

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

by Nick Wools

"Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For everyone that useth milk is unskillful



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in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:11-14). In this chapter the writer had been teaching the Hebrew saints about the

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THE SURE CURE FOR SNAKE BITE

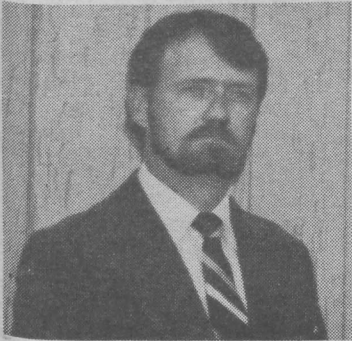
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Scripture Reading: John 3:1-15.

Text: John 3:14, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up."

Nicodemus would come by night to praise Jesus. It seems obvious that he came however, with an inquiring mind. Perhaps a man much puzzled over this "teacher from God," wondering at the greatness of the wisdom of Jesus. Yet he would come by night; concerned that the Jews might see him and cause that his high position



Bob Belanger

would be in jeopardy. But the statements of kindness that he had for the Lord also betrayed a searching heart, to which our Lord would give first concern and first response. There was no need for an introduction between the Omniscient One and the "ruler of the Jews." He would not come upon the Lord as an unannounced visitor, nor was our Lord taken by surprise at his coming. It would seem almost as if Nicodemus had, unknown to himself, an appointment as it were, for we find the Master up in the night hours awaiting the arrival of Nicodemus. Jesus, as the Om-

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MISSIONARY

PREMILLENNIAL

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BAPTISTIC

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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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A HIVE OF BE'S IN A BAPTIST CHURCH

by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:24-25).

I am talking about a hive of Be's — all together, each one contributing to the good of the whole. I am not talking about a swarm of Be's — each one or small groups, freelancing from here to there, not contributing for the good, growth, and blessing of the whole group. A hive is a local, visible group of bees, working for the mutual good of each and all. A hive is not a universal, invisible monstrosity of no earthly good to anyone.

A hive of Be's in a Baptist

church will produce a honey of a service. That is the kind of service we desire. That is the kind of service we need. A honey of a service will be a blessing to all present, will make them desire to come back, and will likely attract others to the services. Let me specify some of these Be's.



Joseph M. Wilson

THE LOCAL CHURCH

ed you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Matt. 28:



Velmer B. Paler

1. Be a Baptist. I am talking about a Baptist church. I am not interested in publicizing, encouraging, promoting, or even recognizing other so-called churches. Let them take care of themselves. But, oh, I would do all I could to promote and encourage Baptist churches. I want Baptist churches to be honored and blessed. I want them to have a honey of a service. I desire that they might be blessed of God and be a blessing to others.

Now, to be a Baptist one must be saved by the grace and power of God. One must then have Scriptural Baptism. Scriptural Baptism involves: the right subject, a saved person; the right mode, immersion; the right purpose, because already saved and to obey Christ and

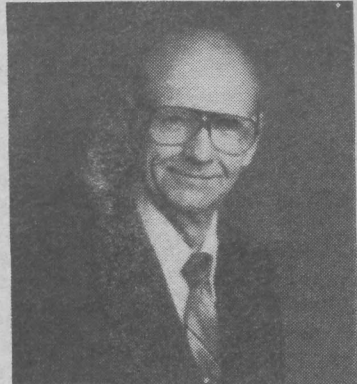
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THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST

by Eld. Edward G. Graff

"Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood... And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:18,22).

Today there are far too many people who do not like to hear about the blood. They think it is



Edward Graff

crude and uncultured and in poor taste to talk of the blood that cleans us from our sins and so many that say so, sad to say, are so-called pastors.

But we need to understand that the Bible is a blood book. Cut it anywhere and it will bleed! Blood will flow. People who say, "Don't speak of the blood, it will drive people away," are absolutely ignorant of the Word of God. The blood

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FASTING OR FEASTING

by Chuck Sandelin
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"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts 13:2).

It was in my former pastor's home, during a Bible Conference, in the evening when all the preachers were sitting around talking about the messages and Bible subjects, sipping on coffee and cokes, that one of the Brothers said, "Is fasting for today or did it go out in the Apostolic times?"



Chuck Sandelin

Brother, then's when things got interesting! Theology started coming out. Of course, I couldn't keep still either, so from observation and hearing, it looked to me as if there hasn't been too much fasting going on in the churches today. Before preaching on this subject I might say that I am far from being any kind of authority on this subject. However, in my past ministry I have done some fasting, from 24 hour fasts to seven day fasts — from juice fasts to complete fasts. I have

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Assistant Editor Doug Newell

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO HELL

by Doug Newell

Luke 16:23, "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."

This text deals with the rich man who died and lifted up his eyes and was in hell. The account of this rich man is not a fictitious one, but is an actual account of a man that lived a sinful life and died and lifted up his eyes in hell. The doctrine of hell is very plainly and distinctly taught in the Word of God. Therefore, we believe its teaching and preach to others that there is a hell. The title of this message is, "Whatever Happened To Hell." I am afraid that, even though this doctrine is plainly taught in the Bible, it is becoming a forgotten teaching of the Word of God. Now I realize that multitudes of my brethren preach that there is a hell. I realize that they believe

in hell, but let me ask you this question. How often and how do you preach on hell? With these thoughts in mind, consider my first point.

I. Whatever happened to hell in the thoughts of men? We are



by Doug Newell

living in a most godless and wicked generation. Men are living as if there were no God in heaven at all. People of our time

have thrown away all decency and morality and are fulfilling the lust and desires of their flesh as if there were no God to judge them for their sins. While they have their thoughts on evil things and worldly things, they have removed God from their thoughts and also the fact that there is a hell. Even so-called religious groups, such as the Jehovah's Witness cult, go about preaching to men that there is not really a hell. They teach that your hell is on this earth in this life. Oh, these poor deceived souls will learn of hell, except the Lord be pleased to save them from their sins.

The Devil is very busy deceiving men about hell. We hear men mention hell all of the time, but they use it as a phrase in their vocabularies instead of as a real place.

Let me illustrate. Often you

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A WATERMELON SEED

I was passing through Columbus, Ohio, some years ago, and stopped to eat in the depot restaurant. My attention was called to a slice of watermelon, and I ordered it and ate it. I was so pleased with the melon that I asked the waiter to dry some of the seeds that I might take them home and plant them in my garden. That night, a thought came into my mind — I would use the watermelon as an illustration. So, the next morning when I reached Chicago I had enough seeds weighed to find out that it would take about 5,000 seeds to weigh a pound, and I estimated that the melon weighed about forty pounds. Then I applied mathematics to the watermelon.

A few weeks before, someone — I know not who — had planted a little seed in the ground. Under the influence of sunshine and shower, that little watermelon seed had taken off its coat and gone to work; it had gathered from somewhere 200,000 times its own weight and forced that enormous weight through a tiny stem and built a watermelon. On the outside it had put a covering of green, within that a rind of white, and within that a core of red. Then it had scattered through that red little seeds, each one capable of doing the

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WHATEVER

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can hear someone, when asked a question say, hell-yes or hell-no. Now isn't this one of the most ignorant, stupid, idiotic things a person can say? Hell is a place, just like Ashland is a place, and it would make just as much sense for someone to say Ashland-yes as it would for them to say hell-yes. There are people that are of high intelligence that will utter these stupid remarks. But this is what the Devil is doing. He is lulling men to sleep and causing them to forget that hell is a real place and not just a slang word they can use in their filthy communication. I am sure you would be amazed how many times the word hell is used in America each day, and those that mention it never even consider that they might one day be there. I am convinced that the ungodly use the word hell more than we do. This brings us to our next point.

II. Whatever happened to the seriousness of hell? Men have made a joke out of hell. To the ungodly of our land hell is something to laugh about, something to tease someone about. When in a crowd of wicked you might hear someone say to another, "Why don't you go to hell." To this the other might reply, "If I go you'll be there with me and we'll turn it upside down." After this both parties will laugh and maybe even the whole crowd. Yes, the reality of hell is a forgotten thing in our land. Hell has become a joke to multitudes. I wonder if hell was a joke to the rich man in our text? Maybe he was one of those that told people to go to hell when he was upset with them or when he was just kid-

Little faith will bring your soul to heaven but great faith will bring heaven to your soul.

ding around. Maybe he was like the Jehovah's Witnesses and didn't believe that there was such a place. It doesn't really matter what he thought about hell before he died, whether he believed it or not. The fact is that he is there. Now he believes in hell. It didn't take him long to learn this doctrine. One second after he died he believed in hell. Death had made a believer out of him. The Bible says that he died, and he lifted up his eyes in hell. Hell is no joke my friend, but it is a very serious matter. There were some young boys who lived in a town not far from me who stopped in a gas station to get some gas. While they were there they began to mock the man that worked there, and while they were taunting him as they drove off they asked him how far it was to hell. Minutes later the man received a phone call to bring his wrecker and tow in a car that had just been in a wreck. When he arrived at the scene there lay the boys that had asked him how far it was to hell. Friends hell is not a joking matter. For these young men hell was not far off. Hell was just down the road a short way. Don't you ever laugh at a joke that makes light of hell! There is not one funny thing about hell. If you could talk to the man in our text he would tell you so. He would tell you he has not seen or heard one funny thing since he has been there.

III. Whatever happened to the preaching of hell? What has happened to men who will stand up and tell you that there is a hell awaiting all of those outside of the blood of Jesus Christ. I'll tell you what. Any man who will not warn men of the dangers of hell and its certainty has no business occupying a pulpit. Any preacher who will preach that God loves everyone and lead sinners to believe they don't need to fear hell is not worth his salt. We don't have the right to preach "God loves everyone" when we can read about hell in the Word of God. When we read that He hated Esau, it is foolish for us to turn around and say that God loved him. When we preach hell we should make it known and plain that all of those outside of the blood will go to hell. There will be grandmothers and grandfathers in hell. There will be mothers and fathers in hell. There will be good citizens and good neighbors in hell. There will be church members and preachers in hell. All who are not born again and trusting in Jesus Christ will be in hell. Missionary Baptists should have no fellowship with any preacher or church that does not believe this truth.

Hell should be preached as if we believe it ourselves. We hear preachers sometimes preach on hell as if they couldn't care less whether you believe it or not. Oh, that hell could become real to Missionary Baptists again. Oh, that we could visualize our loved ones in hell that we might become more urgent with the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us enough about hell that if we would meditate upon this subject it just might be we would awake from our sleep and be terrified at the thoughts of men going to hell. Notice some things about hell that are seldom mentioned in our day.

Think of the fire itself. The rich man said in Luke 16:24, "And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in

this flame." The flames of hell are very real. Can you imagine the suffering this man must be in? Men portray hell in pictures with men standing around the flames or close to them, but this is a false picture. If a man were not in the flame he might find some comfort away from it. The rich man was in the flames. He said so. He said he was tormented in the flame.

Matthew 13:42, "And shall cast them into a furnace of fire..." Hell is a furnace of fire. In a furnace there is not any escape from the fire. I'm convinced that those in hell are engulfed in the flames. They are completely surrounded by the flames. Then of course there will come a day when all of those in hell will be cast into the lake of fire. "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death" (Rev. 20:14). Yes beloved, hell is real, and the flames of hell are a very real part of it. Can you imagine the fear and terror they will experience as they hear the roar of the furnace of fire, and as they hear the lapping of the flames protruding from the lake of fire? Listen, and you can almost hear the agonizing screams as they are being cast into the lake of fire. There men will burn forever, inside and out, but never consumed. This is an awful destiny for the sinner, but this is not all. Revelation 20:10 says, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone..." Not only is there the fire to torment man, but there will be the stifling smell of sulphur in the nostrils and throat forevermore. There man will burn in the intense heat and be gasping for every breath that he can get. My, how God is kind to sinners in this life. Oh, how the sinner should be thankful for the fresh air that he breathes. The lost sinner will never draw a fresh breath of air after he leaves this life.

Then there will be the wailing and gnashing of teeth. Oh, the wailing of hell. Millions upon millions screaming and crying and cursing with every breath that they can catch. Some have heard men wail in agony on the battlefield after a terrible battle, but this will not compare to hell. Man will never suffer in this life like he will suffer in hell. There in hell men are cursing God and blaspheming His name. There, they are cursing each other and themselves. What horror there is in hell! Those in hell will continue to wail and gnash upon one another throughout the endless ages of eternity.

In hell man is totally separated from everything that is good. Therefore he has no chance of any comfort or pleasure whatsoever. He does not have the comfort of rest or relaxation. He does not have the comfort of knowing any kindness at all. He can have no comfort for he knows that he is eternally doomed in hell. My, how men take life for granted. All men by nature are just like the rich man in our text. Men will not consider what God allows them to enjoy and to have in this life. While there are times we are miserable in this life, this cannot be compared to hell. You have heard people say that a certain individual is suffering a living hell. Not so my friend, not so. In hell, every second of every minute of every hour, of every year of all eternity, the unsaved will suffer. There will not be one second that there is any comfort or pleasure. Oh, to think that men will laugh and make light of such a place. Whatever hap-

pened to preaching hell as described in Luke 16 and Revelation 20? What has happened to hell in your pulpit my brother? What has happened to preachers being labeled as hell-fire and brimstone preachers? Brethren, preach about hell as if you are standing close by and witnessing souls being cast into its eternal flames!

IV. Whatever happened to the thoughts of hell in the minds of the believer? The child of God should think often from what we have been redeemed. We deserved those flames in the fires of hell, but praise God that He had mercy upon our souls. Praise God that He loved His own before the foundation of the world. For the saved to quit thinking of hell is to cease to think of what Jesus did on Calvary's cross. There it was that Jesus took our hell. There it was that He did all of the suffering that we would have suffered throughout all eternity. Praise God for His mercy! When darkness came upon the land

and God the Father turned His back on His dear Son Jesus paid it all for the elect. Doesn't this make you rejoice? Doesn't this bring tears to your eyes, that Jesus saved us from such a horrible death? No, Christian friend, don't forget about hell. Don't put it out of your mind, but rather meditate upon your great salvation.

What has happened to our thinking about others going to hell? What has happened to Christians telling their families about this place called hell?

What has happened to God's people being concerned about sinners being saved? Have you put hell in the back of your mind when it comes to preaching the gospel? May the Lord be pleased to stir His people once again to preach this urgent message. If you will, just now, think of one of your loved ones, that you have not witnessed to being cast headlong into the lake of fire. Preach the saving gospel of

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FROM THE EDITOR

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17).

I have a question on my heart. It is bothering me much. I need some help on it. I would like to know what my readers think of it. I am almost afraid to ask it. I am even more afraid to answer it. My question is, can a saved person be sincere and honest, wanting to really know what the Bible teaches, willing to do God's will about it, and still be deceived as to what the Bible teaches on a given subject?

