

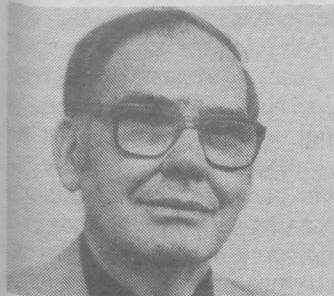
Faults are many where love is small.

(USPS 042-340)

A Study of Third John

by C.T. Everman

As we look into Third John we see that, like Second John, it was written to an individual Christian. While the second letter deals with whom we are not to have fellowship, in this letter John talks about with whom we are to have fellowship. In the second letter he condemns departure from the truth and from the love of the truth. In the third he condemns divisions and splits in the church.



Clyde Everman

While the theme of second John is "walking in truth", that of third John is "love in truth". It would seem that the family written to in the second letter had members that were the "little children" of first John 2:12, that is, new born ones.

Therefore they were in danger of being led astray from the truth by these false teachers. But Gaius of this letter was one of the "fathers". One who was mature in the faith, one who had stood the tests and trials of life, one

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INDULGENCE

by Ray Hiatt
P.O. Box 156
Avawam, Ky. 41713

"who can forgive sins but God only"? (Mark 2:7). "I am the master of my fate: I am the captain of my soul" "INVICTUS"

William Ernest Henley
Today is January 1, 1988, and after last night's profligate cheer, more minds will turn to religious indulgences in their many forms



Ray Hiatt

to quiet the guilt of their sins. With sins thus before our minds, I hereby grant a plenary indulgence to all my readers. Why not, sir? If Pius, Gregory, John, Paul, and John Paul can grant penances and indulgences; why cannot I? If they claim to be Christ's vicar on earth, my claim has more force; for like Paul I stand in the stead of Christ. Pius, Gregory, and the rest of that benighted crew down to the present Pope were elected by men to their office. In this office they forgive sin by granting indulgences and penances which trickle down to the lowliest priest and the newest penitent who enters a confession stall. I, too, have been elected to such an office and to discharge such a benefit. I am writing this

(Continued on Page 8 Column 1)

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The Baptist Examiner

Baptist Is Our Middle Name

Paid Circulation in All States and in Many Foreign Countries

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

VOL. 60, NO. 16

ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, AUGUST 6, 1988

WHOLE NUMBER 2541

HOW DOES ONE BEHAVE WHEN TOTALLY DEPRAVED?

by Andy Proctor
Pastor
Providence Baptist Church
Port Richey, Fl.

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities." (Isaiah 64:6-7). The Bible doctrine of the total depravity of all humanity is a very much misunderstood teaching. As a matter of fact, it is all the more despised today because of the foolish pride of many in our day and time. No wonder there are so many who

profess Christianity, but never practice Christianity - they've been taught that there is a little good in all of us, whereas the Word of God explicitly speaks, "there is none good, no not one!" One must realize his sinful condition, and the more clarity we apply, the better.

First of all, lest we be misrepresented, let us clarify our posi-



Andy Proctor

tion through means of negation. When we proclaim total depravity, we do not mean absolute depravity. In other words, when we say "total" we do not refer to a totality of degree. Consequently, we intend "total" depravity to refer to the extent in depriving one from performing any spiritual good work whatsoever. Ephesians 2:1 speaks of being "dead in trespasses and sins!"

Furthermore, it must not be misunderstood that we do not believe one can do outwardly good works; for to say such would be foolish. In particular, take note of the outward actions of some unregenerate people: Judas Iscariot, who went about preaching the gospel to the lost sheep of Israel in Matthew 10. Furthermore, the rich young ruler who outwardly obeyed much of the Law of God. The Pharisees and the religious

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HOW A STRONG MAN LOST HIS POWER

by Doug Newell
Assistant Editor

Judges 16:18-21, "And when Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her and brought money in their hand. And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to

afflict him, and his strength went from him. And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out



Doug Newell

of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him. But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.

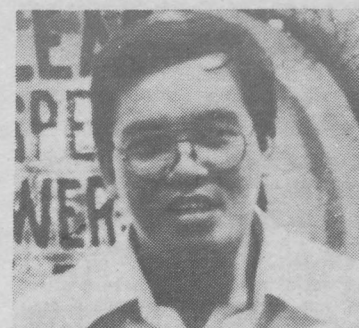
Samson stands out as the strong man of the Bible. I suppose that most people hear of his great strength (at least in America) at one time or another in their lives. Samson was a judge

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REMEMBER THE LORD'S DAY

By Velmer B. Paler
Toril Davao City
Philippines

"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8). We believe with all of our hearts that all days are God's days, and that every day should be lived for God, but that Sunday is uniquely the Lord's day. It is not so much a question of what shall we do or what shall we not do on



Velmer Paler

the Lord's Day, but how shall we keep the Lord's Day in a way that honors and glorifies God. Our observance of the commandments seeks to consecrate one day in seven as a symbol of consecration of all life and space. The sanctity of one day out of seven symbolizes the sanctity of life.

Remember the Lord's Day. I want to think with you of the use

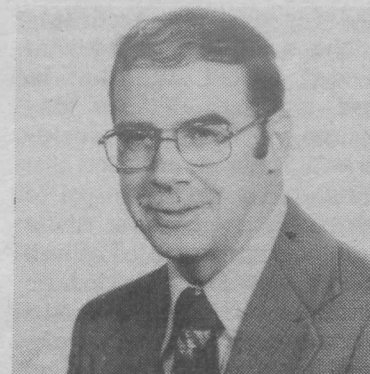
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TO KNOW GOD IS TO BE STRONG AND AT PEACE

by Willard Willis
368 Yankee Rd.
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Let us now continue by considering the mercy of God. There are some who have difficulty distinguishing between the mercy of God and the grace of God. The main point of difference between the two is that God's general mercy is over all His creation, while His grace is limited to His elect.

Perhaps we can have a better understanding of God's mercy if we consider its three principal



Willard Willis

characteristics. The Bible, in fact, makes a three-fold distinction relative to God's mercy. The first of these is that His mercy is general. The second has to do with God's special mercy while the third relates to God's sovereign mercy.

God's general mercy is extended

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(USPS 042-340)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

THE GOOD NEWS OF THE GOSPEL

"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country" (Prov. 25:25). This might be considered as a good text for summertime, but it is also good for anytime, for we all know how good and refreshing a cold drink of water is to one who is thirsty. The figure is a good one. We remember when, in Genesis 21, the water in the bottle given to Hagar for her and Ishmael gave out. She lifted up her voice and wept over this. Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water nearby. With what great joy she drank of that well and gave her son to drink thereof. We remember how, on two occasions, Israel in the wilderness was

without water. God provided water for them out of the rock. With great joy did they drink thereof. We remember how, after Samson had slain a thousand men with the jawbone of an ass, he was thirsty. He called on the Lord. The Lord clave a hollow place, and water came forth. Samson drank thereof, and, "when he had drunk, his spirit came again, and he revived."

The proverb of my text is a good one in a literal sense. We all have experienced the joy of receiving good news; and know that this is truly, "As cold waters to a thirsty soul." However, I desire to apply this text in a spiritual way in this sermon. I desire to apply it to the

good news of the gospel, and what that gospel is like to the soul that has been made to thirst therefor by the effectual work of the Holy Spirit. I really suspect that the Holy Spirit meant this text to be used in this way.

What is the gospel? This is a very important question. Many are misled on this matter. Many think they are preaching the gospel when they have not even touched upon it in their whole sermon. The gospel is not just any part of the Bible. One may preach a sermon that is totally true to the Bible. He may truly interpret, expound on, and properly apply a portion of God's Word, and still never touch the

(Continued on Page 2 Column 1)

The Baptist Examiner

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PUBLISHED EVERY 2 WEEKS at 3339 - 13th St., Ashland, Ky., with paid circulation in every state and many foreign countries.

A contribution of \$6.00 per year would be greatly appreciated to help with the cost of mailing.

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

GOOD NEWS

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gospel. The gospel is not the totality of the Bible. Men often confuse the terms "gospel" and "Bible." One could preach his whole lifetime. Every sermon could be true to the Bible. Still, he could have never touched on the gospel one time.

The gospel is that part of the Word of God that tells what Jesus Christ has done for salvation. The best statement thereof is in I Corinthians 15:1-4, "MOREOVER, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." These are the facts that constitute the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. Of course, these facts must be expounded as well as stated. Jesus Christ is God. He was born of a virgin. He lived a sinless life. He died on the cross to atone for all the sins of all who would ever believe in Him. He was buried. He rose from the dead. The gospel is: Jesus Christ; who He is, and what He did. If we do not preach this, we have not preached the gospel, no matter how true to the Bible our sermon has been.

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PAGE TWO

Christ's eye-salve must clear the sight, or else no right judgment will be made.

One must believe this gospel in order to be saved. Anyone who realizes his lost condition repents of his sins, desires to be saved, and trusts Jesus Christ and His saving gospel will be saved eternally. One is not saved by believing in the inspiration of the Bible. One not saved by believing the Genesis account of creation. One is not saved by believing that God opened a way through the Red Sea for Israel to pass over safely. One is not saved by believing that Baptist churches are the only true churches. One is not saved by believing that baptism is by immersion. One is not saved by believing that real wine and unleavened bread are the elements for the proper observance of the Lord's Supper. I could go on and on. Those mentioned things are



Joe Wilson

all Bible truths, but one is not saved by believing them. One is saved by believing the gospel. One is saved by truly trusting Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

One must hear the gospel in order to believe it. We are not Hardshell heretics, not even the New Hardshells. We are Missionary Baptists. We believe that the salvation experience is wrought by the Holy Spirit using the gospel in giving spiritual life. One must believe the gospel in order to be saved. One must hear the gospel in order to believe it. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:13,14,17). This one Scripture is enough, if men would but believe it, to deliver anyone from Hardshell heresy as to the necessity of the gospel in salvation.

Someone must tell the gospel in order for another to hear it. "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:42). "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk. 16:15). I am enough of a KJV and TR fan to quote from the last twelve verses of Mark as the inspired Word of God. I am totally opposed to those texts and versions that omit or question these verses (that's for free). Many Scriptures could be quoted to show the responsibility of saved people to give the gospel to the unsaved. One must believe the gospel in order to be saved. One must hear the gospel in order to believe it. Someone must tell the gospel in order for another to hear it. Someone told you; yes they did. Hardshellism might be a doctrine to preach (it never

should be, and woe to those who do preach it), but it surely is not one to practice. I have never met the man who says he is saved, but has never heard the gospel. Hardshellism cannot present one living example of its doctrine, but Missionary Baptists can present examples by the thousands. Mr. Hardshell heretic, show me the born again child of God who has never heard the gospel.

The Holy Spirit uses the gospel in salvation. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth...." (Rom. 1:16). "...it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:21). "...for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel" (I Cor. 4:15). "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth...." (Jms.1:18). I could go on and on, but these are enough to prove to any one who truly believes the Bible that the gospel is used in giving spiritual life. Hardshells are like Arminians in that neither of them believe the Bible on all subjects.

The gospel is good news. This is what I want to emphasize. The gospel is good news. It is good news about the only, but sufficient, remedy for man's greatest sickness. Sin is pictured in the Bible as a sickness. It is a terrible sickness. Everyone is afflicted with this sickness. It comes upon one in conception. It is a terminal sickness. The gospel is the only remedy for this sickness. The gospel is not just a remedy. It is not just a good remedy. It is not just the best remedy. It is the only remedy. You will trust Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, or you will die of this sickness and go to hell for eternal suffering. The gospel is a sure and eternal remedy. We really do not need another remedy, for this one works. It is a sure remedy. All who believe this gospel (trusting from the heart in the Lord Jesus Christ; His person and His work) are immediately cured of the sickness of sin. It is an eternal remedy. All who take this remedy are healed forever. They will never have this sickness again. I do not mean that they will not sin again. Some of the effects of this sickness will remain until we receive our glorified bodies or go to be with the Lord in death. But the sickness, as to its killing effects, is cured forever by one dose of the gospel remedy.

The gospel is good news about the answer to man's greatest problem. Men have many problems. They have physical problems. They have material problems. They have economic problems. Oh, the problems that afflict all of mankind! Some have more than others. Some have different problems from others, but all have problems. Sin is the greatest problem that men have. If a man could have the answer to all his problems but this, it would be as nothing. He can live with and die with all other problems. But a man cannot afford to die without the answer to the problem of sin. The gospel is the only answer, but it is a total and satisfactory answer.

The gospel is good news about the supply of man's greatest need. Man has many needs. All of them are as nothing at all compared with his need of salvation. If all needs but this are met, it

will be as nothing. If this need is met, all other needs will eventually be met. All the needs of any man are as insignificant nothingness compared to his need of salvation. The gospel meets this greatest need of man; totally, completely, wonderfully, satisfyingly, and eternally; praise the Lord.

The gospel is good news about the only way to escape hell. Man is a sinner. God is holy, and He must and will punish sin. Hell is the prison house of eternity where God punishes impenitent and unbelieving sinners in the tormenting flames of eternal hell. My friend, the worst thing that can ever happen to a man is for him to die without Jesus Christ and go to hell. We hear or read of something that has happened to someone. We say, "How awful." Friend, as awful as it might be, it is as nothing compared to eternal hell. Hell is not a joke. Hell is not a "scare story" made up by the preacher. Hell is for real. My friend, believe me now; don't wait until you get there to believe in hell. I said to a mocking Jehovah's Witness, "Five minutes after you die, you will believe just like I do about hell, and it will be forever too late." The gospel is the only way of staying out of hell. It tells how Jesus suffered the deserved hell of all who would ever trust in Him. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be eternally saved from the hell you deserve. Reject Christ and His saving gospel, and you will go to hell for sure and for ever.

