

BARREN

by Gene Flynn

As we all know, "barren" means not producing, such as barren soil, that can not produce crops, or barren trees that have not brought forth fruit. We know the Bible teaches that the desert in Israel will one day blossom as a rose, Isaiah 35:1, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." In verse 6, "Then shall the lame man leap as an



Gene Flynn

hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing, for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." But let us look at the word "barren". The woman that so desperately wants children and can't have them may be for some medical reason barren.

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THE WOMAN'S HEAD COVERING

by Leonard E. Lindsted

The subject of the woman's headcovering is mentioned in I Corinthians 11:1-16. There are two extreme views as to its validity. Some believe that it is a divine truth to be practiced by all Christian women everywhere while others believe it is irrelevant and, at best, an outmoded custom peculiar to Corinthian times. Our purpose in this study is to seek the mind of God as to the true meaning of the head covering, bearing in mind that Paul wrote with divine authority. "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (I Cor. 14:37).

The Bible states that lawlessness would characterize the last days (II Thess. 2:7), and that there would be a breakdown in regard for law and order. This spirit pervades the Spiritual realm where, increasingly, professing Christians reject or "water-down" the plain, direct teaching of the Word of God. In considering the

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by Ray Brown
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"Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever! For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me" (Job 19:23-27).

Job said, I want the world to know my relationship with my redeemer. He said, "I want God to engrave these words in a rock

I AM IMPRESSED

with an iron pen". God has engraved His words in my soul forever. God said so in Hebrews. He said in my heart and mind I will write them, and your sins and iniquity will I remember no more. That it is a wonderful thing to have something to stand out and make an impression upon your heart. I remember reading in the Word of God where they stoned



Ray Brown

Steven to death. There was a young man there that held the clothing of those that stoned Steven. It was the Apostle Paul known as Saul at that time. Do you believe that made an impression upon the heart of Saul? God used that boy. That never left Saul. That burned in the heart and soul of Saul when he saw Steven stoned to death. Steven was praying and asking God to forgive them as they were taking his life.

Have you ever dealt with individual Christians who made an impression upon your hearts? You don't forget things like that. You can go back to that, you can draw from that, and you can get a lot of strength from it.

"For our conversation (or matter or life) is in heaven; from whence also

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

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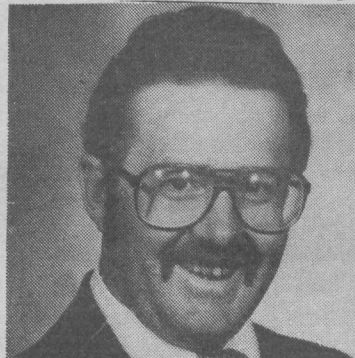
DEBTORS TO THE CHURCH

by Sam Wilson

Romans 8:12: "Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh." Romans 13:8: "Owe no man anything..."

I use these two verses to establish the fact that saved people are in debt to Christ. These verses also teach that we are to pay that debt. Beloved, saints of God have an obligation to live holy and separated lives. Certainly a part of this holy life should and does involve the church. No person can possibly be what they should be to God unless they are faithful members of a true church of Christ. The church should be a most important part of the Christian's life. It

is to their shame and disgrace, that to many this is not the case. Many of our church members have not attached the importance to the church that they should. They talk a good talk about what the church means to them, but they do not act upon those words. It is a most frightening thought



Sam Wilson

that the church means so little to some saved people. I especially refer to those who know the truth about the Lord's church. They should realize their added obligation to God for the knowledge He has given them. To be a debtor means to owe something. If you are saved you owe something to God. You owe God, and the church which He has privileged you by making you a member. I was never a John Kennedy fan, but let me take part of a quote from him. "Ask not what your church can do for you, but what you can do for your church." Many seem to misunderstand. The church does not owe the member; the member owes the church. Don't think about what