Understand that my question does not relate to whether or not a person can be saved and be in error on doctrine. My readers should know me too well by now to even think that. I verily believe that multitudes are saved who do not understand or believe many of the truths of the Bible — who even oppose some of those truths, and believe doctrines that absolutely are not true. I insist that one who believes on Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour is eternally saved. My question relates to whether or not a saved person can be honest, sincere, willing to do God's will, and still be in error on doctrine.

Oh, the multiplicity, variety, and contrariety of the doctrines taught by men — each one purporting to base his teaching on the Bible. I need not name the multitude of contradictory things taught by man. Let me just mention one. One man says that when a person is saved, he is saved forever. Another man says that a saved person can lose salvation and go to hell. This is only one sample of a vast multitude of contrary doctrines taught by men.

Is the Bible such a book that it cannot really be understood by saved people? Is it impossible for me to know which of two contrary doctrines is really taught in the Bible. If this be true, why bother? If one cannot really know what the Bible teaches, if the Bible is so mysterious that a saved person cannot know what it teaches, why study it at all? (Of course, I know that no man fully understands the Bible)

Is the Bible a book that really and truly teaches contradictory doctrines? Does the Bible really teach that one who is saved is saved forever; and then turn around and teach somewhere else that one can lose salvation and go to hell? Does the Bible really teach God's unconditional election of some to salvation, and then teach somewhere else that it is all up to man? Does the Bible really teach that one can be saved without baptism, and then teach somewhere else that one must be "dipped or be damned"? Surely, every saved person will answer "no" to this question. Surely we will all say that the contradictions are not in the Bible, but in the erring minds of men.

Now, my question is, can a man know for sure what the Bible teaches on these contradictory doctrines? Can a man be sincere and honest, willing to do God's will, study and pray earnestly, and still be deceived about what the Bible teaches? Be careful how you answer this. You are going to condemn a multitude. You are going to charge a vast number of people with not being willing to sincerely, honestly, prayerfully, study the Bible, believe what it says, and do what it says. Are we willing to say of any and every individual believer who is wrong on a doctrine, that he is not honest and sincere in studying that doctrine; that he is not willing to know the truth about that doctrine; that he is not willing to do God's will relative to that doctrine?

Surely, for tender, compassionate, and humble hearts, it is hard to say such a thing about brothers and sisters in Christ. We hesitate to say this. We are almost afraid to say this.

Yet, if we do not say this, how will we interpret the text at the head of this editorial? Are we going to contradict our Lord and say that a man can be totally willing to do God's will about a doctrine, and still not know the truth about such? Oh, we are almost on the horns of a dilemma, and we do not want to take either horn, do we?

Will we say of the Arminian that he is not honest and sincere in studying the Bible; that he is not willing to receive the truth; that he is not willing to obey God in the matter? Oh, I hesitate to say this. But, if I don't say this, what shall I say? I am not saying anything for the moment. I told you that I was almost afraid to ask this question and even more afraid to answer it. Maybe my readers will help me out on this question. Believe me. I am not being facetious on this. I am being honest. This is a question that greatly bothers me. I would be happy to print some of the answers my readers might send me on this I would prefer to use your name, but will do as you say if you will send me your opinions.

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Jesus Christ my brothers and sisters, and then leave the increase to the Lord.

V. Whatever happened to hell? It's still there. The flames have not lessened since some of those fallen angels were cast there. Hell is still there with all of the suffering and wailing that the Bible teaches about. Even though men try to remove this place from their thoughts, it is still there. Trying not to think about it will not make it go away. It is an eternal place for an eternal people. All of those that have gone to hell are still there. They haven't gone anywhere. God has not changed as far as hell is concerned. What He has purposed shall come to pass. God will not change His mind. Hell is the punishment for the breaking of God's law, and that is eternally settled. If something has happened to hell, man is to blame. If something has happened to hell, it has happened in the hearts and imaginations of men.

Hell is real and lies there waiting for all of those who will not come to Christ. Jesus said, "ye will not come to me that ye might have life." How sad it is that men will suffer in hell rather than come to Christ that they might be saved. May the Lord bless His Word.

FASTING

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experienced the flesh as well as the spiritual so I feel led to say a few things on fasting.

I. Is it for our New Testament churches? In the New Testament it was used, and told to us to follow. Much complacency, unconcern, and lethargy has overcome our churches in these times. The use of fasting by our churches is almost unheard of today.

When the Lord Jesus started His earthly ministry. He went up into the wilderness and fasted for forty days. Now our Lord Jesus had just received Baptist baptism at the hands of the only one sent to administer it, and we know that the reason He was baptized with Baptist baptism was for all of His in the future to follow Him with this same kind of baptism that "justifies God." (Read Matt. 21:23). So in like manner if we were to follow in His footsteps we should perhaps do a little fasting before we enter into some of these earthly ministries, and perhaps some of them wouldn't fold up as quickly as they do. Amen!, Amen! Some of you zealous young men in the ministry need to keep this in mind — if it's worth putting the next few years of your life into — it's worth putting a week of fasting and prayer into it to know if it's really of God or just the flesh.

I find that the Apostle Paul used this fasting and prayer method. Now he said, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (I Cor. 11:1). In noticing this subject we find that the prayer is probably more important than the fasting; however, the two are linked together. Paul fasted and prayed. He not only did it now and then; he fasted often. I believe that the "fastings often" spoken of in II Corinthians 11:27 was not the same as spoken elsewhere but refer to his suffering want of a meal when nothing was to be had. However, the others were on a spiritual, voluntary basis, purposed for the betterment of ser-

We often go wrong by debating with God instead of waiting on God.

vice for our Lord. Fasting then was not only done in just the Old Testament times; it was done in the New Testament times. That brings us to the purpose of fasting.

II. It abases the flesh. Fasting takes the emphasis off the flesh and will cause one to be more concerned for the spiritual closeness he has with the Lord and especially in the answer to prayers. (We might add right here that when man gets his prayers answered it is not that he is manipulating God, but that he is getting himself and his desires into the will of God.) The Bible speaks of those "whose God is their belly" (Phil. 3:19). It instructs those who are given to appetite to put a knife to their throat (Prov. 23:2). It says, "Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked" (Deut. 32:15). When the flesh is subdued (the old man), the spiritual (new man) can rise. The flesh is powerful over a man; it will make you do many things to satisfy it. Some of the tactics it will pull on you to get you to feed it when starting a fast would fill a book, (such as headaches, quick pains in different spots, cold sweats, etc.) The flesh is very deceiving and ultra-persuasive. After a few fasts one will be able to understand better why a Christian (saint) should never listen to the flesh. The flesh stands opposed to the spiritual — most saints listen to the flesh and that has a lot to do with why they are no more spiritual than they are. The flesh will reign when given the opportunity. Even as you read this article the Spirit says — "Yes, I need to try this fasting," and the flesh says, "Don't you dare!" Then of course, just watch which one you listen to, Amen!, Amen! So fasting is purposed to set the flesh aside so that one can concentrate on the spiritual.

III. It enhances one to draw near to the Lord. Now the first two and sometimes three days of your fast, that is before your gastric juices dry up from there being no food in the stomach, your stomach will cry for food; and as a matter of fact, it will cry aloud. Just don't listen to it; don't give in to it; don't lose the battle just before the victory. So many do this. Now when the gastric juices dry up because of nothing in your stomach, you will enter into a time that is great. You will no longer desire to eat. There will be no pain, no cramps, no desires — as I say, it is great. You are cleaned out, and you are now a clean vessel. Now, until you think on this a bit you do not see the advantage. However, when you are a "clean vessel" you become more concerned with spiritual things. You will experience a greater prayer life and a greater closeness to the Lord than you did when you were not a clean vessel, but full of dirt. Now to give you a verse of confirmation on this thing of a clean vessel having more power in prayer we refer you to the demon that the disciples could not cast out. Jesus said this kind comes out only by what? — by prayer and fasting!

As the days go by, if you can spend your time in prayer and His Word, you won't want to come off the mountain top (Now one cannot go on a complete fast for these several days if they are working or have to work at a physically laborious type job. Beyond pastoring a church and principalizing a Christian day school. I'm an owner-operator of a sawmill and planner mill where we run through

thousands of board feet of lumber a day. I usually work sixteen to eighteen hours every day, so anymore I cannot fast as I would like to.) However a good fast is good for everyone. When we were missionaries, my wife would say, "Honey, you have got to come off that fast or you are going to die." Well, you won't die, you will enjoy it. However, I might add right here that you might die if you do come off the fast too quickly. After a complete fast, start eating grapes, (they are the best for blood purposes — study this in your Bible) or fruit until your gastric juices start up and then go at the solids easy. Do not come off of a fast on meat. Someone says, well Paul ate meat at the end of his fast in Acts. Look at other passages of the use of the word "meat" as dealing with food in general. I believe this is the real meaning.

Now, there are other fasts besides complete fasts such as juice fasts. These are good and especially if you are required to do some physical work during the fast time. Juice (and again I prefer grape, for it purifies the blood) fasts are when you have nothing but juice, no solids. "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath..." (Ex. 20:9-10a). There in the Book is verse after verse that our God wanted a rest and saw that it was good. If there were no other purpose in the Book than a rest, the fast is good. You feed your body and work it 24 hours almost. Some of you won't even let it rest at night. You raid the refrigerator at 10 p.m. so that poor old belly is turning and churning all night, then wonder why you have ulcers. The best doctor medicine you can get for ulcers or a bad stomach is some good grape juice fasts on a regular basis. You'll wonder why you didn't start sooner. Again I suggest you start out easy and work your way up. Certainly every one is an individual and the basic rules are only guides for you.

IV. Fasting is for the church. Now we have the Baptists going over to Acts 13 to show Paul and Barnabas being sent out from the local Baptist church at Antioch (and that is right). However, there are not too many Baptist churches that are spending the day in prayer and fasting before the ordination service to send the missionary out with church authority, right Brothers? Right! Today when we have an ordination service to get ready to send Paul and Barnabas out, the prayer and fasting turns into playing songs and feasting. There is more than one account of the early churches praying and fasting before ordination services. We find in Acts 14:23 that whenever there were churches started, that "they had ordained them elders in every church," and then we notice it was done with "prayer with fasting." Today there might not be so much later problem with those whom we ordain if more of the old fashioned "prayer with fasting" was done before "they commended them to the Lord."

V. Fasting is for the marriage. We have entered a time when the sacred vows of marriage are taken lightly. When even

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Romans 15:13

preachers don't preach on the subject because of divorces in the congregation. Today there are problems between man and wife because they do not know the order and purpose for which God created them. Many Christians are not taught these very important things that are contained in God's Word, and that is, in many cases, because the pastors did not instruct the congregations as he should have. Many times there would not be the cases of adultery committed if married couples were taught that the body of the one belongs to the spouse as Paul instructs in I Corinthians 7. The one is not to keep himself from the other, as I have known some to do for the purpose of selfishness or to hurt or to get back at the other. God says, "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency" (I Cor. 7:5). Defraud means to take something from someone that belongs to them. Now, the only exception is for prayer and fasting. Now concerning this subject: if there are some problems between man and wife, they both need to give themselves to prayer and fasting and seek the Lord. During this time to abstain from matrimony relations but only during the time of prayer and fasting and then, "come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." (v. 5) And the tempting done by Satan will be towards others if relations are not restored to contain them between man and wife. This is confirmed with verse 9, "But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn." Many times if husbands and wives only knew that their body belonged to the other as taught in V. 4 and 5 there would not be the sad ending that could have been prevented and especially had there been some "prayer with fasting."

VI. Fasting is for you. We pray that you have read the article with enthusiasm and appreciation, and that it will encourage you to do some "prayer with fasting." We are New Testament Baptists — and in our New Testament Baptist Book we find these things on prayer and fasting. I'm sure you will grow spiritually and in more love for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ as you pray and fast.

May God bless you.

SURE CURE

(Continued from Page 1)

niscient One, knew of his coming, why he came, and what he needed. "Ye must be born again" was the answer Jesus had for him. It was a statement of a dire desperate need that both Nicodemus and all men have. Nicodemus may not have understood fully why he must meet with Jesus. He may not have understood why, in the night hours, he must see Jesus. But Jesus knew as He knows the troubled hearts of all. A heart troubled finds a ready answer in the presence of Jesus.

"Ye must be born again" proclaimed the Lord Jesus. It was a statement that caused bewilderment in the mind of Nicodemus; yet our Lord carried his mind into further and wondrous mysteries as He spoke of His own Lordship and Deity, as the Omnipresent One of verse 13, and as the very one

whom Moses had "lifted up" in type, in the form of the brazen serpent. We may well ask as Nicodemus, as we consider our Lord's words in verse 14, "How can these things be?" Let us then consider the events of verse 14, as we read Numbers 21: 5-9; "And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread, And the lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. and Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."

Here we find that age-old problem that has existed with man, and in particular the child of God. That being one of unthankfulness and complaining against such things as the Lord had provided. We are such a sad lot as creatures of this earth; sad and pitiful indeed. We read in this portion of Jewish history an "ensample" for our learning, perhaps that we might be encouraged to better perseverance, and that we might be warned to bridle our tongues as "Mr. Whiner" would tend to speak folly within us; thereby provoking the Lord's chastisement upon ourselves. In Numbers 21:4 we read concerning the children of Israel, that they were "much discouraged because of the way." Isn't this something to deeply consider? It was the way around Edom; around the people of Esau; yet though the way was long, it was for their own protection! It was perhaps a way of rugged terrain and stony ground; a way without water, but nevertheless it was the way of deliverance! Yea, and before them was the Shechinah glory cloud, leading and protecting every inch of the way. Before them went the humble servant Moses having faith in the leadership of his God. Before them lay the promised land, and all that needed be done was to "trust and obey." But it was easier to complain, to be fearful, to look back and from side to side, and find displeasure quickly forgetting where they had come from, how they left, what they had received in the way, and where they were going. Then there was the meek Moses, being looked upon as one who had conspired with some evil god to call these forth that they might perish. Picture Moses as he leads to the bidding of His Lord, as behind he hears; "no bread... no water... our soul loatheth this light bread. Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?"

Oh, how the hand should have fled to the mouth to keep back such shameful utterances;

(Continued on Page 4 Column 3)

It does not take great men to do great things, it only takes consecrated men.

The Baptist Examiner Forum I

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Prove from Scripture that it is wrong to gamble.

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Oftentimes we have certain things that do not have direct statements that say "thou shalt not." There are, however, teachings that show us how wrong it is.

Gambling, for instance, is one of those things. The only time we read of gambling is when our Lord was crucified. "They said therefore among themselves, let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, they parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did" (John 19:24).