The gospel is the good news about heaven. Though the gospel itself does not give the message of heaven, it implies and is closely connected therewith. Heaven is for real. Heaven is as wonderful as hell is horrible. No tears in heaven. No pain in heaven. No sin in heaven. No needs unmet in heaven. No sorrow of any kind in heaven. Oh, my friend, heaven sounds almost too good to be true. But it is as true as God's Word is true. The blessings of heaven will be wonderful beyond the power of the present mind to understand. Yes, there is a wonderful heaven.

The gospel is the good news about how to go to heaven. It would do us no good to learn about heaven, to have a desire to go there; and never know the way there. There is a way to heaven. There is only one way. It is a strait and narrow way, but it is wide enough for all who want to go. Jesus Christ, and His saving gospel, is the way to heaven. He is not a way. He is not just the best way. He is the only way.

The gospel is good news about Jesus Christ. I have already told you about this. The gospel is not about man or men. The gospel is not about nations. The gospel is about Jesus Christ.

The gospel is good news about what Jesus did. The gospel is not a set of rules for man to follow in order to be saved. The gospel is not a "do-it-yourself kit" that you must carefully follow directions and put together for yourself. The gospel is about

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FROM THE EDITOR

"...and my glory will I not give to another...." (Isa.42:8).

I was watching a church service on T.V. A lady sang. She sang beautifully, and I enjoyed her singing. When she finished her two songs, the audience applauded. This greatly injured the effect of the whole matter for me. Maybe I am just old fashioned, but I frankly detest this. It has become very popular today. I would not be so shocked at the Holy rollers and Charismatics doing this, but the church program I had been briefly watching was a very large First Baptist Church in a large city - I never thought I would see the day. And alas, I have now heard of such being done in our kind of churches.

"Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus...." (Eph.3:21). The whole purpose of the church is to give glory to God. The church was instituted for this purpose. Everything that is done in a church service is to be done for the purpose of giving glory to God. We assemble together to worship and glorify our God. I ask a very sincere question, What place does the applauding of the performance of man have in a house dedicated to the glory of God? I am not very favorable toward, but I could live with people clapping their hands as they sang to the glory of God. But the hand clapping to which I refer is that of applauding the performance of a man (or woman) in the house of God.

Is this why we go to church? Do we go to be entertained by the performance of men? And are we then to applaud such performances to let the performer know that we have enjoyed his or her performance? My friend, you can twist and turn as you please. You can pretend that you are not applauding the performance of man. But I challenge any who practice this to tell me what else it could possibly be except an applauding of the performance of man in the house dedicated to the glory of God. I have heard men try to make it mean something else, but I got the impression that they did not believe their own arguments.

The lady to whom I referred in the beginning of this editorial sang two songs that really honored the Lord. They were not the sentimental slush so many sing today. They were some old hymns of the faith. Had I not been fearful of what was coming, from a previous viewing, I could have been blessed thereby. But, I tell you that the applauding of her performance by the audience sent cold chills through me. It more than effaced any good that might have been done for my soul.

I would think that a person who was singing in a church service for the glory of God would discourage any such applause. I know that I would discourage such. I would think that the pastor would tell his people that, "This place is dedicated to the glory of God, and we do not applaud the performance of man therein." I would think that the spiritually minded members of the church would let their disapproval be known - loud and strong. I would think that the church would, if necessary, take official action to have such a God dishonoring practice stopped.

Maybe I am just old fashioned. Maybe I just have trouble changing with the age in which I live. But I suspect I will live and die feeling this way about applauding the performance of man in the house of the Lord. Comments welcomed.

GOOD NEWS

(Continued from Page 2)

what Jesus Christ has already done. He died on the cross. He was buried. He rose from the dead. He has done all the work necessary to save your soul for time and eternity. I do not come to you with a plan for you to follow, with a set of rules you must obey, with a description of works you must do; I come to you with the good news about what Jesus Christ has already done. I tell you to believe His gospel, to trust Him, to receive Him as Lord and Saviour; and you are saved, now and for ever.

The gospel is good news for anyone and everyone. No one is shut out from its good news. I come to you with the free offer of the gospel. Men may mock at this term. Men may call it "Arminianism" to speak of the free offer of the gospel. But I know whereof I speak. I know that the Bible teaches that, in the gospel of Jesus Christ, eternal salvation is offered to every man, woman, boy, and girl who hears that gospel. Sad to say, some of our brethren have turned against this truth; but that does not change our message. I have heard men argue, "Is eternal life a gift or an offer?" I have not been changed thereby. It is both. It is the gift of God. It is offered, as a gift, to all who hear the gospel. The gospel is not only good news about what Christ has done. It is also good news about what Christ will do for anyone who believes the gospel and trusts the Saviour. I know that some Sovereign Grace men have, and some do oppose this terminology. I know that some will call me "weak on grace", or even "Arminian" because of this. But I continue to preach to any who hear me, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Yes, the gospel is good news for anyone and everyone who hears it. There are no "rider clauses" attached to the gospel, limiting it in its free offer of salvation in Jesus Christ to all who hear it. There is no "fine print" attached to the gospel that changes what seems to be its meaning, into something else. Anyone who will believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour will be saved forever.

Now, how do men receive this gospel? Many are unconcerned. Would you believe it? The greatest and best news ever told, and men are unconcerned. Good news about the most important matter in time and eternity, and men are unconcerned! Good news that concerns the greatest needs of a man, that concerns his eternal happiness or eternal torment; and many are unconcerned. One would think that men would make any sacrifice, go to any length, pay any price to hear this good news. Surely, such good news should pre-empt every T.V. and radio program. Surely, such good news should be told everywhere, to everyone, again and again. But, the depravity of man; oh, the depravity of man! Many are unconcerned.

Many despise and hate this good news. It irritates them. It offends them. They will hear no more of it. They will stay away from the places where it is told. They will turn from the radio and

T.V. programs that tell it. They will (would you believe it?) slam the door in the face of one who is telling it to them. They will be rude, they will curse, they will order the teller of this news from their homes, they will even become physically violent toward the bearer of this good news. Oh, the depravity of man: many hate and despise this good news.

There are some who believe it, are saved by it, rejoice in it, and praise God for it. Oh, the Holy Spirit does work in some by His grace and power. He makes them hungry and thirsty for the good news of the gospel. This gospel becomes to them the best and sweetest news they have ever heard. They delight to hear it again and again. They never get tired of it. It never becomes "worn out" to them. Tell it again. Tell it again.

Now, to the most important part of this whole message; what does this gospel good news mean to you? Oh, what does it mean to you? Have you received it? Have you believed it? Have you been saved thereby? My friend, does this good news that millions have believed, to the saving of their souls, mean nothing to you? Does this good news that has brought many to unceasing joy, many already to everlasting glory in heaven; does it mean nothing to you? My friend, hear this good news. Believe this good news. Receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour even this moment. This good news rejected may, to you, become bad news of increased punishment in hell. I beseech you, my friend, don't turn a deaf ear to the good news of the gospel.

You who are saved by this gospel; rejoice therein, praise God for it, live for His glory out of gratitude, and serve Him henceforth to the best of your God-given, Spirit-enabled ability. But most of all, at least just now and in this message, tell it to others. Someone told you, or you would have never believed it unto eternal salvation. Now, go forth and tell others the good news of the gospel. Let us go forth and tell the story of Jesus to a lost and dying world. It is our duty to do so; and who, but God, knows what just might be the glorious results of our faithfully telling this good news of the gospel? Tell it again. Tell it again. Do your best to keep men from going to hell without ever hearing the good news of the gospel.

TO KNOW

(Continued from Page 1)

to all of His creation. It reaches to the atheist as well as the believer. "...his tender mercies are over all his works" (Psa. 145:9). "...he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things" (Acts 17:25).

One will find that the special mercy of God was poured upon the rich man whose story is told in the sixteenth chapter of Luke. This man, because of God's special mercy, fared sumptuously every day. There is a great multitude who fall into this same category today. There, in fact, are many Lazaruses today who are lying at the gates of rich men-rich men who could help them if they only would. The rich men, however, as was true of the one in Luke sixteen, ignore them. Judgment day, of course, is on its way. Let me add that it is not altogether what rich men do to the

poor, it is what they don't do. This is true of many even though they are recipients of God's special mercy. God, however, in spite of man's reaction, continues to send rain upon the just and the unjust. "...for he maketh his sun to shine on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matt. 5:45).

The third characteristic of God's mercy is that it is sovereign. This aspect of God's mercy is reserved for the elect-the heirs of salvation. The two previous characteristics of God's mercy are of a temporal nature since they relate only to this life. God's sovereign mercy, on the other hand, endures forever.

The rich man, of whom we read in Luke chapter sixteen, had all mercy severed when he died. There, in fact, was not enough mercy left to generate one drop of water on the tip of the finger of Lazarus. God's sovereign mercy, on the other hand, reaches beyond the grave. This aspect of God's mercy is spoken of in the following passage of Scripture.

"For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion" (Rom. 9:15). Some people have the idea that God is too merciful to cast them into hell, but such an idea can find no basis in God's holy Word. One may as well place a rattlesnake inside his clothes and expect it not to bite him.

What should be our reaction toward God's general, special and sovereign mercy? This question is answered in the following passage of scripture. "O give thanks unto the LORD: for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever" (Psa. 136:1). The least we can do is to thank God for His mercy. One, for example, who delights in a feast, should thank one who prepared the feast.

Let us now consider the love of God. The love of God to us is certainly a product of His sovereign mercy. We read from John 3:16 that "God so loved the world" and in Ephesians 2:4 we read of "his great love". The words "so" and "great" cannot be measured. His love, in other words, according to Ephesians 3:19, "passeth knowledge". The song, "The Love of God", says it very well when saying, in essence, that God's love could not be exhausted by writers even if the oceans were ink and every man on earth wrote about God's love until the oceans were dry.

It is not only true that God's love for us "passeth knowledge," but it is also true that His love is eternal. His love reaches back into eternity past and on into eternity future. His love, in other words, is everlasting. "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31:3). The following passage of Scripture shows very clearly that God's love for us extends back into eternity past. "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). The Syriac version of this

passage of Scripture reads: "through love" rather than "in love". This fact places God's love for us before the foundation of the world and the basis for His choosing us.

It is not only that God's love is eternal, but it is also free. We, in fact, read in Hosea 14:4 that "I will love them freely." The word "freely" means that God expects nothing in return for His great love. It means that His love cannot be merited or demerited. God loves, not for what He can obtain from us, but for what He can give us. God, in other words, did not elect us in order to love us, but He elected us "through love," or on the basis of His love. Election, according to Ephesians 1:4, 5, is the fruit of God's love.

God loved us long before we had one drop of love for Him. "We love him, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).

I'm sure that all will agree that there was no beginning of God's love for His Son. The following passage of Scripture confirms such to be true. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:23, 24). We learn from the above Scriptures that God loves the elect as He loves His Son. We also learn that He loved His Son before the foundation of the world. The word "as", no doubt, relates not only to God's degree of love, but also to His length of love.

One of the great characteristics of God's love for us is that it is unchangeable. This fact should make our hearts leap with joy. There can never be a time in which God will not love us. "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Mal 3:6).

The above raises a solemn question. The question relates to whether or not God loves people in hell. It appears to be the thought of some that God loves lost people until they die and then stops loving them. Those who hold to this idea will have great difficulty with the above passage (Mal. 3:6). This passage informs us that God does not change, which, of course, means that if He loves you now, He will also love you if you die and go to hell. Furthermore, He will love you in hell "as" He loves His Son. I don't believe that God loves those who are in hell. He, in fact, never did love them. God loves only the elect, or those that God, in a covenant way, has given to His Son. "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him" (John 17:2).

God hates all of those who have not been given to His Son in a covenant way. It is as stated in the following passage of Scripture. "As it is written,

Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (Rom. 9:13). God's hatred for Esau and His love for Jacob are not based upon anything that they had done. It was based upon that which God Himself had done. He, in fact, had placed Jacob in the covenant of grace. Esau, on the other hand, was left outside this covenant. This reminds me of two men who need a ride as they walk along the highway. A gentleman stops and picks one of the men up. The other is left to continue walking. The man was not obligated to pick up either of the men. He, therefore was merciful in picking up one of them. God, in like manner, did not owe anything to either Esau or Jacob. He was very merciful in choosing one of them. Let's listen to what God has to say about His action relative to Jacob and Esau. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (Rom. 9:11-13).

The key to the above passage is that portion which states, "...that the purpose of God according to election might stand." Jacob, in other words, was chosen via adoption to be a son of God. Esau was not adopted into God's family. Note carefully the following scripture. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will" (Eph. 1:4, 5).

God dealt with Jacob in a covenant way. All in this covenant are loved because the blood of the Son covers their sins. They, because of the Son, have a holy standing before God. All of those outside this covenant cannot possibly be loved by the Almighty. You will note from the following Scripture that God's love for us is "in Christ Jesus our Lord." "Nor height nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:39).

There are many who use John 3:16 as a basis for not agreeing with that which I have said. This passage states: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

May I make a simple request of those of you who may not agree with me? My request is that you obtain a Bible dictionary and look up the word "world" as it is used here in John 3:16. You will find that the Greek word is "kosmos" and refers to mankind in general rather than mankind without exception. You will find that this same word is used throughout the book of John.