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

"They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lam. 3:23). The book of Lamentations consists of five elegies or poetic lamentations over the fall of Jerusalem. I am certain that Jeremiah is the author. It seems that he may have been sitting and looking at the terrible condition of fallen Jerusalem as he wrote. At least, this picture must have been before his mind. The first chapter tells us of the pitiful condition of Jerusalem. The sec-

ond tells us that the Lord's punishment is the cause of this pitiful condition. The fourth tells us that Judah's sins are the cause of the Lord's punishment. The fifth is a prayer. The third chapter is sort of a turning point. Here, Jeremiah looks to the Lord's mercies, the Lord's compassion, and the Lord's faithfulness. In these he sees hope for Jerusalem. He believes there will be another and a better day for Jerusalem. He knows the promises of God. He knows some of his own

prophecies concerning this. He believes that God will be faithful to His Word; and therefore, there must be hope for Jerusalem.

Faithfulness is an important and crowning virtue. It is so in men. What is more important in a marriage than the faithfulness of each partner to the other? What else can possibly make up for a lack of this? It is important that God be faithful. Without this, He could not be God. What kind of god would an unfaithful one be?

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MOSES BEFORE PHARAOH

by John M. Alber, Pastor

Introduction:

Four hundred and thirty years after Abraham, God called Moses and gave to him the job of delivering the children of Israel out of Egypt. Moses was now eighty years old and God was ready to keep His promise to Israel that He would bring His family back out of Egypt at the appointed time. The children of Israel were ready and the nations of Canaan had taxed the patience of God long enough. It was time for God to deliver His chosen people and



John Alber

judge the wicked nations of Canaan.

By our standards today, Moses was an old man when God called him and placed him into His service. God is not a respecter of

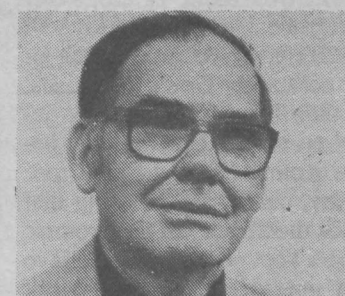
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STUDIES IN I PETER 1:6-16

by C.T. Everman

"Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:" (I Peter 1:6).

In verse 4 the elect of God were told of the inheritance reserved in heaven for them. This inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled and will never fade away. In verse 5 they are told that they are kept by the power of God through faith ready to receive that inheritance in the last time. "Wherein", in view of this inheritance of which we are assured that awaits us, we can "greatly rejoice" even though we may be facing many sufferings and trials. This hope of what lies ahead for the Christian enables him to not only keep going, but it makes



Clyde Everman

him to rejoice even in the midst of his troubles. "though now for a season" indicates a very short period of time. Even though we may face trials for much of our life time, it still is only a brief period of time. The apostle Paul called it, "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment—" (II Cor.

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FAITHFULNESS

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Without His faithfulness we could not love, worship, trust, or serve Him. How could a man worship and love and trust a God he could not depend on? He couldn't. If God would lie to us, if He would not keep His promises, if we could not depend on Him; we surely could not worship or trust Him. If God were not faithful, all true religion would be forever at an end. We would have no hope for time or eternity.

God is faithful to Himself. This is the first part of being faithful. One must be faithful to himself. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself" (II Tim. 2:13). God is faithful to Himself. He cannot deny Himself. He cannot be untrue to Himself. Our believing His promises does not make them come true. They are true whether we believe them or not. Our confidence, blessing, and joy will be affected by our believing or not believing God's promises. But their being kept does not depend on us at all. If we don't believe Romans 8:28, we will lose the joy, peace, and blessing that comes therefrom but the promise will be kept whether we believe it or not. All things will work together for our good anyway; but if we don't believe this, we may fret and worry needlessly a good bit.

Being faithful to one's self involves an exact correspondence between inward reality and out-

ward manifestation. We do not perfectly do this. We put up a front. We try to make a different impression from that which we truly feel. "Yes, thank's for calling. It was good to talk with you. Call again soon." Phone is hung up. "I wish she would quit bothering me. Does she think I don't have anything to do except talk to her on the phone?" How often have we done something like this. Not so with God. With God, the outward manifestation always corresponds with the inward reality. He never does anything for a show. He never puts up a front. You never have to wonder if He is sincere or not. He always is. There are some people you never know whether to believe them or not. Not so with God. You can always believe



Joe Wilson

Him. He is faithful.

