

GOD'S DIVINE CALL TO GLORY

by John Alber
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Introduction:

Several years ago a elderly man gave me a tape to listen to. In that tape the minister dealt with a number of God's calls. One of them had to do with our call to salvation, another with the call to separation, and a third, a call to Christian service; and the last one, a call home to heaven. This preacher took a good Biblical stand on all four issues and thus gave to me the idea of speaking on each of those areas to my own people.

Nearly twenty-five years ago this preacher found himself in the United States Air Force and in hostile areas with regards to the second advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. My pastor, Elder Ray Schwart, took a good stand in all four areas, and especially in the area of Christ's second coming. Until the Lord placed me in central California on the coast, this preacher had never heard any other position than which The Baptist Examiner presented in its pages. It did not take long to realize that not all folk were Bible believing folk - yes, even those that called themselves Baptists.

That caused me to turn to my Bible and research it. After all, we are known as folk that have no creed but the Bible. I was convinced in my own mind, but

needed some assurance. Therefore, I turned to several sources: Dr. M. R. DeHann's books, Dr. Thomas Paul Simmons' book, Systematic Study in Bible Doctrine, and The Baptist Examiner. Brother John R. Gilpin was a God sent gift to this young man. Needless to say, after many years of Bible study and research, this preacher has been convinced of the Pre-millennial, and pre-tribulation rapture of the saints of God; to the extent that I have not eaten a bowl of "Post Toasties" in years. Nothing wrong with them, only I have not wanted to be associated in any way with wrong doctrine.

It was almighty God that saved our wretched souls, and that for a number of reasons: (1). because it so pleased Him to do so, (2). because our salvation brings glory to His matchless eternal name, (3). because God has ordained that

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John Alber

COMFORT YE, COMFORT YE MY PEOPLE

by Martin Holmes
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Our thought under consideration is based on Isaiah 40:1-3 where we read, "COMFORT ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD's hand double for all her sins. The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

We understand this prophecy of Isaiah 40:1-3 has the beginning of its fulfillment in the ministry of John the Baptist as is recorded in Matthew 3:1-3. But let us leave John the Baptist for a moment or two and go

back to Isaiah 40:1-3. The word we want to pay particular attention to is found in Isaiah 40:2 and is the word "double". Notice it tells us here that Israel



Martin Holmes

has received double for all of her sins from the Lord's hand. But also notice before this statement, it tells us Israel's warfare is accomplished and her iniquity

is pardoned. So this word "double" cannot mean Israel is receiving a double portion of judgment from the Lord for her sins. If Israel suffered all the endless ages of eternity for her sins, she couldn't begin to satisfy the just demands of God's law for her sins.

What does this word "double" mean then? In the covenant God made with Israel through Moses, He promised Israel a Kinsman-Redeemer. If a man couldn't pay his debts as they were recorded on his bill of indebtedness, he and his family were to be sold into slavery until the full amount of indebtedness was paid. Now I know this is a very simplistic account of this law, but it contains the main points. Now God provided that

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WHO WILL CARRY ON THE WORK?

by

Doug Newell
Assistant Editor

Psalms 78:1-8, "GIVE ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old. Which we have heard and known, and our fathers



Doug Newell

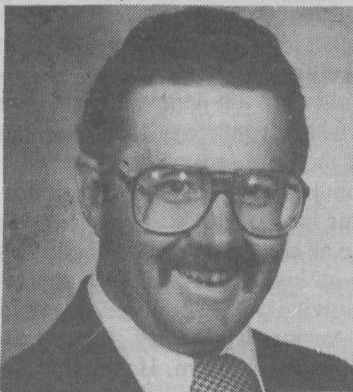
WHAT'S WRONG WITH OUR CHURCHES

by Sam Wilson

Matthew 16:18: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Thank God for this precious promise of perpetuity to His church. Beloved, there is a war being waged against true churches in this day. The sad thing is that this war is being waged more so from the inside than the outside. As the saying goes, "We have met the enemy and it is us." We are on the verge of destroying each other and ourselves. May our God have mercy on the condition of our churches. We should be united in fighting the enemy, rather than choosing sides

and fighting each other. I am not saying there are not reasons for some of this fighting. We are not to sit idle and ignore our sister churches when they violate Scripture and Baptist policy. When a sister church receives an



Sam Wilson

excluded member from another sister church, it is the responsibility of all sister churches to rebuke and fight against this evil. The most hypocritical thing I know of in recent years is the new found attitude of, we are not going to get involved, or we have no right to judge. These are nothing more than excuses to cover up an unwillingness to stand for the things of God's Word. Enough of that for now; more later.

Let me state now the kind of church I have reference to. When I write this article; I am only dealing with Landmark, Sovereign Grace, Independent, Missionary Baptist Churches. I am not concerned with the prob-

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HOLINESS PART V

by Ray Brown
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25036

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14).

If holiness is so important, why can't holiness save us? Why can't holiness put away sin? Why can't holiness cover iniquity? Why can't holiness make satisfaction for transgressors? Why can't holiness pay our sin debts? Can holiness do these things? No, a thousand times no.



Ray Brown

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT USE THE WORD IN REGENERATION?

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (1 Pet. 1:23,25).

It is rather difficult to choose a text for a subject like this since there are so many of them in the Bible. The truth of the matter is that there is not one text to the contrary. Wherever the Bible

teaches on this subject it is all one way - yes, the Holy Spirit does use the Word in regeneration. The Bible is very clear and decisive as to this matter. Missionary Baptist history is also very clear in teaching this truth. But I have chosen the above text as one that most assuredly teaches my subject, and answers the question of the subject in the affirmative.

I do testify this day that I have never wavered on this point. No man on the opposite side can say that Joe Wilson used to be with

us, but he has changed. Many have now changed their long held position on this subject. Oh, I remember when we stood together on this point. A dear preacher friend and I stood one day talking about this point. We agreed totally. We lamented the fact that some preachers, whom we named, had changed on this. We spoke together of the many Scriptures setting forth our common belief on the subject. We rejoiced in the truth. I lived to see the day that, that brother

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The brightest saints are all unprofitable servants. Our greatest works are no better than filthy rags when tried by God's holy law. The white robe, which Jesus gives, is our sanctification. It must be our only righteousness and holiness in the sight of Almighty God. There can't be anything else outside of this robe of righteousness unto justification. This robe of life we receive through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This alone is our holiness in the sight of Almighty God.

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REGENERATION

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changed on this subject. One sad day, I looked; and lo, this brother who had fired with me, shoulder to shoulder, at the Hardshells, was now on the other side, shooting back at me. What a sad day! But he is one of many who have changed their position on this point, but who still falsely wear the name Missionary Baptist.

Now, the Bible has not changed. It teaches the same thing it taught when this brother and I stood together against Hardshellism. The truth has not changed. What was truth then is truth now. The teaching that regeneration without the gospel was Hardshellism then. It is Hardshellism now. Many who once stood with us have changed to the Hardshell position. Some of them have joined the Hardshells. Some of them still wear the "Missionary" name. I do praise the Lord that the vast majority still stand with me on this subject. Though many have changed, the much larger percentage have remained true to the Biblical and Baptist position.

Let us define our question fully. It is not a question as to the sinner being spiritually lead. We surely believe and preach this truth. The sinner is totally dead as to spiritual things. He cannot repent. He cannot believe. He cannot do anything of a spiritual nature or with spiritual acceptability. It is not a question of the sinner being able to do anything towards his salvation experience. This he most certainly cannot do.

It is not a question of the Holy Spirit being the agent in regeneration. He most assuredly is. Men are regenerated by the Holy Spirit. It is wrong (and I cannot but believe that the men who do it know it is wrong) to refer to men who hold my position as being "Gospel Regenerationists," and to men who oppose my position as being "Spirit Regenerationists." These men know that we do verily believe and adamantly preach that the Spirit is the agent in regeneration. We absolutely do not preach that men are regenerated by the gospel without the Spirit. We believe that the Spirit uses the gospel in regeneration. I cannot but believe that my opponents know this, and that they are being deliberately deceitful and hypocritical when they say that we believe in gospel regeneration, but they believe in Spirit regeneration. We believe in Spirit regeneration as much as they do, and they know this. The one and only question of this discussion is, does the Holy Spirit use the Word (specifically, the gospel) in regeneration?

Indisputably, the Missionary

Baptist position has historically been a resounding affirmation on this subject. Surely, no one will deny this. Surely, no one will dare to teach that Missionary Baptists have historically held that the Word is not used in regeneration. Why, beginning with the Bible (where Missionary



Joe Wilson

Baptists originated, and which contains their first Confession of Faith), and going through all their glorious history; they have overwhelmingly, almost with unanimous voice, taught my position. Why, this is the very dividing line between true Missionary Baptists and Hardshell heretics who call themselves

Primitive Baptists. Too many Baptists are on record in the affirmative of this question for any honest man to even think of denying that the use of the Word in regeneration is the historical position of Missionary Baptists.

There is no time lapse between the giving of life, the quickening of the soul, and the exercise of repentance and faith. The Bible presents these things as synonymous. The impenitent, unbelieving; but born again child of God, is an anomaly unknown to Scripture. The very idea of a person being at one and the same time unrepentant and unbelieving, yet being born again is totally foreign, absurd, and repugnant to the totality of God's Word.

The Bible absolutely does not, in the matter of spiritual life, distinguish between "conception" as the giving of spiritual life and "the new birth" as the bringing forth of that life. The fact that this is true in the natural does not at all mean that it is true in the spiritual. The Bible nowhere pictures one as having spiritual life, but not yet being born again. This is a product of the depraved

imaginings of men, not of a spiritual understanding of the Word of God. Now, if I be wrong in this matter, I propose a simple test that can easily settle the matter once for all. If I be wrong, let the Hardshell (new or old) show one Scripture that shows this. I do not ask for ten. I do not ask for five. I do not ask for two. Let the Hardshell set forth one Scripture that shows me wrong in what I have said.

When the Bible speaks of the Word being used in salvation (and it does in many Scriptures) it does not refer to Christ as the living Word. It is doubtful if any Scripture writer except John ever speaks of Christ as the Word. I realize that this is a matter of interpretation, but I stand by my statement. When John uses the word "Word" to refer to Christ, the context makes it very clear that he is doing this. Show me where any other writer does this. The word, "word" in the Bible usually refers to the written Word of God. When it refers to Christ Himself, the context makes this clear. By all the rules of Biblical interpretation whenever we run

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FROM THE EDITOR

PREACHERS AND BIBLE CONFERENCES. Preachers are very important to a Bible Conference. In fact, we could not have Bible conferences without them. They are a fine and noble breed. Praise God for them, and for their willingness to attend and speak at Bible conferences. The churches I know of ordinarily do not pay the preacher for his expenses in getting to and from a Bible conference - that is the host church. This is a large expense for many preachers. It would be good for a church to agree to pay expenses for her pastor for him to attend so many (or leave this open if they will) Bible conferences or fellowships a year. My church does this, and has placed no restrictions on me as to number. Of course I do not get invited to a large number of such. I greatly appreciate my church doing this. I suggest that every church give this matter some thought.

Let me suggest to churches that you allow your pastor to attend (set a number or not as you desire) Bible conferences and to stay for the whole conference. Preachers are often torn between their desire to stay for a whole conference and their church's opposition to their being away when the conference involves a Sunday. Your pastor can be a blessing to others, and he can receive many blessings from conferences. Do not rob your pastor of this opportunity to receive great blessings. After all, that which is a blessing to your pastor will eventually prove a blessing to the church. I do agree that a church may want to set a limit as to how often a pastor can be away from his pulpit, and may be should do this. After all, the pastor does have an obligation to the church he pastors. It is a two way street. Some churches are too demanding on their pastors in this matter. Some preachers take advantage of their churches in this matter. Let both seek the will of the Lord in such matters.

Now, I speak to preachers who are invited to speak at a conference. Brother, the host pastor has a job on his hands. The host church has a job and great expense on her hands. Be as helpful as you can be in this matter. It is an honor for a preacher to be invited to speak in a conference. Preacher, always answer such an invitation. Even if you do not or cannot attend, answer the invitation. Answer it speedily and courteously. The pastor must have time to plan the program. He must know if you will or will not attend. Of course, we all know that things could develop so that one who plans to attend cannot do so. This is understood. The host pastor does not need to be told this. He simply wants to know if you plan to attend, and will be there unless something develops so that you cannot come.

If you say you will be at a conference, do all in your power to be there. I have had preachers tell me they would come. I would assign them a subject and place them on the program. Then they never showed up. They did not let me know they were not coming. I went right up into the conference expecting them to be there. They did not show up. They did not inform me they could not come. They did not even bother apologizing or explaining then or afterward. This is inexcusably rude, discourteous, and inconsiderate. No preacher should ever be guilty of such behavior. One should answer the invitation even if he does not plan to attend; but to say he will be there, be placed on the program, and then to not show up is just plain rude. Of course, something might possibly happen to cause this, but almost without exception, he can let the host pastor know.

Let me suggest that preachers encourage their members to attend conferences. Do not discourage your members from attending a conference because they will miss one Sunday at church. After all this will not happen often, and they will probably get more blessings from the conference than from Sunday School and two Sunday sermons. I have always encouraged my members to attend conferences. I feel that they will be blessed, and that the church will be blessed.