This concludes our study of the attributes of God. I, however, would appreciate hearing from

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The Baptist Examiner Forum I

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT
THE BAPTIST EXAMINER--P.O. BOX 60--ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060

Why is the tribe of Dan omitted in Rev. 7:4-8?

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Deuteronomy 29:29: "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law."

Read Revelation 7:4-8. I know that the text I have chosen might not seem applicable to the question before us, but I think that it is. I think there are things that are secret unto God. There are things that He chose not to reveal unto us. I am not saying that it is wrong to venture a guess as to the meaning of some verses, but there are verses that it is very difficult to be dogmatic about. I feel this verse fits in this category.

I will be perfectly honest with you about this question. The truth is, that I don't know why Dan is omitted from the twelve tribes in Revelation 7:4-8. I will however venture a few guesses. I remind you that these are only guesses. Let us now deal with this question.

In some form or another the twelve tribes are listed in the Bible about thirty times. There are always twelve tribes named together. These are not always the same twelve. We must remember that Jacob had twelve sons. We must also remember that sometimes the two sons of Joseph are mentioned and sometimes the Levites and others are left out. The important thing is that there are always twelve mentioned. One might ask, "Why is Ephraim not mentioned here and Manasseh is?" These are questions that perhaps only God knows. Let us deal with some ideas concerning this omission.

Let me begin by pointing out that this does not mean that no tribe of Dan existed then, and I assure you that it does not mean that there will no longer be a tribe of Dan. We read in Ezekiel 48:2 that Dan is the first nation given a portion of land in the millennial reign of Christ. Many are quick to point out that this land is the farthest from the temple. It is thought that this is punishment for Dan being the first tribe to go into idolatry. Some say this is the reason they are now left out of this list. I doubt this to be true. Another theory is that, based upon Genesis 49:17, the Antichrist will come from the tribe of Dan. They will be so enamored by him that they will not as of yet have turned to God. I also doubt that this is true. The theory that I give the most credence to is that

since Dan had become a very small tribe, they are here included with the tribe of Naphtali. Remember that Naphtali was Dan's full brother by Bilhah.

If I had to hold a belief on this question, this is the answer that I would hold to.

These are a few theories about why Dan is omitted in the above passage. You may adopt any that you please without great argument from me. If you have a better interpretation, I would love to hear from you. I would like to point out that it took great and detailed study on behalf of the questioner to notice this omission. We need that kind of study in our churches.

Let me make a few closing comments. First, I remind you that secret things belong unto God. These things perhaps will add to our joy in heaven when our shallow knowledge becomes complete. I believe it is important to point out that Dan will be restored as promised by God. The time of that restoration may not be clear, but we have shown them in the millennium. God's purpose will not be defeated. I do not believe that Deuteronomy 29:18-21 can be used to teach that Dan ceased to be a Tribe of Israel for eternity. I know they were the first into idolatry. I know they were exceedingly idolatrous, but they were not the only nation involved in this. If I must say why they were omitted; I say it is because they were taken in by Naphtali. May God bless you all.

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"And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel" (Rev. 7:4).

In the list of the twelve tribes that are to be sealed, the tribes of Dan and Ephraim are omitted. We are not told why this is so, but a study of Scripture reveals the probable reason for this. In Deuteronomy 29:18-21 we read, "Lest there should be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of these nations; lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood;... The LORD will not spare him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven. And the LORD shall separate him unto evil out of all the tribes of Israel;... We find in I Kings 12:25-33

that these two tribes failed to heed this warning, for we are told that king Jeroboam caused both the tribe of Dan and the tribe of Ephraim to go and serve other gods. He did this by making two golden calves. He set one in Bethel (in the tribe of Ephraim) and one in Dan. He then said to the people, concerning the golden calves, "...behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. ...And this thing became a sin: for the people went to worship before the one, even unto Dan".

It would seem that because of this sin, these two tribes are to be omitted from those who are to be sealed and protected by God during the tribulation. If the twelve thousand of each tribe to be sealed are God's special witnesses during this time, God will not be using any from these two tribes. They must all go through the tribulation without the protecting hand of God.

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Let me begin by saying that I can only give my belief and opinion as to why Dan is omitted in Revelation 7:4-8. There has been, and I suppose will be, much speculation among those who care, as to why Dan is omitted. Some Bible teachers simply solve the problem by taking the position that these twelve tribes merely represent the church and are symbolic. That, of course is wrong; for God is here speaking literally because of specific tribes and numbers being mentioned. It is so nowhere else in the Bible and is not so here. Then there are those who say the omission of Dan is because of the addition of Manasseh, but the omission of Joseph's other son Ephraim has no significance at all. They point to the fact that in the 29 lists of the tribes of Israel in the Old and New Testaments, 12 are always given, never more. Most times Levi, the priesthood tribe, is omitted so that never more than 12 tribes are listed. They conclude then, that because only 12 were ever listed, no matter who was omitted, it is of no consequence here that Dan is missing. I do not believe that, however, and in spite of these and some other arguments, I think the omission of Dan is significant, as is that of Ephraim.

I believe the fact that Dan was a great ringleader of idolatry, as was Ephraim, is the reason for exclusion from Revelation 7:4-8. We can find their idolatry mentioned in the 17th and 18th chapters of Judges. Dan's great wickedness in hosting the great idolatry of Jeroboam the son of Nebat by having one of the

golden calves set in Dan was a most wicked and grievous act. Jeroboam did wickedly in several things, but his introducing idolatry and leading the people to a continuing sin was possibly the worst. I Kings 12:31 says, "And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi." Dan gladly embraced this all in place of serving the great "I am". Idolatry is abominable to the Lord. He warned Israel several times against it. Leviticus 26:1 says, "Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am the LORD, your God." Again He told Israel a truth that men do well to remember today when He said, "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." (Isaiah 42:8) God did not seal from the tribe of Dan, nor of Ephraim because of apostasy through idolatry. Dan was the first to lapse into idolatry and their pagan inheritance evidently is continued to be manifested even to Revelation 7:4-8. However, the day will come when God shall convert Dan as well as all Israel, for we find that Dan is first to be given a millennial land portion in Ezekiel 48:2. The tribes are not lost as many believe, but God knows where they are. When Dan receives his portion, then to its fullest will Romans 11:26 be fulfilled where it says, "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:" Our God hates sin in His own as well as the wicked, but ultimately God delivers His own to His glory and praise forever.

TO KNOW

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you if I have raised any questions which you are having difficulty with. My address is: Willard Willis, 368 Yankee Road, Monroe, OH 45050.

DEPRAVED

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leaders during Christ's earthly ministry were noted for their straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel in keeping the law, leaving the weightier matters of the law left undone. We could cite many other examples of such; yet, these should suffice.

Now, we know there are varying degrees of one's sinfulness; i.e., one sinner being greater than another, such as the Pharisees being referred by Jesus as receiving the greater damnation - yet, one is totally unable to save oneself from his sins. For instance, Jeremiah 17:9 reveals, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" This is a rebuke to those who say that everyone has a good heart, for God says such is false! On the other hand, the

mind is also deprived of spiritual success. Genesis 6:5 affirms, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually!" In addition, man's conscience even testifies affirmatively concerning the total depravity of man. Hence, Titus 1:15 judges, "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." So much for those who say, "listen to your conscience." Furthermore, we find that the Lord rejects the affections of the unregenerate person, "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Consequently, the natural man cannot and will not love God - his affections are depraved! Moreover, the speech of a person is even affected by the horrible disease called sin! Thus saith the Lord, "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:" (Romans 3:10-14). As a matter of fact, the inherited nature of Adam wrought by sin, has so corrupted the human race that we are sin-sick from head to foot! Isaiah said under inspiration of God, "A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken anymore? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment" (Isaiah 1:4-6). Finally, lest there be an Arminian or otherwise who is still not convinced, consider the spiritual condition of children, in and out of the womb: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psa. 51:5). "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies" (Psalm 58:3). Before someone assumes falsely, I do believe that all children who die as infants, including those who are killed during abortion shall be in heaven by the power of the gospel and the quickening power of the Holy Spirit. This is a miraculous event, as is any born-again event, which is proven by II Samuel 12:19-23, where David speaks of seeing his newborn child who died, "But now he is dead,"

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The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT
THE BAPTIST EXAMINER--P.O. BOX 60--ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060

Psa. 5:5. Does God hate sinners, or just their sins?

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According to the Hebrew-Greek Key Study Bible compiled by Spiros Zodhiates, Th.D, the word, hate, here means to hate personally, enemy or foe. Our text says that He hates all workers of iniquity. He does not say that He hates their works, but rather those who work iniquity. Yes, God hates those who sin against Him. There is another Scripture that I would like to call your attention to. Psalms 11:5 says, "The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth."

Proverbs 6:19 says, "A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among the brethren." Of course this is only one of the six things that is listed that God hates.

Yes, God hates as well as loves. He loved His Son the Lord Jesus, but turned his back on Him when our sins were being paid for with His life. He hates all reprobates and one day they will be cast into hell.

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"The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity. Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man." (Ps 5:5-6). Hate is directed at a person or a thing. Hate means to have a strong dislike or ill will for someone or something. Therefore, we can say that God not only hates sin; he hates sinners as well. A sinner is one that exists outside the realm of God's love. The definition of the word "hate" does not include any indication that it means to love less. The initial reply by man to this question is that it certainly cannot be true. Man has been engulfed with the lie: "God loves everyone". Contrary to what those of the world believe, God is not only a God of love, He is also a God of hate. In fact, His hatred is perfect. "I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies" (Ps. 139:22). David imitated the hatred of God.

The first verse we quoted states that God hates all workers of iniquity. This statement alone shows that God hates the sinner. A worker is one who does some-

thing and is not the thing that is done. It shows the sinner to be a fool in the sight of God. All workers of iniquity, unless changed by the power of a sovereign God, will forever be an object of God's hatred. God hates individuals.

"I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness." (Mal 1:2-3). This premise is again stated in Romans 9:13-16. There is a constant factor that man fails to see when God's hate is discussed. That constant factor is the electing grace of God. The sinner that God loves was loved before the foundation of the world. This is why God stated that he loved Jacob.

God also hates sin. It is sin that separates man from God. "But Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." (Is 59:2). The word "abhor" means to hate with indignation. So, God does hate that which people do relative to actions.

"These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood. An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among the brethren" (Prov 6:16-19). These are things that man does everyday, they touch his physical being. God also hates that which is not spiritual in nature. The deeds and the doctrines that are false. "But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." "So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate," (Rev 2:6,15).

These Scriptures support the premise that God not only hates sin, but He hates the one that is a worker of sin.

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Hate is an attribute of God. An attribute means something that is attributive to God or belongs to God. God has anger. He becomes angry with His people because of their sins and trespasses and so

He chastises them. His anger is a righteous anger. So with His hate; it is a righteous hatred.

God hates sin, it is true. Sin is against God. It is contrary to His nature. Sin is averse to God. What sin is, God is not. But, not only does God hate sin, He hates sinners. Romans 9:13, "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."

Psalms 5:5, "The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity." The word "hate" in Romans 9:13, with reference to Esau, can hardly mean "love less." Let us read Hebrews 1:9, "Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore

God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." It is unthinkable to say that Christ loved righteousness but He loved iniquity less. The word "hated" in Hebrews 1:9 comes from the same Greek word as in Romans 9:13.

The hatred of God is found in other Scriptures. God hates sinners. God hates those who continue in sin and make a practice of sinning. Proverbs 6:18-19, "An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." The Scripture here says that God hates the one that sows discord and the one that speaks lies, not just his sin but the one who does such. Read Proverbs 6:16, "These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination..." The seventh thing named that He hates is "...he that soweth discord among brethren."

God hates those who are proud and arrogant. Proverbs 6:17, "A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood," God hates those who are covetous and greedy. Psalms 10:4, "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts." God hates those who justify the wicked and condemn the just. Proverbs 17:15, "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemn the just, even they both are abomination to the LORD." The word "abomination" means to detest, to cause disgust, or to hate. To abominate carries with it the meaning: to hate very intensely.

God has the right to hate sin and sinners. Hate is an attribute of God. His hatred of things or persons is a righteous hatred. God hates for a right purpose and right cause. Just as He is angry for a right cause. When God hates sinners and sin, He does not do wrong; for He has a good reason to do so. We may not know the reason for His hatred for sinners,

but you can rest assured that the all wise God never makes a mistake. Hatred in men is an affliction, but not so with God. We may hate for the wrong reason, but God does not.

God's hatred and anger are somewhat alike. God being angry with the wicked every day does not cause Him to lose His composure, or get out of shape, or get ruffled, or to be moved out of His place. God knows how to deal with sin and sinners. Let us not forget that.

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All the attributes of God are perfect. His character demands it. His love is strong and complete. His mercy is everlasting. His justice is pure. He alone possesses infinite power, knowledge, and presence. He is not limited by time or space. All that He is and does is perfect and complete.

To hate means to dislike something or someone with strong feeling. The literal translation of Psalm 5:5 is. "...The boastful station not themselves before Thine eyes: Thou hast hated all working iniquity." God strongly dislikes sin, you must agree. Then He must dislike the source of sin, sinners. How could God be perfect and true to His character to hate sin and love the source? Men are not mere innocent victims of sin, as if taken by some disease. Men sin by nature. Just as dogs, by their nature, bark. Dogs are born dogs; men are born sinners. They must be born again to fellowship with God; made new creatures in the likeness of His dear Son. Apart from this new birth made possible by the sacrifice of Christ, man cannot approach God. They shall suffer the wages of sin, the second death, eternal death.