God is faithful to the everlasting covenant. Before all worlds began, the Triune God entered into covenant with one another relative to the salvation of the elect people of God. God the Father chose unconditionally of His own sovereign will, from among fallen mankind, a great number that no man can number, and predestinated them to be the recipients of saving grace. God the Son agreed to come into this world, live a perfect life, die on the old rugged cross, and thus secure and purchase the eternal salvation of all the elect. God the Spirit agreed to, at the predestinated time, work repentance and faith in the elected and redeemed ones, thus applying to them the purposed and purchased salvation; and to keep each of the elect saved through time, and to present each one forever safe in glory.

God is faithful to this covenant. The Father wrote each of the elect's names down in the Lamb's book of life, and He will not close His saving work until they are all saved. He will not forget a one of them. They will all be eternally saved. The Son was faithful to this covenant. Though He prayed in Gethsemane that the cup might pass from Him if it could be possible; He drank the bitter cup of God's wrath against sin. He gave Himself into the hands of His enemies. He lay Him down on the old rugged cross, took upon Himself the sins of all the elect, and bared His soul to the sword of God's wrath against sin. He did not come down from the cross. He stayed there until He had suffered the full equivalent of eternal hell that the elect would have suffered had He not died for them. The Holy Spirit is faithful to that covenant. He knows the predestinated time of each one of the elect's salvation. He will be there at that time. He will use the gospel and bring that one to the experience of salvation. He will enter that one and abide in him. He will keep him saved through all time, and at last set him down in eternal glory.

An Old Testament Scripture speaks of God remembering His covenant. I preached a sermon on that, applying it to the everlasting covenant. I pointed out how that God remembered that covenant. I pointed out how that the thief was on the cross, a few hours from hell. God remembered His covenant. The Spirit worked in that one, and he turned in repentance and faith to the Saviour. All of the elect will be saved. God will prove faithful to the everlasting covenant.

God is faithful to all of His covenants. He made a covenant with Noah that the world would never again be destroyed by a flood. There have been local floods doing great damage, but there has never been, and never will be, another world destroying flood. You can count on it. God said it. God told Noah that, while the earth remaineth, there would be seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and night and day. And so has it been. God has said it. God is faithful. It will be as He has said. God has made other covenants.

He has been faithful to all of them. We will mention some of them, but not all. But know that God has always been faithful.

God is faithful in His covenant with Israel. Oh, God's covenants with Israel! How much is involved! How much has been fulfilled. One cannot understand the past or future history of the world without seeing it around the fact of God's faithfulness to His covenant with Israel. World history has been the outworking of God's faithfulness to His covenant with Israel. God made a covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, with Jacob, and with David - all concerning Israel. God has been faithful to all these. God has blessed Israel. God has chastened Israel. God has preserved Israel - all according to His covenant with them. The past has demonstrated God's faithfulness to this covenant.

The present demonstrates this. Israel is here. Other nations of antiquity have disappeared from the stage of history, but Israel is here. Where is Babylon? Gone. Where is Assyria? Gone. Where are the nations of Canaan which warred against Israel? Gone. I could go on and on. But Israel is here. God is faithful. The A-millennialists and some Post tribulationists tell us that God is through with Israel as a nation. Then, pray tell us, why is Israel still here? Oh, it is the faithfulness of God to His covenant with Israel that has preserved her through the centuries, and that has once again given her a place among the nations of earth.

The future will demonstrate God's faithfulness to this covenant. Israel has a future, despite what the A-millennialists tell us. God is not through with Israel. God has made some promises with Israel that remain to be fulfilled. God's faithfulness demands that they must and will be fulfilled. Israel will be reunited, regathered, and saved. Israel will yet be the chief nation on the face of the earth. There is a bright and glorious future ahead for Israel. God has promised it, and God is faithful.