Most churches, in inviting preachers to speak, state that they will provide lodging for the preacher and his family. They usually do this in homes of church members, and then in motels if they cannot put them in homes. I always go to the host pastor upon arrival and stay wherever he places me. If I desire to do differently, I let him know when I answer the invitation. I feel sure that most churches are gladly willing to pro-

vide lodging for those who speak at the conference and their families. A problem comes in here. Some preachers do not want to stay in a home. They prefer to stay in a motel. When I invite a speaker, I usually put on the invitation that, if he prefers to stay in a motel, he may do so at his expense. Maybe I am wrong in this. Comments welcomed. However, I do feel somewhat that if our church is willing to place the preacher in a home, that we should not have to pay an added expense because the preacher does not want to stay in a home. When we fill what homes are available and have to put the preacher in a motel, we are perfectly willing to pay for the motel. But it does bother me a little (again, I may be wrong) to have empty rooms which have been provided for a speaker, but have to pay a motel bill instead. Again, I just go to the host pastor and stay wherever he places me, with no suggesting and no complaining. Except that I stayed with my son, Joe, who lived here then, when speaking at a conference here and some at King's Addition. I let the pastor know this ahead of time, and it was not an expense to the church. Apart from this, I would not raise a question or make a suggestion as to where I would stay, except I would want to make it as easy on the church as possible.

If a preacher is not perfectly willing to stay wherever the host pastor places him, he should let that pastor know well ahead of time. I have been placed in embarrassing positions by the following. I work on my members urging them to keep conference preachers. A family tells me that they can keep two preachers and families, or whatever. I place the preachers (Katie really does this). I tell the members who will be staying with them.

Everything is all set. Whew! Good! I am glad that we have everything arranged now. Then the preacher arrives and tells me that he has gotten or wants to get a motel room. I am embarrassed. What shall I do? The said preacher will almost always pay for his motel room under this condition. But what am I now to do with the beds I talked my members into providing for that preacher. Last year I had two provided rooms unoccupied because of this way of doing things. The year before that, I talked a preacher friend in a nearby city into keeping some preachers for us. The preachers who were to stay there took it upon themselves to make their own arrangements. Brethren, be more thoughtful and considerate in such matters. A church family agrees to keep a visiting conference speaker. The wife cleans the room and puts her best bed clothing on it. She gets in extra food. She has gone to trouble and expense to provide for the preacher or preachers I have (Katie again) assigned to her. The preacher, without notifying me at all, makes his own arrangements, and (maybe) the woman is angry with me, (maybe) she won't do this again, at least it is an embarrassing situation that would never develop if preachers would be more thoughtful and considerate.

Let the host pastor know ahead of time if you desire or expect a different arrangement from whatever he might plan for you. If you are not willing to stay in a home, let him know now, and you and he can settle it as to who pays. Let the host pastor know how many of your family will be with you, God willing. It is so helpful to know all this in making arrangements for the conference (I should let Katie write on this). Let the host pastor know when you plan to arrive and when you plan to leave. This helps him in making arrangements for your lodging. If you plan to take someone who is not family with you, let the host pastor know, and you and he settle on the matter of lodging and paying. So many little things like this can make the great big job of arranging for a conference so much easier for the host church.

Preacher, do everything you can to be at the conference for the first preacher and stay through the last preacher. We had more preachers absent from the last session of our conference this year than ever before. Sometimes this may be necessary. In most cases, it is not. Preacher, apply the golden rule here. You may be speaking at the last session sometime. Wow, I must close. This is long already. Comments welcome.

REGENERATION

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into the word "word" in the Bible we should take it to mean the written Word unless it is made indisputably clear that it refers to Christ. The Hardshells ignore this rule of interpretation. They interpret the word "word" as it suits their theology, not as it truly is in the Bible. If it does not suit their "regeneration without the word" heresy, they say that it means Christ. We are to interpret a word in the Bible according to its natural and usual meaning. We are not to interpret it in a pictorial and unusual way without clear Scriptural authority for so doing. The Hardshell method of interpreting "word" as it suits them, used as to other subjects, would turn the Bible into a book with no clear meaning. If one can interpret a word to mean one thing, and another interpret it to mean something else; then understanding of the Bible is at an end. When the Bible uses the word "word" it should always be interpreted as the written Word of God unless it is very clear that it means otherwise. When the Bible says that we are "born again by the word of God" we are not at liberty to say, "Oh, that does not mean what it usually means, that means Christ." The Hardshells have made themselves a key in the laboratory of their own minds. This key is, that when they want it to, "word" means Christ. Then, whenever we give them a Scripture that connects the Word and regeneration, they will say, "Oh, that does not mean the gospel, that means Christ." They are unscriptural and anti-Scriptural in this method of interpretation. Their method would give a man room to make the Bible mean whatever he wanted it to mean.

The Bible clearly teaches, as we shall see, that the Spirit uses the Word in regeneration. These three ways: 1. There is a time lapse between regeneration and the exercise of repentance and faith. 2. There is a time lapse between conception, the giving of life; and the new birth, the bringing forth of life. 3. When the Bible connects the word and regeneration it means Christ as the living Word. - these three things have been the Hardshells' ways of getting around the Biblical truth on this subject.

Please read the account of Ezekiel and the dry bones in Ezekiel 37:1-10. I know that the Biblical interpretation of this refers to the restoration and salvation of the nation Israel. But I believe that this can be applied to the giving of spiritual life wherever and whenever this takes place. I think that most men will agree to this. Well, what does this vision of the dry bones teach about the giving of spiritual life? It certainly teaches us that there is to be the preaching of the Word to the spiritually dead. "Again he said unto me, Prophesy. upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD" (Eze.37:4). This Scripture also teaches the work of the Holy Spirit in the giving of spiritual life. "Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live" (v. 9). If this Scripture

teaches us anything about the giving of spiritual life (and it does), it teaches that the Spirit uses the Word in regeneration. It affirms my subject.

Now, read the parable of The Seed, The Sower, And The Soil in Matthew 13:1-23. This parable surely teaches and illustrates how God brings forth the salvation experience in His elect. The sowing of the seed is necessary to the bringing forth of fruit. The fruit brought forth is the salvation experience. There can be no salvation experience without the sowing of the seed. Luke's account of this parable clearly states that, "The seed is the word of God" (8:11). The Hardshell will accuse us of teaching that the seed makes the ground good. We do not teach this. We believe that, that is the work of the Holy Spirit. But it is the clear, unequivocal teaching of this Scripture that without the Word of God there can be no spiritual life. This parable teaches the truth I am setting forth in this message, and condemns the Hardshell doctrine as unscriptural heresy.

Let us look at some clear and irrefutable Scriptures setting forth my position. "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). Beware of the Hardshell heresy of separating regeneration and salvation. They will teach that one can be regenerated but not saved. Ha! Ha! What absurdity. A regenerated man, but at the same time, an unsaved man; can anything be more absurd? Titus 3:5 tells us that, "he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." How then can regeneration and salvation be separated as to time? Surely, the gospel is used in regeneration. "...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). This verse, beyond all controversy, teaches that the gospel is used in regeneration - in the giving of spiritual life. Paul could not regenerate them. He knew this. But he also knew that he had preached the gospel to them that the Holy Spirit used it in their regeneration. I know that some say this means that Paul was a sort of mid-wife who assisted in the birth. But this is not the meaning of the Greek or the English. And Paul, in the same verse refers to himself as their spiritual father. The father is essential in the matter of the giving of physical life. His presence is not essential at the birth. I do not see how a Hardshell can live with himself after his perversion of this Scripture, seeking to defend his heresy of regeneration without the Word.

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost. (I Thess.1:5). Paul is talking about their salvation experience. He tells that this experience was brought about by the Word and by the power of the Holy Ghost. "Not only, but also" in this Scripture affirms the truth of my subject that the Holy Spirit does use the Word in regeneration. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth...." (Jms.1:18). No man, without a heresy to defend, would

deny that this verse teaches the use of the Word in regeneration. It is so very clear. Attempts to get around its clear meaning easily reveal themselves as perversions of the Word of God. I could give very many more Scriptures, but these are sufficient for any man who will humbly bow to the authority of Holy Writ. The question of this message must be settled, not by human reasoning, but by the Bible. I ask the Hardshell who does not agree with me on this subject, If these Scriptures do not teach that the Holy Spirit uses the Word in regeneration, how could it be taught? If God had meant to teach this, in what way could He have taught it any more clearly? If God wanted to teach what I teach in this article, and if these Scriptures do not teach this, how could God teach it? I ask, if the Hardshell can get around these Scriptures, what could God have said that the Hardshell could not get around? My friend, if these (and other Scriptures that could be given) do not teach my position in this message, I make bold to say that it would be totally and absolutely impossible to teach it.

I make bold to say that the Scripture is all one way in this dispute. In some arguments, there are Scriptures that can be given on both sides. I do not mean that the Scriptures teach two different things, but only that in some disputes, there are some Scriptures (wrongly interpreted of course) that can be set forth for the wrong position. But there are no such Scriptures in this controversy. There is not one Scripture that can be used to teach the Hardshell position. I once offered a brother a large sum of money, about a thousand dollars to show me one verse anywhere in the Bible that teaches regeneration without the Word. Needless to say, he never claimed the money. Of course, I knew I was quite safe in making such an offer. My friend, the Bible is all one way on this subject, and it is the way I am teaching in this article. Show me in the Bible one man who has spiritual life and has never had any contact with the Word of God. Come on now, show me one such. Furthermore, there is no man who can truthfully testify that he was a born again child of God before and apart from any contact with the Word of God. The Bible and Christian experience show the truth of what I teach in this message.

Biblical truth on this subject is summed up in four statements. 1. The sinner is dead. 2. The Holy Spirit, as it pleases Him, gives life to dead sinners. 3. The Holy Spirit uses the gospel in giving this life. 4. This life is characterized by repentance and faith, and immediately evidences itself by the exercise thereof. This sums up the Biblical teaching on this matter. To leave out any of these four things is to pervert the Biblical teaching about the salvation experience.

I ask those of my readers who once stood with me on this subject to not be too hard on those of us who still stand where they once stood. Remember that we stand where you stood when we stood together. Just because you have changed, don't expect us to change. We prefer to stand in the old paths and walk therein. I would urge those of you who once believed as I have set forth in this message, but have now changed, to give serious thought and prayer to this matter. You

have left the truth. You have adopted a heresy. Man, think what you have done and are doing.

I urge my brethren who have taken up with this heresy to come back to the truth they once believed. Oh, my brother, come back, come back. We still call you, brother. Your heresy is not one that means you are unsaved. We would delight beyond all words to see you return to the faith of your fathers. I would delight to publish in The Baptist Examiner the testimony of those who return to the truth on this matter.

But, ah me, I have learned by sad experience that men seldom return to truth from which they depart. I have seen many leave error and come to the truth. I have seen only a very few leave the truth for error, and then come back. Still, I urge you to come back. We will receive you with open arms.

But, if you are not going to come back, may I make some suggestions. 1. Go on and join the Hardshells. Do not trouble our camp any longer. Do not come in like wolves and devour the flock. Some of you came into our kind of churches under false pretences, and then overthrew the faith of these people on this subject. Some of you changed after you came into our kind of churches, and then took the church with you down the road of Hardshell heresy. Woe to the preacher who does this. Woe to the church who follows him. Friend, my position is the Missionary Baptist position. Your position is Hardshell. Be honest. Get out of our kind of church. Go on and join the Hardshells. Many have done this. I respect them for it. It is what they ought to do if they are not going to return to Missionary Baptist truth on this subject.

2. Maybe you can't go along with the Hardshells either. Maybe you can't agree with their teaching that the regenerated one may die and go to heaven and not till then believe on, or even know there is, the Lord Jesus Christ. Maybe you can't agree with Hardshell prophecy. Maybe you can't agree with their "hope so" salvation. Well, if you can't agree with the Missionary Baptists, get out of them. If you don't agree with the Hardshells, don't join them. Just start you a new denomination with your mixture of Missionary Baptist truth and Hardshell heresy. When I no longer believed what the Holy-rollers taught, I turned in my ordination certificate and left them. I did not try to stay in their churches and not agree with their doctrines. I wish that these Hardshells who are in Missionary Baptist church, if they are not going to come back to the truth, would do as I did and get out.

One thing, and I am done. Let those of us who believe as I have preached in this message be very faithful in giving the gospel to the unsaved. Let us be Missionary in practice as well as in doctrine. And let us earnestly pray that God will use that gospel to the salvation of lost men and women. I have preached Bible and true Baptist doctrine in this message. Let those who agree with me stand with me in and for this glorious truth. Let those who disagree consider their position, come to the truth we believe, or go forth from us, no longer pretending to be one of us. May God bless you all.

HOLINESS

(Continued from Page 1)

"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings, with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of host. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar" (Isa. 6:1-6).

The brazen altar is a picture of Calvary. It was the first thing the sinner saw when he came through the tabernacle gate. He saw the brazen altar where the fire was always burning. This pictured Calvary. This is where God said He would meet the sinner. This is where the animals were brought to be slain upon the altar. We see the seraphim take the tongs from off the altar having a live coal, which is the purification fire. This fire that purifies is spoken of in Matthew 3. The purifying fire of the Holy Spirit it purifies the soul.

"And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed" (Isa. 6:7-10).

Here we have the commission God gave Isaiah. This is a reproduction of his commission. God had already given Isaiah this commission back in Ch. 1. He told Isaiah He wanted him to preach to Israel and unto Judah. He was to bring the woes upon them. Isaiah was going to "woe" the children of Israel as God had told him to do. The seven woes in which he was to bring upon the people from God. The last woe was to Isaiah.

"Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of

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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

Explain "only begotten" in Heb. 11:17 with respect to Ishmael.

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According to Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, the root word for "only" means, 1. Solitary, 2. exclusive. The word "begotten" has to do with the relationship between the father and the son. The King James translators were justified in translating MONOGENES as "only begotten", because even though Ishmael was Abraham's son in the flesh he was not the son of promise. In Genesis 17:15-22 we see a beautiful illustration of God's divine election. God had given a covenant to Abram that He would give him a seed through which all the nations of the earth, (not all humanity) would be blessed. That seed was to be planted in the womb of his wife Sarai. Ishmael did not come from the womb of Sarai; but from Hagar, Sarai's handmaid. Nevertheless, according to Genesis 17:20 God promised to bless Ishmael's seed in the flesh, but His covenant of grace would be established in Isaac (see Genesis 17:21). There was never any possibility that the covenant of grace would be established in Ishmael because Isaac had been chosen before he was ever conceived, yea before the foundation of the world. The establishment of that covenant of grace in Isaac; Abraham's solitary, exclusive son (The word "exclusive" is a very interesting word. Webster's New World Dictionary defines it as 1. excluding all others, 2. shutting out other considerations, 3. excluding all but what is specified, 4. not shared, or divided) was God's seal of promise to send His own solitary, exclusive Son to perform the redemptive work necessary for the salvation of Abraham's spiritual seed. According to Romans 9:6-9, all of the children of God are Abraham's spiritual seed, (Christ being that exclusive seed). "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this is the word of

promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son." What we see in this text is the exclusion of Ishmael's seed, the seed of the flesh. Now keep in mind that the context of this chapter involves an election of grace.

Romans 9:11, "...that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth" verse 16, "So then, it (election) is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." So what we see in the term "only begotten" in Hebrews 11:17 is the covenant of grace applied to Isaac's seed, God's elect; and the exclusion of Ishmael's seed, the non-elect. Furthermore, we also see a type of God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Yes, our Lord Jesus is the "only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (Jm.1:14). God's exclusive grace was manifest through the Son, and was shed upon us. Jesus is the promised Seed, the Lamb, the Light, the Way, the Truth, the Life, the Saviour, the Branch, the Door, the Shepherd, the High Priest, the Apostle, the Bread, and the Word. He is that solitary, exclusive, unique, Son that has shed His precious, perfect blood to redeem His elect from sin's condemnation. Amen.

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Hebrews 11:17: "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son."

Let me start this answer with a statement. I am very tempted not to even answer this question. You see, I sent this question in; and if I already knew the answer I would not have asked the question. If the editor is going to send my own questions back to me, then I have a few for the future. Questions like, name the Trinity or how many commandments are there in the Ten Commandments? These questions, I can answer with no problems. If the editor needs any more such questions for Forum one, I will gladly supply them. This is a question that I asked him, and his reply was; "Son, I am the questioner and you are the answerer." A lot of help he was. I probably will not be of much greater help to you, but I will at least try. I might add that, in this case I was questioner, and suppose I will have to try and be the answerer

also. I will be looking forward to reading my fellow writers on this question. Let me now briefly give you my answer.

First, we know that Isaac was not the only son of Abraham. We know that Ishmael was also his son. We know that Ishmael was the product of adultery on Abraham's part. (I do not mean to imply that this has anything directly to do with the question.) I think that the term "only begotten" has reference to Isaac as the only seed of promise. God had made a covenant with Abraham. This covenant was to be fulfilled by Abraham and his wife Sarai. I think that so far as God's promises to Abraham about his seed, Isaac was the only begotten. There is also the fact that Ishmael had been banished from the family with his mother, Hagar. In a sense, he had been dis-owned by Abraham. What terrible results come about because of sin! In this case as with most cases today, the child was the one to suffer the most. This made Isaac, in a practical sense, the only begotten of Abraham. (Though not in a real sense.) I guess I will stick by my first answer Isaac was the only begotten with reference to the covenant of God to Abraham. If you have a better answer, please send it to me. May God bless you all.

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"By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son"

To see what is meant by "his only begotten son", we need to go back to the account of Abraham and see that when God made a covenant with Abraham to give him the promised land and a son and through that son all nations would be blessed, Abraham had no son and Sarah, his wife, was barren. Abraham first tried to get God to agree for him to adopt a son, "Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir" (Gen. 15:3). But God told him this was not the son which He had promised but that son was to be one come from him, his own seed.

As time went on and as it seemed to be an impossibility for Sarah to bear a son, she decided to help God keep His promise. So she gave her Egyptian maid to Abraham to be his wife and bear him a son. As a result of this Ishmael was born and Abraham thought he must be the son God had promised. But God said no

this was not the one. Then God told Abraham that Sarah would bear his son, "And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her, and thou shall call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him" (Gen. 17:16, 19). "And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him" (Gen. 10:1, 2).

We see from this that, as far as the covenant which God made with Abraham, Isaac was the son and the only son whom that covenant covered. In the plan and purpose of God as to the covenant, Isaac was the "only begotten son" of Abraham. While Ishmael was born after the flesh; Isaac's birth was by promise. While Ishmael's birth was a natural birth, Isaac's birth was a miraculous birth, thus Isaac was the only begotten son of Abraham born in this way.

HOLINESS

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hosts" (Isa. 6:5).

We see the importance of the holiness of God here. God had to show one of His great prophets the greatness of His holiness. He filled the temple.

"IN the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple" (Isa. 6:1). Until God removed this great king, he took upon himself many tasks in this great kingdom that he had. He took upon himself that he would go into the holy of holies and offer up sacrifices and praises to God himself instead of allowing the appointed priest to do it. God smote him with leprosy. This man went into his home and there he died with leprosy. But until God removed the greatness of this man and the influence that this man had over Judah, people could not see the glory of God, the holiness of God, or the greatness of God. God reveals this great holiness that He has for His people, imputed unto them through Christ Jesus by the way of the cross; by the sufferings of Him that died upon the cross of Calvary nearly two thousand years ago. This pictures the holiness of God and the terribleness of this altar. The hot coals were taken off of the altar with tongs by one of the seraphims and touched to the lips of Isaiah. His sins were purged and his iniquity was taken away. He was purified. Then Isaiah began to cry out, Woe is me! He cries out as a leper. I believe that many times in our regeneration we need to fully examine the power of God. God reveals in our heart that we might see the characteristics of God; that we might see the holiness of God, the righteousness of God, and the glory of God in his greatness. I believe that many times before we will exercise the fruits of holiness and the fruits of righteousness in our life, God has to remove something. Many times

God has to remove something that is in our life. God removed a great king here. He had great wealth, a great empire, and great power; but God removed this man for one man's sake, Isaiah. His great prophet. God said he does not see my glory and my holiness. He does not see my righteousness, my greatness, and my power. I must remove these obstacles that are in the way. I must remove this that the burning of my holiness might get through that this man might see. The seraphims are beings that are created holy. They would not even uncover their faces and their eyes, for they could not look into the face of God. They could not come into the presences of God without closing and hiding their eyes from the great holiness of Almighty God. When we see ourselves in the presences of a thrice Holy God, and come into contact with a thrice Holy God then we will better understand the holiness of God. Then we will cry out as a leper. We will cry out unclean, unclean. We will see how undeserving we are of eternal salvation. We will see how fortunate we are that God wants us to take the good news of glad tidings that his Son died on the cross of Calvary nearly two thousand years ago. We will begin to see the holiness of God and the full glory of Almighty God. I pray dear people that it will not be something bad that will happen in your life that God removed that you might see and exercise this glory. Sometimes God has to move an object or something to get our undivided attention. It is a very dangerous thing when we thrifle with God's love. We see that this altar represents the cross of Calvary; represents the sufferings of our dear Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

"Also I heard the voice of the LORD, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me" (Isa. 6:8). God taught Isaiah a lesson, and Isaiah said, Lord here I am; send me. He said, I want to go, I want to be thy servant, I want to go forth and proclaim thy glory; I want to go forth and proclaim thy holiness and thy righteousness. Let me carry the good news of salvation to the lost and dying world. Let me glorify thy righteous and holy name. Many times when things come in conflict with our Christian life, God puts us flat on our back. Something happens in our Christian experience. Then we cry out and we want to go because God has revealed His great holiness to us. How important holiness is!

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works; lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). Everyone is saved the same way; through faith in a crucified and risen Savior. But God deals differently with believers when it comes to exercising His sovereignty, His greatness, His glory, and His holiness. What is He telling Isaiah here? He is telling Isaiah that he must be holy. God commands that we are to be holy.

"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Pet. 1:15-16). This

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The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT
THE BAPTIST EXAMINER--P.O. BOX 60--ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0063

How can we prove that there is no apostolic succession today?

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Only fourteen men have ever held the office of an apostle. The twelve that were chosen by Christ. "And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;" (Luke 6:13). The one that was chosen by the church to replace Judas. "And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." (Act 1:26). The apostle to the Gentiles, Paul, called and instructed by God in the desert of Arabia. "PAUL, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God," (Rom 1:1).

When a man is called of God for a particular office (bishopric), he must meet the requirements or qualifications for that office. It is true with a man that is called to pastor or be a deacon, so also is

it true of an apostle. In the world today, holding an office in the church is not based on God's requirements, but man's twisted interpretation of those requirements. The best example is the ordaining of women in violation of the requirements God gave for choosing pastors and deacons. Read I Timothy 3 for God's requirements, then look to see man's misinterpretation.

The qualifications for an apostle are stated for us in the first chapter of Acts. "Wherefore of these men which have accompanied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection" (Act.1:21-22). These are not hard to read or understand. It was necessary that one be chosen to replace Judas to fulfill Scripture (v 16) and to fill the office of an apostle, verse twenty. Then, he must have seen the Lord while he was on the earth. He must be one that had the baptism of John, believer's baptism. And he must be a witness of the resurrection of Christ. Joseph and Matthias met those qualifications, and Matthias was chosen by the church.

What then of Paul? Some may

argue that he did not meet any of these requirements. He must have met the requirements, for God calls him an apostle in His Word many times. We are not told how, but God did cause His requirements to be met by Paul. After his conversion, Paul went into Arabia to be instructed. "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus" (Gal 1:15-17). And Paul also states: "And last of all he was seen of me also, as one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God" (I Cor 15:8-9).

God has no use for an apostle today. His Word is complete, and He works in His church through His pastors and teachers as they rightly divide His Word. Neither can there be any because there is no man alive today that can meet the Scriptural requirements.

Holy Spirit and the fruits of holiness which He has given unto us.

Let us not be as Isaiah. Someone may have to be removed. Some thing may come upon your life. Acknowledge God's glory, His righteousness, His holiness, and His great sovereignty. Exercise this holiness which God has given to you in the new birth that you might bring forth fruits of holiness unto God. Give yourself fully and completely to God. Fear God reverentially in your heart and in your life.

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His chosen elect people should testify of what He has done in behalf of the redeemed, (4). because God has and is preparing a wonderful place for His chosen ones - heaven.

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:1-6).

John 14:1-6 is a wonderful passage of Scripture to the believer. One of these days, the elect of God will hear the cry, "Come up hither" (Rev. 4:1). Oh dearly beloved, that is why Jesus could say, "Let not your hearts be troubled." You see, one of these days, perhaps very soon, our Lord will return for His own. What a grand day that will be. "Even so, come Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

Faith believes that great and wonderful truth. Hope anticipates that event. Love will cause the believer to share it with others. Patience will help us wait for that day. Nevertheless, He is coming again to take His own out of this world. Therefore, we must stand fast and sure on these grand old truths, and that in part because our Lord Jesus Christ is returning for His own. This is one of the most fascinating subjects in the Word of God. The Bible is a book that is pre-eminently a book about God, and particularly His Divine Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, just how important is man? Man is of little importance along side of God Himself; that is, until the Bible speaks of man's redemption. Then and only then, does the Word of God inform us as to what God thinks about His creation - man. Oh beloved, God loves His own in a very special way. What our God has done for us is great! He chose us in Christ from before the foundation of the world - "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). He has saved us from our

sins - "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). He has made us accepted in His dear Son, Jesus Christ, "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6). And, He has forgiven us (the elect) of all our sins, Ephesians 1:7.

Would you listen to me for a brief moment. We could go over these things for hours, but our subject is God's call to glory. With that in mind, would you notice some major benefits that are ours in Christ Jesus: (1). These grand old facts should and will comfort the elect of God - "Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (I Thess. 4:18). (2). It will also give hope to those who find themselves in afflictions (3). These glorious truths will give answers to those who are somewhat confused. (4). furthermore, it will stimulate us unto God's service when we realize that He is coming back for us. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (John 15:16), and, (5). it will give endurance to those that are weak.

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:8-11).