We are told in I Thessalonians 5:22 to "abstain from all appearance of evil." If gambling for our Lord's cloak while He was being crucified is not evil, then I don't know what evil is. If the soldiers gambled for His cloak while He suffered, then I don't want to have any part of it. We are not to try to gain by chance, we are to earn what we have. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground..." (Gen. 3:19).

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The Bible does not have a commandment that says, "Thou shalt not gamble," but a study of God's standards for our behaviour will show that it is wrong to gamble.

In Hebrews 10:38 we are told that, "Now the just shall live by faith." This tells us that the life of a Christian is a life of trust. Day by day we are to trust God to lead in our lives. This rules out "luck" and "chance" as a principle for a way of life. Depending upon luck and chance is a form of idolatry which is a grievous sin in the sight of God.

In I Timothy 6:10 we are told that, "the love of money is the root of all evil." In Luke 12:15 Jesus tells us to, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Also in Proverbs 15:27 we find, "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house;" Again in Proverbs 21:25, 26 we are told, "The desire of the slothful killeth him, for his hands refuse to labor, He coveteth greedily all the day." Do not these passages describe

the gambler?

In Luke 10:7 Jesus said, "the laborer is worthy of his hire." This tells us that honest work and honest wages go together. Exodus 20:9 tell us that, "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work:". In Ephesians 4:28 it is said, "let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good." Also in II Thessalonians 3:10, "if any would not work, neither should he eat." From these passages we see that the divinely appointed way of maintaining life and supporting one's family is by working. In view of this, there is no room for the practice of gambling.

In John 13:34 Christ commands us to love one another. Love causes us to seek the welfare or interest of others. Gambling has just the opposite goal, only the welfare and interest of self. Then we are told that whatever we do we are to, "Do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31). Does one who gambles do it for the glory of God or for self? These passages show us that there is no place for gambling in the life of a Christian.

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Genesis 3:19; "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Personally, I don't know for sure if this verse applies to the question or not. It does teach that man is to work for a living and not gain it at the expense of others. My Dad has a saying for things such as this. He says; that there are some things common sense should tell you and you don't need Scripture. I am not totally in agreement with that statement on this subject, but it does apply in some circumstances.

I must admit that I cannot prove from Scripture that it is wrong to gamble. I do know that most of the things that are associated with gambling are wrong. I do know that there are many families who have to go without because their mother or father wastes all their money on gambling. I do know that when there is gambling there is a greater possibility of there being cheating and lying. Look at the sports world. I think of the John "Hot Rod" Williams case at Tulane where there was speculation of point shaving. Think about the famous Black Sox scandal. These things came about because of gambling. I know the Bible says that the love of money is the root of all evil. Certainly the love of money and a way to get it easily are behind gambling. Gambling in this fashion is wrong.

I must say that this question raises many questions that are

more difficult to answer. Is playing the stock market wrong? Surely we must admit that this is gambling to a degree. Is buying a lottery ticket wrong? If you say yes to this, then you must also say yes to the stock market. The Little League in Gladwin sells raffle tickets for a chance at a side of beef. These tickets cost a dollar and are for the cost of little league. Is it wrong to buy or sell one of these tickets? In this area, I can not say these things are wrong because I do not have Scripture to back me up. I guess in this area I would have to leave it up to the individual and his conscience. May God bless you all.

SURE CURE

(Continued from Page 3)

but it was words spoken out of season, spoken against the Lord who had led, protected, directed and provided. Yet worse than this did Israel do when they declared an equality between God and Moses. Almost needless to say, the holiness of God could not allow such ways of rebellion to go unpunished. How they had "loathed this light bread." They were weary of it and troubled to the soul with this, the Lord's provisions; yea, even such as was a picture of the very Son of God, even the true Bread from heaven (John 6:32-35). No sooner had their loathes and woes been murmured, Numbers 21:6 states: "And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died." (See I Cor. 10: 9-11). Yea, the sentence of death was carried out upon many, "for the wages of sin is death."

In these deeds we recognize Israel as being representative of all mankind, being pleased to dwell in the world (Egypt) while complaining against the creator and provider of all, while despising the Lord and those His servants. As with father Adam, Israel had been under the protection and direction of God, but sin entered in and brought death. Oh beloved, observe the people of Israel, waving their fists in anger against the Lord and Moses. See the hatred in their eyes as they despise the journey and the goodness they had received. Suddenly and without warning, their cries of anger turned to cries of horror as deadly serpents appear among them striking and biting at will. Death suddenly seizing upon them, forever stilling that murmuring tongue. Yet does this not portray for us the "sting of death" even sin? "And much people of Israel died." There was no cure, there was no hope. Death was instant and swift, without remedy. Such it is with sin; that its bite has permeated even unto the very soul of man so that he is dead before God.

Today man marvels at his society of "instant" this or that, but when death comes in an "instant" manner, disbelief, shock, horror, and the utter helplessness of ourselves is realized. Man cannot and does not apply this reality in type to

his very soul, and as a result, one day plunges headlong into hell nor realizing, until it is too late, that sin has put him there! See the children of Israel as they scatter in fear, as they try to destroy this destroyer. Fighting, killing, maybe a thousand, but bitten by an enemy far too powerful, in the end they fall at the pleasure of the serpent. Such is the way beloved, of this sin cursed earth. Morality is that blunted sword of battle for man, but alas, it cannot defeat so great an enemy as sin!

What needs must follow? "Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, we have sinned." The necessity of realizing their terrible and dreadful condition! The necessity of realizing the cause for that condition! This, beloved, was a step in the right direction. Observe the people of Israel, seeing their sinful condition. They would now come to him whom God had appointed as their intercessor and mediator. The one who was their shepherd, who sought the care of them as the poor wandering sheep. The one who would speak on their behalf, even Moses, who here typifies the Lord Jesus Christ. What is here portrayed for us in type is the story of the Gospel, i.e., the need to recognize sin, what it causes and reaps. The need for repentance, and the need for the Lord Jesus Christ to speak to the Father on our behalf. For God "commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). Repentance is that godly sorrow over sin against God, and a turning away from sin realizing what has been done. Notice again Numbers 21:7, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee." Is this not the way of man, always replying against God? Always speaking against His Servant, His Christ? To use His name in vain, to use it as a curse, to use it idly, to use it falsely in speaking against Him! It is as if Israel is saying here, "All we like sheep have gone astray. We have sinned for we have spoken against the Lord." Repentance is that "humble and contrite heart" that in no wise will be despised by the Lord. It is the deep conviction of the Holy Spirit of God that "leadeth thee to repentance" (Rom. 2:4); and in such condition as this, do the children of Israel come unto Moses humbly asking for his intercession on their behalf. "Pray unto the Lord that he take away the serpents from us" (Num. 21:7). Yes, pray unto the Lord that He takes away our sin from us, lest we die! It is only under the convincing and conviction of the Holy Spirit of God that we are made to see such a terrible condition we are under. The people of Israel knew where such evil had come from and why. They knew that they received justly at the hands of God. They knew that they in no wise of themselves could remove this destroying enemy among them, and Moses, like Christ, would intercede on their behalf. Intercedeth because He loved His people and would have compassion on such a miserable lot as these. "And Moses prayed for the people" (Num. 21:7). He who had been treated as an enemy by his own, would humble himself with a forgiving spirit and "pray for the people." See in type, the glorious Christ coming before the Father praying for His enemies, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do."

Numbers 21:8, "And the

Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent." Here we arrive upon a blessed and high event wherein the Lord would so condescend to speak unto a mortal. Speaking great things of a wonderful event that would one day come for the blessings of His people. The Lord had commanded that Moses make a "fiery serpent," an image of that which destroyed the people, and caused that many should die. What possible purpose could such serve that Moses should make an emblem of that which has always symbolized evil? "...And set it upon a pole, and it shall come to pass, that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." (Num. 21:8-9). "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up" (John 3:14).

Moses was to make a "fiery serpent." He was to make an image of that which resembled the real. He was to make an image of that which represented their sin, and the wages of it. An image of that which had the form of the true but having neither bite nor poison. In this we see the Lord Jesus Christ taking on the form of man, the form of sin, but without sin; thus resembling the real. The serpent Moses was to make, was then representative of Christ the man, becoming sin for His own. In 2 Corinthians 5:21, we read: "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." Again, Romans 8:3: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (Correct Greek).

Numbers 21:9, "And Moses made a serpent of brass." Two questions come to mind regarding this. First, why did Moses use brass to make the serpent? Second, what exactly is brass? Most scholars agree that Moses chose brass because of its fiery color, and brilliance. Brass is an alloy of copper and zinc, or copper and tin, which is commonly thought to be the bronze of Moses' day. These two metals were melted with a fervent heat to combine them into the alloy, brass. This brings to mind the afflictions of the Lord Jesus Christ as He alone, and above all, went through the "furnace of affliction" for His own, both Jew and Gentile. This also speaks to us of the two natures of the Lord Jesus Christ. As a "fiery serpent" it would portray the wrath of the Father upon the Son as He offered Himself for His own. As the "fiery serpent," it would portray that deep burning abiding love that Christ has for His own, whom He loved unto the end. The serpent, as we implied earlier, has always been a creature feared by man, because somewhere in the conscience, man is aware that the serpent is a reminder of the curse, upon it and man. It ever remains therefore the emblem of the "accursed"; thus we recognize in this symbolism Galatians 3:13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."

Brass, by the ancients, was considered a lesser and despised

(Continued on Page 5 Column 4)

The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

See Ezekiel 18:24; 33:13, 18; 3:20. Is the righteous man here saved or unsaved? What does blood on the hands mean?

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The primary application of these verses is to capital punishment, and is a case of a righteous man who has violated God's law, in which He had decreed death to the violator. A human judge might be inclined to set aside the penalty for such a man because of his former righteousness. However, in the law that God gave His people there was to be no partiality and no respect of persons. Now if a righteous man violated the law and did the same evil things that a wicked man did, he must suffer the same physical penalty as would the wicked man. That is, he would be put to death in this case.

What does blood on the hands mean? Let us look at a Scripture found in Matt. 27:24, 25, "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children."

Pilate seemed to think that he had gone as far as he could go and still hold his job, and thought that by washing his hands he could shift the responsibility to others. Then the people said, "His blood be on us, and our children." The truth is, Pilate washing his hands did not relieve him of his responsibility, he was still guilty. The people were guilty also because they took part in the death of our Saviour. They cried "crucify him." We, today, are guilty of standing by and letting friends and loved ones die without telling them about the Saviour. Their destination has already been determined, but our responsibility as Christians is to witness to the lost. How many people do you know that have died, and you feel badly because you never said a thing about your Lord and Saviour to them? If we stand by and do not warn the lost about Hell and introduce to them a Saviour, their blood, so to speak, will be on our hands. God saved every one of us on purpose, and that purpose was to tell the story of Jesus, and to be a missionary in our every day life.

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Jesus said in Matthew 5:20: "For I say unto you, except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the

Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." How is it that our righteousness can exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees?

Before I answer the question, I want to call our attention to some thoughts concerning the responsibility of a pastor, Sunday school teacher, deacon, missionary. It is the duty of leaders, especially the overseer of a flock of God to teach, instruct, exhort, warn, and whatever else falls in the line of the duty of a pastor. In Hebrews 13:17 there is exhortation for the flock to obey them that have the rule. It is a very important job that the pastor has, for he watches for the souls of those for whom he cares. The pastor one day will give account for how he taught, instructed, and warned his people. He will give account if he fails to give out warning. The Apostle Paul was very faithful in warning the saints wherever he went. He warned the saints at Ephesus with tears night and day, and he did this for the space of three years. (Acts 20:31).

There is a sin unto death and this is mentioned in I John 5:16. If one persists and continues in sin, he will bring death upon himself. If a righteous man turn from his righteousness and live in iniquity continuously, the Lord will cut him off. If a person has the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is my belief that he will not continue in sin. If one has the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus, he then is a saved person and will go to heaven when he dies. If a person who is saved sins, then his sins are covered by the blood of Christ. I cannot believe that person whose sins are covered by the blood of Christ will continue in sin till his death.

Some people have a righteousness of their own. They worked hard for it and they will not easily give it up. Now, if such persons as this turn from their own righteousness and commit iniquity then their righteousness will be forgotten. This is what is referred to in Ezekiel 33:13. If a person trusts in his own righteousness, he cannot be saved; or will not be saved if he continues to do so. For man's own righteousness will not save him from his sins.

If the man referred to in Ezekiel is a saved man, and he has that righteousness of the Lord, and he dies because of sins that he commits; it is then that the Lord takes him out of this world because of his disobedience to His Word and His law. I am thinking that the man referred to is an unsaved man and he commits sin and keeps on sinning and the Lord cuts him off. For the Scripture referred to in Ezekiel 18:24, 33:13, 18; and 3:20 speak of a man turning from "his" righteousness, or not turning from "his" righteousness. Evidently the righteousness mentioned is that of a man's own, that he built up himself and not that of the Lord.

Now, as to our righteousness exceeding that of the Pharisees. How can our righteousness ex-

ceed the righteousness of the Pharisees? It can only exceed theirs if we have that of Christ. The Pharisees' righteousness was that of their own doings. A man cannot get to heaven upon such righteousness. Christ was made sin for us and His righteousness is imputed to us; it is counted for ours. II Corinthians 5:21, "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."

Now, as to the question, What does blood on the hands mean? Ezekiel was the watchman of the Lord. When he gave the warning of God to the people, then he was clear of his responsibility; and their blood would be on their own heads. If Ezekiel failed to warn the people, then God would hold him in account; and he would lose rewards and blessings. Those that are under our care; God will hold us in account as to how we cared for them. A man is clear of the blood of others only when he discharges his duty to them before God. Notice this Scripture in Acts 20:26, "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men." How was it that he was pure or free from the blood of all men? Because he discharged his duty. Acts 20:27: "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." It is when we have declared all the counsel of God that we are pure and free from the blood of all men.

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The child of God, although he may stumble he shall not be utterly cast down. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." (Jude 24).

We are His "workmanship," His work is perfect. (Deut. 32:4). We are justified in the sight of God in the legal sense, in that Jesus Christ satisfied the law and the Lawgiver for us. The righteousness, which God sees is not our own, but is Christ's applied to us. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (II Cor. 5:21). This is our legal standing, our spiritual condition. The flesh is corrupt, yet it shall be changed in God's own time. (I Cor. 15:42-58). Regeneration does not change this flesh, that change shall take place in the resurrection. Thus we must give God the glory when we perform any good at all in this flesh. Man's righteousness in the sight of God is likened unto filthy rags. I believe the righteous man in Ezekiel to be merely a good

man, not a godly man. Many good men will die outside of faith in Jesus Christ, sincerely trusting in their goodness and their righteousness, and wind up in hell. The Apostle Paul said... "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Rom. 10:1-4). I believe the righteous man in Ezekiel to be unsaved.