God is faithful to His promise to His church. In the days of His earthly ministry, Jesus Christ started the first Landmark, Sovereign Grace, Missionary Baptist Church. In Matthew 16:18, He promised that the gates of hell would not prevail against it. They would try; oh yes, they

would try; but they would not prevail. Jesus was promising perpetuity to His church. He was saying that there would be one (probably many more) of this kind of church when He came again. He has been faithful to this promise. The Jews tried to destroy His church. The heathen tried it. The Catholics tried it for a thousand years, murdering multiplied millions of Baptists.

The Protestants have tried it. But there are true Baptist churches on earth today because God is faithful. I tell you that, if the devil could have his way, there would not be a Baptist church or individual on the face of the earth when the next sun comes up. God is faithful. He has preserved and perpetuated His church these many years. At (Continued on Page 3, Col. 1)

FROM THE EDITOR

"Brethren, pray for us" (I Thess. 5:25). In the last issue, I wrote of church members praying for one another. I now write of churches praying for other churches of like faith and practice. Lately, I have said frequently to other churches that we should pray for one another; and that if we did not pray for one another, who was going to pray for us? I am sure that churches of other denominations are not. I am sure that those who call themselves Baptists, but who do not believe as we do, are not. So, we must pray for one another, or else there will not be much prayer going up to heaven for the individual church than that of its praying members - and we need more prayer than that.

Do we believe in prayer? Do we believe that God answers prayer? Do we believe that we can obtain blessings by prayer that we will not otherwise obtain? If we believe the Bible, we must believe these things. Search the Scriptures and see what mighty things have been wrought in answer to prayer. See the multitudinous promises to prayer. Remember James 4:2, "... Ye have not, because ye ask not." If I read my Bible aright, there is much that we can receive in answer to prayer. And we need to pray much more than we do. And we need to pray for others more than we do. And our churches need much prayer.

Most of our churches are very small. In each church, there is likely a large percentage that do little praying for the church. If prayer is a means for the obtaining of blessings from the Lord, and if all the praying we have on our behalf comes from the membership of our church, where does that leave most of us? I believe one way to help this situation, and to promote many other good things, would be for our churches to pray for churches of like faith and practice. This praying can be done by the pastor, by different members; but should often be done by the church as a whole. I would suggest that each pastor, in his private prayers, make it a habit to pray each day for one or more such church. I would suggest that each member do the same. I would suggest that the pastor mention other churches to his church, requesting prayer for them. I would suggest that the pastor often lead his church in prayer for other churches.

Think this over. See how much it would multiply the number of prayers going up to the throne of grace for each church. If the Bible tells the truth about prayer, this could not but prove a blessing to our kind of churches. The more prayer, the more blessings. Is this not a Bible truth?

This would be a blessing to the individuals and churches doing the praying. I believe that intercessory prayer can obtain blessings from God for others. I believe that, at the same time, this praying will rebound in good to the one doing the praying. One just cannot pray aright without being blessed thereby. It would also give a larger heart to those doing the praying. We need a large heart. We need to reach out with a heart of love to other individuals and churches. Praying for them will help produce this largeness of heart.

Praying for other churches will produce more love between the churches. Oh, how we need this. There is much friction and many problems (too many) between our churches. There is much hard feelings between many of our churches. Then there are many cases where there is not really any hard feelings, but one church is totally wrapped up in itself and just is not concerned about sister churches. This is likely our greatest problem, though the afore mentioned things do exist. Well, could we not still pray for one another? Is there really a situation with another church, or feelings concerning another church where I just cannot pray for that church? Should there be? Can there really be a situation involving a true church that would justify my being unwilling to pray for that church? Surely, if we will just go ahead and pray for one another, this will make things better between our churches. Prayer and love will sort of go together and interact upon one another. The more prayer, the more love. The more love, the more prayer. I cannot but believe that it would do good for all involved if we would pray for one another. Let us at least give it a try. We have nothing to lose. It may be that we would all have much to gain.

