory from Thy book.

Create my nature pure within,
And form my soul averse to sin;
Let Thy good Spirit ne'er depart,
Nor hide Thy presence from my heart.

Though I have grieved Thy Spirit, Lord,
His help and comfort still afford;
And let a wretch come near Thy throne,
To plead the merits of Thy Son.

A broken heart, my God, my King,
Is all the sacrifice I bring;
The God of grace will ne'er despise
A broken heart for sacrifice.

My soul lies humbled in the dust,
And owns Thy dreadful sentence just;
Look down, O Lord, with pitying eye,
And save the soul condemn'd to die.

Then will I teach the world Thy ways;
Sinners shall learn Thy sovereign grace;
I'll lead them to my Saviour's blood,
And they shall praise a pardoning God.

Oh may Thy love inspire my tongue;
Salvation shall be all my song;
And all my powers shall join to bless
The Lord, my strength and righteousness.

—Isaac Watts, 1719

TEN RULES FOR A SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE

1. You must marry the right person, one you love and one who loves you, and both of you must be in love with Jesus Christ.
2. GIVE and TAKE is a necessity. Let love cover the disagreements which will come in any marriage.
3. Never carry into tomorrow the petty troubles of today. Forgive at the end of the day, and then forget.
4. Don't discuss your disagreements and personal problems with others. You will soon forget these quarrels, but others will remember them forever. Go to the LORD for the advice you need.
5. Try to live within your financial means. Don't try to keep up with some other couple; keep within your income. And be sure to set aside something for the Lord's work.
6. Keep your love as romantic as possible. Appreciate each

other. Express that appreciation in actual love and affection in the home.

7. NEVER, NEVER, NEVER even think of divorce as a solution for your marriage problems. You took your vows "until death do us part." So often, divorce never settles anything!

8. Keep your eyes on the person you have married, and don't bother looking around for someone else. Wandering eyes benefit no marriage.

9. Read God's Word and pray together every day. To pray together is to stay together.

10. Let Christ shed the love of God abroad in your heart, and you will be sure to have love for each other.

—Copied.

Real faith never goes home with an empty basket.

TUNE IN TO THE CALL TO CALVARY

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

BROTHER E. G. COOK GOES HOME

"...with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:23).

The little giant has gone to be with the Lord. Many of us referred to brother Cook as the little giant. At about 9 p.m. on July 17th, brother Cook reached the end of his earthly pilgrimage. He finished the task God had given him to do. His work on earth was done. He heard a voice from heaven saying, "Come up higher." The angels of God came and carried his soul into the presence of the Lord.

Brother Cook had been sick for some time. He had been growing weaker and weaker. Now, he is in the presence of the Lord whom he loved so much and served so well. Our sympathy is extended to his loved ones left behind. He will be missed by the church where he served God so faithfully for many years. Our sympathy to all these. However, we do not feel sad for our departed brother. We are sure that he is in heaven. We are sure that his trials and troubles, his sickness and sorrow are all past forever. He is safe now in glory with Jesus. Why, we almost envy him. He is so much better off than we who are still on the battle field.

Brother Cook was small in stature. I am rather short myself. I used to like to stand beside brother Cook as it made me feel tall. Yes, he was small of stature, but he was a giant. He was a giant mentally. Many years ago, someone asked me, after hearing brother Cook preach, if I did not hope that when I was as old as brother Cook, I would have as good a mind as he did. I replied, "I wish I had one that good now." We marvelled at the strength of the mind God had given him. He was a giant spiritually. It was always a blessing to be in his presence. One could feel the presence of the Lord when with brother Cook. I was always impressed by the spiritual fragrances that seemed to just come forth from him. I still remember and count as some highlights of my spiritual experiences, the blessing of spending sometime in his home. He seemed to always be thinking and talking about spiritual things. He seemed to have little interest in or time for other than spiritual and eternal things. His life was a blessing to others.

He was a giant in the Word of God. I did not always agree with him on every point, but I listened to him. I knew he had studied much in the Bible. I delighted to sit with him and listen to him as he talked of the Word of God. I have not known many, if any, preachers who spent more time studying the Bible. He drank deeply at the fountain of God's precious Word. He was learned in the Bible. His messages were always filled with the Word of God. He could draw forth deep lessons from the Bible, and present them in such a way as to be a blessing to those who heard him.