"But his blood will I require at thine hand." This statement magnifies our responsibility to the lost, whether they be very wicked or very good, if they do not trust in God's righteousness, Jesus Christ, they are condemned. It is our responsibility to warn them, and we shall give an account. Our work shall be made manifest for the day shall declare it.

SURE CURE

(Continued from Page 4)

metal; held in little esteem for its value. Likewise was it declared of Christ, that He should not be desired among men. Brass, for its polished brightness, reflected the brilliancy and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Brass is considered to be one of the strongest metals, which tells us of the might and strength of the Lord Jesus Christ; yea, mighty to save! Brass is one of the most durable of metals; this tells us of the eternal existence of Christ, of which Hebrews 13:8 declares, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." And finally regarding brass, it is symbolized in Scripture as the symbol of Divine judgment. We find this signified in the brazen altar of Exodus 27, and in Deuteronomy 28:15 & 23 we read: "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes... thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass..." Meaning darkness and judgment would befall them, and thus do we read in Matthew 27:45-46; "Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Here we not only view the judgment of the Father by the darkness of the heavens, but also in the words, "the ninth hour." Nine being the very number of judgment.

Now in John 3:14, our Lord declares; "...Moses lifted up THE serpent." In Numbers 21:9 we read, "and Moses made a serpent." Moses was not to make many and varied serpents. He was to make but one serpent, and it was upon this one serpent alone — this one serpent ordained of God; that those bitten were to look upon and live. Acts 4:12 declares, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." I Timothy 2:5 adds, "For there is one God, and one

mediator between God and man the man Christ Jesus." Thus, the one and only way; thus one serpent!

Next we read in Numbers 21:9 that "Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole." Thus he obeyed the Word of the Lord, the Lord who intended that this serpent should so represent his own crucified Son centuries later. Here we see the strongest and most exact type or picture of the suffering, crucified Christ. Our Lord declared of this that, "Moses lifted up the serpent... even so must the Son of man be lifted up." In John 8:28 Jesus declared to the Jews, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then ye shall know that I am he". And again, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." (John 12:32). "And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of the skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: Where they crucified him..." (John 19:17 & 18). Our word rendered "cross," when rightly translated is a "pole" or "upright stake," that being a pole, thus we see the perfect picture of Christ crucified in the fastened serpent upon the pole.

Christ being "lifted up" speaks to us not only of His great suffering but of His resurrection and ascension into the heavenly; and being "lifted up" to exaltation by the Father's side. For being "lifted up" He was set on high. He as the crucified One, was "lifted up" for the seeing, for the healing, even from afar; and as His brilliance shown, even the duller eye that looks in faith from afar, will be delivered from sin. The Lord had declared unto Moses: It shall come to pass, that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live." (Num. 21:8). Shortly thereafter we observe the sure word of promise being fulfilled: "...And it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." "Even so must the Son of man be lifted up... That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." The sure promise to the children of Israel was kept, the sure promise of Christ is kept.

Looking upon the serpent in faith, brought life to the perishing and dying. It brought salvation! It brought the sure cure! It was not faith in the brass serpent that saved, but the rather, what it represented, even the sure Word of God. The power of life was given by faith. They were to "look" not upon self, nor their deadly condition, but on God's own appointed means! Nicodemus did not understand the words of our Lord, "Ye must be born again," but would he understand the meaning of these things? Praise be unto the Lord, we believe he did, for in John 7:50 it is recorded that he rose in an attempt to defend the Lord, and in John 19:39 we find him coming to assist in the burial of his Friend, and that no longer by night.

May these things bless you as they have blessed me.

Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore.
Psalms 37:27

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QUESTION: — What is the longest word in the Bible?

ANSWER: — "Maher-shalhashbaz," Isaiah 8:1, 3.

LOCAL

(Continued from Page 1)

taught by a false prophet about the local church.

The church that Jesus built is not all those who are saved. All believers are God's children. This is the family of God. But, the church cannot be applied to this spiritual body. "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (Eph. 3:15). The church is not the kingdom of God. This spiritual kingdom is composed only of those who have been born again. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and

hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son" (Col. 1:13). The church is a called-out, visible, local assembly of chosen believers, baptized by a Baptist baptism, covenanted together upon the doctrines of Christ for carrying out His will on earth. There are five reasons why the local church is very important:

First of all, the local church is God's will. Notice that in the sixteenth verse of our text (Matt. 28), the Lord had appointed these disciples to a gathering at the mountain of Galilee, prior to His ascension. But why this place? Mark tells us this remarkable event that happened. "And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would... And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach" (Mk. 3:13, 14). This was the place the Lord founded and organized His church in the right place, in the right time, and with the right people. The resurrection of Jesus Christ vindicates His local church "...and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 15:18).

The church that Jesus built was not a recent plan of God.

The church originated in the mind of God in eternity past. It was a "mystery" to the Old Testament saints, but has now been revealed by God in the New Testament. "How that by revelation he made known... the mystery; which in the other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit" (Eph. 3: 3, 5). The New Testament Church even as the Lord's elect are "so according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," (1 Pet. 1:2) were foreknown in the councils of eternity, to be revealed in due time.

We were chosen by God. He said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit..." (John 15:16). These are the peculiar group of baptized believers, chosen and called out by the sovereign right of the Lord exercising His power over whomsoever He will. But, many modernists have not allowed God to know more than themselves, and have rejected the doctrine of God's foreknowledge of the local church. But when God looks upon the local church, He views

with delight His own chosen people, and sees his eternal purposes accomplished in them.

Christ loved the church. The most popular belief of the day is that God loves everybody. Love is the favorite tenet of the modernist, liberals ecumenical, charismatic movement, and the Catholics. God does not love everybody. If He did, He would love the Devil too. God is sovereign in the exercise of His love, in that He loves whom He chooses. "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" (Eph. 1:4). It was because of that love that God the Father predestinated His chosen ones. It was because of that love Christ purposely offered Himself on the cross to call the chosen ones into His sheepfold. "...Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). This divine love was according to the good pleasure of His will.

Then secondly, God must be worshipped in the local church. God is a God that cannot change His laws. The sovereign God has the right to give His commands, and we believers obey to be right and to receive His bless-

ings. In verse seventeen of our text, (Matthew 28) His disciples worshipped Him.

The church is the habitation of God. "But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put His name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come" (Deut. 12:5). We are to be found in the church to worship Him. In this church God's abiding presence and His power protect every member of it. There is no other place to find God's blessing spiritually in doctrines and in fellowship until you find yourself in this church.

Honouring God in the local church. This is the only place where God is properly honored when we obey Him without reservation. A healthy body of believers are united, working, giving, representing Christ, nourished, evangelizing, teaching and praying, fellowshiping and worshipping together in the local church. God is honored.

Hearing God's message. By studying and hearing the preaching from the man of God, the pastor of the local church, and your faithful attendance, prayers and support under the

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DEFINITIONS WATCHES

by Ray Hiatt

I have done something in this paper which I have never done before. I have rewritten it three times. My first "W" definition was entitled "Withdrawal/Withering" but after I wrote it I was vaguely dissatisfied with it. I then wrote a paper on "Whig" but neither the editor nor I thought it was quite suitable for publication. I rather liked "Whig" but agree with the editor that it was a bit strongly worded for publication. I have now written "Watches" and shall rest with it.

I am not sure if I am a "dispensationalist" for I'm not sure what the term means. I have a book in my library on "Seven Dispensations" by J.R.



Ray Hiatt

Graves and another by Clarence Larkin entitled "Dispensational Truth." I have never read either of these books, though they have been laying about my library for years. I am told by others that these books set forth the truth that God does deal differently with different people at differing times and that He does employ different agencies to execute His will in differing ways. I find no fault with this in general terms for it is so obvious that you have only to open the Bible at any page to see this truth displayed. Why men would bay at such a simple concept I cannot know.

I spent four years in the Navy. In the Navy if you say, "I've got the watch" this simply

means you are on duty for a particular time. The "watches" regulate your life in the Navy for someone must always be alert to maintain a guard and do the necessary work and more especially at sea. At sea your entire life is governed by the "watches" and all your life is regulated by when you "go on watch" and when your "watch" ends.

I received a communication from a brother recently who said he was going to destroy "dispensational heresy." I offered him every encouragement in destroying whatever "heresy" came his way. Yet, is the belief that God "dispenses" different responsibilities to different peoples or agencies at different times truly a "heresy" which should be destroyed or a truth to be believed?

In the Bible the Jews observed three "watches of the night" which were time periods where different soldiers were on duty and their duty was to "watch" as good soldiers must ever do. In Roman times this was changed to four watches to accord with Roman custom. But in the Old and New Testaments someone was always on duty and had the "watch."

In Navy parlance when an officer is relieved of the watch his successor says, "I relieve you sir" and salutes him. It is simplistic truth that in the on going work of God the "watch" has been relieved several times at God's direction and I state to you further that Christ's church now "has the watch." Is this "dispensationalism"? I really don't know but I do know, however, that it is "Bible."

Allow me to trace for you those who had the "watch" and who relieved them and carried the work forward. I shan't mention everyone but a general line of those who carried God's responsibilities. In the beginning Adam "had the watch" and was God's chosen instrument to perform God's exclusive work. Adam fell and the "watch" passed in time to Enoch and later to Noah. Then God chose a man named Abraham and gave him the watch. All these men were God's exclusive agents to perform His exclusive work.

The "watch" passed from Abraham to Isaac and to Jacob and from Jacob a nation was formed and Israel then "had the watch."

All of these people performed different tasks at differing times according to God's differing directives. The work of God is an unfolding work. Beginning with Adam and through to the nation of Israel each one in turn had the watch and performed their exclusive duty after God's design and with His varying "dispensing" of grace.

Come now to the New Testament. Who now "has the watch"? Who is now on duty? Who is now God's designed and designated agency to perform His will and work? Only one answer is possible and it is Christ's church, which is His body and pillar and ground of the truth.

This fact does not denigrate Israel or Noah or Abraham. They served their time "on watch" according to the "dispensing" of God's grace and Israel yet has a purpose to serve. They performed varied functions at God's behest but they are not now the agency which God has chosen to further His will. Christ's church now occupies this office.

If believing the above makes me a "dispensationalist" then I suppose I shall accept the title though I don't seek it. What I have stated seems to my mind so simple that I can't imagine that it could be quibbled against. Yet, quibbles arise even in the face of simplicity, truth and right.

The "watches" in the Old and New Testament were kept in hours of darkness. They were kept so that valued things could be safeguarded and maintained, for darkness is the time of knaves and thieves. Satan is a thief just as was Judas, his New Testament agent. Communists are, by definition, thieves. They are bandits who try to reap where they do not sow and so to is the prince of darkness.

Christ's church has many functions and we must all know by now that she functions in the hours of darkness of this world. The Sun of Righteousness is not with us in bodily form, so darkness reigns and it is a

darkness which can be felt. Christ's church and Christ's saints are lights in a darkened world and darkness recedes before them.

Christ's church has "had the watch" for almost two thousand years and has exclusively functioned in an exclusive manner. Those who deny even the simplistic form of "dispensationalism" which I have shown, likewise deny the concatenate existence of Christ's church for the two errors seem to be an inseparable ligature of Baptists on the left side of the aisle.

I am not a student of "dispensationalism" just as I am not a diligent student of prophecy though I am not ignorant of the signs of the times. I can understand when men are confused over complex issues, for complexities confuse me as well. I prefer simple studies and concepts. But, "dispensationalism" in its simplest form is so lacking in complexity that even I can understand it.

"Dispensationalism" is not a single study but rests within the over all concept of God's choosing and "dispensing" of duties and responsibilities in an exclusive manner. When you deny exclusivity as a concept you deny the entirety of God's eternal purpose.

The church of Jesus Christ "has the watch" or if you please she has the responsibilities of preaching, baptizing, and teaching for this particular age. When a ship is at sea only the Commanding Officer or "Captain" may interfere with or countermand the officer who "has the watch." This officer may be very junior in rank and others may rank over him but only the Captain may command the man who has the watch. For any other officer to interfere with the officer on watch is a Court Martial offense.

This leads me to say that men had better keep their soiled hands off Christ's church. She is answerable to her Captain who gave her the "watch" as a duty to perform. As the world views status, structuring and rank, a small Baptist church in an isolated town may seem insignificant but if men value their well being they will keep hands off her. She is God's agent and

more, she is God's body, His pillar and ground of the truth and His fullness in this world. Have a care how you treat a Baptist church. She is under the age long power and protection of her Captain. God will not hold any man blameless who defiles His body which is His church.

Every hand raised against Israel has been judged. Long is the list of ancient and modern peoples who fell because they detested Israel.

God loved Israel and loves her yet, but love is a quantitative thing. Christ's church is blood of His blood and life of His life... His very body upon earth. Christ's love for His church is the height and depth of love. Let men quibble about "dispensationalism" all they like. Let them philosophize and polemicize and wrangle over obtuse topics. But let them not raise a hand either verbally, doctrinally or physically against Christ's church.

Christ's church "has the watch" in this age of time and beyond this she is a priceless possession of her Captain. I would rather antagonize the Mafia and make an enemy of the Soviet Secret Police than raise even a verbal hand against Christ's church and interfere in her duties.

Here is a proscription for all who read these pages. Do you see a Baptist church straying and in error? Pray for her but as you value your life and well being do not interfere in the affairs of a church of which you are not a member. To her own Captain she stands or falls. Keep your hands off her ministries and deal lightly with her errors. She "has the watch" for her time and place. If she is a bit off course her Captain shall correct her or eliminate her. I would rather be cast into the sea with a millstone about my neck than interfere with a church I am not a member of. If a Baptist church goes astray do not attempt to put your hand to the wheel and turn her. You have been given no such responsibility. Her Captain stands behind the helm and He shall correct her course in due time and after His own sovereign design. Keep your hands from the one who "has the watch."

REVELATION

(Read Rev. 2:8-11).

There are those who think that the seven churches of Asia represent seven epochical periods of church history. Those who hold to this view, would state that we are now in the Laodicean, or the seventh period of church history. Personally, I do not believe this. It is entirely too fanciful and far-fetched for me to accept this interpretation. I think that at the time John was writing the book of Revelation, these were seven characteristic churches. I am sure that there have been churches like each of these seven in every age down to the present. I am furthermore positive that we have churches today just like these seven. These are churches today like Ephesus, who have lost their first love. There are churches today like Laodicea, that are lukewarm. There are churches like Thyatira which are run by the women. There are churches like Sardis that are dead. There are churches Pergamos that are worldly. There are also churches like Smyrna and Philadelphia that are faithful and true to God's Word. I say then, beloved, that I do not believe that these churches represent various periods of church history — rather, they are just sample churches, characteristic of John's day, of our day, and will be characteristic of every day until Jesus comes.