If this were to be done well, it involves some fellowship between the churches. One church needs to know about the needs of the other church in order to pray better. Of course, there can be much prayer even where there is little knowledge except as to the existence of one another. But the more we know, the better we can pray. It would be good to know of the special meetings of one another, and to pray much at this time. We might also learn of different problems of others and pray for them.

Who, but God, knows what could come of such a course by churches of like faith and practice? Surely, the results of such would all be good. Even if one church should do this for other churches, and the other churches did not do the same, the praying church would lose nothing, but rather gain thereby. And the more churches who would become involved in such a course of action, the more the blessings would be. I suggest that which costs nothing and takes little time; that which will hurt no one, but will be a blessing to many. Let some church begin. Let others join in if they will. We have nothing to lose and much to gain by such a course of action. I verily believe that if several churches would begin to faithfully practice this, we would ere long see some results. It is at least worth a try. Who will be first to become faithfully involved in this? May God bless you all.

Maybe other preachers could write commending such a course of action, or making suggestions concerning such.

FAITHFULNESS

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times they have been few in number. At times they have almost been hidden from public view. At times most of them have been very small. But there has always been one or more of them on the face of this earth since Jesus started the first one.

Men have disbelieved, ignored, or rebelled against this promise.

Men, not believing this promise, have started thousands of churches. Some have disappeared. Some are still with us. But through it all there has always been a Baptist church or churches.

My friend, you would do well to heed this. Not without reason has Christ perpetuated His Baptist churches through the ages. You should find one of these churches, join it, serve God

faithfully in and through it. You will miss much in time and in eternity by ignoring this church that Jesus built, and has preserved through the centuries.

God is faithful in eternal security. He has promised that His sheep would follow Him, and He would give them eternal life, and they would never perish. He has said that they are in His hand, in His Father's hand, and sealed by the Holy Spirit. He has said that

nothing could ever separate them from the love of God. Again and again has the Lord stated and promised the eternal security of the saved. Men have denied this. Men have fought this. Men have preached against this, calling it most horrible names and casting foul aspersions upon it. But it remains true because God is faithful. And yonder in glory, when the "falling-from-grace" men who were really saved are

there, they will praise God for the glorious truth of eternal security. They will realize that they made it through, not by the works they preached, but by the eternal security of the grace and power of God. Not one of the elect will fail of being saved. Not one of the saved will fail of eternal glorification - all because God is faithful.

God is faithful to His people. A man and woman stand before the preacher. They promise to be faithful to each other, in poverty and wealth, in sickness and health, in good and bad; being faithful to one another so long as they both shall live. But, oh how sad, often they prove unfaithful in a short period of time. But God is faithful to His people.

He is faithful in sickness. He will be with them then. They will know His blessed and encouraging and cheering presence. He will make their bed in all their sickness. He will heal them when and how He pleases, or maybe uses that sickness as their chariot into His glorious presence.

He is faithful in sorrow. He feels for them. He shares with them each sorrow they have. He will be with them and enable them to bear their grief. He will help them to bear it.

He is faithful in poverty. All the needs of His people will be provided. They will never be forsaken. Their bread and water shall be sure. They may not have as much as the wicked. They may not have all they desire. But their needs, all of their needs, shall be supplied according to the riches of the Lord.

He will not forsake them, even in their failure. We fail Him. Yes, we do. We fail often, and sometimes terribly. Not one of us has proved to always be totally faithful to Him. But, even in the time of failure, God is faithful to His people. He was faithful to Noah. He was faithful to David. He was faithful to Jonah. He was faithful to Peter. Oh, we fail Him. But Jesus Christ is our advocate who pleads for us. The Father sends the Spirit. The Spirit brings us to sorrowful repentance. God forgives us. He does not cast us away. He does not disown us. He brings us back into fellowship with Himself. I fail Him, but He never fails me. Praise the Lord.