God hates the sinner and loves the righteous man. His elect are forever righteous in His eyes. They stand justified by the work of Jesus Christ. God never has nor ever will hate His own. Christ stands as a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. The sins of the elect of God are forever covered by the blood of that Lamb. Legally, the true believer has never appeared as a sinner to God. I am not saying that the believer has never sinned in his life, or that he does not sin daily. I say that his sins are hidden in the blood of Christ. He shall suffer chastisement due to his sin as a child of God, because God loves him. Out of love for His elect, He quickens them, grants repentance and faith, and saves them in His own time according to His own will. If then God hates the sinner, are we to hate him also? I say no! There are several reasons. God's hatred is a righteous hatred. He has never sinned, and all sin is against Him. Although believers were commended for hating the deeds of sinners (Rev. 2:6) no man was ever commended for hating another man. We are commanded to love one another. Love thy neighbor as thyself. Love does not condone evil deeds, but warns of the danger and admonishes the disobedience. Although God hates sinners and their deeds, we are not

God, we should love them, while we hate their deeds, be a witness to them, pray for them, that they might come to trust Christ to the saving of their souls.

DEPRAVED

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wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." (II Sam. 12:23). As we have seen in the preceding passages of Scripture, mankind is totally depraved in every way.

The effect of this total depravity is one of great controversy, and which is of high importance if we are to truly represent salvation wholly by grace. The question which settles all other questions is: Are we dead in trespasses and sins before regeneration? Let us seek counsel from the Word of God for such an inquisition. Colossians 2:13 says, "Are you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses". Allow me to use a well-worn, but good illustration. If there was a man lying dead on the floor in front of you, could that man even attempt to do anything that pertains to physical life? Could you persuade such a one to respond on his own to any form of stimuli? Well, any sane person would have to answer negative to both of these proposed questions. The man is dead! In comparison, when we consider a man who is in a spiritually dead condition, as the Bible says all are because of sin, should we steer from the absolute that dead is not alive, and alive is not dead? Of course not, yet, that is exactly what some "intellectual theologians" do. Take, for example, repentance; is it a good work? Is it pleasing to God? Is it a command of God? An affirmative answer to all these is obviously apparent. Thereupon, we must conclude that divine intervention is needed in order to enable a dead man to do something that corresponds to spiritual life. Repentance, or I should say godly repentance, which is expressed by godly sorrow for sins and a turning away from sin unto God, is wrought by the quickening or life-giving power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus says in John 6:63, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." Consider John 6:44, 65, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day..." Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." Hence, no man can come to God without the irresistible grace of God, whereby the Psalmist expresses in Psalms 65:4, "Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts:" Psalms 110:3 - "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning..." If man is truly and totally depraved, and truly and

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DEPRAVED

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totally dead, then that man must be unconditionally elected unto salvation, for he cannot elect himself because of a depraved nature. His sins must be atoned for, as his spiritually dead condition prevents self-atonement. Finally, because of this depraved predicament, God must elect or predestinate certain vessels unto honour (Romans 9:13-24), for we cannot do it for ourselves. To be quickened by irresistible grace and the Power of the Holy Spirit in regeneration, as we cannot repent and receive Christ, is a good work! It is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, not the flesh nor the unregenerate heart, or else we have a salvation by works, and that contradicts the fundamental doctrine of total depravity! As a result, a spiritually dead man cannot do anything that pertains to spiritual life.

In summary, let us examine a chain of Scriptures to aid us in tying together this wonderful, God-honouring doctrine. Jeremiah 17:9 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Proverbs 4:23 states, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." God says in Job 14:4, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." In other words, can anything good come out of an unclean heart such as repentance, or any other good work? It is utterly and Biblically impossible! In like manner, Jesus affirms this truth in Matthew 7:17-18: "Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Moreover, in Luke 6:45, the Lord says, "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh." Thereupon, let us take heed to Romans 10:9-10, "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 with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Obviously, it is understood that from a wicked depraved heart can no good thing come forth. What must occur? Jesus says in John 6:63, "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing..." When the Holy Spirit regenerates the soul of one of God's elect, is alive spiritually. He believes in the heart, and confesses with his mouth the Lord Jesus Christ unto salvation! Hallelujah! Thank you God for doing it all, for without your sovereign love and power I'd be a damned soul. This precious teaching of God's Word should cause one to praise God all the more for His grace upon such depraved and hell-deserving

Those of an innocent and candid soul are less apt to think evil of others.

sinner. May the Lord bless this message to His glory and our good.

STRONG

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of Israel around 1070 B.C. He was one who served God faithfully for many years until the time of this great fall that he had. The 13th Chapter tells us more of the work of Samson. Judges 13:2-5, "And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not; but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines".

Notice that this Samson was a chosen vessel of the Lord. God, by His predeterminate council had first of all chosen Samson unto salvation. God knew Him and loved him before he was ever born. God, in His sovereignty, already knew what kind of life Samson would lead. God had determined that He would give Samson his great strength that He might receive glory unto Himself. Oh beloved, how Samson is like every blood bought child of God. All of the elect of God were chosen for the glory of God. Our Christian lives are for the glory of God. All that God enables us to do in harmony with His Word is all for His glory. Samson was a chosen vessel. He did not come by this power through any work of his own, but it was a gift from the Lord. Let us be thankful to God when we are able to serve Him. Let us give Him all of the praise that is due His name when great things are accomplished in His work.

Let us see some of the great things that Samson did in his work for the Lord. Chapter 14:5-6 says, "Then went Samson down, and his father and his mother, to Timnath and came to the vineyards of Timnath: and, behold, a young lion roared against him. And the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and he rent him as he would have rent a kid, and he had nothing in his hand: but he told not his father or his mother what he had done". Samson had such great strength that he was able to kill a lion, and a young strong one at that. Can you imagine the strength that he must have possessed? Even the strongest of men are no match for such a foe as a lion.

Then we read in the 15th chapter and the 15th verse of another remarkable story or event that took place in the life of Samson. In this verse it says, "And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith". Now this truly was an

amazing feat, one man taking a jawbone of an ass and killing a thousand men. Some will scoff at this account. Some will say that it did not really happen this way. Some will say that he had help from some of his countrymen in slaying all of these Philistines. No beloved, Samson slew them. There was Samson and his jawbone in hand on one side and the Philistines on the other. Can you not see him as he is swinging that jawbone and cracking open the skulls of the Philistines? Can you not see the blood and hear the screaming as he is killing them one by one as they attack him? Yes, this is a true story. Samson really killed all of these men.

Now I want you to notice one other account of his great strength. In 16:3 it says, "And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gates of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron". Some say that he carried these doors 20 miles. I would not begin to guess the weight of the doors, bars, and posts. Being the doors to the city, I would imagine that the combined weight of them all would be several thousand pounds, maybe several tons, I do not know. We have seen the weight lifters of our day as they will struggle with five or six hundred pounds, but this man of God went 20 miles with all of this weight on his shoulders.

In these accounts, we have Biblical statements proving to us that Samson was the strongest man who ever lived apart from Christ Jesus Himself. I am convinced that he did more than these, but we just do not have an account of them. Now, while Samson was this strong and able to do these things, it must be made clear and plain that his strength was not his own. Samson did not work out in order to become this strong. Men work out daily with weights and other means of developing muscles, but none have ever been as strong as he. No, dear friends, the strength that Samson had was from the Lord. I don't believe that Samson was the giant of a man that some would have us to believe that he was. I don't believe that you could recognize him by his appearance if you were a stranger in the land. I think that this is evident by what Delilah asked him. She asked him wherein his strength lieth. Had he been a giant, she would have known that his strength was in his muscles. God could have made him a giant of a man had He so desired, but He chose not to. God has seen fit to glorify Himself in small things down through the ages. He has taken one man against many to do this. He has taken small groups against many to do this. He has worked this way that men may glorify Him when great things are accomplished. So the strength of Samson lay not in him but in the Lord. Psalm 29:11 says, "The Lord will give strength unto his people". God is able to take the weakest of men and make them strong for His glory. Many men and women who thought they were weak have given their very lives for the Lord. Many have endured persecution and even death in standing

for the truth of the Word of God. Yes, God is able to give strength to His people in their hour of need. Samson's strength was from the Lord, the giver of strength. Now remember that from the womb Samson belonged unto the Lord. He was to be a separated man, a consecrated man unto the Lord. The fact that he was not to cut his hair was a sign of this. It showed his separation. His hair did not make him strong, but was only a sign of his consecration. His strength came from the Lord. Now, as Samson had strength in his consecration we find that every born again believer will find strength in it likewise. Strength lies in our separation unto God and His will. If we are out of His will, or if we are not devoted to Him, then we will not have the strength in our lives that we need. Let me ask this question. Where are the strong men of our day? Where have all the men gone who have separated themselves unto the work of God and given themselves fully to it? What has happened to writers of our day? Why will men no longer take the time to write articles or books concerning the Word of God? Beloved, the answer is that we are not, and I say we, consecrated unto the Lord as our forefathers were. We are too involved in the world to give our time to Spiritual things. Oh, may God not be through with His raising up of great men. May we see more in the days ahead that will be a help and a blessing to us. May we see men who are doing great things again in the service of the Lord. Spurgeon said in his day, "The littleness of Christians in this day results from the littleness of their consecration to Christ". Oh, how more true this is in our day than it was in his.

This sermon is on the subject how a strong man lost his power. Let me point out to you that with great strength there comes great responsibility. Samson was not without responsibility. He was responsible unto God to keep himself a consecrated man. It was his responsibility to keep himself from the ways of the world and to see to it that he remained in close fellowship with the Lord. Now, let me say here that the more strength that a man has, the easier it will be for him to begin to trust in his own power and ability and forget about the Lord, his real source of power. You mark it down, when a man takes his eyes off Jesus he is in trouble even when he is doing something great. Remember how Peter was doing a great thing by walking on the water? He was doing just fine as long as he had his eyes on Christ, but when he looked away from Him he started to sink. So it is with us. We need to look to Christ always and never to our own strength.

It seems that Samson had become somewhat self-sufficient in his service to the Lord. It seems that he had developed some pride in his strength and became very careless with it. It seems that Samson did not even consider the possibility that he could lose this great strength. Samson did not realize that the more the Spirit uses an individual and the more strength that he has, the more the devil is going to move against him. Now the devil, of course, was not pleased with the glory that God was getting out of the life of this champion of Israel, so he began to work against him to try and get him to fail God. And

how we should all be aware of this fact. If you are being used mightily of the Lord, look out for the devil. He hates that, and he will try and ruin you so that you cannot bring glory to God. Beloved, the more we are used of the Lord the lower we must become. The more strength we have the lower and more humble we must become. Paul said in Ephesians 3:8, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ". Consecration will bring strength and strength must be accompanied with humility if we are to keep it.

Let us note now the downfall of this great man. In Judges 16:1 the Bible says, "Then went Samson to Gaza, and saw there an harlot, and went in unto her". He had faithfully served for 20 years, and then this takes place in his life. He goes in unto a whore. Samson is no longer the consecrated man that he was. He has gone into the camp of the enemy of God and had unbiblical sex with a whore. He has, by doing this, brought shame to the work of the Lord. He has brought shame to himself. He has taken his eyes off the Lord and has begun to satisfy the lust of the flesh. Now, note that Samson did not lose his strength at the time of this affair with that whore, but he was headed in that direction. He had weakened himself and was headed for trouble. Now listen, God may not deal with you over a particular sin, and you may think that you have gotten by with it; but you are wrong. Samson thought he could do this and still be a strong man. He thought he would prove that to himself and every one else when he carried the doors of the city away after it was found out that he was in the city. But Samson was wrong, and you are wrong if you think yourself strong enough to fool around with sin and not think that it will hurt you. This is evident by what we read in verses 4 and 5 of this chapter. Notice, "And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him that we may find to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver". Samson goes from one whore to another who is far more dangerous to him than the first. The devil leads Delilah to entice Samson, and he falls in love with her. Delilah was an enemy of God, and Samson considers it not as he is in a state of self-sufficiency. Samson says what can happen to me? Who is able to defeat me? This was the attitude that he had, and we see that it leads him into trouble. The devil has him right where he wants him. The devil wants him to trust in himself. The devil knows that his power is from on high. As we read this story we see that Samson toys with his strength. When Delilah asks him where his strength comes from he teases her and lies to her so that he can mock her. But all of this toying around led him to trouble. He should have left. He should have sought the Lord for strength

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PLAIN PROPHECIES FOR PLAIN PEOPLE GOING TO HELL WITH THE DEVIL PART II

by John R. Gilpin, Sr.

Now in Glory

We read: "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the Heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened, and another book was opened; which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:11-15).

Who is going to go to hell with the devil? It is the crowd that stands at the white throne judgment.

Every once in a while, I meet with some individual who talks about going to the great white throne judgment. Not for me, beloved; I am not going to be there. No child of God is going to be in this judgment. None of God's elect will be at the white throne judgment. There won't be a single person there that was once saved, and later lost his salvation. There won't be a single believer at the white throne judgment. Listen: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

Every one that was given as a love gift by God the Father, to God the Son, before the foundation of the world, is going to someday come to Jesus Christ to be saved, and God's Word says that He is not going to cast out a single one of those that come to Him. Listen again: "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom. 8:30).