I think Ephesus was mentioned first in view of the fact that it was John's home town, and also, it was the largest church, and was entitled to first mention and prominence.

The church at Smyrna, in size, was perhaps next to Ephesus, and for this reason it was mentioned in second place. Now today, I want to talk to you about this, the second mentioned of these seven churches — the church of Smyrna.

I. As of last Sunday, we will notice first of all the way Jesus revealed Himself to this church at Smyrna. Four words characterize His revelation of Himself — "first," "last," "dead" and "alive."

Here was a church that had suffered much persecution. They were, in John's day, having an exceedingly hard time. They had had, and were still experiencing much tribulation. Now Jesus reveals Himself to them in a way that should give them encouragement. He announces that He is the first and the last. That is to say He was here before the Devil came, and that He will be here when the Devil is defeated.

Furthermore, He told them that He was the one who was dead, and is now alive. Many of this church were being martyred. They were passing through great tribulation. Therefore, He reminded these suffering, persecuted Christians who were losing their lives for His sake, that He was dead and now alive, and thus encouraged them by referring to the resurrection.

What an encouraging revelation of Jesus this was to Smyrna. He was here before the Devil began, and He will be here when the Devil is defeated; He was dead, and is alive, and therefore, all who died for Him shall likewise live.

Not only was this an encouraging revelation to Smyrna, but to all of us down to this present day. Today, I thank God that He was here before the

Devil began, and that He will be here when the Devil is defeated. I thank God that through Jesus we have hope that though we die, we shall be made alive in the resurrection. Yes, the comforting revelation of Jesus at Smyrna is the same comforting, encouraging message which we need today. How it thrills our



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hearts in these days of apostasy to know that He is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and that He is to us exactly what He was to the church at Smyrna.

When I fear my cause will fail, and that the things I stand for shall be defeated, and when I see the truth I have preached trampled beneath the feet of Satan-inspired and Satan-directed swine, I rejoice to know that Jesus is the first and the last, and that He is still alive, and that my hope is in Him who has fought the battle through the ages, and who will be here when the Devil is through. He is still alive. Yes, it is encouraging, it is heartening, it is comforting, and it is stimulating to read of Jesus' revelation of Himself to Smyrna, and to us.

II. Yet, it is just as interesting to notice that for which Jesus commended this church at Smyrna.

First of all, He commended them for their works.

"I know thy works" (Rev. 2:9). Here is a church that was at work for the Lord Jesus. This is similar to that which He said about the church at Ephesus, which we studied last Sunday. Smyrna, like Ephesus, was commended because they were busy and working for the Master.

A lot of folk falsely have in mind that since we believe in salvation by grace, we do not expect Christians to produce any good works. If this be true of you, let me disabuse your mind this morning, for while we believe in salvation by grace, we certainly believe that a man should prove his salvation by the works of his life. Notice this Scripture: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).

Here then was a church at Smyrna which was doing what they ought to do — they were working, and they were keeping at the task, and Jesus commended them because of their works. I wonder if He could commend you thus today?

There are lots of Baptist churches, and Baptist preachers, and Baptist church members who could not get this commendation in view of the fact that they have no works worthy of the Master's praise. It will be wonderful to hear Him say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" when one comes to the end of the way; but it is just as wonderful to know

that a church, or preacher, or church member has the Master's commendation today.

In the second place, this church was commended for its tribulation. Jesus said: "I know thy works, and tribulation" (Rev. 2:9).

This church was having a hard time — they were being persecuted. Yet, Jesus commended them for it.

Polycarp, their pastor, has been burned at the stake. When they had him bound and were beginning to light the fagots about him, one who would roughly correspond to an attorney today, admonished him to renounce Christ and live. With a wonderfully dramatic flight of oratory, he said, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he never wronged me; how then shall I blaspheme my King who saved me?" That which was true of their pastor, was also true of many of their members — they were going through all kinds of persecution, tribulation, and hardships for the cause of Christ and Jesus commended them because of it.

It reminds us of the early days of the church at Jerusalem, when, following the advice of Gamaliel, the hostile Jews gave the preachers a severe beating. "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name" (Acts 5:41).

Thus it was with the church at Smyrna. Even though suffering tribulation, it was with joy, and therefore Jesus commended them.

You will notice that Jesus also commended this church because of its poverty. He said: "I know thy works and tribulation, and poverty" (Rev. 2:9).

Smyrna was very much unlike Laodicea. Laodicea was rich, but Smyrna was poor — not only poor, but actually poverty-stricken as to material goods. Yet, Jesus commended them for their poverty.

I often hear people say, "I would like to be a more liberal giver, and I would if I were financially able." Well, beloved, do you know that one of the Scriptural requirements for great giving is that of poverty? Paul tells us concerning the churches of Macedonia that they were great givers. Read II Corinthians 8:1-3. He said there were three things which prompted their giving, namely, "a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty." These three Paul said abounded unto their liberality. The greatest givers of the world are not rich, but those who give out of their poverty. While Jesus condemned the church at Laodicea since they were depending more upon their money than upon Him, He commended this church at Smyrna in view of their poverty which brought them to a complete dependence upon Him.

Likewise, this church at Smyrna was commended by Jesus because they were being slandered. Jesus said: "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews" (Rev. 2:9).

Weymouth, in his modern interpretation of this Scripture, translates it this way, "I know the evil name given you by those who say that they themselves are Jews." Here at Smyrna was a Jewish synagogue which was openly hostile to this weak, poverty-stricken Baptist church.

These hostile Jews said that they themselves were the people of God, and they started and circulated slanderous, villainous reports concerning this New Testament church in the city of Smyrna.

Even to this day their progeny has not ceased, for many times the truth is spoken against, and God's own are slandered just like this church at Smyrna. I always rejoice to hear of anyone being spoken against for the truth's sake. I am glad when I hear that somebody has been condemning me for what I preach. In fact, beloved, it makes me feel mighty good to know that the Devil thinks I am worth stirring up some of his offspring that they should slander and persecute me. In fact, it even means a reward for me. Listen to these words: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven" (Matt. 5:10-12).

Here is one reward I don't have to work for. We hear from dozens and even hundreds of folk every week who enjoy the messages that go forth from our church, and yet, we hear also occasionally from those who condemn us and speak spitefully about our ministry. I am sure that these also speak against our ministry to many others. Well, beloved, your persecutions and your slanderings are just laying up a reward for me in Heaven — a reward that I don't even work for.

Yes, Jesus commended this church at Smyrna because they were being slandered, and if I speak this morning to a saint who has been slandered for the truth's sake, and who is hated, despised, and persecuted because of his stand for God's Word, then may that individual take courage in the light of Jesus' commendation of this church at Smyrna.

Above everything else, Jesus commended this church at Smyrna because of their suffering. He said: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer" (Rev. 2:10).

This indicated that they were actually suffering for His sake, and He commended them for it. A few days ago I came across a great Scripture in Paul's second letter to young Timothy, when he said: "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (II Tim. 2:12).

What a wonderful consolation to the saint of God who is suffering for Jesus' sake. Here was a church that was actually suffering because of their stand for the truth, and since they were suffering, they had the Scriptural assurance that some day they would reign with Him.

Wonderful, then, is this commendation which Jesus gave to this church at Smyrna. He commended them for their works, their tribulation, their poverty, the fact that they were being slandered, and for their suffering for His sake. I wonder if He would commend you today for all, or any of these things. Happy is the church, the preacher, or the individual who has Jesus' commendation for anything, and especially was this church at Smyrna happy in that it had Jesus' commendation in these

particulars.

III. Though Jesus commended this church in these five respects, He also gave it a little counsel. Listen; "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

Here then was a two-fold counsel in view of their past suffering, and their present difficulties, and especially the coming tribulation.

His first counsel was to "fear not." It is so easy for a person who has been slandered, and who is suffering, and who is given Divine assurance of coming tribulation — it is so easy for such a one to become frightened. None of us like church troubles. Most any of us would rather acquiesce to the enemy than to continue daily with suffering, slander, and tribulation. Yet, to this church at Smyrna, Christ gave no hope of an end of the trouble; instead, He gave them a picture of more trouble. Yet, He encouraged them in that He counselled these members of this church to put aside their fear, and to face the coming tribulation bravely.

His second counsel to this church was, "be faithful." He said, "Be thou faithful unto death." You will notice He didn't say, "be faithful until death," but "be faithful even if you have to die."

What wonderful counsel is this for Smyrna, or for any church — "don't be afraid," and "be faithful." Surely the God who thus counselled Smyrna, would counsel each New Testament church, preacher, and church member today. We are to fear nothing, and we are to be faithful to Him in all things.

IV. Now having seen Jesus' revelation of Himself to this church, and having observed that for which they were commended, and also having studied the way in which He counselled them, let us notice His condemnation or what He condemned them for.

I received one letter this past week relative to our messages on Revelation in which the writer declared that Jesus found fault with each of these seven churches. Not so, beloved, there was no condemnation for the church at Smyrna. Jesus never censured them for anything which they were doing. This church at Smyrna was living rightly, and was preaching rightly, and because of this, they were having many persecutions.

Here then is a lesson for us: When one is doing the thing which pleases God, there is not going to be any condemnation from God. There will be no censure from Him. If you do not live purely, and if you preach unscripturally, and your church is unorthodox, then you can expect Jesus to condemn you — you can plan for His censure; but when there is right living, and right preaching, and Scriptural practices in a church, that church, like Smyrna, can expect commendation without condemnation. It can expect no critical censure, no condemnation; but, the wholehearted commenda-

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REVELATION

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tion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

V. What was wrong with this church at Smyrna? Since Jesus did not condemn them, it would appear that there was nothing wrong, but if you will read again, and read more closely, you can see that which was wrong — the Devil was at work. Listen: "Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison."

They were commended as I have said, but not condemned. The wrong was on the outside. The Devil was stirring up trouble, he was spreading slander, he was causing the saints to suffer, he was getting ready for widespread tribulation in the church. In other words, the chief troublemaker in Smyrna was the Devil. Though this church had Christ for its comforter, it had the Devil for its trouble-maker. Though Christ was on the inside comforting and commending, the Devil was on the outside persecuting, and causing tribulation.

Let me ask you a question: "Is the wrong in your church on the inside, or on the outside? Where is the Devil at work in your church, on the inside or on the outside?" Oh, that God might grant that the church of which I am pastor, and the church of which you are a member, might be free from the Devil on the inside, and yet may be found on the outside.

I like to see a church which has the same wrong as the church at Smyrna — that is, I like to see a church that is being fought by the Devil, I saw a picture several years ago of a cold, formal congregation in which the Devil was pictured as occupying one of the pulpit chairs, sound asleep. I don't want that kind of a church! Beloved, I want a church where the Devil is not in the pulpit, nor in the choir, nor in the congregation: but I want a church where the Devil is on the outside, fighting us, slandering us, persecuting us, causing us to suffer, and bringing much tribulation our way. Most churches have the Devil on the inside. May God grant that it may be said of your church and mine that we have right living, and right preaching to such an extent that the wrong is not on the inside, but on the outside, and that wrong is that the Devil is at work.

VI. Now briefly may we notice Jesus' promise to the overcomers of the church at Smyrna: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (Rev. 2:10, 11).

Here then was His promise — He offered a crown of life. It wasn't a crown of gold, nor a crown studded with diamonds; but a crown of life. What an interesting study this is, for He declares that there was no danger of it being taken away, in that He said, "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." How precious this was to Smyrna. The Devil might kill their bodies, but these martyrs could not be hurt of the second death.

And what a precious promise this is to us in that we have a crown awaiting us — a crown of

life, and there isn't any possibility of us losing it, for the second death holds no fear for us who have been born twice.

Conclusion: May I ask, "Have you been born twice?" If you have been born twice, you will die but once; yet if you have been born but once, you must die twice. May they then who have been born of the flesh, be born now of the Spirit, and receive the promise of a crown of life which is ours through Jesus Christ.

This church was poverty stricken from the standpoint of the world, yet Jesus said of them: "But thou art rich" (Rev. 2:9).

This was a rich church in that they had convictions that were worth living for and worth dying for.

You say, "Brother Gilpin, do you suppose that if you lived back there in those days you would have been willing to die for your convictions?" I don't know, beloved, whether I would have had martyr blood in my veins or not. No man knows what he would do until the time comes. You might say that you would do so-and-so, but you don't know what you would do in any given circumstance until the time arrives.

Here was a church that was made up of martyrs. They had convictions that were worth living for and dying for, and, beloved, they lived for them and they died for them.

There are some things that we ought to be willing to live for, and to die for. There is that great doctrine of salvation by grace and the great truths of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Likewise there is that great truth of the doctrine of election, that God chose us before the foundation of the world. I tell you, beloved, a man ought to be willing to live and to die for these great truths.

Whenever I think of this, I remember that individual who had ridden one day many miles in our Kentucky mountains to collect a sum of money that was owed to him. He collected the money and put it in his saddle pockets and fastened the same to his saddle for the ride back home. At noon time he stopped, fed his horse, rested his animal, took the saddle off, rested himself, and presently after he had rested, he saddled his mount and started on his return trip, but in putting his saddle on, he forgot the money that he had collected that was in his saddle bag. When he put his foot over the horse's back and started to leave, his dog began to run around the horse, barking and jumping at the horse's mouth, seemingly trying to tell his master that he was leaving the money there on the ground. This man didn't understand it and after the dog had acted thus for some few minutes, he thought surely the dog had gone mad and he pulled his gun and shot the dog. After he had ridden on a few miles farther he remembered the fact that he didn't have his saddle pockets tied to his saddle, and when he returned to the spot, there lay his dog with his head, in death, over those saddle pockets.

I will never forget that old Baptist preacher of whose experience I have just told. He said, "Brother Gilpin, I never knew what it was to be faithful to death in the things in which I believed, until I saw my dog lying there dead, with his head on my saddle pockets."

Beloved, that is what God wants you and me to do. These

are trying days through which we are passing, and God wants us to be faithful unto death.

May I remind you that this church at Smyrna possessed a quality that neither persecution, nor poverty, nor death, could destroy. If you have Jesus Christ inside your heart, you have quality that persecution and trouble and death can't destroy. If you are not saved, then believe him, receive Him, and trust Him and become a child of God, and then go out to live for Him and serve Him, and if need be, die for Him.

God help you to be the kind of a Christian that our Lord will be able to speak of as a rich Christian, and be a member of a church that our Lord will be able to speak of as a rich church.