He is faithful in death. If the Lord tarries, we must all die. One by one we will cross the river. No earthly friend can go with us. Even if we go at the same moment of time, we go alone, so far as human companionship is concerned. But, God's child will not be alone. The Saviour will walk with him through the valley of the shadow of death. In that hour, I verily believe that the Lord will be closer than ever before. I saw my oldest son die. I saw the fear leave his eyes. I saw the peace that came to him in that hour. I verily believe that the angels were there. I doubt not that he saw them. The Lord did not forsake him in that hour. I do not doubt that God's children suffer some in death. I will not vehemently argue that they have no fear in that hour. But I feel that they suffer and fear far less than we might think. I believe that the Lord is with them in a special

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We see women on TV and hear of them saying they would give anything to have a baby. To hold the little one in her arms to love and the joy of seeing their baby grow up, saying their first words, and to hear them say Mom and Dad. What could be more beautiful? But the word "barren" means they can't have any children, and what is a home without children?

Now, you say adopt a little baby. That may be so, but to be a mother is to carry the little baby nine months and bring forth through suffering and pain, and then have the joy of being a mother. John 16:21, "A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world."

Today we hear so many women and men saying, we don't want any children, we both work, we don't have time, or we just don't want any children. There is much selfishness and greed in the world today. Proverbs 31:28-30, "Her children arise up, and call her blessed, her husband also, and he praiseth her, Many daughters have done virtuously but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the LORD she shall be praised." Let us look at five women that were barren and God opened up their womb and gave them children, and the lives of their children.

In the book of Genesis 11:30, "But Sarai was barren, she had no child. Now, look what happened when Sarai wanted another woman to have her child in Genesis 16:1-4, "Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the LORD hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai. And Sarai Abram's wife took Hagar her maid the Egyptian, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife. And he went in unto Hagar and she conceived and when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes."

Now it was a big mistake of Sarai, trying to obtain children through Hagar, and many heartaches followed. You know it sounds like the surrogate mothers of today.

I'm glad we have a God that sees all, hears all and can do all things. Look at Genesis 17:15-19, "And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. 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. Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart; Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? And shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: And I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant and with his seed after him." Look at verse 21, "But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at the set time in the next year." God is always faithful in His promises, for He had told Abraham at the set time Sarah will have a son, and in chapter 21:1-3, 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. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac."

We see Isaac, a type of Christ obedient unto death. Look at Philippians 2:8, "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." In Genesis 22, when God spoke to Abraham to take his son to Mt. Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering. One can imagine the things that went through Abraham's mind, Oh, the heart-felt pain he suffered. But we see Abraham as a type of the Father and Isaac as a type of our Lord Jesus Christ. Also we see our blessed Lord Jesus as He died on Calvary; the suffering pain, and the blood that cleanses us from all sin. We see Sarah barren, and God opened her womb and brought forth Isaac, the promised seed.

Let us look at another one of the great women in the Bible that was barren. Did you know that Rebekah was barren? And the great God of heaven answered prayer, and gave her Esau and Jacob. In Genesis 24, we have the beautiful story of Abraham as a type of God the Father, and his servant as the type of the Holy Spirit, as we see in Genesis 24:3-4, "And I will make thee

swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell. But thou shalt go unto my country and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac." Isaac is a type of Jesus Christ, and Rebekah is the type of the bride. In verse 67, look what it says, "And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent and took Rebekah and she became his wife, and he loved her, and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death." Oh dear people, as Isaac's love for Rebekah, how much the Lord Jesus Christ loves the church and gave His life for His bride. I am glad the Lord led me to be a Baptist and not a Protestant, aren't you?

Now in Chapter 25, look at verse 21, "And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife because she was barren: And the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived." When Isaac took Rebekah to wife, he was forty years old. God blessed them twenty years later, and gave them Esau and Jacob.