Everyone whom God foreknew in eternity past, He predestinated, and everyone that was predestinated, He called; and everyone that was called, is justified, and everyone that is justified, is going to be glorified. Beloved, God never begins to do one single thing and then quits. Listen: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform (finish) it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6).

Thank God, He will never begin to save you, and turn you loose, and let you go to Hell. The Methodists can talk about falling from grace, the Holy Rollers and the Campbellites can talk about how a man was once saved, and fell, and went to hell. Beloved, the Word of God says, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which

hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." I tell you, there is not going to be one single believer at the great white throne judgment - not one.

I'll tell you who is going to be there. There are going to be some little sinners and some big sinners, for God's Word says, "I saw the dead, small and great." That's little sinners and big sinners.

You say, "I thought they were all the same." I think from God's



John R. Gilpin, Sr.

standpoint, they are about the same. If I get up on a high building, 500 feet in the air, and look down I have a hard time distinguishing between a boy and a man, for they both are about the same. When God looks down from heaven, I think that big sinners and little sinners look about the same. However, here in this world, we are prone to try to divide up sinners, some of them as big sinners and some of them as little sinners; we are prone to talk about little sins and big sins and white lies and black lies. Beloved, I think in God's eyes, it is all the same, but God, for convenience's sake, says that the dead, small and great, are going to stand before God. Everyone - little sinners, big sinners - those who have not done the worst in the world, and those who have the dregs of depravity, are all going to stand there.

Beloved, they are all going to stand before God. You couldn't get them to come to church. The majority of them wouldn't even think about coming to church. The majority of this crowd that is spoken about here wouldn't even consider coming to church one day, but one day they are going to stand before God.

Notice that the books were opened. What books? The books that tell the story of your life.

The majority of you couldn't begin to tell what your life has been, because there is so much that you have forgotten. There is so much that has just completely slipped from you.

Did you ever try to keep a diary - to write down the day by day events of your life? Well, I have. You know there were so many of the days that were so uneventful that I would just usually quit and say "Phooey," and forget about it. Then there were some days that I was ashamed of and I said, "Phooey on me for doing so poorly." I didn't want to write that down. I never did keep a diary except for a very short time.

Beloved, God has kept a day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute, second by second diary of your life. Things that you have forgotten about, God has them all written in His book. Some of these days the books are going to

be opened.

I think that some people may have just one and I think some people may have a set, and some people may have a whole library. Isn't it going to be something to stand in the presence of God at the judgment of the great white throne, and have God to read off page after page, of the things of your life that you have done - maybe the things that you have forgotten about? Sinner friend, if I were to write the ten blackest sins of your life across the sky, so that everybody might read those sins, you would be a raving maniac before the days' end.

Beloved, that is nothing. Ten sins is nothing. God is going to reveal every sin of your life, for God has kept a record, and that record is going to be opened.

Notice that another book was opened. What is the other book that is spoken of? It is the Book of Life.

There is going to be somebody say, "Lord, that is all true but wasn't I ever saved? I used to pass the collection plate in the church. I used to be an usher in the church. I used to sing in the choir in the church. Lord, I used to be bishop there. Are you sure that this is all the records that you have?" Then it is that God brings out one more book - the Book of Life. Why? To show that man that his name never was in the Lamb's Book of Life. If it had been there once it would have stayed there. If it were ever placed there, it was placed there before the foundation of the world, and it would never be taken out. God brings out the Book of Life to show men that their names never were inscribed therein.

How is this crowd judged? They are judged according to their works. Sinners are always talking about works - their meritorious deeds - the good that one does. Beloved, he will have his works crammed down his throat at the judgment bar of God, for he is going to be judged on the basis of his works. Sinner friend, if you are depending upon your works, you can be certain of one thing - you are going to meet your works at the judgment bar of God.

Then it tells about who all will be at the judgment of the great white throne, for it says that the sea gave up the dead that were in it. Just think of the ships that have been sunk. I go back to my boyhood days to the time when the Titanic, supposedly the greatest ship that was ever built up to that time - the ship that was supposed to be unsinkable - when the Titanic went down with hundreds and hundreds of people. Beloved, the sea will give up the dead that are in it.

Just think of the vessels that have been sunk in war. Just think of the vessels that have sunk because of some catastrophe that has overtaken them. Just think of the lives that have been lost and the bodies that are in the water today. Someday, the sea is going to give up the dead, and every dead body is going to come out of the ocean.

Then it says that "death and hades delivered up the dead which were in them." Beloved, that's the graveyards. The cemeteries will not be able

to hold back one single body at the judgment of the great white throne.

Suppose when a man dies his body is entombed in a concrete vault, and over that vault are written these words: "This grave is purchased for time and eternity." Beloved, it is not for time and eternity; it is just until the morning of the judgment of the great white throne. Death is going to deliver up the dead which are in it, and Hades (where the unsaved soul is now) will do likewise.

What is the difference between Hades and Hell? Just simply this: It is the same difference that exists between a prison house and a penitentiary. In a prison house, they hold a fellow for a little while, until he goes to the penitentiary. Hades is God Almighty's prison house, and Hell is God Almighty's penitentiary.

I tell you, beloved, death and Hades deliver up the dead which are in them and they will be judged according to their works.

We sing sometimes: "There's a great day coming, a great day coming."

Beloved, it is going to be a great day for the man who is saved, but a thousand years later, there is going to be a sad day coming for the man who dies without Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

IV. The Unsaved are cast into hell: We read: "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:14).

Can you imagine going into a lake of fire? I think about this poor unfortunate man, several years ago down at the Rolling Mill, who accidentally fell into one of those hot vats of molten metal that was heated to 2200 degrees Fahrenheit. I have stood there with colored glasses on and looked into that molten metal, and could see it so hot that it constantly bubbled 8, 10, or 12 inches high. So hot is that metal, that a man told me, that he saw the fellow fall into that hot vat of molten metal, and it looked like he just dissolved as he fell in; that by the time he had gotten out of sight, he was completely melted or disintegrated. The mill never rolled that metal. They took it out and dumped it. If you were to go there today you could see a molten mass. There is a human being inside of it. Some of these days that man's body is coming out of that molten metal. God is going to bring it out.

Notice again: "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15). Who is going to be cast into the lake of fire? Everybody that isn't written in the Book of Life. Just be certain of one thing: everybody that is not written in the Book of Life is going to hell. It doesn't say a thing about church membership. It doesn't say a thing about having your name on some church record book. It doesn't say a thing about being baptized. It doesn't say that the Lord looks the baptismal certificates over and says, "Well, that looks pretty good; come on in." It doesn't say that He calls for the church clerk and has him to read the church records, to see whether you were in good standing and in full fellowship. The only book that counts at the judgment is the Lamb's Book of Life, and if you don't have your name in the Lamb's Book of Life, it is hell

forever more.

I never read this chapter but what I feel a pathos come over me. I think about the men and women that I have dealt with from day to day - people that are good people as we use the term "Good" - people that are nice and kind to me - people whom I think a lot of from a material point of view. I think of them, and I know that they are going on and on and on every day, hot-footing the road to vice, and I know they are going on without God to hell.

I think about those of you who are unsaved. I think about those of you have never yet trusted Jesus Christ as your Saviour. I tell you, my heart is filled with pathos when I think that out yonder is a hell waiting for you. Oh, might it please God to reach down and stir your heart with the Holy Spirit and save your soul.

My prayer to God is, that you might stand with me on the shores of the sea of Gallilee, and I might, like John the Baptist - the first Baptist preacher - point to the Lord Jesus Christ as He walks by, and say to you: "Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29).

Either He takes away your sin, or else you take your sin to hell with you. Might it please God today to open some heart and save some soul!

STRONG

(Continued from Page 5)

and help. Instead he continues his affair with Delilah. Finally, through her persistence, he tells her of his hair, his sign of consecration. She kept after him until he finally gave in. Oh, how persistent the devil is in his attacks towards the people of God. He needs no sleep or rest and he works day and night in his quest to halt the purposes of God. Any time that he can cause a child of God to fail, he will be right there. He finds great enjoyment in doing this. Well, we see that Samson falls asleep and his hair is cut off. He is no longer a consecrated man. The mighty man of Israel is defeated. The one who slew a thousand men with the jawbone of an ass is defeated by one woman. What disgrace there was in this fall. What shame there was for him and the people of God. Who will lead them? Who will fight for them now? Samson is taken captive and his eyes are put out and he is brought to Gaza, that city of which he carried the doors away, and there he is bound with fetters of brass and made to grind in the prison house. The mighty man of Israel is blind, and weak, and made a laughing stock before the Philistines. What a tragedy this is. And so it is when any Christian comes to this awful point.

But this is not the end of Samson. Samson, while blind and in prison, is still a chosen vessel of the Lord. His hair begins to grow again. Then one day he is brought before the people that they may make sport of him. He was tied to the pillars of the temple of Dagon where about three thousand were gathered. While he was tied there note what he said, "And Samson called unto the LORD, and said,

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O Lord GOD Remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. Then in verse 30, "And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life". Samson was brought to a point of helplessness that he might again become strong. He realized and was made aware of the fact that his strength was of the Lord. May we learn from this and draw from our source of strength daily.

INDULGENCE

(Continued from Page 1)

outside on a balmy Florida day with my dog and two cats in attendance. I asked my dog if it was all right with her if I grant men indulgences for their sins. She made a motion to this effect by a copious yawn and my two cats seconded the motion. I have therefore been nominated to forgive men their sins, and my election to this office is equally as genuine as is any babbling Pope's. Indeed I have more confidence in my animals than in any college of cardinals.

The question before us is, "If one man can forgive men their sins then why may not every man exercise this function?" Truly all men do... in their own minds, for as Henley puts it, lost men think themselves "masters of their fate". Since men think their will is free, then why can they not deal effectively with their own iniquities? Truly they do and penances and indulgences are only a few of the multitude of plots men utilize to defang the wrath of God.

We may disagree on just what constitutes sin, and we may be right or wrong.

Some bind us so near the Israelite law that they deny us pork or a Sabbath day's journey. Others are so loose that they say only poorly understood doctrine is sin, while they allow the flesh free reign. Many are the opinions as to just what sin is, and there are variances of views even among sound and saved people. I don't generally quarrel too much with this, for men's wrangling over sin definitions is usually more amusing than somber. My quarrel arises when anyone devises a remedy for sin other than the atoning blood.

It has been my displeasure to work with three Roman Catholics whom I recall most clearly. One was an Army officer and a kind and gentle man, while the other two had the filthiest mouths and vilest minds I have ever met with. All three were bound in common cause. They truly believed that they could wallow in all sin so long as they staggered to "confession" occasionally where a sympathetic semi-drunken priest would indulge their sins with a patronizing penance. One hundred "Hail

Railings and revilings, as they are without love, are without profit.

Mary's" is the prescribed dosage for such things, I believe.

I once lived on a farm outside Winchester, Kentucky and drove to town each Saturday. There was some sort of Catholic nunnery in Winchester at that time. I usually drove by this place each Saturday, and the first time I did I noticed a nun sweeping the sidewalk with a broom. On each succeeding Saturday I noticed the same thing... always a nun sweeping the sidewalk. I thought for a time that the Catholics must have inordinately dirty sidewalks, and then it occurred to me that I was viewing Catholic doctrine in sweeping display (forgive the pun). These nuns were serving time for their sins, and I can testify that they had the cleanest sidewalks in Clark County, Kentucky. They were doing penance which is a sort of make-work indulgence granted by those to whom they had confessed their sins, small and great. I imagine that if they swept for an hour they had some particularly ugly offense forgiven them.

This then is how men treat with their sins. The Catholics log this as their official dogma, but all lost souls follow this genre more or less. Thus, lost men slander Almighty God. They imagine that He can be bought off with gutter sweepings. They offer bribes to appease his indignation just as Jonah's sailors gave life for life. Jonah's companions had the better understanding of the matter because they sacrificed life while the Catholics (and those with no religion whatever) offer mumbled words, Easter crossbearings and varied street sweepings to expiate their iniquity.

Men will never see sin rightly until they see God rightly. Dead men proffer dead gifts, and the Roman penances and indulgences are as dead as a savage's totem. Light will not cohabit with darkness, and until men see God as eternal light they shall abide in darkness and compound their sins by their religion. Organized religion is an outlet for their blindness. Men become religious because as children of wrath they can do no other.

Romans 1:19-23 tells us that men innately know things of God's nature, but their nature forbids them to worship Him aright. Death cannot bow down to life, and fallen man is dead in his sins and in his nature of sin. Even in their refractory nature, lost men know truths of creation; but they worship not the creator, but the creation itself. Men become gods in their own mind, and extol their free-will while they indulge their sins and make mock of God. They say in their minds, "God is as I am, and if I can indulge my sins, surely God cannot do otherwise."

Some sects banish the very thought of hell fire punishment for sins, for their sins weigh lightly upon them. Men tread with God on an equal footing and if their will is as free as God's, why shouldn't they? Thus men reason. Men foist upon God their own derangements and distortions and make God in their own image. Since they refuse to ultimately punish their own sins, and since they see themselves as "masters of their fate", they cannot imagine that God shall in any way punish them too severely. This is why total depravity is so detested a doctrine. While men indulge their sins they indulge God and think of Him as "the old man upstairs" (a dottering and

senile image), but most beloved of men.