Let me ask you in closing, are you a rich Christian? Maybe you aren't a member of a rich church, but beloved, you can be a rich Christian.

May God bless you!

LOCAL

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leadership of the pastor is to clear the will of God for you.

Then thirdly, God's way which is the New Testament Church. I never regret that I became a Baptist. A man ought not to be a Baptist unless the Word of God impels him to be one. There is no point to our being separate, and calling ourselves by another name, if we are not called of God to stand up for truth as no other people do. God has chosen to accomplish His work on earth through local churches. His program for evangelization, maintenance of the ordinances, teaching benevolence, and other things were all entrusted to the local churches alone.

Baptists are unconnected with ecclesiastical organizations. The New Testament will be searched in vain for any organization other than the local church to accomplish God's program. Man has never been satisfied with God's way. They have continually rejected the church and tried to build something better. Baptists have been satisfied with God's way through individual local churches. Every individual missionary Baptist church is the only true church of God: local and visible. The totally independent Baptists are more important than any other organizations. Man has never been satisfied with God's way. In salvation, man is not satisfied because it emphasizes man's total helplessness and God's sovereignty. Man has his own way rather than God's way; so that it glorifies man, and robs God of His glory. Man has never been satisfied with God's local church, and has tried to build something bigger that would glorify man. The Bible says, "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen (Eph. 3:21).

Unbroken history of the church. Jesus said, "...I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). From the very beginning of the church, it had promise of perpetuity given to it by the Lord Himself. He promised that it would continue until the end of the age. Herod wanted to stop it, and James was beheaded. Then Emperor Nero attempted to wipe Christians out by burning them. Constantine made the

so called Christianity the state religion, of which the Roman Catholic was definitely formed. During the Dark-ages millions of the Ana-baptists were the lion's prey, slain, beheaded, drowned with mock baptism, and put into prison. But, there is no sword fashioned that can destroy the local churches, nor ever will be. There will always be churches of God as long as there is the world. In other places, they were called Waldenses, Albigenses, Paterines, Cathari, Novatians, Montainists, and by whatever name they were known, they are generally characterized by that which is presently peculiar to Baptists.

The church is under God's Control. This perpetuity is not owing to human strength and faithfulness, but solely to God's sovereignty in preserving them.

And forthly, God's warrant (authority) to the local church. In verse nineteen of our text (Matt. 28), the Lord gave His authority to the local church. The New Testament church is a sovereign and authoritative assembly when we realize the great responsibilities which have been placed upon it by the Founder and Head Himself.

The right preacher is sent from the local church. We believe that the true, local, independent, missionary Baptists are the only churches authorized by God to preach and to evangelize the whole world through missions. Every preacher and missionary must be properly and Scripturally sent out from the local church. "And how shall they preach, except they be sent..."

We are to regulate Baptist baptism and observe closed communion. The local church is the only one authorized to baptize. If this is denied, the question will arise as to who does have the authority? The authority to baptize could not rest in the individual nor the ordained preacher, but only to the true local church. Baptist baptism of the believer is the prerequisite to the privilege of a church relationship and to the Lord's Supper. When a Baptist Church is wrong on the Lord's Supper, it follows that they are wrong on Baptism.

Reaching The World Through Missions. "Go Ye..." is the greatest command of Christ, the founder of the church; and He authorized this church to do so. The very purpose of the church as expressed in the Great Commission speaks of its responsibility to be a militant and missionary body. The Lord meant for His church to be militant and missionary, which would make the world see its need for a Saviour. May God burden the hearts of His people and of His churches to wake up to, and to do their duties to Him in the local church.

And now lastly, God's Wedding Day with the local church. The bridal relationship of the church and Christ is one of the most misunderstood doctrines of the Bible. The relationship now is the bridal with a view of becoming the wife in the future. Remember, the Lord deals with each local church as though she (local church) were the only one on earth.

It will be an honourable day. What a day, and a glorious day with a great expectation to His coming back and to the wedding. This faithful bride looks forward to His glorious coming.

And then there will be the heavenly supper of the Lamb.

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev. 19:7,8). What excitement, anticipation, joy and all that goes with such great events, builds up as the day draws near. So is the coming of the Lord to a true Baptist church. His coming is being preached and taught more and more, simply because of the nearness of the great day. Why not talk about it? Nothing is wrong with it. Just keep enjoying and talking, concerning the marriage of the bride and groom when Jesus comes.

The home of the bride will be the New Jerusalem. There is a mansion for every saved one prepared by Christ. But, something very special for the home of the bride, that is the new Jerusalem. "... John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21:2). This is not a figurative description, but an actual description, and a special place for His bride — the local church.

Friends, the church has a message for you. Are you ready to listen to His Word? "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). Christians, we must put off the old man and put on the new man. We cannot be rightly related to the Lord if we are not rightly related to the members of His body which is the local church. This is the will of God. God bless you all.

BLOOD

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is all that will bring people in. We are blood washed children of God... by the blood of Christ, that is, if we are really born again.

We sing, that is, we used to sing, I don't hear them much anymore, "Are You Washed in the Blood?", "Nothing But the Blood" and "Saved by the Blood." Do we really listen to what we are singing? Do we really hear those words? I think not.

Let us consider, that is, take a good look at, "The Blood Book," the very Word of God. We see that all the Bible is a bloody book, and for that we should praise God. For without the blood, there would be no redemption for any of us. The blood flows from Genesis to Revelation. The Old Testament (but, then, who reads the Old Testament anymore?), looking to Christ, speaks of the blood by goats and lambs. The New Testament, (and if you don't read the Old Testament you will not understand the New Testament), tells of Christ and points us back to Christ. Oh, yes, the blood flows!

It started at man's fall in the Garden of Eden by God Himself, He made coats of skin for Adam and Eve. "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them" (Gen. 3:21), that is, covered them and their nakedness, their sin.

They were naked in sin.

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BLOOD

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Blood had to be shed to cover their nakedness. That is their sin of disobeying God. To have skin coats, you must first have death and blood. So you see here the first man, his sin covered by blood, looking forward to the shed blood of the Lamb, Christ our Lord. The first man had to shed blood over and over again, but we do not. Christ shed it once and for all time as we shall see.

So, we see the blood throughout the Old Testament. We see Abel in Genesis 4:4 bringing the first of his flock to the Lord. Blood was shed and God looked on Abel with a good heart. Noah (Gen. 8:20) out of the ark after the flood, built an altar and offered a burnt offering. Then we see in Genesis 15:7-10 the covenant with Abraham. See, oh, my brethren, don't you see, can you not see the blood flowing?

Now, let us take a close look at just one commandment of God (Ex. 12:3-14). See the Lamb, the Lamb of God. In verse 3... take a lamb, a little pure lamb, pure as new snow; verse 5... "Your lamb shall be without blemish, (no spot or uncleanness on it) a male." We could say much on this, but that is another message. Now then, look at verse 7... "And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses..." Oh, people, do you see? Can you not see the cross, the altar of sacrifice and Christ the Lamb? The blood was for sin, our sin, not the Lamb's. The blood flows on. Look at verse 13... "And the blood shall be to you for a token (that is a sign to you) upon the houses" (Oh, don't you see the cross, and the blood?), so that "when I see the blood, I will pass over you."

Oh, we sing, "When I see the blood, I will pass I will pass over you..." but do we really see the blood, the cross, the Lamb? God goes on, "pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." Oh, people do you not see? Can you not see the blood, the cross, the Lamb? Christ is our Lamb on the Cross, His blood was shed so that His elect will not be smitten, (that is, not killed), but live forevermore. Oh, beloved, open your spiritual eyes so that you can see the blood flowing.

See the blood again under the law in Leviticus 16, 17:1-11. Please turn to Leviticus and read God's Word. See Christ and the cross and see the blood flow; all pointing to Christ and our redemption. From the beginning it was death and blood for a covering for man's sin. Oh, yes, it is the blood and only by the blood are we covered!

Look closely at Leviticus 17:11, "...it is the blood that maketh atonement..." Verse 14 — "It is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof..." And that flows all points to One; Christ, our Lord, the Lamb.

Hebrews 10:10-14. Look closely, the blood flows. The offering was made once for all time, by the body of Christ, the anointed One. — "This man, (Christ) after he had offered one sacrifice (no more needed) for sins forever," (for all time).

Open your eyes, beloved ones, can you not see, will you not see? With a single offering, He has completely cleansed and

made perfect those who are sanctified (that is, made saints). We see the lamb, the blood, the offered One; but only one time, no more... no need of new sacrifices. No mass, no temple, no priest, no altar, only the blood of Christ.

And because of the flow, we have redemption. Ephesians 1:7, "In whom we have redemption..."; justification, Romans 5:9, "...being now justified by his blood"; eternal life, John 6:53-54, "...hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day"; peace, Colossians 1:20, "...having made peace through the blood of his cross..." The blood flows on down through Hebrews 13:12, sanctification; I John 1:7, spiritual cleansing; Hebrews 10:19, spiritual boldness to come to God in prayer. All by the blood and only by the blood.

Yet, we still hear one preacher, so-called, (oh, yes, many other also) say "Don't talk about the blood. It is bar-bic." But, mark you this, in Heaven they sing about the blood of Christ. Revelation 5:9, they sung a new song," (that song is of Christ and His blood) — "saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." If it is good enough to speak of and sing about in Heaven — then it is a duty for us to speak and sing and preach about it here on this sin-sick earth.

This is a fact, if you are born again, if you go to Heaven, it will be through and by the shed blood of Christ. I Peter 1:18-19, "Redeemed... with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb..."

It has been said, and it is true, that the blood alone makes us safe; the Word alone makes us sure; the resurrection will take us home; only by the blood. Yes, it is a bloody Book, but such a precious Book.

Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Are you covered? Are you washed by His blood? We pray so. May God bless you.

HIVE

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picture the gospel; the right authority, a true Baptist church. One should continue as a member of a true Baptist church. I say this because, though when one is baptized he is then and by that act a member of a true church; yet, such a one could later join a false church. So, by being a Baptist, I mean to be saved, baptized, and a member of a true Baptist church.

2. Be there. This is a very important "be". This is first and foremost. One can not "be" the other things without being there. My text commands that we forsake not the assembling of ourselves together. If church membership means anything at all, it means that, whenever possible, one is to "be there." Each member is to be present at every service of the church unless he has a good reason. I said reason, not excuse. An excuse is the skin of a reason stuffed with a lie. You must have a reason for every church service you miss that will stand before the Lord Jesus Christ, or give an account to Him for missing that service. You may give that account here in repentance and confession, or give it at the judgment seat of Christ. I know that

the preacher can't make you be at the service. I know that you can get by the preacher. But when you get by the preacher, you still must meet the Lord.

The one who is not "there" cannot contribute to the service. Your presence is needed. You are a part of the body. If you don't fill your place and do your part, no one else will or can. Each one has his own part to contribute. Oh, it is a great joy to be in a service when all the members who can be there, are there. If you are not "there," you cannot receive anything from the service. The preacher may have just the sermon you need. It might be the very one that would do the most for you. Oh, it could be a blessing, a help, an encouragement, if you were only "there." But you can get nothing at all out of the service if you are not there. Most of the First Baptist Church of Jerusalem met on that day of the Lord's resurrection. The Lord met with them. They had a great service with the Lord in their midst. Thomas was not there. He missed out on the great blessing of that service. There was so much of God's blessing in the service that day, but Thomas did not get any of it. He was not there. You never know what you might miss by missing church.

3. Be on time. It seems that folk can be on time everywhere else, but not for church. One can be at work on time, be at school on time, be at some worldly place on time, be in some place of amusement on time; but cannot be on time for church. This is a shame and disgrace. It seems to say that these other things are more important to this one than the church is. It is dishonoring to the Lord, disturbing to the church, disrespectful to all concerned to be late for church. I realize that there may be exceptions and may sometimes be legitimate reasons for such, but most of the time this is not the case. Most people who are late for church are not late because of what happened on the way to church or at the last minute; but because they did not start in time.

4. Be properly clothed. Do not dress in showy, party type clothing. You are not going to a party or to a fashion show. Don't try to show everyone up by the way you dress. Don't dress in immodest (I should say indecent) clothing. The preacher is sometimes ashamed of the way some people dress for church and often wonders why they are not embarrassed and ashamed. Dress clean and proper. There are clothes that may be proper in some places, but improper for God's house. I certainly would not like for any of my ladies to wear pants to church. My opposition to this makes me sometimes almost want to say no pants for women period, but I cannot, for myself, justify this attitude Scripturally. And ladies, don't forget your head covering when you go to church.

5. Be a tither and an offerer. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. 3:10). Why, without money we cannot have a hive in which to meet, much less have a honey of a service. The non-tither is a God-robber. Surely, robbing God is going to detract from the honey in the hive of a

Baptist church. God has promised to bless the tither. He has promised to bless the church of tithers. He will pour out His blessings on the tithing church. Don't forget that God demands an offering as well as the tithe. And you cannot give an offering until after you have paid your tithes.

6. Be prayerful. Oh, this may well be our greatest failure. We don't pray enough. Surely, we don't pray enough. God delights to hear and answer the prayers of His children. He delights to pour out His blessings on the church where His believing children have gathered to pray. Pray before you go to church. Pray all week. Pray for the pastor. Pray for the officers and teachers. Pray for the members. Pray, oh pray hard and long that God will bless the next service the church has. You are not yet properly ready to go to church until you have prayed for God's blessings on that service.

Pray during the service. Be in a hungry, thirsty attitude during the service. Pray for the song service as it progresses. Join in earnest prayer with the man that is leading in public prayer. Pray for the preacher as he preaches. Pray that God will bless you during and through the service. Pray that God will bless others during the service. Pray for the unsaved who are present that God might be pleased to save them in that service. I remember when George Munsey was saved. Oh, it was a blessed service. He almost got out the door, but God stopped him and saved him that night. I spoke to several members during the next week about the blessing of seeing George saved. I do not know how many of them told me that they had been praying for George during the service, that God would save him. In fact, I do not remember a one who did not say this. I surely believe there was a divine connection between that praying church and the salvation of George Munsey that night. Yes, pray during the service.

Pray after the service. Pray on the way home. Pray after you get home. Pray that God will help you to do the things He brought to your heart during the service. Pray that God will cause the effects of the service to be lasting and productive of much spiritual good. Dear friend, can we ever pray too much?

7. Be willing. Don't be a shirker. Don't say let someone else do it. Be willing, yea, be anxious to do anything you can for the Lord in and through the church. I have heard of Sunday School classes named The Willing Workers Class. Every child of God ought to be a willing worker for the Lord and in the church. Don't wait to be asked. Don't wait to be begged. Don't play hard to get. Be ready always to do anything you can do for the Lord and for the church.