Twenty-five years ago this preacher was told that Jesus was not coming back again for His own. But that is not what the Bible teaches! In fact, one quarter of the Bible when written was centered around prophecy - facts that God said would come to pass. Many of them have come to pass, and that causes many of us to believe that the rest will as well. God simply meant what He said and said what He meant. The Old Testament announced the second advent of our Lord. While it is true that they often did not make a distinction between the first and the second advent, they nevertheless, speak often of our Lord's second advent. Remember, the New Testament is hid in the Old Testament and the Old Testament is revealed in the New Testament. The Bible is a book that loses its punch when you attempt to do away with any part of it. We need it all! Not just the

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HOLINESS

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word "conversation" means manner of life. Isaiah cried out, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of people of unclean lips." Before this Isaiah couldn't see anything but the faults of other people. He couldn't see his own faults because he was looking at the faults of others. He had his eyes upon other people, and he was willing and eager to go forth and proclaim these woes upon God's people. Yet he himself needed the same message. All of God's people need the endowment of holiness. All of God's people need to obtain holiness. I don't care what name you go by, we all need to obtain this holiness of God. We all need this holiness that we might have holy fruits unto Almighty God.

Isaiah said, "Woe is me! for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." Isaiah saw before that the people were unclean, but he couldn't see himself. God put the spot light on him and the law of God shined in his heart. The law of God showed him how filthy, how dirty, how corrupt, and how unworthy that he was in the sight of God. That is what the holiness of God does. It brings us into the presence of God through the infallible Word of God and shows us that we are not holy. God said, "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." Matthew, chapter 8 tells about

when Jesus and the disciples were going across the sea of Galilee. A great storm arose upon the sea, and He was in the back part of the ship asleep. They went and woke him up and said, do you care if we perish? He got up and rebuked the wind and the sea. There was a great calm. They said what manner of man is this that even the winds and the sea obey him. See they were so used to looking at other people's problems and the life of other people that they weren't busy enough looking upon themselves. God sent the storm. Even with Jesus Christ in their midst, their eyes were upon other individual people; and they didn't have their eyes upon themselves. Jesus taught them a lesson. They said when the trouble calls and it involves your own life then it is a different story. We all point our finger of accusation against someone, and we all say look, he fell by the way side. Look what he did. He did this and he did that. Instead of having compassion, mercy, love, and going and lifting that person up. Jesus said we're to love one another. He uses the word "compassion" many times in deep meaning. It means to be involved. When they cry, you cry. When they weep, you weep. When they rejoice, you rejoice. It means to get involved with the situation and put yourself into the situation and really get involved and lift that individual person and intercede on behalf of that person. Have compassion and love upon that person. We have to be taught a les-

son. We have to be taught a lesson. You belong to God by purchase. God has purchased you. If you are not doing what is right, God one day will reveal it. He might be very severe. He may put you in the bed flat on your back. He may take a loved one, take your job, or you may loose your home. Whatever it might be, God will remove those obstacles; because as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation. We are to exercise this holiness God has given unto us that it might bring forth fruits of holiness unto God. It might be manifested before a lost and unsaved world.

God said you be holy in all manner of life, and no if's and but's about it. Because He said, I am holy. I commanded it. You must be holy because God commands it so. God will give you an understanding of how to exercise this holiness. How to obtain this holiness. How to work this holiness in your life. Don't be looking at the other person. Look upon your own life. Take inventory of your own life. Examine yourself under the light of the infallible Word of God. Do what God would have you to do. Exercise this holiness. You do this brother in the time of your sojourning here in fear. We must be holy because God commands it.

If it says in the Word of God not to do something, you don't do it. That is how God speaks to us. That is His revealed will. He enables us by the power of the

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part that we like!

Furthermore, the New Testament Jew expected the coming of our Lord. While it is true that they did not comprehend all of its points, they still looked for that grand appearing. Jesus Christ promised His church before His death on the Roman tree that He would return for them. In Acts one we are told by the angels that our Lord will come back in the same fashion or manner in which He left: bodily, and everyone will see Him. It is interesting to note that the early apostles and preachers believed in His second advent so strongly that many of them died a cruel death. They were not afraid because they realized that He would soon return for them and take them home to a wonderful place, a place called heaven. Therefore, the church of God looked for His return.

Many there be today who would attempt to take this away from us. But the Scriptures speaks of that grand event as though it had already happened, and yet is future. Some day the Lord will come again and take us out of this world and unto Himself. Look up! Expect it! Live as though it could be today!

WHAT'S

(Continued from Page 1)

lems of the P.T.L. or the Swagert Ministries. If these men will do what they should, they will join themselves to a true church of Christ and quit getting rich off religion. These organizations are not churches. They are nothing more than the synagogues of Satan. This seems to be becoming more evident with each passing day. Christ started the afore mentioned kind of church. Christ loves this church and has promised it His presence until He comes again. Christ has revealed in His Word His desire for this kind of church. You find that desire in Ephesians 5:25-27. There are few if any churches I know of that fit that description. God is not pleased. God is angry with us. We have an obligation to Christ to improve the condition of our churches.

I also mention here that we have an obligation to our Baptist forefathers to improve the state of our churches. I love a Baptist church. I love the heritage from which we came. Modern Baptist churches are an embarrassment to their forefathers. I do not mean by this the so called Arminian Baptists, I mean us, the churches that believe the truths taught in The Baptist Examiner.

I mean the churches that we have fellowshiped with and had conferences with for years. Beloved, we are a disgrace to the name "Baptist." I am afraid that there is very little about us today that resembles those who wore the Baptist name before us. Our services are probably much different from theirs. Our discipline is probably much different from theirs. Our actions towards sister churches and our respect for their authority, I assure you, is much different from theirs. May we return to the "ancient landmarks our fathers have set."

Friends, I am greatly grieved at the condition of our churches. I am grieved at the condition both individually and collectively. Individually, we are just not what we should be. We are not the representative of Christ that we should be. Collectively, there is too much jealousy and fighting going on amongst us. I have seen great harm come to our churches in the last few years. Many have gone into heresy. Many have died. I can think of several churches that at one time flourished among us that are now dead, or dying. Churches where we have had great blessing in the

past, and now they sit disbanded or mostly empty. What about your church? Is your church what it should be? May God enable each of us to honestly examine our churches and discover what is wrong with them. Then may we make every effort to correct these problems. I do not claim to have all the answers or to even recognize all the problems. I do not claim that all the things I mention will be true of every church, but they will fit most of us. I do know that the answer does not rest in the words of this article. We need some members who will take a stand against

some pastors and vice versa. We need to return to the Bible and to the practices of our forefathers.

Before we get into the heart of the message about what's wrong with our churches, let us think about the importance of this question. Beloved, other than the question of salvation, I can think of no question of greater importance. The church is the institution through which Christ has chosen to do His work on earth. The work will depend upon the condition of the churches. That makes this a very important question. Let me state some reasons why this is an important

question.

First, this is an important question when we think about the revealed will of Christ for His church. God does not take it lightly when we are not what we are supposed to be. The church is to be holy, without blemish, and without blame before God. The church is to be actively engaged in doing the work Christ left them to do. The church is to love Christ and the things associated with Him. The church is that from which Christ is going to take His bride. I see few

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JACOB'S LADDER PART III

by T.B. Freeman

Jacob awoke from his sleep very much moved in soul and spirit by his sweet dream. He discovered what he was ignorant of before he slept, namely, that God was there. And he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not." How strikingly does this ignorance represent, first the ignorance of mankind in general. God is omnipresent. He is about their path and their lying down, but they do not know, they do not consider, they do not realize it. He is not far from everyone of us: For in Him we live, and move, and have our being (Acts 17:27, 28). Secondly God's people themselves are so often ignorant of His presence. How prone are they to forget their privileges of this great fact, that God always dwells within them, and will never leave them nor forsake them.

Christ was in the world and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own and His own received Him not (John 1:10, 11). How sad to behold the spiritual blindness of fallen man.

To be conscious of Christ's ever-abiding presence in our soul is the true secret of true holiness. What a transformation takes place in one's life when that person is brought to a restful and continued conscious mind of the ever abiding presence of Christ in their own heart.

Yes in me, in me He dwelleth, I in Him and He in me!

And my empty soul He filleth, now and through eternity.

God has made known the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory (Col. 1:27). How about you, friend? Is Christ living in you? If not, will you now trust Him as your Saviour and Lord? Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him (Psalm 2:2).

Jacob also was so affected by this vision, with a holy fear of God, that he was afraid. An experience of this nature with God, does not favor a levity of mind, but produces a holy reverence for God. Moses beholding the burning bush and hearing God speak, trembled and durst not behold. Think also of how the heavenly vision affected Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Paul and John.

This generation needs to be struck with a sense of the presence of God Almighty, and become conscious of its own

vanity and vileness. The Almighty God has been defied by this penetration until there is a grave danger of this provocation inviting the wrath of God to be poured out very shortly without mixture. Oh! that there might be a mighty turning to God, with faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, in this our day, is my prayer to God. Sin is the most expensive thing in the universe, and the absence of repentance marks the doom of nations and individuals. This awful wave of sins in this time is most alarming. The indecent, immodest dress of the day evidences the lack of the fear of God in the hearts of the people. The land is full of cursing, swindling, cheating, murder, rape, drunkenness, adultery, prevarication, and lying. So full of hatred, wrath, strife, backbiting, pride, boasting, and lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. I fear the impending judgment of the all powerful God is ready to fall upon this wicked and adulterous generation. Oh! lost sinner, hell from beneath is moved to meet thee at thy coming, except you repent.

The effect of this vision upon Jacob rectifies the mistake of those who imagine that the doctrine of grace and the work of the Holy Spirit leads people to a kind of careless and presumptuous freedom with God. The experience of every believer gives the lie to this. The nearer he draws to God's seat, and the more intimately he deals with Him, the more he sees of God's perfections, the more he feels and senses his own corruptions, and is made to realize his own insignificance and nothingness.

The Scripture declares that, "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him." Jacob said, "How dreadful is this place!" Friend, have you ever experienced this godly fear? Have you ever been made to tremble in His holy presence? Did you ever weep and rejoice at the same time, with ecstatic joy in the Lord? Has God so moved your soul until it felt like it was about to leap from your body?

John the Baptist leaped in his mother's womb when she was filled with the Holy Spirit. There is also a moving in our souls when we are filled with the Holy Spirit, and most surely there is always with this experience a profound reverence for our blessed Lord. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Alas! how little of this do we see manifested today in the place of worship.

Our Lord told us who to fear when He said, "And I say unto

you my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more than they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him" (Luke 12: 4, 5).

Jacob called that place the house of God. The house of God is not so much brick and mortar stacked together in ornate edifices, or stately buildings. The house of God is where God meets with His people. The church of the living God is the assembly of Christ with His people. Our Lord prayed and preached in private dwellings, and in the open air, on the mountain side, and in a fishing boat, as well as in the temple or synagogues.

While it is well enough that churches have good buildings, it was not till the end of the third century that Christians had edifices expressly reared for their public worship. Nothing makes any place sacred but the divine presence. There is far too much emphasis put on buildings today and not enough upon the divine presence. This came to be the sad case with the nation of Israel, in the days of their apostasy. The prophet Hosea declared this indictment by the word of the Lord saying, "For Israel hath forgotten his maker and buildeth temples."

Our blessed Lord assures His own, that where two or three are gathered in His name, He is there. How sad that so many churches are more concerned for crowds, money, and elaborate buildings than they are for the presence of our blessed Christ. For this end many unscriptural methods have been adopted, for the promotion of man made programs and fleshly entertainment until the state of the Laodicean church has developed. Therefore apostasy is fast taking over and judgment is at hand.

Jacob in all probability must have been speaking of the ladder when he said "This is the gate of heaven." You remember Jesus said, "Straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life and few there be that find it."

The ladder was both straight and narrow. We do not climb the ladder for salvation as some would suppose. Angels ascended and descended upon the ladder, but not men. We are not saved by climbing or works, but by grace through faith in the person whom the ladder represents. Christ is the gate of heaven, and He is the straight and narrow way. This He implies when He discoursed with His disciples about heaven in John chapter fourteen. He

declared Himself to be the way, the truth, and the life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by Him.

Carnal men think of heaven as a place far off, but to those who are saved, space is a very small matter. For, for them to be absent from the body is to be present with their Lord. Dying Stephen had a clear vision of Christ at the right hand of God, though he was yet up on earth.

Jacob saw that he was not in heaven, yet he was in such communion with God, he deemed heaven not far away. To know Christ is to be in the gate of heaven. So, heaven is near for God's children. In one sense heaven is far off, but only as it represents the limitations of the flesh.

Many times saints have testified, when near the time of departure from this life, that their vision of that blissful state, they were embarking upon, was clear.

"How bright the room, how full of angels," said one. Another says, "The chariot has come and I am ready to step in." Hear another say, "Eternity rolls up before me like a sea of glory." Still another cries from his dying bed, "I am in perfect peace, resting alone on the blood of Christ. I find this amply sufficient with which to enter the presence of God." One more says, "The sun is setting, mine is rising. I go from this bed to a crown. Farewell."

These knew well they were in the gate of heaven, as a Scripture says, "But it shall come to pass that at the evening time it shall be light." It appears that with many, their realization of their standing in Christ becomes more obvious to them, in the evening time of their pilgrimage.

After Jacob had given his dying blessing to his sons, he said while dying, "I am to be gathered unto my people." The apostle Paul said, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure (Greek release) is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

When our vision of Christ enlarges, our vision of heaven enhances. My friend, have you had an experience of fellowship with Christ that brought heaven near? Oh! that it may be you have, if not, will you trust Him now as your Lord and Saviour? Oh! that today, you might be saved.