He was a giant in Christian character. He was kind,

thoughtful, considerate, and courteous. He treated others well. He was a giant in activity. I have marvelled many a time at the amount of work he was able to get done. He wrote many tracts that have blessed thousands. Many of us have learned so very much from the writings of this man of God.

His tracts were well prepared, well documented, and very helpful. He has had many articles in The Baptist Examiner. It has been a sad disappointment to me personally that brother Cook has not been able to write much of this paper since I have been its editor. His writings in this paper have been a great blessing to me. He certainly was a giant in The Forum. For many years he wrote in this part of this paper. We always looked eagerly to see what brother Cook had to say in answer to the many questions in the Forum. We always knew that it would be worthwhile to read his answers. We could tell that he had studied seriously and carefully, and had done his best with each question. He was sorely missed when he resigned from this work.

Yes, brother Cook was a little man, but he was a mighty giant. I am sure that many Philistines trembled greatly when they were attacked by the pen of this giant of God. He won many great victories on the battle field for the Lord. He helped many of us. I feel that he often furnished ammunition for me and sharpened my sword for me and helped me greatly as we fought together in the service of the Lord.

Brother Cook stayed true. He stayed in the old paths. He did not go off after the new doctrines as they came up in our midst. As many of our brethren wandered off after new things, brother Cook helped others to stay with the Bible. He helped me greatly and encouraged me much in this respect. I felt that today he would be where he was yesterday, and tomorrow he would still be in the same place. Oh, it has been one of the great griefs of my ministry to see so many who once stood with us,

MY IMPRESSIONS

It was a great three days of spiritual preaching, fellowship, beautiful singing, good food and so bountiful. The host pastor and his wife were so gracious. We love them very much. May God bless the Baptist Examiner is our prayer.

Sadie Cole
Stanleyville, N.C.

There was nothing lacking in making this a good conference. There was good preaching, singing and fellowship. There was a good spirit and the food was real good. Enjoyed seeing all our brothers and sisters in Christ again. Many thanks to Calvary Baptist Church for a good weekend of blessings.

John Shelton
Westfield, N.C.

Before I comment on the conference I would like to thank Calvary Baptist Church and its pastor for its hospitality to all that attended the conference. I

but who have now gone after this, that, or the other new and strange doctrine. Not so with brother Cook. I felt I could depend on him; could count on him.

Brother Cook has gone home. We will miss him greatly, but we are on the way, and soon we will join him in the presence of the Lord. The giants are leaving us. They are going home. How many of them have left us in the last several years. Sometimes, as I think of this, I almost grow afraid. What will we do when the giants are all gone? Well, I know what they would tell us; and praise God, it is true. The God of the giants is with us still. He will give us the strength we need to carry on a while longer, and then He will call us to be with Him also. Farewell, dear brother Cook. You were a blessing to me personally, to my Christian life, and to my ministry. I will see you again. Thank God for brother Cook and the many blessings God has given so many of us through him.

APPRECIATED LETTERS

Dear Bro. Wilson,

Greetings in the Holy and wonderful name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Just a few lines to tell you how thankful I am for the Baptist Examiner. What a blessing it is to read and rejoice in what the Lord has done for us. I just finished reading the message you wrote on, "Good works seen of men." It was truly a blessing to my heart. It is God that worketh in us and not we ourselves. I am sending you a name for T.B.E. May God bless you and the work. Pray for me.

Mrs. Virgil O'Banion
Oakdale, La.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Indore Baptist Church of Indore, West Virginia has the following radio broadcasts. WKWK, 1400 Am, Wheeling, WV at 7:30 Sunday morning. WMON, 1430 AM, Montgomery, WV at 8:00 Sunday Morning. WCWV, 92.9 FM, Summersville, WV at 8:30 Sunday morning. This is a very fine, sound, and true church. Brother Ray Brown is the dedicated, sound, and able pastor of this great church. He is the speaker on the broadcasts. I urge all who read this paper, and who can get these stations, to listen to these programs. I am sure they will be a blessing to you. Pray for brother Brown, the Indore Baptist Church and for this missionary ministry of their church.

would especially commend the ladies of the church who were so helpful and friendly. They made us feel at home. God bless you and we thank you.