8. Behave. The church is no place to misbehave. I have often, during a church service, told the children that if they wanted to throw paper on the floor, take it home and throw it on the living room floor. Don't throw it on the church floor. Behaviour is an important matter as to the whole service in church. It is difficult, if not impossible, to have a good, blessed service with a great deal of misbehaviour going on. Be in your seat when the service starts. Stay there until it is over. Don't be running in and out. I have often said that every Baptist church should have an

outhouse — a mile from the building — through a briar patch — filled with rattlesnakes — then, when someone said he had to go, I would believe him. Most services would be better if the rest rooms were locked during the service, and most people could get along very well with this being true. Be still and quiet in your seat, except when standing, singing, or participating in the service in some way. Don't talk. Don't scribble and pass notes. Don't pass photographs. Don't squirm, twist, and turn. Don't be looking at others all around, especially those behind you. Behave. Behave. Behave. Many services are hurt, and many who do behave miss out on much good in the service because of the misbehaviour of those around them.

If you want to misbehave; do it at home, do it at school, do it at work; but don't misbehave at church. It is the Lord's house. And, parents, see to it that your children behave too.

9. Be awake. Sleep in school. Sleep when company is present. Sleep on the job. But don't sleep in church. Respect God's house. Respect God's people. Respect God's preacher. Respect the Lord. Stay awake in God's church. You will miss as much while you are asleep as you would if not there. God may have some word for you that you need and that would be a great blessing to you. You will miss it if you are asleep. Being asleep disturbs others because they look at you, and think about your sleeping instead of showing interest in the service. Stay awake. You might fall off the pew, be embarrassed, embarrass others, or maybe break your neck and die; remember Eutychus?

10. Be attentive. Pay attention. God may have something for you. Don't miss it by lack of attention. It is disrespectful to the boss not to pay attention when he is giving orders. It is disrespectful to the teacher not to pay attention. It is disrespectful to others not to pay attention when they are talking to you. Surely, it is disrespectful to God Almighty not to pay attention when He is talking to you through His preacher. Not being there, being asleep, and not paying attention are three thieves that will steal from you the blessings that God has for you in His house.

11. Be hungry and thirsty. Oh, go to church like a hungry man goes to the table. The appetite has much to do with the enjoyment of the meal. Poor cooking tastes pretty good to a very hungry man. The best cooking on earth is not tasty and appealing to one who is not hungry. My friend, you say that you did not enjoy the sermon; it was not much of a sermon, you say — maybe it was a great sermon and you just were not hungry. You may have been so full of the junk food of this world that you were not ready for the soul food of the Word of God. My friend, there is a lot of truth in saying that what you want is what you will get out of the church service. If you do not go to church to get a blessing — hungry and thirsty for it — you will not get one, most likely. Katie is an excellent cook. She enjoys cooking for a crowd. She enjoys cooking for a hungry crowd. She will pile it on as long as one will eat it. It always saddens and disappoints her when

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HIVE

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she has worked hard preparing a meal and folk are not hungry and will not eat. It is the same with the preacher. He "slaves over a hot stove for days" getting a good meal ready. He puts it on the table, and behold, many of the folk he prepared it for are not there, some of them are half asleep, most of them are not hungry. The best preacher cannot feed one who is not hungry.

12. Be believing. The Lord's church is precious to Him. He has promised to meet with His church. The Lord started His church. He perpetuates His church. He baptized His church in the Holy Spirit. He gave the great commission to His church. He gets glory through His church. He will take His bride from His church. Yes, the church means so much to the Lord. Should it not also mean much to the child of God? The Lord will meet with and bless His church. Believe these things. Believe that the Lord has promised to, and will be there. Believe that the church is the place where God has promised to meet with you in a special way. Go to church in faith, believing that the Lord will keep His Word and will give you a blessing.

13. Be a participant. Oh, we do not want our church members to be spectators. Be a participant in every part of the service. Participate in the singing. You say you can't sing. That is not true. You won't sing. Well, even if you cannot sing, you can make a joyful noise unto the Lord. Every one present should get a song book, stand or sit with the congregation (unless physically hindered), sing out strong and loud. Whispered singing is no good. Sing out. Sing out. Make a joyful noise. Lift up your voice unto the Lord in songs of praise and adoration. The song service should be the ante-chamber to the blessings of the sermon. The song service should be the handmaid to the blessings of the sermon. The song service should prepare the congregation for the sermon, and prepare the preacher to really preach. The song service means very much to the totality of the service. Be a participant.

Participate in the prayers. Only one can and should lead in public prayer — at least at a time. Women should never lead in prayer or pray out loud in the service. But every child of God can join in the prayer service and this adds to the effectiveness of this part of the service.

Participate in the preaching. Oh, you say that you can't do that; that only the preacher can preach. Among other things, it takes two things to make a good sermon. It takes a good speaker and it takes a good listener. Preaching is more than just giving a speech, or just saying words. It is a form of spiritual communication between the speaker and the hearer. Oh, I love to preach to good listeners. I love to preach to those who sit there and seem so hungry, seeming to drink in every word. Yes, you can and you should participate in the preaching.

14. Be obedient. We go to church to hear what God has to say to us. When God speaks to you, telling you what to do; go out and do it. Obey the Lord. Come into church to learn God's will for your life. Go out to do it.

Be thou wholly for God and He with all His power, will be wholly for thee.

Put what you hear in the church service into practice in your daily life. Many times we miss the ultimate of the blessings possible through the church service by our disobedience. Hopefully, it is hard to go to church without hearing something that should affect our daily lives. But what do we do about what we hear? That's the question. Some one asked, "Is the sermon done?" Another replied, "No, the preacher is through, but the sermon remains to be done. Disobedience in our daily lives is the chief reason we get so little out of the church services. I do not know which "Be" I have given is the most important, but being obedient must be high on the list.

A hive of "Be's" in a Baptist church will produce a honey of a service. This is the kind of service we desire. This is the kind of service we need. A honey of a service will be a blessing to all present, will make them desire to come back, and will likely attract others to the services. May God bless you all.

WORD

(Continued from Page 1)

greatness of Christ's priestly ministry as compared to that of the Old Testament priest. It seems as though the writer came to a certain point and then just stopped. He gives his reason for stopping in verse 12. "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not strong of meat."

Evidently, because they were Hebrews, the writer thought they had an advantage of which they did not make use. "What advantage then hath the Jew? Or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God" (Rom. 3:1-2). They needed to be taught all over again. It was as though they were running along with others and then fell behind. Instead of catching up with those at the head of the pack, those in front had to come back to get them. They needed that one teach them again the first principles of the oracles of God. In this, we want to observe that the Word of God is progressive, super-natural, and experimental.

It was the first principles of the Word that they had forgotten. What is a principle? A principle is any first thing from which the others belonging to some series take their rise. The Word of God is an organized progression of teachings, or doctrines. James called it the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. These principles take their rise from that faith of which Jude wrote. In other words, we rise to a sound knowledge by a progressive learning experience, and each step behind us is necessary for a foundation, while each step in front of us is necessary for our progress. If we are to rise in knowledge, we cannot so much as leave out one doctrine. If you leave certain ingredients out of your bread or your cake, it won't rise. The progression of God's people in the principles of the oracles of God could be expressed with the words of Isaiah chapter 28, "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn

from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little."

The fact that these principles of doctrine are learned progressively is further illustrated in the analogy of milk and meat. "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (I Pet. 2:2, 3). After we have tasted that the Lord is gracious, that is, after we have been saved, we have an intense hunger. As a newborn baby craves milk, we take in the Word of God. Peter tells us why we have this strong desire for milk: that we may grow thereby. A newborn baby has a nursing instinct which illustrates a saved person's instinctive desire for the Word.

Peter said it was the sincere milk of God's Word. Sincere means guileless and unadulterated. A tiny baby needs clean and pure food unless you want to be up all night patting it on the back. They won't grow right if you feed them junk food. To have proper progression, or growth in grace, a child of God must have pure truth systematically served to him, and he must eat it. "The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times" (Psa. 12:6).

Now suppose your wife called you in for your big Sunday afternoon meal; and you went into the dining room to find her best china was on the table with the silverware, and the linen napkins were in place; neatly folded; but in the middle of the table was a little jar of creamed spinach, some strained carrots, and a little jar of blueberry buckle for dessert. It wouldn't do much for you, would it? Why? Well, your appetite is progressive and you left baby food a long time ago. This was the problem with these Hebrew saints. They should have been eating strong meat, but they still preferred milk. Now it is noteworthy that Peter said it was newborn babes that desire

this milk of God's Word. Those who are not born again don't desire it.

They can't even discern that it is nourishing, pure, and sincere. Newborn babes love milk because they can discern that it is pure, and so it is also with a new born — again babe. "Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it" (Psa. 119:14). Something cannot be discerned until it has been tried. Isn't it frustrating when you know a certain food is nourishing, but you cannot get your child to so much as try a taste of it? We discern that the Word of God is good by experiencing its work in our lives. "...Even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised..." (Heb. 5:14b). Sheep food makes strong healthy sheep and that is why Peter said, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof." (I Pet. 5:2).

Now the writer talks about strong meat. In this case strong means firm, solid, or hard; something you can sink your teeth into. The Greek lexicon says Hebrews chapter five is the only place the word meat is used in this way. Meat is the food of the mind; the substance of instruction. Have you ever noticed when you have company, or you go to someone's house and sit down to a big meal; everyone gets a little excited about the food, especially if they have waited for it and are very hungry? Well, the meat of God's Word rejoices our heart, excites us, and nourishes our spiritual health. "Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17). The Word of God, as the sincere milk and the meat, progressively fills our hearts with gladness and causes us to grow spiritually. "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection..." (Heb. 6:1a). The Word of God does not make us perfect. The word, "perfect," is better understood to mean mature, a fully grown Christian.

The actions of a baby tell the mother when it is time to move from milk to strained food, to junior food, and then on to table food. In like manner, the actions of a child of God tell when they have matured enough to be fed strong meat from God's Word. However, in contrast to the natural realm, those who are able to digest strong spiritual meat will still always delight in the milk also. Strong meat may be difficult for a spiritual babe, but it will never harm them. The Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth regarding their spiritual immaturity. He more or less told them to stop acting up so they could grow up. Notice the correspondence between their diet and their spiritual growth, or lack of it. "And I brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envyings and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" The words carnal and babe are not synonymous. A person could be a babe without being carnal, but when a Christian seems carnal, it is often a sign of immaturity. Our children act up most often when they are immature. The sincere milk of the Word will cause a child of God to grow, and he will progress to maturity and the use of the strong meat of God's Word. The Apostle Paul tells us the purpose and result of the Word of God in the church, and the peaceable fruit it bears. "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:14-15). Surely, there is profit for us in the Word of God. This is what the Apostle Paul told the elders at Ephesus. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

ENEMIES OF THE CHRISTIAN HOME

by Roy Mason
Now in Glory

I picked up the newspaper this morning and the first thing I read startled me. The paper had two columns over near the corner. There I saw statistics dealing with marriage and divorce. I noted that twelve marriage licenses had been issued to couples while seventeen couples had filed petitions for divorce.



Isn't that situation astounding? Nearly a third more people divorcing than getting mar-

(Continued on Page 11 Column 1)

PRAISE IN POETRY

I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith, and love, and every grace;
Might more of His salvation know,
And seek more earnestly His face.

'Twas He who taught me thus to pray,
And He I trust has answered prayer;
But it has been in such a way,
As almost drove me to despair.

I hoped that in some favoured hour
At once He'd answer my request;
And, by His love's constraining power
Subdue my sins, and give me rest.

Instead of this, He made me feel
The hidden evils of my heart,
And let the angry powers of hell
Assault my soul in every part.

Yea, more — with His own hand He seemed
Intent to aggravate my woe;
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,
Blasted my hopes, and laid me low.

"Lord, why is this?" I trembling cried,
"Wilt Thou pursue Thy worm to death?"
'Tis in this way," the Lord replied,
"I answer prayer for grace and faith."

"These inward trials I employ
From self and pride to set thee free,
And break thy schemes of earthly joy,
That thou mayest seek thy all in Me."

—John Newton

ENEMIES

(Continued from Page 10)

ried! The percentage is not always that high, but sometimes it is even higher. That kind of situation will eventually destroy the nation if persisted in. Think of the children involved, and of their distress and disturbance. Think of all that is involved along every line. The American home is the foundational organization of this nation. That is why our homes are so important. As we think of the situation, we are bound to ask the question, "Why are homes going to pieces today?" Why is marriage proving to be such a failure in so many places? Let me suggest a few reasons.

1. Ignoring of what God says. Not a single human being of this earth made and put himself here. God made the earth, and every inhabitant, and He established the laws. He made man, and set in motion the laws that are to govern us. His laws concerning marriage are expressed by His Son, Jesus, in these words, "Whosoever shall put away his wife saving for the cause of fornication causeth her to commit adultery, and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery" (Matt. 5:32). Nearly all divorced people remarry. This they have no right to do, unless their divorced mate was guilty of fornication. The world is full of divorced couples whose children are scattered all over the place. This has wrecked homes, and often it wrecks the lives of the young people of the homes.

2. Turning again to the question as to why marriage is such a failure in many cases today, I would suggest that much of the trouble is caused by too early courtships. Boys and girls start "going together" before they are old enough to know much of anything about life. This often leads to very youthful marriages. They never gave themselves time or opportunity to experience love of any depth, and because of this, they often meet someone else with whom they fall deeply in love. This is the person they ought to have met and married, but they didn't give themselves time or opportunity. Now it brings divorce and troubles and problems of all kinds.

3. Another thing that ruins many homes is the practice of marrying an unsaved person. This is in direct violation of the command of the Bible which says, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

Sometimes people marry before either of them have ever given any consideration to religion. One of these comes under the influence of the gospel and is saved. Their life and outlook is completely changed. Even if the unsaved one is a nice person, the problems become immense. The unsaved person takes off for the beer parlor. Sunday comes, and the saved attends church, while the unsaved nurses a grouch. And what about their children? Whom shall they follow — father or mother?

4. Another thing that brings troubles in homes that result in fightings and quarrels, separations and divorces is immoral lives before marriage. Recent statistics are frightening. It is claimed that a large portion of teenage girls in grade schools practice immoral conduct that in many cases result in pregnancy. A goodly number of young people who get married today

Real consecration means that God fills up your emptiness and empties your fullness.

have had sexual experience. A husband or wife seldom feels that they can trust a mate who has had corrupt morals before marriage. Many of them fear that the husband or wife will be untrue to them, and slip back into old habits. This causes jealousy of the deepest nature, and very often the utter breakup of the home.