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PLAIN PROPHECIES FOR PLAIN PEOPLE "BAPTISTS AND THE SECOND COMING"

PART I

by John R. Gilpin, Sr.
(Now in Glory)

"Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

In these series of sermons on the second coming, I have told you something of the results of Christ's coming back. For example, concerning the Jew, there are certain things that will take place relative to the Jew when Jesus comes. When the Lord Jesus Christ returns, every Jew is going to be regathered to his homeland in Palestine, and is going to be saved - a nation in a day's time. The hope of Israel today is the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to this world.

In addition, I told you some of the results of Christ's return concerning society. Society is going to be changed when Jesus comes again. I told you something about the problem of capital and labor. Beloved, the strife between capital and labor will never end until the Lord Jesus Christ comes again.

I told you at that time that strife between nations, which results in war, would never end until Jesus Christ comes back again. You will recall the many Scriptures that I read, telling how Christ's coming is going to affect human society and is going to usher in an era of peace, when nations shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks.

I told you at the same time something of the results of Christ's coming back to this world so far as the physical universe is concerned. Will you believe me that this old world, the physical universe, is going to be changed, and changed considerably, when Jesus Christ comes back? All the wildernesses and the deserts and the solitary places are going to be changed. There won't be anything in this world but a fertile field. The productivity of the most fertile spot in this world will seem nothing in comparison to what it will be when Jesus Christ comes back to this world again.

The Word of God tells us that there will be no thorns nor thistles. It says that the briars will all be removed and that this world itself will be a rose garden. Such, I say, are some of the results affecting even the physical universe when Jesus comes again.

Then I told you something of the redeemed of the Lord. I said that all the redeemed who are alive within this world are likewise going to be caught up into the air to be translated, to be with the Lord Jesus Christ; so that all the dead saints in the grave and all the living saints on top of the earth are going up in one single moment's time to be with the Lord Jesus Christ, to be rewarded and to be forever with the Lord.

That, beloved, is something of the results of His coming as concerning the redeemed of the Lord.

Well, now I want to take that message just one step further. I want to show you the results of Christ's coming back to this world in regard to the church that

Jesus built. I want to show you how the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is going to affect Baptists.

Frankly, I never heard a sermon in my life on the subject of the second coming of Christ in relation to Baptists. Many, many times I have heard heretics talk about the second coming of Christ in relation to the church, but what they call the church is what God calls the family, in the Bible. Those individuals will talk about the church - how that it is to be raptured, to be with the Lord. Now, beloved, that is not the church. The Word of God never refers to the church as an invisible organization. Anything bigger than the real, visible organization is not a church; it is either the kingdom of God or the family of God on earth.

Now today I want to show you how the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is going to affect Baptists, and when I say Baptists, I mean by that, the church that the Lord Jesus Christ established when He came to this world nineteen hundred years ago.

I. The history of Baptists: The very first Baptist that ever came into this world was John the Baptist, and he was sent specifically with a commission and a command from Almighty God. We read: "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt. 3:1, 2).

Here was a man who was a preacher, for you will notice that he came, saying, "Repent ye" - thus a preacher. Furthermore, God called him a Baptist. Therefore, he was a Baptist preacher.

I'll go a step further and say that this individual was a Missionary Baptist preacher, for we read: "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John" (John 1:6). He was sent on a mission; hence, a missionary.

Now if you will put John 1:6 and Matthew 3:1,2 together, and will find that he was a preacher, you will find that he was a Baptist, and you will find that he was a missionary. Therefore, beloved, put it all together and you will find that John the Baptist was a missionary Baptist preacher. He was the first missionary Baptist preacher that this world ever saw, and from the time of John the Baptist down to this present time there has never been a day nor an hour when there were not missionary Baptists within this world.

Now this man John the Baptist, who came as the first missionary Baptist preacher, came with a distinct commission from Almighty God and that commission was to inaugurate baptism. I do not believe that John the Baptist had any other specific commission other than to inaugurate baptism and prepare a people for the Lord. Listen: "And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost" (John 1:33).

John the Baptist said, "He that sent me to baptize

with water," so you can see that John the Baptist's commission in the main was to baptize -- a commission to inaugurate Baptist baptism here within the world.

As I have said, from the days of John the Baptist, there has never been a time when there were not missionary Baptists within the world. In like measure, from the days of John the Baptist, there has never been a time when there has not been



John R. Gilpin, Sr.

Baptist baptism somewhere within the world.

Let's go one step further and notice that when the Lord Jesus Christ came into the world, He took the material that John the Baptist had baptized, and with that material, organized His church. Listen: "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mt. 16:17, 18).

Notice that Jesus declared that He built His own church. I wish you would notice this truth; the Lord Jesus Christ received baptism at the hands of John the Baptist, the first missionary Baptist preacher, the man who came to inaugurate Baptist baptism, and the only baptism Jesus ever had was the baptism that He got from the hands of John the Baptist. All of the individuals who made up this first church that Jesus established were baptized by John the Baptist, the first missionary Baptist preacher who came to inaugurate Baptist baptism. Not a one of them had any other kind of baptism other than Baptist baptism.

So, beloved, when the Lord Jesus Christ, who had been baptized by John the Baptist, took this crowd of people, who likewise had been baptized by John the Baptist, and put them together in a church. He organized them into a church as folk who had received Baptism baptism from the first missionary Baptist preacher, who had authority directly from heaven to baptize.

If you will go back to the Old Testament you will find that in the long ago David wanted to build a temple and God refused to allow David to build that temple. Instead, God said, "Because you have been a man of blood, a man of war, you can't build the temple, but you can prepare the material, and later on your son, Solomon, can build the temple." Now beloved, just as David prepared the material and Solomon took that material and built the

temple, so John the Baptist prepared the material and the Lord Jesus Christ took that prepared material and organized, and instituted, and started His church, of which the Lord Jesus Christ is Head and Founder.

I insist, beloved, that the Lord Jesus Christ is Head of His church. Listen: "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22, 23).

In other word, Jesus took the material that had been saved through the ministry of John the Baptist and had received baptism at the hands of this first missionary Baptist preacher, John the Baptist -- Jesus took that material and organized the church of which He Himself is the Head. I insist then that the Lord Jesus Christ when He was here in this world established a Baptist church out of Baptist material prepared by the first missionary Baptist

JACOB'S

(Continued from Page 6)

And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of the place Bethel (Gen. 28:18, 19).

The night has passed, and the day break has come, and he must embark upon his journey. However he will not leave without placing a stone of memorial at this hallowed spot and give it a name of renown. We should remember the golden hours of experiences we have had with our Lord. They will be a strength to us in the day of trial. As it is written, "In the day of adversity consider." It is well therefore to have some holy markers left along the way to consider in the day of trial. "My mother used to say, in the time of trial," The Lord has helped us before, and He will now help us again."

David remembered the victory over the lion and the bear, when he went to slay the giant of Gath. We are so prone to forget, that it behooves us to mark our trial, in the places where we have experienced God's special mercies, for they will be a strong support to us in another day.

Our blessed Lord left the ordinance of the Memorial Supper with His church to be kept in remembrance of His death till He returns. Remember also the sacred admonition, "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip."

Jacob called the name of that place Bethel, which means "The House of God," the place where later, God told Jacob to dwell. Friend, don't forget the house of God. Here is where God found Jacob (Deut. 32:10; Hos. 12:4). Do you remember where God found you? How well I remember the place where He found me as a sheep going astray? It is still better however to remember Him who found

preacher, and that He became the Head of that church down to the end of the age.

I say also that the Lord Jesus Christ promised perpetuity to that church, for he said: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mt. 16:18).

When the Apostle Paul wrote to the church of Ephesus, he said: "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end" (Eph. 3:21).

Beloved, you can't read such verses as these without the realization that the church that Jesus built, which was a Baptist church, having been established out of the material that had been gotten together by John the Baptist, who had a specific commission direct from heaven to baptize -- you can't read these verses without realizing that this Baptist church that He established was promised perpetuity, and that it should last, world without end.

you, and how He suffered for you to redeem your soul with His own precious blood. How He arose from the dead for your justification and ascended into glory, Who ever liveth to make intercession for you. It was years later in Jacob's life when he returned to Bethel, and he built an altar there, a foreshadow of Christ Crucified, and called the place El-bethel, which means, "the God of Bethel." Jacob after years of growth in grace, magnifies the God of Bethel rather than Bethel. The place where God found us will some day pass away, but the Lord who found us abideth forever, so it is the God of the house of God that we worship. To Him be glory in the church.

Jacob felt himself obligated to God for all this glorious experience. So he makes a vow to remember this stone as the house of God, and of all that God would prosper him with, he would give the tenth unto him.

Just how or where Jacob conceived this tithing idea, we do not know. Whether he knew of his grandfather Abraham doing this (Gen. 14:20), or whether it came to him from God as a special revelation; it is not said. While all of God's benefits to His own covenant people, comes to them of His free and sovereign grace. It is always the case when grace is imparted to them, a spirit of generosity is manifested in them. For example consider Zacchaeus (Luke 19). The members of the church in Jerusalem were hilarious givers (Acts 4:34). God loveth a cheerful giver (II Cor. 9:17).

After all, tithing is just rendering unto God the things that are His, and it is so regarding whatever we might give. We have nothing but what we have received from His bountiful and gracious hand. While

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STUDIES IN JUDE

by C. T. Everman

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (V.4).

The phrase "who were before of old ordained to this condemnation", shows that these "certain men" do not take God by surprise, for He has had their punishment ready for them from of old. Verse 14 tells us that even before the flood Enoch prophesied of these ungodly men and their punishment. These men who have "crept in unawares -- are 'ungodly' in that they have no reverence for God and His Word. They act in disregard or in defiance of God. They have no fear of God. They have a 'form of godliness but deny the power thereof' (II Tim. 3:5). They deny Christ as the way of salvation. They deny Christ as Lord of our lives. They may profess to believe in God, that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. They are 'ungodly' in that they turn 'the grace of God into lasciviousness'. The word 'lasciviousness' means to excite lustful desires or 'all who turn the love our God has for us into unbridled lust' (Beck trs.). We are 'saved by grace through faith' (Eph. 2:8). When this great truth is perverted into a license to sin, that is a departure from the faith. When a man thinks he can do what he pleases, go where he pleases, without regard to what God's Word says, he has turned the grace of God into lasciviousness. Instead of the grace of God giving us the license to sin, Titus 2:11-13 tell us that it is the grace of God that teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, that we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this world.

To pervert the grace of God to lasciviousness is to set aside what the Word says concerning the grace of God. Rejection of the Scripture is a departure from the truth and these "certain men" had done this very thing. They are also ungodly in that they deny "the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" or as Beck translated it, "disown our only Master and Lord Jesus Christ". The four titles given here of Christ speaks of Him as Lord of our lives, of Him as Saviour, of Him as the Messiah, and as the sovereign God over all. All of these are denied by the false teachers, these "certain men" who have crept in unawares. They will agree that He was a good man, a great teacher, but just a man, not the eternal God. The acid test for any one is to ask him what he thinks of Christ. Is He God come in the flesh? If he denies this, regardless of what else he may believe, that man is a false teacher. He is one of those who have "crept" in unnoticed.

"I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of

Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not" (V.5).

Jude now gives us three examples of groups who turned from the truth, and the punishment they have or will receive. The first group are the children of Israel. He tells us to remember how God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, yet because of their unbelief, they were not permitted to enter the promised land. They had seen how God with His mighty hand brought them out of Egypt, parted the Red Sea for them to cross, brought water out of a rock for them to drink, and fed them manna from heaven; yet when they came to the border of the land they refused to enter. The spies had brought back a report that everything was just as God had told them, but ten of the spies did not believe that God could bring them into the land. The people believed the ten rather than the two (Caleb and Joshua). "And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!" (Num. 14:1,2). This is an example of a departure from the faith. God had made them a promise that "I will take you out of Egypt and I will bring you into the land" Their failure to believe that God could do what He had promised brought about their death in the wilderness instead their of entering the promised land, God said to Moses, "How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. Say unto them, As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness;... all... from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me" (Num. 14:27-29).

Unbelief kept these from entering and living in the land of Canaan (Heb. 3:16). Paul tells us that what happened to Israel is for our example "to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted" (I Cor. 10:6). He adds in verse 12, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall". What Paul, as well as Jude, is telling us by giving this example of a people who departed from the truth is that even though we are saved and can never be lost, yet to depart from the faith will bring about chastisement from the Lord. Sometimes it is even physical death as it was in the case of the Israelites. I John 5:16 tells us, "There is a sin unto death". There were some in the church at Corinth who, because of their sin were "weak and sick -- and many sleep".

"And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under

darkness unto the judgment of the great day" (V.6). The second group that Jude recalls for us are the fallen angels, "which kept not their first estate". That is they did not keep the rank or position in heaven where God had placed them. Instead of keeping this high position they, "left their own habitation" That is they deliberately rebelled against God and left their dwelling place. They turned their back on the place and the function which God had assigned to them. We are not told when or how this took place. Many Bible scholars believe the "sons of God" of Genesis 6 were the fallen angels who assumed human bodies and cohabited with the "daughters of men", producing a race of giants. Others believe these angels are ones who fell with Satan, whose sin was such that God bound them in prison until the judgment day. But regardless of when or where this took place, we need to keep in mind the main lesson to be learned is that the angels rebelled and were punished for this rebellion. Jude tells us that as a result of their sin, "he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day". Peter writes of them. He says God, "delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment" (I Pet. 2:4). It would seem that they were confined in a dark prison as if by chains, and it is without end, "everlasting". This means their doom was sealed. They left what could have been theirs to enjoy, but like the Israelites who lost the land of milk and honey to possess and enjoy, lost it all through unbelief. The Bible tells us there will be a judgment for the angels, and their punishment will be in an everlasting fire. "Then shall he say, ... Depart from me, ... into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41).