It is not by chance that Santa Claus has emerged for he is the embodiment of how men in their natural state see God. To paraphrase Voltaire (who has now been educated in the things of God) "If Santa Claus did not exist it would be necessary to invent him." Dear, kind Santa is a god men can understand and intreat with successfully. Santa seems feeble minded and malleable, and this is man's concept of God.

Negotiation is at the heart of man's concept of sin. What man is there who does not believe that he can somehow appease God with a civil discussion over the matter of his sins? What man is there (even the atheist) who does not offer up something to excuse himself? What sinner will not be shocked to find that he has no power to "negotiate" with God? Indulgences and penances are diverse forms of negotiation. Men think the white throne is a celestial agora where they make an offer which God shall counter with another offer, and where they shall finally settle the matter of sin over a cup of tea to everyone's satisfaction. Men who are working their passage to heaven shall meet with stormy seas ere they finish.

Even in their depraved nature men do have a correct, though distorted, view of God. They imagine that His approval can be purchased. They are right, it can be. God's wrath can be turned for a price. What men fail to see is that the price is so costly no man can pay it. Yet, God's wrath can be stayed if the price is right. Religious mutterings and moanings, indulgences, penances, laborings, and well meant sacrifices can purchase naught from God. Yet, Christ's blood can purchase our freedom, for we are bought with a price.

I have served the Lord Christ for many long years, and I still have nothing to offer Him. I offer nothing... I only receive. Even if I garner rewards they are products of grace. "Just As I Am" is the proper anthem and "Amazing Grace" is no mean companion.

Men shall never be saved everlastingly until they cease their negotiations with God and become helpless medics before Him. Offer God your least, or your most; and it shall damn you. Offer Him nothing and you shall receive all out of the eternal riches of Christ. Indulge your sins and they shall slay you. Bow before God claiming Christ's blood, and life shall be yours and that abundantly. Dear reader until you see yourself as unutterably vile, you shall never see God as He is. Come to Christ with nothing, and His blood shall open the heavens for you, and grace unto grace. Give and you shall die, receive and you shall live. Confess yourself worthy of His wrath, and it shall never touch you.

God ever reverses the processes of men. Plead a plausible case before an earthly judge and perchance you shall gain by it. Yet, if you plead anything before Almighty God, save the blood of the everlasting covenant, you shall perish for your efforts. Men dress well before an earthly judge to sway his penalties. However, when you appear before God come garbed in nothing but your sins and plead nothing but your debased nature. Cry "unclean, unclean" and you shall be cleansed forevermore by the katharsis of the mighty blood of

Christ. Cry any virtue before God and torment awaits you.

Organized religions are just organized efforts to bribe God. They exist for no other purpose. They are somewhat worse than those souls who take no thought of God. It shall fare better with you if you have no dealings with a judge than if you attempt to bribe him. Every religion invented by man from the Roman Catholic variety with its street sweeping purgatives to the Hindu with its horror of stepping on an ant for fear he may be your grandfather, is an effort to assuage the effect of sin. Organized religion cloaks sin. It exists for no other purpose. You do not have to be a Baptist to be saved (though some renegade Baptists have brayed such), but everyone who is ever saved must be saved the same way the Baptists are... by grace through faith as the gift of God. The "Baptist religion," if such exists, shall save no one. Religion serves to doom men, not free them. Remain religious and you shall remain dead. Claim "Baptist" as your "religion" apart from faith in Christ and you shall perish. Arminians who wear the name "Baptist" and who are busily making folks religious have much to answer for. Papists preach that if you sweep enough sidewalks in punitive servitude that God shall take note of you. Arminians keep their converts just as busy at religious playtime and call it worship. I can't say which is the more damnable. I do know that the clinging tentacles of organized religion will never save a soul.

REMEMBER

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of that which we call the Lord's Day which will best keep us within the good graces of law which is written in our hearts; a law which guards the highest interest of our bodies, our minds, and our spirits. Our generation knows little about the observance of the Lord's Day. We don't talk much about it. How much the preaching about the Lord's Day have you heard recently? How much teaching is being done about it?

Certainly very little in local churches with which I am acquainted.

Why is it that we have so little to say about the subject which, I believe, is one of crucial importance to the life of the Christian enterprise? Well, there are various reasons, I suppose, why we don't preach more about it. For one thing, people don't want to hear about it.

These people are often not aware of the fact that there is a question about how to use Sunday. But those who are aware of the problem are doing so little about it that they don't want to be reminded.

Remember the Lord's Day. I felt led to bring forth this message that every born again Baptist should observe the Lord's Day in the local church in a way that honors Christ for these reasons:

First of all, Sunday is the day of celebration. What does the New Testament teach about the Lord's Day? Why Sunday and not Saturday? One of the questions that has given many people much concern is: why did Christians come to the local church to worship God on the first day of the week? Why the first instead of the seventh?

"By grace are you saved through faith" was the creed of Abraham in antiquity. It is only "Baptist" doctrine because it was Abraham's doctrine and God's doctrine before Abraham was and before Baptists were. Yes, if you are to be saved you must be saved the same way the Baptists are and the same way Abraham was. Abraham offered no penance or indulgence for the sake of his sins and neither do we. Become a Baptist to gain salvation and it will benefit you no more than a Papal indulgence. Claim Christ's blood on your behalf in faith believing, and you shall have no need of indulgences, for you shall be then of one blood in the family of God. After you are saved "give and it shall be given unto you" is a proper formula. But in order to be saved, you must recognize that you have nothing to give.

In parting, I repeat my grant of a plenary indulgence for all your sins dear reader. My dog and my cats approve. With this "dog days" indulgence you may purchase as much from God as with an indulgence or declaration of penance from the Pope at Rome. I have often wondered why a Pope's indulgence is thought to free men's souls from punishment when it can't even cure a New Year's Day hangover. Perhaps the Vicar of Christ in the Vatican can explain this.

Do you believe that men can forgive your sins, gentle reader? Can men shield you from God's wrath? Nay, but the blood of Christ can wash you clean and grant you life everlastingly.

The difference. The first day was celebrated by Christians as a joyful celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave. Even though you will find similarities, note the differences in the two days. The seventh day was observed by the Israelites in memory of the rest day of God after creation and in memory of their deliverance from Pharaoh's cruelty. The first day of the week is observed and honored as the Christian Sabbath in grateful and loving remembrance of our Lord's resurrection from death and His triumph over the grave. The old Sabbath commemorates the first creation; the Lord's Day commemorates the new beginning in Jesus Christ. The Jewish Sabbath symbolizes deliverance from Egyptian bondage; the Lord's Day is the Sabbath that symbolizes deliverance from the bondage of sin. Saturday was the Sabbath of nature: Sunday is the Sabbath of grace. Saturday is the Sabbath of a rejected, executed, entombed Jesus; Sunday is the Sabbath of a risen Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, Saturday is the Creator's day; but Sunday is the Redeemer's day.

Our Devotion. The name "The Lord's Day" comes from Revelation 1:10. In the first section of that glorious book the aged apostle John said. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." We believe that John was here referring to the first day of the week. From time immemorial, on the first day of the week, Christians, or the anabaptists, have assembled for worship. It is a day of great celebration and rejoicing; the day of the hope of immortality. It is the day when the message of salvation is preached; comfort, instruction, prayer, fellowship, rest from all six-day labour, and

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REMEMBER

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who knows when Jesus will return to this planet earth? It may be on the first day of the week.

The Day To Remember. Jesus did not change the entire meaning of the day, but to His church has given a different Sabbath. Yes, the seventh day was chosen for the Jews, but for the Lord's church it was the first day. With all my heart, I wish that Christians might be careful about how they observe the Lord's Day. I yearn for them to dedicate themselves anew, letting their observance of the Lord's Day be the declaration that God is God, that Christ, His Son, died for our sins, was buried, and that He rose from the grave and ever lives! Will you honor God by remembering the Lord's Day? Remember the Lord's Day.

Secondly, Sunday is the day Christ Arose. Sunday is the Lord's day. What a glad day and a marvelous day of our risen Lord. The Lord's day therefore, should be observed reverently, joyfully, gladly, humbly, and prayerfully.

Assurance of our faith. Christ is alive. It is our confidence that Christ's resurrection is the supreme evidence of our faith. On the first day of the week we now celebrate Christ's completion of the work of redemption, and the hope that is our eternal rest in heaven. Christ, the author of Christian worship. The Lord Jesus foretells His disciples of a gathering which is on the first day of the week—Sunday—**"But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee"** (Matt. 26:32). Here we understand that Christ commanded His church to gather on the first day of the week for worship. **"And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him"** (Mat. 28:9). The Bible does not record a single instance when the Lord observed the seventh day after His resurrection. Every time the Lord met with His disciples after the resurrection, and the day is specified, it was always on the first day of the week. This pattern of the Lord Jesus evidently was followed by the Baptists in the early church. They gathered in the church on the Lord's Day by common consent and in commemoration of the Lord's resurrection. Remember the Lord's Day.

Then thirdly, the Lord's day is Christian worship. We read that the celebration of the Lord's Day was so notorious to the heathen in the early days of Baptists that they would ask the Baptist martyrs on their way to death, "Do you keep Sunday?" and the Baptist's reply was: "I am a Christian. I cannot omit it" **"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. 10:25). To others, Sunday is a holiday. But, let every Baptist know that Sunday is a holy day; and it should be kept holy. The whole day should be kept holy and not just part of it. We are told not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. This lovely day is given to us as a day for divine worship.

Togetherness in God's worship. The Lord's day is a time that calls us to worship together in the

congregation to praise God and hear the preaching of His word. We believe the time has come when Christians must be Christian. We must return to the old paths. We must stand up for our convictions, for what we believe. We must keep the Lord's Day because we love the Lord and because we want to honor Him. We call on every Baptist to stand up and be counted, to abstain from shopping on Sunday; and to devote the whole day to the Lord in the church. We have plenty of outstanding Christian followers of Christ who do it, because they were compelled by the love of Christ, loyalty and obedience to Him.

Taking the whole family on the Lord's day. Sunday is a day for a family union and reunion. It is a day for families to get together in the Lord's church. How beautiful it is for families to be in worship in the local church. Sunday should be the happiest day of the week for families. We are constantly being pulled apart as a family. Everyone seems to go in a different direction; kids are off to school, Papa is out to work and Mama is busy at home. But the Lord's day can bring us together. The Lord said, **"keep it holy."** The Lord's Day is the day we lift up our souls to worship God. The closer we come to the Lord, the closer we are together. Remember the Lord's Day.

And lastly, Sunday is the church's gathering. The Lord's Day is the day for a gathering of His people in the church. Oh! what a fellowship! What a joy divine! This is the day for strengthening a family unity and a day for strengthening ties with one another and with God.

We exalt Christ in the church. The Lord's Day is our heritage from Christ's resurrection and the earliest day of the church's fathers. Justin Martyr was a disciple of Polycarp, a man who had been personally acquainted with the apostle John. He wrote, "Sunday is the day upon which we hold our assembly, because it is the first day God made the world; and Jesus on that day rose from the grave." Christ is the Lord of our life, our relation to Him will determine our attitude toward the use of this special day. We will use it as He used it for the glory of God. **"Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen"** (Eph. 3:21). This is the highest, holiest, and most blissful moment to glorify Him.

Let every one bring their tithes and offering. **"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him..."** (I Cor. 16:2).

His Word has instructed us to bring our tithes and our offerings on Sunday in to the church. Someone said that worship in the church will not be completed without giving our tithes and our offering. We are to pay our tithe and to give our offerings to Him into the church. This is the Lord's plan. The tithe should be given to the local church of which you are a member. This is the work God has promised to bless. It is through the church that missionaries are sent out. It is through the church that preaching and teaching of the Word is given. It is the church that brings glory to our Lord Jesus Christ.

We encourage you to come to

the Lord's church, remembering the Lord's Day. Let us come to His church to worship together. Come, let us seek our God and attend the church services on Sunday. A world without the Lord's Day would be like a man without a smile, like a summer without flowers, and like a homestead without a garment. It is the most joyous day of the whole week to the church. The Lord's Day gives our soul to grow in the best company. The Lord's Day is a day of opportunities of service in the church—keep it holy. Do you delight in the Lord's Day? What you do on the Lord's Day declares what you are. Remember the Lord's Day. May God bless you. Amen.

STUDY

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who knew the truth, loved the truth, and was firmly established in the truth.

"The elder unto the well beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth" (III John 1). John again refers to himself as **"The elder"** or pastor.

As there are several men named Gaius mentioned in the New Testament, we have no way of knowing which, if any, of these is the one to whom John is writing. We do know that he was a well-loved Christian, for four times in this short letter he is called **"beloved"**. This tells us he was a man who was highly regarded among the brethren because of his stand and love for the truth. Believers are addressed as **"beloved," "...the elect of God, holy and beloved"** (Col. 3:12). God, the Father referred to His Son as **"My beloved Son"** (Matt. 3:17; 12:18; 17:5). Christ, speaking to the Father concerning those that love Him, **"...that the world may know that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me"** (John 17:23). Since all believers are **"accepted in the beloved"** Christ. (Eph. 1:6), we too are God's beloved ones. Gaius was a beloved one in Christ. **"Whom I love in the truth"**. John's love for him was **"in the truth"**. In all of John's writings he insisted that love and fellowship must be based upon the truth. Divine love for one another can exist only where there is a stand for the truth.

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (III John 2).