There is another thing that I feel impelled to mention, and that is the practice of Baptist young people dating and marrying people of other denominations. I have witnessed the way in which this works out, and I have seen some bad results. Because the couple cannot agree on some religious matters, they often just quit going to church. Personally I reached the place years ago where I declined marrying couples who belonged to groups of different faiths. I recall a very fine young woman who was a member of my church. She wanted to get married, and she wanted me to perform the ceremony. The young man she was engaged to was a Seventh Day Adventist. I told her that I could not conscientiously tie her up to an Adventist. She affirmed that he would not seek to disturb her church attendance or her beliefs. She brought him to see me, and he declared that if I married them, he would never try to interfere with her beliefs or her worship. I finally agreed to marry them. After their marriage, the young woman attended church just as regularly as ever. Then she began to drop out part of the time and soon after that, she vanished. The Adventists ran a cookie bakery close to where I lived, and one day, when I stepped in to get some cookies, there she was. They had given her a job. Her husband worked for the cookie place, and he secured the help of the Adventist people he worked with in pulling his wife from the Baptists. They succeeded, all right. I went back to the practice of declining to marry people of different churches.

(copied from the Park Ridge Baptist Messenger, July 1977 issue).

SEED

(Continued from Page 2)

same work all over again.

What architect drew the plan? Where did that little watermelon seed get its tremendous strength? Where did it find its coloring matter? How did it build a watermelon?

Until you can explain the watermelon, do not be too sure that you can set limits to the power of the Almighty, or tell just what He will do or how he will do it. The most learned man in the world cannot explain a watermelon, but the most ignorant man in the world can eat a watermelon and enjoy it. God has given us things that we need, and He has given us the knowledge necessary to use those things. And the truth that He has revealed to us is infinitely more important for our welfare than it would be to understand the mysteries that He has seen fit to conceal from us.

William Jennings Bryan

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

Psalms 42: 11

IN THY NAME WE GO AGAINST THIS MULTITUDE



Wil Bang

"And Asa cried unto the LORD his God, and said, LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O LORD our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O LORD, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee" (II Chron. 14:11).

Asa was a personality in Biblical history to which not a great deal of space is dedicated: nonetheless, his position is one that commands admiration. The faith which he possessed is humiliating to usward in many respects, while at the same time provoking our Spiritual senses, tenderly admonishing the present day saint that it is the same God now, as then, and these immaculate bestowals of sovereign grace still may abundantly be shed forth through the effectual vocation of the Son.

We are not daring to insinuate that every child of God is enjoying the heavenly places in Christ, simply because the Scriptures state that he can delight in such intimate bliss. There are much greater manifestations of spiritual revelations which we hitherto have not romanced (Eph. 3:11,12,16-20; John 17:13). So once again, the Old Testament magnifies the redundant power of Israel's God, while Christianity today, at best, only discourages those glorious triumphant exploits of Jehovah God in bygone days. Paralyzed by our present spiritual immobility, we anticipate no miraculous successes for the current time, but rather wist off into the future like a scurrying bird and rest in the thought of that sweet by and by: content, I assume, to remain submerged in our Spiritual nothingness which is characterized by no greater conquests than daily Bible reading, and our expectations are either clear gone forever in Old Testament victories, or just around the next corner in future days. Away with such nothingness! Let God send Asa to the rescue. In the name of Jesus, let us go against this multitude. Whether it be unbelief, sin, despair, the Law, distress, persecution, famine, weakness—physically, Spiritually, or morally—haughtiness, arrogance, sloth, and all of the other Spiritual enemies that saturate our heavenly calling, let us consider the thousand thousand and three hundred chariots of Zerah, the Ethiopian, as they loomed around the valley of Zephathah. It was then that Asa considered not the obstacles set before him, but rather had respect unto the omnipotent God who he knew was the Orderer, the Controller, and the Consummator of everything.

The Scriptures teach that Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord (II

Chron. 14:2). Election—what a marvelous portion of ponder. What caused this man to differ? Was it not the mighty God who setteth up one and tearth down another? Faith, whose Author and Finisher is Christ, knows but one direction when its present anxieties are pushed forth in heart-felt dependednt request. To God, to God, to God we must go and Asa cried unto the Lord his God.

Asa was a God-wrought, God-honoring, Spiritual champion. He flogged idolatrous practices like Joshua fell on Jericho. "For he took away the altars of the strange gods, and the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves" (II Chron. 14:3). Judah had a king, a man sent from God - Asa, immersed with convictions, permeated with power, and fortified with faith that would shake the nation. God endowed this vessel with such Spiritual integrity that his forceful commands became Spiritual invitations which commanded respect from the brethren, and sanction and validity from the Most High God. "And commanded Judah to seek the LORD God of their fathers, and to do the law and the commandment. Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah the high places and the images: and the kingdom was quiet before him. And he built fenced cities in Judah: for the land had rest, and he had no war in those years; because the LORD had given him rest" (II Chron. 14:4-6).

A vessel so highly favored and honored of the marvelous God should be assured that the Scumsucker is going to soon vomit forth the satanic phlegm which is devised to destroy the dove, the darling, and the heart throb of the Almighty. When the battle is in array and the enemy commands his troops, innumerable though they be, it is then we must cry unto the Lord our God, Asa said, "...Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power..." Asa knew the battle was the Lord's. God was his battle-ax; convinced by God-wrought conviction that the greater the number of the enemy, the more awe-inspiring will be the great God's victory. The old sage had evidently been taught, as would be later the Apostle Paul, that if God be for us, who can be against us (Rom. 8:31)? As far as Asa was concerned, numbers were just so much mathematics. Whether it be all the powers of hell, or whether it be no power at all, God was the determining factor. A host of 1,000,000 and chariots numbering 300 to say the least was a sizeable opponent! --a great burden to Asa were he to fight this multitude without the aid of God. But what is that multitude to God? Asa said, it is nothing. Would it be a strain on Omnipotence? Again, our hero exalts the power of his Lord. He simply states, it is nothing with Thee to help. Faith goes on a little further, and once again we stand in awe as we watch the faithful fervent prayer of a righteous man availing much. The soon conqueror simply asked, help us O Lord our God; and that was enough said. Let us notice the reaction and the position that faith so soon contracts. "...for we rest on thee..." Faith is always ask-

ed to believe the impossible. Even the most courageous faith, hoping for miraculous things, will oftentimes stagger. Oh, for the grace of God to rest in the Lord! Why was it that in the days of the pilgrimage through the wilderness that so many of them never entered the promised land? The answer, according to scripture, is that they did not rest, like Asa did rest, but rather were denied such because of unbelief. "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God...So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to some short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it...Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief...There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Heb. 3:12,19; 4:1,2,6,9-11). To rest in the Lord is quite forcefully annunciated as ceasing from one's own works, regardless of how astronomical the opponent, how vicious his steaming threats, or how prevailing his past successes. It is in the name of Jesus that we must go against this multitude.

Asa, being desirous of God's glory, carried his confidence in God to the extremities of Spirit-wrought boldness, by declaring into the ears of the Almighty One that He must fight the battle, for it was His glory that was at stake. Not only would that arrogant Ethiopian bolster his insidious victory over Israel, he would also chide, mimic, and dishonor the only God that is God. Asa concluded the short prayer with a dozen words which dripped with eternity's power as they soared through the Spiritual channels of immutability an cranked the affections, touched the tenderness; and sweetly embraced the cords of love. "...O Lord, thou art our God, let not man prevail against thee."

Your heart will take an extra beat as you anticipate the reaction, the answer from this God, who is so much God, that the creation must cover its face and sigh, 'woe is me--too unworthy to be privileged to have knowledge of such a great Lord.' Yes, twelve words uprooted and overthrew the enemies of Asa. "So the LORD smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled" (II Chron. 14:12).

What might we learn from Asa? "...for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude." In the great name of Jesus! It is faith wrought from God that

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
SEPT. 20, 1986
PAGE ELEVEN

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

MULTITUDE

(Continued from Page 11)

magnifies His name. Well might Jesus Christ, the only begotten son of God, declare in His intercessory prayer of John 17, "I have manifested thy name..." (John 17:6). Faith in God, obedience without blemish or flaw; righteousness redundant with perfection; exploits so replete with incomprehensible Deity—truly, doth magnify the name of God. Faith grips on the immaculate perfections of Jesus, rests in His perfect work, and deems all other actions and reactions as habitual emptiness. Faith ceases from its own works. Trust in Christ commands, while it also convincingly entreats, that we go against all insurmountable obstacles in the name that is above every name, and rest in the completed work of God's favorite of all, His Prize, His Glory, His Son — JESUS.

Sin, the chiefest of all the enemies—Lucifer's bloodstream, the quagmire of his sadistic constitution. He is as immersed in its filthiness as he will one day be immersed in the flames of the Lake of Fire. How do we go against sin? We are sinners by nature. We are fallen. We are depraved, and every day is but a continual manifestation of the screeching rottenness that still encumbers our being, retards our progress, and deadens our senses. It is in the name of Christ Jesus we go against this multitude. Sin has been defeated in Christ. He answers in our stead. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls...For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit..." (I Peter 2:24,25; 3:18; II Cor. 5:21).

The Law, as holy, righteous, and good as it is, if it be not satisfied, we must deem it an enemy. How do we go against this multitude? These Holy Oracles? Ah, yes tis once again in the name of Jesus we go against this multitude. The Law was satisfied in Christ our Saviour. "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it... But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle

wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father... For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law. That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in my mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved... For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (Col. 2:14, 15; Eph. 2:13-18; Rom. 10:4-9; John 1:17).

In the name of Jesus we go against this multitude and in the name of Jesus we rest. The Old Testament priesthood knew only a Levitical origin, save the case of Melchizedek. Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, sprang from the tribe of Judah of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood. A change in the priesthood must make necessary a change of the Law. "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law" (Heb. 7:12). The question might be asked, why a change? The answers are quite evident: "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God... Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:19, 25). The Law could make nothing perfect, neither could it save. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:19, 20). The Law could not save, nor could it make anything perfect because the Law had a fault — it was weak through the flesh and could not compensate for that weakness. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3).

It is then that the writer of Hebrews makes what at first appears a glaring statement, but the peace that ushers in from his declaration is more than heart can endure. "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second" (Heb. 8:7).

Another covenant now takes the place of the first one and the new covenant we find is of grace and mercy, two attributes of which the first covenant knew nothing. The Law kills and knows no mercy, whereas grace is made of mercy and mercy is made of grace, and Christ is the author of them both. "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. 8:12).

Through the offering of Jesus we are sanctified in Him. "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10:10). Through the offering of Jesus we are perfected forever. "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14).

The admonition then to the children of God is to remain faithful and rest in the name of Jesus. Let us draw near. Let us hold fast. Let us consider. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful and promised;) And let us consider..." (Heb. 10:22-24a).

It is very likely that the children of God will be tried by the same promises for which they wait. But when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life. "Until the time that his word came: the word of the Lord tried him" (Psa. 105:19). "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee, And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise" (Heb. 6:13-15).

Still, let us rest in the name of Jesus and anticipate greater recompense of reward. "Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry" (Heb. 10:35-37).

Faith wrought of God rests in God's Son, Jesus Christ the righteous. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen... But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:1, 6).

Let us hear then the conclusion of the whole matter — in the name of Jesus we go against this multitude!

"...and they carried away very much spoil." Yea. Amen.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting, and to everlasting. Amen, and Amen.

Psalms 41: 13

The JUSTICE OF GOD is in itself a great barrier to the salvation of a sinner. Because God is just, our sins must be punished. Never has there been a sin pardoned without atonement since the world began. There has never been a sin remitted by the great Judge of Heaven until justice has been fully satisfied. How, then, can a sinner be saved? This is the great riddle of the law and the grand discovery of the gospel. The answer is, "God's justice has been fully satisfied through the substitution of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." He died "the just for the unjust" that He might bring us to God. Through the obedience and death of our Lord on our behalf, God can be just and justify the believer.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Doug Newell is the assistant pastor of Calvary Baptist Church and the assistant editor of The Baptist Examiner. He is a very sound and able preacher of the Word of God. It seems that he is growing by leaps and bounds in his knowledge and preaching of the Bible. Brother Doug is available to hold meetings in other churches as the Lord opens the door. He would be happy to come to your church for a few days or a week of special services. I highly recommend brother Newell. I hope some of our churches will use him in this way.

Brother Newell is a great blessing to me and to our church. I would really hate to lose him, but I would not stand in his way. He would be interested in pastoring a church if the Lord opened the door to such. I would recommend Doug to any church in need of a pastor. I would do this even though it would hurt me to lose him, for I know the young preacher's desires (I was once there). I consider brother Newell to be very capable of pastoring one of the Lord's churches, but I leave the time and place thereof to him and the Lord. (The editor).

MY IMPRESSIONS OF 1986 BIBLE CONFERENCE

It was terrific. I only wish it lasted longer and happened more often. The best conference I've been to in a long time.

Corina Rice
Grayson, Ky.

What a great conference! What great fellowship! There were both spiritual and physical food so plentiful. What a blessing to be there!

Jeannette Kern
Gladwin, Mi.

The conference in Ashland has become an annual time of spiritual blessing for me. The only thing wrong with the conference is that it was just too short. I cannot remember when the food was better. I will be planning now to make this conference next year.

Eld. Eldon Joslin
Birmingham, Ala.

Beloved, if you missed this Bible conference you missed a blessing! I thank the Lord for people who are willing to stand

up and speak up for the truths of God's Word in spite of the persecution involved therein. This Bible conference was filled with fellowship with the Lord's churches — Sovereign Grace Landmark Missionary Baptists! Hope to see you next year in glory, but if not there — the next best is in Calvary Baptist Bible Conference in Ashland, Kentucky.

Eld. Andy Proctor
Port Richey, Fla.

The conference was well planned and well carried out. I was pleased to hear some sermons preached to preachers and some to laymen. All sermons and songs brought praise unto our great Saviour and God which is the main reason to meet together.

O.K. Sevy
Goshen, Ind.

Praise the Lord for the Christian fellowship exhibited and felt at the conference. I am a student of the Bible and sometimes called on to speak. The style and means of expressing God's Word helps me to understand my text.

Robert Gatrell
Piketon, Ohio

APPRECIATED LETTERS

Dear Pastor Wilson,

I wish to thank you for putting my name on your list. I read T.B.E. with much interest. We are outcast in this area, with our belief in election and predestination. So it is nice to share the paper. We are still having our Bible study with our small Catholic group and they are over-whelmed by the truth. Thank God, He chose me, and drew me, and took me from the Catholic Church of Rome. Sincerely, Mrs. Barbara Foxworth, Port Anthon, Tx.

The Baptist Examiner

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