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (V.7). The third example Jude gives of God dealing with the ungodly is that of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. Both Peter and Jude write that God had made these cities an example to warn the ungodly that God will judge sin. The apostle Peter wrote, "And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes... making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly" (II Peter 2:6). A study of these cities reveals the people to be ungodly, filthy, wicked, unlawful, unjust, and completely given over to immorality. They did not just occasionally commit unnatural sexual sins; they were given over, "to fornication, and going after strange flesh". This means this was their way of life. Strange flesh has reference to the peculiar sin which comes from the name Sodom, which we call Sodomy. (See Rom. 1:24-27). The phrase, "going after" is that their habit was to go after that which was contrary to nature.

These cities were "set forth"

by God as an example and a warning to the ungodly people today. The verb, "set forth" means to expose openly to public view as a corpse lying in state, as the bodies of God's two witnesses shall be viewed by the whole world as recorded in Revelation 11:9. These cities are not today in open view. Most likely they lie at the bottom of the Dead Sea, and their people are in hell with the rich man of Luke 16, awaiting the judgment that is yet to come (See Revelation 20:11-15). But on the pages of the Holy Scripture we can see them as an example of God's wrath against sin. America had better wake up to the fact that she, as a nation, is rapidly heading down the same road as Sodom and Gomorrah and can expect the same punishment.

What was the sin of Israel? It was rebellious unbelief. What was the sin of the angels? It was rebellion against the authority of God. What was the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah? It was the practice of unnatural, lustful immorality. From these examples we see that unbelief, rebellion against God's authority, and that of lust are sins of which false teachers are guilty. The lesson to be learned is that these false teachers will not escape judgment any more than the examples given. Another lesson to be learned from this is that the true churches must be on guard and see that these "certain men" do not creep into their churches and start to lead the people away from the truth. The sad thing is that many true Christians are being led astray by these false teachers. The apostle Peter tells us, "And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of" (II Peter 2:2).

To prevent this happening we are urged to "earnestly contend for the faith". To do this we need to know the Word. We must "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). Every true church should be a Bible centered church. Every Christian should be a student of the Scripture. Not only that, but we must have the courage to stand for the truth at any cost. This stand may cause us to lose dear friends and loved ones. A church that stands firmly for the truth may lose fellowship with sister churches, but we are commanded, "and having done all, to stand" (Eph. 6:13). Another thing we are to do is to watch and pray. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph. 6:18).

WHAT'S

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churches, or members of churches, or pastors of churches that seem like Bride material. Yes, this question is important because of Christ's revealed will for His church.

Secondly, this question is important because our very existence depends upon the answer. I know that when Christ comes there will be at least one church left. I do not know how many more there will be. Will yours still be in existence? Let us never forget that God does remove can-

dlesticks. Just because you were once a church does not mean you always will be. God does still spue churches out of His mouth. Will yours be the next church that makes God so sick at His stomach that He vomits you up? Answers and actions to this question will assure us of a long existence.

Thirdly, this question is important because our fellowship depends upon it. As a young preacher, this thought scares me. To look down the road and see so limited fellowship is a most frightful thought. Will there still be enough fellowship to have Bible Conferences? Will we be getting along with each other well enough to have revivals? Our circle seems to be getting smaller and smaller. If the state of our churches does not improve, there will no longer be the joy of Bible Conferences and fellowship. How joyful was the time spent at the Calvary Baptist Church Bible Conference this year. In spite of all the recent difficulties, to have well over two hundred people in attendance was a real blessing. How I do enjoy the fellowship with other true saints of God who are in agreement with us doctrinally! How I would miss this! Beloved, this question is important because of future fellowship with one another.

Fourthly, this is an important question because the souls of men depend upon the answers. I am not in any way slighting the sovereignty of God. I know that all things are controlled by Him. However, neither do I slight the responsibility of man. I know that all of the elect will be saved. I also know that it pleases God by the foolishness of preaching to save men. The bulk of this preaching is to be done by true churches. We must also recognize that the works and rewards of saved people are at stake. A part of our job as Christians is to proselyte. We owe it to saved people who are in heresy to try and lead them to the truth. We must recognize our responsibility to fellow church members. We are to be a help and strength and comfort to them. We cannot do this if our churches are not what they should be.

Fifthly, this is an important question because the future of our young people depend upon our actions relative to this question. If our hearts are not so closed to the needs of ourselves, then at least let us consider our youth. Think about the future of your children and grandchildren. Will they have a church to attend, or will we let them die before they grow up? Think about all the great times of joy we have had in God's House. Are we going to ruin this for our youth? Think about their souls. They need church. They need the proper kind of church. Will they have a church in your community to attend? For their sakes, may we answer this question with action, not words.

The sixth and last thing I mention is that this question is important because of the chastisement of God. God loves His church. He has promised that as many as He loves, He will chasten. I know that this includes His church and the individual members of each church. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of an angry God. Think about those members in the Church of Corinth. Many of them were sick

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and some of them were dead because of God's chastisement upon them for their sin against the church. Can we think that we will escape the chastisement of God unless we improve the condition of our churches? This thought should surely frighten us. God does punish those He loves. He will not allow us to make a mockery of His Church. If for no other reason than our own health and safety, let us clean up and improve our churches. Yes beloved, this is a very important question.

Let me now mention some things that I think are wrong with our churches. I stated earlier that everything will not apply to every church. I also mention that I will not have space to deal with every little problem that affects our churches. I will briefly mention the things that I feel are the worst problems in our churches. I urge each of us to be honest in our examination of ourselves and our churches. The lack of honesty amongst our Baptist brethren is frightening to me. I think of one preacher in particular, whom at

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COMFORT

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a near kinsman, acting as a Kinsman-Redeemer, could assume full responsibility for this indebtedness by doubling this bill of indebtedness over, stating this was his purpose for folding it over, and signing his name. This freed forever the Israelite from these debts. This is the thought in Isaiah 40:2. Notice Isaiah states that Israel's warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: because she has received of the Lord's hand, the doubling over for all of her sins.

Now let us go back to John the Baptist in Matthew 3:1-3 where we find this prophecy of Isaiah 40:1-3 having the beginning of its fulfillment. Here we find John the Baptist proclaiming, "repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Then in Matthew 3:3 he quotes from Isaiah 40:3 so that Israel would know, beyond any shadow of doubt, that he was speaking of the one who would come to double over their bill of sin, and by so doing assume full responsibility for their sin thus freeing them forever before God. They had, had this pictured to them in God's eternal covenant with Abraham in Genesis 14:17-20 with Melchizedek and the bread and the wine, and also in Genesis 15:8-18 where God bound Himself to Abraham in an eternal blood covenant. We see this again in Exodus 12 in the giving of the Passover Lamb. John the Baptist's message of repentance for the law of doubling over was crystal clear to all who would believe. In Matthew 3:13-17 God put His stamp of approval on John the Baptist's message by sending to his baptism the one who would give Himself as God's lamb to assume full responsibility for the doubling over of the bill of sins for all who believe. This law was not for all, but for believers only, as John 3:16 tells us.

But let us go on now in this ministry of comforting God's people. In II Corinthians 1:3, 4,

5 we find in verse three this ministry has its origin in God just as the law of doubling over for sin comes from the hand of God. Just as the lamb of God comes from the hand of God, so this comforting of God's people has its origin in God. In verse three we read, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort."

The word comfort is from the Greek word, "paraklatos" which means one who is called alongside to console and encourage. In John 14:16, 17 we find that this is the ministry of the Holy Spirit for the children of God.

Paul tells us in Romans 5:5 that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. In II Corinthians 5:14 we find that the love of Christ, or the love of God, constraineth or impels us to work the work of God. Now, since God is the Father of all mercies and the God of all comfort or consolation and encouragement, and since He lives in our hearts and His love motivates us, then His ministry becomes our ministry and Isaiah 40:1 becomes a command to all of His people to comfort or console and encourage one another, doesn't it?

If you doubt, as a believer, that this ministry of consoling and encouraging is the work of all believers let us go on in our study of II Corinthians 1. In verse 4 we find this God of all mercies, consolation, and encouragement, comforteth us in all our tribulation. Why does He do this for us? First, because He loves us; and secondly, so that we can prove our love for Him and His children by consoling and encouraging others with the consoling and encouragement that we receive from Him. For you see verse five of this passage of Scripture points out to us that the sufferings of Christ abound in us. We see in the Word of God how much Christ loved us and how much he was willing to suffer in our place at Calvary, that He might double over our bill of sin. Since He is the source of the doubling over of our bill of sin, so He is the source of our consolation and encouragement. Since He lives in our hearts, and since His love motivates us, then His ministry of consoling and encouraging His people becomes our ministry, doesn't it?

Please allow me to use a very personal illustration of how this consoling and encouraging ministry flows from God the Father, through God the Son at Calvary into our hearts, and lives by the working of the Holy Spirit in and through us, and on to others as we walk this uneven journey of life.

Saturday Evening of April 23, 1988 at 4:10 p.m., I received a phone call from Memorial Hospital of Lima, Ohio that our youngest son had been stabbed in the back by a worker in the Country Club kitchen where Tom was the head chef. The lady said he was enroute to the hospital in an ambulance, and they needed someone from the immediate family to sign the permission form for surgery that they might try to save Tom's life as his aorta artery was severed. My wife and I drove the twenty seven miles to

the hospital in fear and dread. After the forms were signed I knew we needed someone who was close to us to minister to our emotional and spiritual needs. Our oldest son couldn't be there as he had to fly in from Arizona. I called a godly couple that we have known for years, who had lost a son in an automobile accident; and they came immediately and didn't leave our side until the surgeon came in at 10:55 p.m. and told us Tom had died. This couple drove us home, had prayer with us, and waited with us until some members of the family arrived. They were with us during the calling hours at the funeral home, the funeral, and the trip to the cemetery. No one will ever know how precious these folk were, and shall always be to us.

It was during these hours of great pain and suffering God took me to a new depth of understanding of Isaiah's message in Isaiah 40:1-3, the message of John the Baptist in Matthew 3:1-17, the work of Christ at Calvary, and the teachings of Paul in II Corinthians 1:1-24.

Just six weeks from the day of our son's death was the funeral service of one of my first cousins who had died of a massive stroke while pulling a haybailer on his farm. I found, as I stood beside his widow and family at the funeral home, that I could comfort or console and encourage them with the consoling and encouraging I had received from this godly couple who ministered to our pain and sorrow.

Just seven weeks from the day our son was murdered the phone rang I recognized the voice of a very dear friend and widowed mother of three sons. I knew she was in great distress by the tone of her voice. I finally understood she was telling me her oldest son, forty five years of age, had a massive heart attack while driving his car and had died before his wife could get the car off the side of the highway. In the time before the funeral service, I found once again I was consoling and encouraging with the consolation and encouragement that I had received from God the Father of all mercies and the God of all comfort at the death of our son.

I dreaded the funeral service as I was to bring the funeral message. But I realized, in my heart of hearts, from God's Word, that the eternal destiny of the one who had died was settled, and there was nothing I could say or do to change that. I also knew there were folk there who could hear and needed comfort from God's Word, and some who needed warning from God's Word. As we journeyed through the first six verses of John 14, we could point out that heaven was the Father's house and it was His prepared place for a people that He was preparing to go there. This served as comfort to those who could be comforted with the Word and as a warning to those who were unprepared by God for heaven's glory. As we journeyed on this comforting and warning ministry we walked through the twenty third Psalm once again. We found those who were following the good shepherd found comfort from God, even as they passed through the valley of the

shadow of death. But those who were not following the good shepherd needed to take warning because they were unprepared for death or the Father's house. Some were comforted, others took heed to the warning; but some simply closed their hearts. But ours is to comfort the people of God and warn the unruly.

Life has many heartaches and pains and valleys that are so dark we feel we are beginning to lose our way. But our Lord tells

us in Hebrews 13:5 that He will never leave us or forsake us. One of the many ways our Lord keeps this promise to His children is through His consoling and encouraging ministry that He carries on for them through His own precious ones.

Once more let us go back to Isaiah and hear Isaiah cry, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God." In the New Testament we find this comforting ministry comes to us through the work of Christ at Calvary where He doubled over the bill of sin of His chosen ones and assumed full responsibility for them as He signed that bill in His own precious blood.

So please children, remember in John 3:35 the Word of God tell us that the Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hand. In Romans 8:28 the Word of God tell us, "and we know that all things work together for good to them that are the called according to His purpose." In Ephesians 5:20 the Word of God tells us that one of the evidences of a Spirit filled life is that we find ourselves led of the Spirit in giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. As we find this Spirit fulness and are able to praise or give thanks unto God for all things, we will find ourselves offering consolation and encouragement to those who are walking through the valley of heart ache and pain, for we have received this same consoling and encouragement from the Father of all mercies and the God of all comfort.

Let us draw these thoughts on comforting God's people to a conclusion by saying that if we have a tendency to rebel against God's purposes for our lives by questioning Him as to why we must walk through these dark valleys of heart ache and pain which steal our joy and happiness from us; we will not only fail to receive of Him consolation and encouragement, but we will find ourselves unable to console and encourage others with the consolation and encouragement that we have received from His hand.