John's love for Gaius is accompanied by a wish—**"above all things"** or in all things and **"in health"**. He prayed that Gaius' material welfare and his physical health might be as good as his spiritual health. John had received word of Gaius' spiritual well being, and it was of the highest report. I am afraid that, too often, our physical health is much better than our spiritual health. We are often much concerned as to our physical health, but how much thought do we give to our spiritual well being? Gaius, it seems, although in poor physical health, was very much alive and healthy spiritually. How we need more Gaiuses in our churches. Too many of our church members are in very poor spiritual health.

"For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as

thou walkest in the truth" (Verse 3). As the Christian teachers and preachers traveled among the churches, they brought back word of the welfare of the churches. Sometimes the word was not good, but in Gaius the report was nothing but good. The word for **"came"** in the Greek means a continuous action. The brethren kept coming with good reports of this man of God. What was the secret of this man's spiritual health in spite of his bodily weakness? The **"truth"** was in him and he walked in the **"truth"**. Gaius was a lover of God's Word. He read and studied and put in practice that which he learned. Sometimes we claim to know the truth, yet we fail to **"walk in the truth"**. But Gaius, though having a frail body, had the truth and walked in it. Regardless of his bodily condition, he could say, **"It is well with my soul"**. Gaius' walk expressed the truth which he believed and loved. Does our walk express the same?

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (Verse 4).

It would seem that Gaius was saved under John's preaching, and as such, John calls him one of his children. John says his greatest joy is to hear that one whom he has brought to Christ is loving and walking in the truth. Paul called some of his converts, **"My joy and crown"** (Phil. 4:1) and urged them to **"stand fast in the Lord"**. But there were some whom Paul was troubled about. Some he wrote rebuking for not standing for the truth. **"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another Gospel"** (Gal. 1:6). **"I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you"** (I Cor. 4:14). No doubt John had heard of some who were not standing for the truth, but how his heart was made to rejoice to hear of his child, Gaius, standing firm and strong for the truth.

"Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well: (Verses 5,6).

John commends Gaius for his hospitality which he extended to all the traveling preachers and teachers. It seems that Gaius' home must have been headquarters for the visiting preachers that came to the church of which Gaius was a member. Gaius not only had in him a love for the truth, but he manifested that love by his hospitality for the preachers and teachers. For this John highly commends him. These traveling brethren had given a report of this hospitality, and the love of Gaius which had been shown toward them in helping them on their way. John writes that to continue to do this is well and good. In verse 7 he explains why this is needed, **"Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles"**. These missionaries were going out, not receiving anything from the Gentiles, the unsaved, therefore he said in verse 8 that, **"We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be**

fellowhelpers to the truth." This is just as true today as it was then. Those whom God has called to preach the gospel should be supported by other Christians. We, thereby, become **"fellow helpers to the truth."** Each Christian has a particular job to do. Some are to go preach the Word, others are to stay home. But we are all to be **"fellow helpers to the truth"** and when God gives out the rewards, we will all share in them. **"For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name --he shall not lose his reward"** (Mark 9:41). **"He that receiveth prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward"** (Matt. 10:41).

"I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not" (V. 9).

Here, John writes of another man, who it seems, was a member of the same church as Gaius, but what a difference between the two men. Some think Diotrephes may have been pastor of the church, but regardless of his position in the church, one thing is clear, he wanted the place of prominence in the church. John had written a letter to the church, **"But Diotrephes"** had rejected John's written instructions. That is, he refused to recognize John's authority as one of the apostles. Why did he refuse to listen to John? He, **"loveth to have the preeminence among them."** This means, "to be fond of being first" or "he likes to put himself first". The word **"preeminence"** is used only one other place in The New Testament. In Colossians 1:18 we read, **"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence"**. Instead of Christ being the head of the church, Diotrephes had set himself as the head. Therefore, he refused to listen to John's instructions and warnings. Someone has said, "Diotrephes is the father of a long line of sons who have not learned to distinguish between the love for Christ and His church and love for their place in it". These are those who refuse to accept the authority of the church and want to control it themselves.

"Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbideth them that would, and casteth them out of the church" (V. 10).

"Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds", that is, he would bring before the church the deeds and words of this man. What had this man done? First, he was, **"prating against us with malicious words"**. Prating means to talk nonsense. It carries the idea of words that were not only

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STUDY

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wicked, but were also senseless. He was doing and saying all that he could to discredit John. The word "malicious" means wicked, spiteful, intentionally harmful. Diotrophes' problem was he was jealous of the apostle John. He wanted to be the head of the church and to have the preeminence. He was not satisfied with his malicious prating against John, but "neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church". He would not receive the traveling brethren, whom John, no doubt had sent, neither would he permit others to receive them. Those who did, he had put out of the church.

"Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God; but he that doeth evil hath not seen God" (V.11).

John is saying, "Beloved Gaius, do not follow Diotrophes in that which is evil, but continue in your love for the truth and in your help of the brethren as you have been doing. Just remember, that which a man does reveals whether he is of God or not, he that doeth evil hath not seen God". This places Diotrophes, does it not?

"Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself, yea, and we also bear record: and ye know that our record is true" (V. 12). This is the third man mentioned in this letter. It would seem that Gaius did not know Demetrius and John was recommending him. He had a good report of all men, a man of "good report" is one who keeps God's Word. Not only "all men" but also the "truth" itself testified as to Demetrius. John also gives his testimony, "and we also bear record; and ye know that our record is true". Demetrius' life and teaching harmonized with the teaching of the Word, therefore, John could recommend him with the assurance that he would speak the truth.

Of the three men mentioned in the letter, there is Gaius, who is weak in body but receives the brethren in the Lord. Then there is Diotrophes who wants to run things; wants to be the head of

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TORN IN HALF

by D.J. MacDonald

Many years ago a colporteur might have been seen wending his way through the forest to the door of a country cottage in France. Arrived, he greeted the woman within and offered a New Testament for sale.

Jeanne hesitated. Would the priest approve? That was the question. Still, she wistfully eyed the neat little volume.

"Do not be troubled, madame," urged the colporteur. "The priest would sin against God if he prevented you from reading of the love of Christ."

At last she produced a half franc, and, taking the book, said: "I cannot refuse, monsieur, but may I be pardoned if it is a sin."

Presently in came Jacques, the charcoal burner, her husband. After his tea, Jeanne rather timidly produced her book for his inspec-

tion. As she rather feared, he upbraided her for spending his money in this fashion.

"But," said she, "the money is not all yours, Jacques. I brought my dowry when we married. The half franc was as much mine as yours."

"Give me the book," shouted Jacques in a temper. He snatched it from her hands.

"The money was half yours and half mine you say. Very well, the book is the same. Voila!" He opened the book roughly, tore it in two pieces, dropping one into his pocket and throwing the other to Jeanne.

Several days later Jacques sat in the forest by his charcoal fires. He had finished his mid-day meal and felt lonely. Suddenly he remembered the torn book. He would investigate it.

It was the latter part of the New Testament. His rough fingers had divided it in Luke's gospel. He began at the very beginning:

"and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son."

Spellbound, he read to the end of the story, and then a dozen questions presented themselves. What had he done - the poor lost son? Why was he exiled? Where had he been? What induced him to return?

The questions haunted him. "I wish I had the beginning of the story," he sighed. At home, his pride prevented him asking Jeanne for her part of the book.

Meanwhile, Jeanne used her leisure moments poring over her part and spelling out its contents. She began to delight in it, but when she reached the end her interest was doubly quickened. That younger son - his waywardness, his journey, his sin, his misery, the wonderful change in his thoughts. She read on: "I perish with hunger. I will arise and go to my father,..." There the story stopped.

But what happened? Did the father welcome him? Her tender heart longed for a satisfactory answer. She even cried over the story, but she could not bring herself to consult Jacques.

The days passed. On one, however, the rain poured down very heavily, and Jacques came home feeling specially weary. He ate his soup and bread for supper as usual, and at last he blurted out:

"Jeanne, you remember the book I tore in two?"

"Oh, yes," said she, half fearing.

"My part had in it a wonderful story about a lost son, but only the end of it. I cannot rest until I know the beginning of it. Bring me your piece."

"Oh, Jacques! How wonderful!"

"Why?"

"The same story is ever in my mind, only I lack the ending. Did the father receive that wilful son?"

"He did. But what was the sin that separated them?"

She brought her piece and knelt by his chair. Together they read the whole of the beautiful parable, which was an absolute novelty to them. The Spirit of God, who had been working in both their hearts, caused its hidden meaning to begin to dawn on them.

That was the first of many Bible readings by the firelight after their evening meal. Just as the prodigal son returned to his father, so eventually they were

both led to return to God, to repent of their sins, and to trust in Christ.

Are you yet far off from God as the prodigal was from his father? Are you still chasing after sinful pleasure? How amazing that God continues to call to you, "Return unto me!"

A famous preacher, in speaking about the father receiving his prodigal son, said something like this: "Here are eyes of mercy, and those eyes quick-sighted, for 'when he was yet a great

way off, his father saw him." Here are bowels of mercy, yearning at the sight of his son, for he "had compassion." Here are feet of mercy, and those feet quick-paced, for "he ran." Here are arms of mercy, and those arms stretched out to embrace him: "he fell on his neck." Here are lips of mercy: "he kissed him"; and this kiss not only assured him of his welcome but sealed his pardon."

Is it not wicked to think that God is less merciful? He is more

merciful and compassionate than any parent ever could be. He who is "rich in mercy" sends this message to you, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55:6-7).

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES CONCERNING PRAYER

by Harold Brunson

"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matt. 6:9-15).

These verses of Scripture furnish us Jesus' teaching, concerning prayer. These verses of Scripture embrace the model prayer. This portion of Scripture is not the Lord's prayer as is so often erroneously claimed. The Lord's prayer is found in the seventeenth chapter of John's gospel. In the model prayer Jesus gives marvelous instructions concerning prayer. We should occupy our thinking with these three questions: To whom should we pray? How should we pray? For what should we pray?

TO WHOM SHOULD WE PRAY?

First, we should pray to God the Father, who is in heaven. Matthew 6:9 reads, "Our Father which art in heaven." Another example is found in Acts 12:5 and it reads, "Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him." Jesus did not teach us to go through Mary or the apostles or some other saint. Jesus taught us to go directly to God the Father in our prayers.

Second, we should pray in the energy of the Holy Spirit. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph. 6:18). "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost" (Jude v. 20). Some prayers never get higher than the roof of one's mouth, much less the roof of the building where they are prayed. It seems in our age of intellectualism, modernism, liberalism, communism, and, I might add, "rheumatism," people are more interested in saying than in praying. You can phrase beautiful words with perfect enunciation and pronunciation, and you can

pray "ring around the rosary," and you can pray to be heard of men and still not touch the throne of grace. The only energy that will tender our hearts and condition them for prayer is the energy derived from the Holy Spirit while we pray.

Once a man was intrigued by a beautiful church building, so he decided to walk inside and view the sanctuary. The windows were all open and the janitor was cleaning the building. To the man's surprise several birds were flying around in the sanctuary that had come through the open windows, and not knowing the particular species he asked the janitor, "What are these?" and the old colored man replied, "Boss man, the day is Thursday and dese heah is some prayers that wuz prayed here Sunday and ain't got out yet." More truth than poetry!

Third, we should pray in the name of Jesus. "And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you" (John 16:23). "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that" (James 4:14-15). "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;" (I Tim. 2:5). The name of Jesus is the one name that can always, without exception, get an audience with our Heavenly Father.

HOW SHOULD WE PRAY?

First, we should pray in faith. "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. 11:6). "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23). "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if ye have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him" (James 5:15). Remember, genuine faith is not based upon presumption, superstition, or fanaticism, but is based upon the Word of God. Paul declares in Romans, the tenth chapter, verse 17: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." To be called a prayer of faith, one's prayers must be based upon sound Scriptural ground.

Second, we should pray with humble sincerity. "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." (Jere. 29:13). "But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (I Sam. 16:7). Humility and sincerity are ingredients which are healthy to one's prayer life. Pride and arrogance will not be found in the humble prayer. Superficiality and sensationalism will also be absent in the humble prayer. The Lord loves humility and sincerity, therefore one should always pray with a spirit of humble sincerity.

Third, we should pray believing. In Matthew 21:22 Jesus said, "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." The test of our prayers can often be determined as to the portion we believe when we pray.

Fourth, we should pray in reverent boldness, because the Lord challenges us to come "boldly" to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:16). Paul assures us in the Ephesian letter that our Heavenly Father is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us (Ephesians 3:20). With these great challenges, which are also promises, the child of God should not be timid when coming to his Heavenly Father in prayer.

FOR WHAT SHOULD WE PRAY?

Too many people are like the man who prayed for me and my wife, our girl and boy, us four and no more! Our prayer lives are oftentimes occupied in an area of selfishness. Also, too many pray as the prodigal son when he left home, "give me," and fail to see the way he prayed when he returned home. It was not the selfish "give me" but rather an humble "make me." Our happiness depends largely upon whether we are "give me" askers or "make me" petitioners.

First, we should pray for the hallowing of God's name. "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" (Matt. 6:9). The haughty over-familiar

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BIBLE TEACHES

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spirit of arrogance with which some approach the throne of grace is not to be named among God's people. "...holy and reverend is his name" (Psa. 111:9) and we should always reverence His holy name when approaching His Majesty's Highest in prayer.