I have always heard it said when we come prayerfully expecting a blessing, then we receive a blessing. Well, there must have been a lot of folk praying and expecting, for God certainly was on top of the mountain and saw the Glory of God as we listened to His Word proclaimed. To Him be the praise!

This was my second conference and the first in which I was invited to preach. I shall always remember and treasure these three days and the fellowship we enjoyed with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Thank you, Calvary Baptist Church for hosting a great conference.

Eld. Reggie Moore
Appalachia, Va.

NO LONGER DO I WALK IN DARKNESS

Once I spurned the old gospel story
And salvation that Jesus would bring,
For my heart was desperately wicked
And deceitful above all things.

I stood condemned in God's sight already,
In the sight of a thrice-Holy God,
For I'd tramped the blood of the Savior
And rejected His Holy Word.

'Twas sin that nailed Him to the cross
And cost Him His blood, divine;
But I was blind and could not see,
That the sins He bore were mine.

I cared not at all that Jesus died,
His blood meant nothing to me;
I walked on in darkness and foolish pride —
A slave, by Satan's decree.

And then one glad and happy day,
God's Spirit took control;
He showed me Jesus, the sinless one,
The Savior of my soul.

No longer do I walk in darkness,
But in His glorious light;
His Spirit fills my heart with joy
And makes my pathway bright.

K. Parrish

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH BIBLE CONFERENCE

The annual Bible conference at Grace Baptist Church, Stanleyville, N.C. will be Labor Day Weekend August 29-31. We would like to extend an invitation to all the readers to attend. God has in the past blessed our conference, and we are prayerfully anticipating more of the same this year. Meals will be served at 5:00 p.m. on Friday evening with the first services beginning at 6:30 on the 29th. There will also be two meals on Saturday and Sunday. We are planning to have several special singers, and twenty-one messages from the Word of God. If we may be of assistance in any way relative to our conference please feel free to contact me. We would love to see many of our friends here at this time. If you are unable to attend, we desire your prayers for our church and those who come to make this a very special time during the year for our church. May God be pleased to meet with us, to His glory. You may contact me at (919) 377-9808 or 377-2154. My address is: Gene Kiger, 143 Cross Baptist Church Road, Rural Hall, N.C.

PROGRAM

Friday Evening, 6:30 p.m.
Jesus Christ Our All in All Reggie Moore
A Good Vineyard, But Wild Grapes Jim Walters
Ye Shall Be My Witnesses Chester Powell
Our Great High Priest and His Offering Aaron West
Saturday Morning, 9:30 a.m.
What About Capital Punishment Dan Phillips
The Necessity of Prayer James Crace
Does It Pay To Serve God? Willard Pyle
A Hive of Be's In The House of God Joe Wilson
Saturday Afternoon, 1:30 p.m.
The Astonishing Doctrine of Jesus Christ Eldon Joslin
What Kind of Church Did Jesus Institute? Doug Newell
Christian Depart From Iniquity John Lenegar
Saturday Evening, 6:30 p.m.
Church Authority David West
The Terrors of Hell Don Pennington
The Powerful Influence of Music Sam Wilson
Sunday Morning, 9:30 a.m.
What About Sunday School? Jim Hobbs
Salvation By Grace Don Shockey
Absolute Predestination Johnny Pruitt
When God Speaks To The Sinner Gene Kiger
Sunday Afternoon, 1:30 p.m.
The Authority of the Word of God Ron Boswell
Looking For Jesus Andy Proctor
Repentance Earl Smith

NO PROBLEM

We like to hear "no problem"
The words bring comfort to know
If we think we cannot pay a debt
And our assets register low.

We wonder if our health is good
If there's a deeper cause for pain,
The physician says "no problem there"
And we tend to bless his name.

"No problem" says the evil one,
To many steeped in sin,
"Don't stop to take a second look
At the mess you're getting in."

We do have a "problem"
Says the Judge of all the earth
This weight of sin upon us,
Which began the day of birth.

But God hath decreed a solution
In mercy He sets free,
Those of us who love the Son
And prepare for eternity.