So, bring all of your heart aches and pains to the Father of all mercies and the God of all comfort and receive from His hand consolation and encouragement, so you in turn can give consolation and encouragement to others who are in such desperate need of it. Don't turn away from this working of God in your life. It is only in our accepting trials and tribulations as part of the all things from God that we can learn from the Father of all mercies and the God of all comfort how to offer consolation and encouragement to others.

WHO WILL

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have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength and, his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children... That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments: And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God."

I preached this sermon some weeks ago at Calvary Baptist Church. I preached it primarily to the younger membership. I thought it might be good for all younger Baptists to consider it; thus I am presenting it to you in this article. Who will carry on the work? This message is one of challenge to young Baptists. Young Baptists face a great challenge as they are about to inherit a great work to carry on. I say great, for there is no greater work on the face of the earth than that of serving God in a Baptist Church. I say great, for there is no greater opposition than that of the world against the Lord's work. Yes, there is a great work to carry on. Now I am not in the least worried that Christ will be disappointed and unable to find a Baptist Church upon His return. I am not worried. There will be one here because Jesus said, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

There will be faithful Baptists on the earth when Jesus comes. I am not worried that all Baptists will die out, and that there will be none left. Still, I am compelled to ask the question, Who will carry on the work? Of course we can say that it is all up to the Lord. We can speak of the sovereignty of God in saving souls and adding them to His churches. Of course God is sovereign and He doeth as He pleases and His will will be done. I realize that, but I want you to consider with me for a while the responsibility of young Baptists, and the great task that lies before them, or us.

I would like for young Baptists to think of the testimony that the older Baptists have shown to us. What a blessing and joy to be around are those faithful saints who have been in the battle for many years. What a testimony they have, and how we can learn much from them. The older members are faithful in many ways. They are faithful in their attending services. I see them as they come. Some are not feeling well at all yet they are there. Some do not have a way to get here yet they see to it that someone brings them. What a testimony it is that they do all that they can to get to the services of the church. And then I see them and their love for Jesus Christ. You can tell their love for Him by their actions. They love to hear of Him; that is why they come. They love to speak of Him

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JACOB'S

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at the same time tithes and offerings given by God's people when given in the right spirit, are an outflowing of grace in the renewed heart. It also is the recognition of God in His providential care for His own. Moreover it is an act of faith. For he who tithes in the right spirit, believes God will take care of him without the tithe. It is also an expression of love to God proceeding from the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). It is furthermore an act of obedience. God loves obedience. Behold to obey is better than sacrifice (I Sam. 15:22).

Some think that Jacob was trying to bargain with God here, but I rather think this was a working of God in Jacob's heart, as it was the case in Abraham's heart when he gave the tithe, for he was commended for doing so, as we read in the Book of Hebrews. Whether Jacob lived up to this vow or not, we do not know. One thing we do know, God certainly prospered him and made him rich. God also blessed him spiritually, and His promise to him failed not.

It is written, "That where no vision is the people perish." This vision was an upward look for Jacob. It was a vision of inspiring hope. Poor Jacob was away from home and earthly friends, and hated by his elder brother Esau. A stranger in a strange land and in a low state of adversity. Moreover he was yet to experience many sharp trials in life. The trials with Laban, his father-in-law, the absence of his beloved Joseph, for many years. The death of his close loved ones and disappointment with his disobedient and cruel sons. Then as he sat before Pharaoh, he said to him, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." Finally comes to his death in Egypt, and to this the apostle refers when he writes by the Holy Spirit, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them a far off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were but strangers and pilgrims on the earth." (Heb. 11:13). For all of these trials therefore this inspiring vision of hope was an imperative necessity for the sojourner at Bethel.

A lonely man he was when he lay down to slumber, but when he awaked he realized the best Friend of all comrades was with him to guide him through an unfriendly world of sin and conflicts. A Friend that sticketh closer than a brother and that loveth at all times. It is said that a man without a friend moves the compassion of God.

He was given a vision that pre-figured the coming Messiah. He was given the promise of the continued presence of the unchanging God of his fathers; the great God of love and mercy, who faileth not, to care for him. He was also assured of an interest in the everlasting and immutable covenant of grace and mercy that God had established for His

people. This was his strong support in the pilgrimage of trial he was to pursue in this life.

Friend, if you are lost and do not know the way, then by faith look to Christ as the only hope for your sin sick soul. Trust Him alone for your soul's need of salvation. If you are in a wilderness of trial, affliction, and confusion, then look to Christ, for looking to Christ is an upward look. The ladder was set upon earth, but the top reached to heaven. If you are saved, friend, remember the admonition, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on earth."

I could not close this message without leaving a final word with you who do not know my Saviour. Please do not look to men, or any man here upon earth for salvation, but look by faith to the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time (I Tim. 2:5). He is the God-man, He has all power in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18). He is therefore able to save and will save all that come unto God by Him.

To Him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins (Acts 10:43). Oh! that God, in His sovereign grace, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, through His glorious gospel, may show you your lost and ruined condition, that you may see in His redeeming blood the cleansing for your sinful soul. For the prerequisite of your salvation is to realize your imperative need of Christ. Careless soul, you need to become desperate and alarmed about your lost state. If you hunger and thirst after righteousness you will be filled. There is water for the thirsty, and there is bread for the hungry. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters (Isaiah 55:1). If you eat of Christ, you will live forever, for He is the bread of life. Do not be confused; eating of Christ is not taking the Lord's supper. You eat of Him by faith. The just shall live by faith. He is that living bread that gave His life for our sins. He died for our sins according to the Scriptures. He was buried, and arose again the third day according to the Scriptures (I Cor., 15:3, 4). It is therefore by grace through faith in Him trusting Him as your Lord and Saviour, that you become a partaker of Him, the bread of life. As He said, "I am that living bread that came down from heaven: If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness (Psalm 107:9). He is altogether lovely, and there is no spot in Him. He is the fairest of ten thousand to my soul: My God, my heaven, my all; Farewell.

WHO WILL

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and to sing about Him. Yes, there is a love in their hearts for Christ. These things are evident, and they are a great testimony of the saving

grace of Jesus Christ in their hearts. The elderly membership here at Calvary are very faithful in the Lord's work and I thank God for them.

Now, while it is true that the older Baptists are faithful, we are confronted with this question again. Who will carry on the work? One of these days, all of the older Baptists are going to be gone, and it will be left up to the younger to carry on this great work. What does the future hold for our kind of churches? Now again, I know that Jesus will find some when He comes, but how many is He going to find? Just because you are a member of a certain church now that does not mean that that church will be here when Jesus comes. It could die out or maybe even lose its candlestick. Now whether this happens or not depends upon what the younger Baptists do. What does the future hold for the church that you are a member of?

What will happen to church attendance when the older people are gone? Let me say this: that church services are not just for the old folk who have nothing better to do. Church services are to be attended by all. It is mandatory that you be in all of the services that you possibly can. It seems to me that the younger take this more lightly than do the elder. It seems to me that there is just not that driving force within them to go to the services that the elderly seem to have. Oh, may this not be a trend. Being a young preacher, I would hate to see the day, and would not enjoy being in the business of begging church members to attend services. Hebrews 10:25 says, "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." The manner of many of the younger Baptists is to come when they feel like it, or if it is convenient. This should not be so. The manner of Baptists of all ages should be that they are a church-going people. The devil has offered so much entertainment for young Christians in our day. He has given them so much to do and to think about that their minds are not where they ought to be. May God be pleased to deliver many of our younger people from the snares of the devil and grant to them a heart of obedience. So, I ask you, will your church die out when the older members are gone? Will there be none left to carry on the work? While we are here, are we training our children in respect to the Lord's house? Do you have them in services? Do you teach them that this is where they ought to be on the Lord's Day? Shame on you if you are not. You are failing as a parent if you are neglecting this duty. Come to the services; your church is depending on you.

In the next place, let me ask you: What will happen to the doctrines when the older members are gone? What is going to happen to the doctrines that your church stands for? Will they be forsaken for new ones? Will they be replaced by "better" ones more suited for you? Tell me, What do you think of the doctrinal stand that your church takes? Do you even know what your church stands for? I am afraid that some probably could not tell you what their church believes. Well, Baptist friend, you should care and know the stand your church takes on various doctrines. You should

be concerned in that you make sure they are Biblical stands. You should also be concerned about these doctrines that you might pass them on to your children. We must admit, that there is some, and I said "some" truth outside of the Baptist Churches. If this were not true no one would ever be saved outside of one. But the only place that you can hear all of the truth is in a true Sovereign Grace Landmark Missionary Baptist Church. This being true, you should be interested in the doctrines preached, and make sure that they are reserved for your children. Listen, What greater gift could you give a child than for him to have a privilege to attend a Baptist Church? Will you preserve them for your children?

Will you stand and die for Church doctrines? Will you stand as your fore-fathers did, and declare to the world that no one else has the authority to preach the gospel but Baptists? Or, will you give in and unionize with the devil's Protestant churches. Will you stand for the doctrines of grace that tell us that God chose a people unto salvation, and then He effectually calls them to repentance and faith? Will you declare these truths against all of the opposition that you will face? Or, will you give in and accept Arminian doctrines that belittle our Lord so much? What will happen to these great truths in your Church? Listen, these truths are worth something. They are worth fighting for and even dying for in order to preserve them. Are you willing to fight for them? Some of the younger might think that there is too much fighting going on. Maybe they don't want to get involved in such. Well, I answer that by saying sometimes we must fight, and I believe we should when it comes to preserving the purity of doctrines. Heresy is not to be left alone, but when discovered it should be dealt with. I Corinthians 11:19 says, "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." Those who are approved are those who speak out against heresy. Listen, young Baptists you need to speak out against heresy and fight against it, and you may as well get used to doing it now, because it will always be around while true churches are still on the earth. The devil would have you to be a Pacifist about these things. He would have you to be unconcerned about them. Pacifism is prevalent among the young today. The young Americans are unconcerned about so many things. Again may God be pleased to deliver His peo-

ple from such an attitude.

Then I ask, what will happen to the ordinances of the church of which you are a member? What about baptism? Will you accept any kind of baptism? Will you let people into your membership who have alien baptism? Or will you stand as true churches have stood since the days of Christ and reject any baptism that is not Baptist? Will you carry on with the way of baptism being total immersion? Or will you resort to sprinkling?

When it comes time to observe the Lord's supper, will you continue to use wine and unleavened bread, or will you resort to grape juice and crackers to get along with the world? Will you invite non-members or even the unsaved to the supper, or will you continue in the old paths and observe it as a church and her membership alone? What will you do concerning these matters? What is going to happen to your church?

In the next place I ask, What will happen to church authority when the older members die out? There is a great attack in this day on church authority. Many are not recognizing it for many reasons, but I suppose the biggest is that it gets in their way. Baptist friends, church authority must be preserved, and we need to fight with all of our ability to do so. If churches are not going to recognize it, then I don't know what the future holds for our kind of churches. You need to understand, as a young Baptist that this dodging around church authority to get what you want is not Baptist doctrine. This is a new doctrine invented by rebels against authority. The old paths that Baptists have walked in is to respect and adhere to church authority. Read carefully the book of Acts, and you will see what I mean in regards to a church being independent and the authority that a church has.

Now in order for the work to be carried on properly these things that I have mentioned must be practiced. You cannot just believe them and never practice them. No friend, they must be preached and practiced. We need to preach them just as strongly and boldly as did our fore-fathers. We cannot afford to become weak on any one of them. Some may be willing to lose a few to keep members. I would rather lose members than to lose one ounce of truth. You should feel the same way. Proverbs 23:23 says, "buy the truth and sell it not." You, being a Baptist have the truth; and the Bible tells you not to sell it for anything. Don't sell it for friends, they are not worth it. Don't sell it for money; preacher,

(Continued on Page 11 Column 4)

With broken heart and contrite sigh,
A trembling sinner, Lord, I cry;
Thy pard'ning grace is rich and free:
O God, be merciful to me!

I smite upon my troubled breast,
With deep and conscious guilt oppressed;
Christ and his cross my only plea:
O God, be merciful to me!

Far off I stand with tearful eyes,
Nor dare uplift them to the skies;
But thou dost all my anguish see:
O God, be merciful to me!

Cornelius Elven

WHAT'S

(Continued from Page 9)

one time I had great respect for. I can no longer respect this man, for he has many times over proven to be a liar. This is a scary thing. Let us be honest in this examination of our churches.

The first thing I mention that is wrong with our churches is the possibility, or I might should say probability, of lost church members. I know of very few pastors who do not have at least one, and sometimes many members in their church, about whom they worry as to their salvation. I read one time that a Baptist Church should be the hardest thing to get into and the easiest thing to get out of in the world. Have we become so member hungry that we are not particular enough about the professions of faith of our members? This sometimes happens because we push our children into false professions. Let us be careful of this. Let us give them the gospel and witness to them often, but let us leave the saving up to God. We must remember that when we have lost church members, they have as much say in running the church as saved people. These people surely are under the devil's influence, and their decisions will not benefit the church. Let us protect the door into the church. Let us

be as sure as we can possibly be that professions of faith are genuine. Let us closely observe new members and converts to examine their fruit. Let us be quick to point out to them their errors when they fail and urge them to make their calling and election sure. Let each member examine himself and know that he is not a lost church member that is hurting the church.