Second, we should pray for the coming of God's kingdom. "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). Being an ardent premillennialist, I do not believe this is to be interpreted as the church militant bringing in the kingdom. Further, being an ardent premillennialist, I do not believe that you can have a kingdom without a king. This leads us to the conclusion that this part of the model prayer is instructing us to pray for the second coming of Christ, for not until then will Jesus enter upon His role as King of kings. John teaches us to pray for the second coming of Christ and gives us an example in Revelation 22:20 when he prayed, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Third, we should pray for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven (Matt. 6:10). Now, will every reader please put on your shock absorbers, fasten your safety belts, adjust your dentures, and get a glass of water at hand, because I am fixing to shock you. This is one preacher who believes in an Enthroned God. This is one preacher who believes that God is not baffled by the perplexities and predicaments in which humanity finds itself. The Bible teaches that God works all things after the counsel of His own will. Now to the meat of this part of Matthew 6:10! Jesus did not say that God's will was not being carried out on the earth. Jesus said for us to pray that it would be done on earth "as" it is in heaven. God's will in heaven is carried out consciously and joyously. God's will is carried out on earth, but as a rule it is carried out ignorantly and unconsciously. This example will suffice. Wicked men crucified the Lord of glory. This was God's will from all eternity. God's will was exercised on the earth but it was carried out ignorantly and unconsciously. Don't ever say God's will is not carried out because His purposes cannot be thwarted. Remember Jesus instructed us to pray for His will to be carried out on earth "as" it is in heaven.

Fourth, we should pray for the reviving of God's people on the earth. "Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?" (Psalm 85:6). "A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet upon Shigionoth. O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy" (Habakkuk 3:1-2). It is Scriptural to pray for a reviving of God's people.

Fifth, we should pray for laborers to be sent forth into the harvest. "Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the

harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matt. 9:37-38). It is Scriptural and right to pray for laborers to be raised up and sent out into the harvest for the Master.

Let me admonish you to season your Bible study upon your knees in the chamber of prayer, and further let me admonish you with the words of the Apostle Paul, "Pray without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:17).

WE NEED THE REVIVAL

by C.D. Cole

"Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?" (Psalm 85:6).

Introduction: We use the word revival rather loosely and without much thought. We call it a revival when we are able to get members into the church. But strictly speaking a revival has nothing to do with the lost directly - a revival is for the saved. Revival implies life - dead things are not revived. A revival is the refreshing, strengthening of the Christian whose spiritual pulse is weak and his interest in eternal things is at a low ebb. So revival also implies that the Christian is anemic. There is life but little activity. Now, it is the general rule that when God's people are revived the lost will be saved.

With many a revival, it is something the evangelist brings in his grip, or something he "pulls out of the hat," as it were. But a true revival is not magic. A true revival goes deep into the human soul. There is a burden for sin, a confession and forsaking of

sin, followed by joy of salvation. In a true revival all sorts of sins--big sins and little sins -- sins of commission and sins of omission -- are dragged into the light and confessed before God. In a true revival there is abhorrence of self and rejoicing in Christ.

I. The revival we need. This implies the need of a revival.

A. A revival of heartfelt and sincere interest in eternal things. By every rule of measurement there is a sad lack of interest in Christ and His church. This interest has been lost under testing. Some have been tested by business. Their business has become an idol. It has robbed them of God. Some have been tested by pleasure. They have run after pleasures that last only for a season and forgetting that at God's right hand are pleasures eternal. Some are tested by money -- either by lack of it or by having too much of it.

"Some are so busy with their fees

That they ignore all my pleas.

The louder I cry

The faster they fly

In the wrong direction

To their own destruction."

It may be that some have been tested by affliction. They have been sick and have become allergic to themselves. They feel so sorry for themselves that they have no interest in the church and its work. If some of us were to consult a psychiatrist he would say something like this: There is nothing wrong with you except too much self-interest. You have become an isolationist; you forget there is anybody else in the world; you are allergic to yourself. I recommend you take interest in something else. Join a Sunday school class; go to church and help with whatever you can do. Find somebody who

is really having trouble and lend a helping hand."

Pardon the personal reference, but I think I have had all these tests I have mentioned within the past year. The poet tells us of souls that well apart in a fellowless firmament. Bob Jones, for instance, says to himself: "Well, I've made a lot of money in late years. I'm pretty well fixed; my nest is pretty well feathered. And my son John and his wife are in good shape too. So we will all crawl into our nest and watch the world go by. We will stop our ears to the call of Christ and His church. We will shut our eyes to a suffering, wailing world. We are rich and have need of nothing." Poor deluded souls! If indeed, they are alive, they need a revival in their souls.

B. We need a revival of respect for the church of Christ.

1. A respect for its value. What Christ loved and gave Himself for can be despised only at awful peril.

2. A respect for its claims. Every one of us needs to raise the question, Do I really belong to the church? If I belong, then the church has some claims upon me, for whatever I belong to, I have obligations to. For example, my wife, my country, etc.

3. A respect for its mission. What is the church for anyway? Is it a pullman to glory? Is profession of faith a magic formula for eternal bliss? No, No. The church is a workshop where God's children work in the interest of His business. The church is an army with banners fighting the good fight of faith. The church is the base of supplies from which go out to the world that which is essential to eternal life. The church is the divine granary from which the bread of life is to be sent into all the world. The church has the most expensive mission of any institution on this earth. Members neglect the church and its work with little concern.

"I love Thy church, O God,
Her walls before Thee stand,
Dear as the apple of Thine eye,
And graven on Thy hand."

C. A recovery of love for God's Word. By the Word, we became babes; by the same Word we are to become strong men. Most church members know all they want to know, and they know so little that they do not know enough to know how little they do know. People lose love for God's word because they lost interest in the things the Bible talks about. They lust after sensual and senseless things and want books that deal in these low sordid things. One of the most alarming signs of the times is the kind of literature being read by the masses. People read what they think about and as a man thinketh so is he. So judging from what people read, most of us are living on the low level of the beasts.

D. A recovery of the lost sense of sin. Who is bothered and distressed over sin? And really what else is there to be distressed about? Our consciences are calloused that we cannot feel sin. There is such a hard pan of indifference over our souls that no word of warning gets through to awake us. Blessed are they that mourn, but with most it is blessed are they that snicker at sin. The Bible says "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion," but the average church member says "Woe to the preacher who tries to break up my nest of ease." The Bible says that sin is

the abominable thing God hates, but it is the thing many roll under their tongues as a sweet morsel. There can be no revival in our souls until sin becomes to us the awful thing that God says it is. There can be no revival until we judge ourselves -- until we abhor ourselves -- until we slay our self-righteousness and cry out through repentance toward God and faith in Christ, "God be merciful to me the sinner."

II. How can we get the revival we need? This is not easy to answer. Our text tells us that it is God sent. Some say a revival cannot be worked up; that it must be prayed down. That may be true, but when a child of God begins to pray as he ought to pray, the revival has already come to him. A revival is not man-made; it is God-sent. "Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?"

We cannot have a revival without wanting it and yet when we want it as bad as we ought to, it is already on its way. We cannot have a revival without falling out with sin and falling in with Him, and yet when sin becomes bitter and Christ becomes precious, the revival is within us. The choir cannot bring a revival by its good singing, and yet when they begin to sing with the spirit and understanding, the revival is on. The preacher cannot bring a revival with his good preaching, and yet when he begins to speak with lips that have been touched by coals from off the altar of God, the revival has already struck.

Conclusion: Do we want a revival? Are we satisfied with our past service for God? Have we been ideal church members in our own eyes? If we are self-satisfied, that is proof that we are a victim of spiritual amnesia - we are walking in our sleep and do not know who we are nor where we are. Our only hope is the awakening, convicting, withering work of the Spirit of God. O Spirit of God, make these dry bones to live!

"Some are on pleasures bent,

And for trifles their money is spent.

In the devil's den they dance and they dine,

But for God's church they have not a dime.

In the scorner's seat they delight to sit,

But at church they fear they'll be hit.

WHEN OTHER FAITHS COME TO YOUR DOOR

1. First, ask them to write their name, address, and phone number on a card for you. Have cards handy for this purpose. Talk to no one who will not give you this information! Remember, honest people are free and open, readily identifying themselves. If they persist, without giving you this information, close the door. Graciously!

2. Ask what group they are representing. Most of the cults will give this information without your asking. The exception is the Seventh-Day Adventists.

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There was but one place of safety in the day when the flood came upon the earth; that place was Noah's ark. So also there is but one hiding-place for the sinner who would escape the storm of God's anger, he must venture his soul on Christ.

-J.C. Ryle

I SING THE MIGHTY POWER OF GOD

I sing the mighty power of God,
That made the mountains rise;
That spread the flowing seas abroad,
And build the lofty skies.
I sing the wisdom that ordained
The sun to rule the day;
The moon shines full at His command,
And all the stars obey.

I sing the goodness of the Lord,
That filled the earth with food;
He formed the creatures with His word,
And then pronounced them good.
Lord, how Thy wonders are displayed,
Where'er I turn my eye:
If I survey the ground I tread,
Or gaze upon the sky!

There's not a plant or flower below,
But makes Thy glories known;
And clouds arise, and tempests blow,
By order from Thy throne;
While all that borrows life from Thee
Is ever in Thy care,
And everywhere that man can be,
Thou, God, art present there. Amen.

-Isaac Watts

A true minister is best measured not by how many bouquets have been pinned on him, but how many brickbats have been pitched at him.

TUNE IN TO THE CALL TO CALVARY

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

STUDY

(Continued from Page 10)

the church. He fights every one who does not agree with him. Now John is sending one, whom he can recommend whole heartedly, as he has a good report, and who knows the truth and walks in the truth. John writes this letter to Gaius so that this man, Demetrius will be received.

Second John was written to instruct them not to receive nor have any thing to do with those who denied the Son of God, the Saviour our Lord. The third letter was written to instruct them to receive those who have good record and love the truth and walk in the truth.

"I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee: But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace be to thee. Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name" (V.13,14).

John closes this letter very similar to his second letter. He is

saying he would like to see Gaius face to face. He would like to talk to him about the things of the Lord. He hoped to come shortly and see his beloved friend. He then asked Gaius to give his love to his other friends. We have no way of knowing if he ever got to see Gaius again here on earth, but we do know that for more than nineteen hundred years they have been able to talk face to face in heaven concerning the things of the Lord.

The message we get from these two short letters written by John is, first; we are not to extend help in any way to false teachers, those who deny the virgin birth of our Lord, the eternal Son of God. Secondly, we are to help in every way possible those who preach and teach the truth. We are warned of ones like Diotrephes, who want to control the church and cause all kinds of trouble. I am afraid that in many of our churches today there are Diotrephes "who love to have the preeminence among them." As the apostle James has said, "My brethren, these things ought not to be" (James 3:10).

God's people need to provoke one another to love and to good works. I have felt this working in the conference this year. Many of God's people have suffered internal trials over the past year, and many things have happened; but there seemed to be a spirit of closeness among those who were there. God bless Calvary Baptist Church for all the work and sacrifice which made it possible.

John Pruitt, Griffin, Ga.

I liked the sermons and the fellowship. I saw some friends and heard good singing. It was a great conference.

Dougie Newell,
South Shore, Ky.

This being only my second conference, and the first of this church enables so many introductions. I can't think of any other place I'd rather be on earth than to meet my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. Being a newborn, it still amazes

me to hear the Word of God preached in such a consistent manner. Truths held fast for 2000 years throughout the world with so many cultures. Would our Almighty Lord have it any other way? Praise be to God.

Anon.

I enjoyed the conference very much. It was great to see the consistency in the messages that only God can enable. It is very encouraging to see brothers and sisters in Christ from different parts of the country unite in such a common spirit and warmth. It was such a great opportunity to hear so much of the Word at one given time.

Brian Hess, Kirtland, Ohio

Glad to be here! Thank God for churches and pastors that stand for these truths that glorify God. May Calvary Baptist Church continue to be blessed and continue to sponsor these conferences.

Covington, Ky.



Walter Herin preaches against the Universal Church Heresy.



Sam and Julie sing for us.



Wanda Bowe, my capable secretary, at her desk in our book store, WAITING FOR BUSINESS.



Let's hurry to the eating place and get ahead of Joe Wilson.



Landmark Baptist Mission Building



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

g. Founding and perpetuity of the church by Jesus Christ, (Mt. 16:18, 18:17; Eph. 3:21).

h. Eternal punishment, (Mt. 25:41, 46; Heb. 6:2; Rev. 14:10; 20:10). Nothing so devastates false teaching as the clear presentation of these doctrines.

5. Do not accept their literature

The editor will be speaking in a series of meetings with the Landmark Baptist Mission (see accompanying pictures) August 18-21, 1988. Services will be at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, Friday, and Sunday.

Saturday will be a very special day for these people, as the mission will be organized into a church under the authority of Temple Baptist church of Ap-

palachia, Va. which is pastored by Elder Reggie Moore. The following men are scheduled to preach during the day: Reggie Moore, David West, Don Pennington, Dan Phillips, and the editor. There are to be three sermons in the morning with the organization of the church. This service will begin at 9:30 a.m. The church will then serve lunch to all who attend. The afternoon service will begin at 1:30, and

two sermons are scheduled. There will be no Saturday night service.

The building is located beside the South Stokes High School about 8 miles east of US 52. If traveling on US 52, take the RJR Moore exit. Traveling east on this, one runs into Mountain View Road. The building is located on South Stokes High School Rd. between Mountain View Rd. and N.C. 8.

For further information, contact Herbert Cole at 919-983-2730, Jesse Cole at 919-993-9707, or John Shelton at 919-593-2147. I would delight in seeing many of my friends at these services.

These people are some of the finest and soundest Christians I know. They would delight to have you in any of their services. You will be blessed by doing so.