The second thing I mention that is wrong with our churches is that pastors are not doing their jobs. Let me mention that every effort should be made to pay your pastor full time. I greatly sympathize with pastors who have to work and preach both. I know how busy I stay being full time and remember how hard it used to be to work all day and then try to prepare sermons. I pastor a church of sixteen members. That church pays me full time. They pay my house, utilities, and health insurance. Besides this we still support mission works. I personally believe that the pastor should be the first consideration of the church's money rather than foreign missionaries. I know that this is not always possible, but where it is, the pastor should be full time. This however is not the major problem of our churches. The major problem is that pastors are not doing the job God gave them.

Oh how we ought to recognize the great honor God has given us in making us pastors. We should take this honor and do the best job we can. Many are letting down, and it is reflected in the condition of our churches. Let us mention a few areas in which we are failing. 1. Pastors are not leading as they should. I know of pastors who, rather than being the leader they should be, are being led by certain members of the church. They do not have the gumption to stand for what they believe in and are afraid of having trouble; so they just let certain members of the church take over the role of leader. These members are usually the most outspoken, and it is evident that they want to be the leaders of the church. We do not need people like that in our churches. God gave the pastor the job of leadership. If you do not follow his leadership so long as it is Scriptural, then you are living in deliberate sin against God.

Many times pastors will pastor only a portion of the church. They will pick out their favorites and treat them like kings while the rest of the church is neglected. One woman told me just recently that her pastor only pastored a small portion of the church. Needless to say, this woman has since left that church. She said she was tired of certain

members running the church through the pastor and her and others being left out. We as pastors should beware of this practice. We are to pastor the whole flock and to treat them the same so far as love and spiritual help go. Pastors need to be leaders by their example to the flock.

We as pastors should be leaders as we are led by The Holy Spirit. There have been some decisions made by pastors in our circles lately that flabbergasted me. My wife asked me recently if there are any pastors left who still have moral values. These values have not been shown in some of the actions of some pastors. I know these decisions were not based upon the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Let Him lead us that we might properly lead others. Then we have the fact that pastors do not rebuke sin as they should. Maybe this is because we are equally as guilty. Beloved, it is our job to rebuke church members who are not living right. I know it is hard to rebuke those that you love, as well as those who pay your salary; but we must for the sanctity of the church. Another problem I mention is jealousy among preachers. I know of one pastor who has split his church, mainly because of jealousy. Beloved, we are to work together as pastors. We can be a great help to one another. Whatever ability we have, it was given us by God. Knowing this, we have no reason for jealousy. Knowing that we are supposed to be fellow soldiers in Christ's army, and fighting together for His cause, should rid us of any jealousy. Perhaps another fault of the pastor is that we fail in the preaching of the gospel in our services. We need to be reminded of what God has done for us. We also need to preach often and hard against sin. Lastly, may God please give us the shepherd's heart that we might be, as pastors, a part of the solution and not a part of the problem in our churches. (to be continued).

and into many thousands more through the broadcast tower. The program is also broadcast concurrently over a radio station which also enters thousands of homes.

Pastor Hiatt invites all those in the broadcast area of channel 65, WLJC to view this telecast. This is the only television program in existence which is produced by a Sovereign Grace Baptist church which is not aligned with mission boards and which is truly independent in every way, Elder Hiatt says.

Pastor Hiatt views this telecast as an outstanding opportunity to preach the truths of Christ's church, the doctrines of grace and the saving gospel of Christ to many thousands of people each Lord's Day. The broadcasting systems of the world are given over to men's theologies and ideologies. This single program preaches God as He is... a sovereign and supreme Deity who is neither mutable nor changeable, and who performs His works after the design of His own will.

If anyone or any church would like to receive a video cassette of "The Message of Grace" telecast the church would be glad to share it with you at no cost. Just address your request to Ray Hiatt, Pastor, Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1597, Hazard, Kentucky 41701, and please pray much for this television ministry.

If anyone or any church would like to help financially in this work, the pastor and church would greatly appreciate it. The church is small, and such help is needed. Checks should be made out to the church and mailed to the church address above.

GRACE--THE GREAT LEVELLER

Grace links believers in a common brotherhood. Grace makes the rich man give his hand to the poor and confess a heavenly relationship. Grace constrains the intellectual, the learned, the professional to stoop from their dignity to take hold of the ignorant and unlettered and call them brothers. Grace weaves the threads of our separate individualities into one undivided family. Let the gospel be really felt in the heart, and it will destroy selfishness, pride, and arrogance. We need only the gospel thoroughly preached to bring about "liberty, equality, and fraternity" in the highest and best sense of these words.

---C. H. Spurgeon

If a man would be like Christ, he must look to Christ and study Him. We cannot make ourselves holy by merely trying to be so, anymore than we can make ourselves believe and love by the energy of the flesh. Men try to be holy and they fail. They must look upon a Holy object, the Lord Jesus, and be changed into His likeness "from glory to glory." They must have Christ, that Holy One, as their best friend. Companionship with the Lord Jesus can alone make us to resemble Him. It's "LOOK" from start to finish.

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
SEPT. 17, 1988
PAGE ELEVEN

FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN

by J. E. Pierce

Text: I Kings 18:21.

We see a great challenge, crisis and criteria on Mount Carmel. What a challenge, "if the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him." You ought to believe and trust in Him. The prophets of Baal were headed by that ungodly, wicked Jezebel, and a great famine had made it difficult for the people of God. Ahab had gone all over searching for water. Elijah came on the scene immediately.

Nothing was said of him before; nothing is said of his childhood. He appears to Ahab and tells him of the famine. But now he tells Obadiah to tell Ahab that he's here. Obadiah was afraid to, but Elijah told him to do it anyway. Ahab said to Elijah, "Art thou he who troubleth Israel?" But Elijah said, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim." Elijah told Ahab to gather to him all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and he gave him a challenge. The people answered not a word. Elijah was in the minority but it doesn't matter as long as God is on your side.

One great man said he would be concerned if they were not on God's side. Elijah said, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" How long will you be undecided and follow Baal. The word "opinions" here in Hebrew is "saiph" and means "divided in mind," a very fitting word. Though this was thousands of years ago, it is fitting today. How long are you going to follow the world? Church members need this challenge. The same word describes the leaping priests who leaped upon the altar; it means skipping. I'll try to show you by skipping, which I can't do very well, but see that? What do you do when you skip? You hesitate momen-

tarily and there's a great deal of skipping and halting.

We're not following the Lord as we ought. We have divided minds. If your head is not on straight, the feet will turn out of the way. Elijah said, we are going to put bullocks on the altar and the one that answers by fire, He is God. Would you have done this all alone? So Elijah said, have at it first and they did. They made ready except the fire. God was to supply that. I wish preachers would learn that lesson. Only God can supply the fire. Once He killed two men for kindling strange fire. It was a bad mistake when the ark was put on a wagon and thousands were killed because of it. God invented covered wagons. He doesn't need any help.

Elijah needed no matches or gasoline. God set the whole mountain on fire. Those Arabs are wild people for God told Abraham that Ishmael (the one from whom they descended) would be a wild man. Elijah began to mock them and told them to cry louder and louder. All day they cried to Baal, finally they leaped upon the altar and cut themselves, it was a bloody mess, but their god never answered. It is stupid to whittle out a god, then worship it. Better worship the one that makes the knife. It was close to the evening sacrifice and Elijah knew it, so when it was time, he took stones, made an altar, cut the bullock in pieces and laid them one it. He poured water over the sacrifice and around it, four barrels at a time until twelve barrels were poured. He didn't make it easy, but he knew God would make it burn. He didn't cry all day as they did to their god, but he called on the Lord and said, "Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again." That's all he prayed and the fire fell consuming the sacrifice,

stones, dust, wood and water. It was a very hot fire to burn all that up.

Elijah had said, if God be God, follow Him. All the prophets of Baal, 800 of them were taken to the brook and killed. The people acknowledged God as the Lord. While Elijah was praying for rain with his face between his knees, he sent his servant to look for rain. He did this seven times and the seventh time God brought down rain, an abundance of it. Just as surely as Jesus is the great sacrifice, we need to pour the Word in ditches so that lost sinners might be saved. The sad part is that by the time a man learns how and what to preach, his time has about run out. Ahab had a beautiful horse and chariot, and Elijah told him to get in it to beat the rain where he was headed, and Elijah girded up his loins and outran the horse and chariot to Jezreel which was twenty miles. He was the same prophet who cried to the Lord to hear him, on the mountain.

The great thing is who Elijah's God was. All sacrifices through those years were symbolic of His sacrifice. I ought to pour and keep pouring water (the Word) on the sacrifice, and you see that He is the One who answers by fire. How long halt ye between two opinions? Why not make up your mind. Why spend much of your time following after the world? How long before you make up your mind? It was the challenge of thousands of years ago. No one is more important than Him, to serve. Time is running out much faster than you think. You can't make up your mind whether to come to church or go somewhere else. He bought all of you, not a part. We know we ought to serve the Lord. Some have just enough religion to make them miserable. They're not satisfied in the world anymore, and they're not satisfied serving the Lord. Time is running out. I pray you'll turn to Him today.

WHO WILL

(Continued from Page 10)

it. Do not sell it to maintain peace in the family, you are only cheating yourself. If you have the truth; hold on to it dearly; for you have the greatest possession that you can possess on this earth.

In closing let me say that there will be a true church on the earth when Jesus comes. It is possible that your church will not be here. Maybe you won't care and you will quit attending and supporting your church. Maybe you will forsake the doctrines of the Word of God, and it will cease to be a church. I don't know what will happen to your church. Tell me, What will it be? What will it be?

SOVEREIGN GRACE BAPTIST TELEVISION MINISTRY

Ray Hiatt, pastor of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Hazard, Kentucky, announces the reinstitution of "The Message of Grace" television program. This television program is aired each Sunday evening over the facilities of channel 65, WLJC in Beattyville, Kentucky and is a half hour telecast in full color. This telecast goes into thousands of homes via 16 cable systems

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

MY IMPRESSIONS

Each sermon builds me up more spiritually and makes my soul rejoice. This is my second conference and I am looking forward to more in the years to come. Brother Wilson has done a fine job organizing the sermons, special singing and food. It is all exceptional.

Wayne Chapman, Ironton, Ohio

Since I started going to Bible conferences three years ago, I haven't missed a one and I'm so thankful that God allowed me to be at this one and that my pastor, Elgie Hornsby, was able to come with Barbara Bess and me. My sister, Margaret Clark, came from Owensboro, Kentucky to meet me and enjoy all the preaching and fellowship of God's people. When you get fed from the Word of God so well, you want others to be fed just as well as you are. Looking forward to next year and for more of my family and friends to come with me to enjoy the food, singing, and preaching as much as we did this year. God bless this host church.

Marie Sutherland, Sanford, Florida

I've enjoyed being in the company of so many wonderful people. There is such an air of meekness and kindness that is so precious and priceless and rare to behold. Many different subjects have been discussed that effects so many areas of our life and there is much to ponder and mediate on and to take home with us. This is my first conference and I truly, truly feel at home with these loving Lord's people. May the Lord come quickly.

Barbara Bess, Kenansville, Florida

Another great conference. The speakers were good. We enjoyed feasting on the Word of God. Wonderful to see old friends from around the country. It was great to see so many young people. Down through the years the CBC and TBE have meant so very much to us, for the truth they stand for. Let us not forget what it is costing all of us to stand for these great truths taught in God's Word. May God always bless.

Bernie & Roszella Foor, Gladwin, Mi.

This ministry must be owned and blessed of God or it will come to naught. The farmer plows and sows and then leaves the harvest to God! What else can he do? He cannot bring rain nor command the sun to shine nor make the seed to bear. So it is with us; true wisdom does what God commands and leaves the results in His hands. You can apply this principle to all that concerns you.

No persons appear less likely to be saved than religious unbelievers. They wear an armor of proof. You cannot tell them anything new and striking. Their heads are helmeted with religious knowledge. You cannot touch their hearts, for they wear the breastplate of gospel-hardening. They give assent to every truth and yet believe nothing; they attend to every religious observance and yet have no religion. No other suit of plated armor is one-half so effective for warding off the strokes of truth as that which is forged in the arsenals of religion. I have more hope for an avowed infidel than a gospel-proof hearer.

--C.H. Spurgeon



Elgie Hornsby, a newcomer to our conference. A great blessing in singing and preaching.



Rhoda Smith, our very talented pianist.



Earl Smith: Great preaching as usual.



Food and Fellowship at the Parsonage after the last session.



More of the same.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Faith Baptist Church of Lawty, Florida will be holding special services September 21-22-24-25, with Elder Coy Cox of Somerset Ky. Services will be held at 7:30 p.m. on the 21st and 22nd, and at 10:00 a.m. on the 24th and 25th. On Saturday the 24th, there will be several speakers, and lunch at noon. For more information contact Elder Marty Hoffman (904) 782-3106.

STRAIGHTENED OUT

I had such need
The Savior knew
My life was empty
Sad and blue.

He saved my soul
My life straightened out
He gave me hope
Without a doubt.

I'm sorry to confess
There's remaining sin,
But I'm being straightened
I'm not as I've been.

I will understand
Why His life He gave
When my body is straightened
In the grave.

Should this not be,
If the valley I miss
I'll go up with Him
And enjoy perfect bliss

To dwell with Christ
What joy 'twill be
I'll be free from sin
Through Eternity.

Mrs. J.P. Morgan