Let us go on to another one of the great women of the Bible that was barren. In Genesis 29:18, "And Jacob loved Rachel." It is a beautiful love story; Jacob's love for Rachel, and how Jacob worked seven years for her. But after the seven long years had ended Jacob wanted Rachel for his wife, but Rachel's dad, Laban gave Leah to Jacob to be his wife, and you can imagine what went through Jacob's mind. But it didn't end there because of Jacob's love for Rachel, he worked another seven years for her, and the time went so fast. Let us see what happened. In Chapter 30:1, "And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister and said unto Jacob, give me children or else I die." verse 2, "And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel and he said, Am I in God's stead, who had withheld from thee the fruit of the womb?"

We see the sovereignty of God. For in verse 22, "and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb," verse 23, "And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach." Verse 24, "And she called his name Joseph, and said, The LORD shall add to me another son." We can see the love Jacob had for Rachel; but the greater love God has for His children. I am glad I serve a great sovereign God of all power, and He can do all things according to His sovereign will, Aren't you?

Rachel did have another son in Chapter 35:17-19, "And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that

the midwife said unto her, Fear not, thou shalt have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Ben-oni; but his father called him Benjamin, And Rachel died and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem."

Rachel was buried in Bethlehem, but it brings great joy to a child of God, for Bethlehem means "the house of bread". Jesus said in John 6:48, "I am that bread of life." In Luke 2:11, look what it says, "For unto us is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Amen.

Let us now look at another one of the women of the Bible that was barren. This is another one of the beautiful love stories of a man and his wife that could not have children, and God answered her prayer. Let us look at I Samuel, chapter 1, about a man named Elkanah. Now Elkanah had two wives, Peninnah and Hannah. Peninnah had given Elkanah children, but Hannah was barren and she wanted so much to have children. Let us look at verse 5, "But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb." Verse 6, "And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb." Look at verse 10, "And she was in bitterness of soul and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore." Here was Hannah pouring her heart out unto the Lord "give me children." Eli thought she had too much wine, and said, "How long wilt thou be drunken?"

But in verse 15, "And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord. I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD." Look at verses 19 and 20, "And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife and the LORD remembered her, Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD."

Does God answer prayer? Hannah says, "I have asked him of the Lord." God blessed Hannah with a son look at chapter 3:20, "And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD." Oh dear people, did you know that this baby (Continued on Page 10, Col. 5)

The Baptist Examiner Forum I

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

Should we "greet one another with a holy kiss"? Explain II Corinthians 13:12.

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II Corinthians 13:12 says, "Greet one another with an holy kiss."

A number of years ago in the early 1970's, I attended a Bible conference in another state each year for some five or six years. It was at that conference that I first experienced a physical observance of II Corinthians 13:12. I had often read this reference as well as the others speaking of it, but I had never given the exhortation to "greet one another with an holy kiss" much study, or thought until then. I was duly "warned" by some of the folks there and soon experienced what they were talking about. The pastor who observed the admonition literally, would grasp the hand, embrace, and bestow a holy kiss on the cheek, or neck of another brother. My turn came, but I knew what to expect. The execution of that act was done in the most loving and sincere way possible by that man; and it conveyed to me all the Christian love, joy, and concern he truly felt and wished to express. Even then, however, the act was looked on as odd, or uncomfortable, and certainly the exception by many of the brethren there. Today it would be even more so because of the day of moral decline and degeneration in which we live. The eyes that God gave me with which to read His Word and to serve Him, have unfortunately seen men kissing men in several heavily traveled public places in a most unholy and abominable way, while the law and decency ignored that which God hates. Bad enough this, but to know that many who are supposed to be ministers and people in religious leadership positions also indulge in this abomination, is intolerable.

The act of the holy kiss has not been widely used since the early days of the church age. It was widely used by the Jews and other eastern nations in Paul's time. He also mentions the "holy kiss" in Romans 16:16, I Corinthians 16:20, I Thessalonians 5:26 and I Peter 5:14. The "holy kiss" is in contradistinction to the wicked kisses of several in the Bible, including the infamous kiss of Judas. The important thing is not the kiss, but that which it conveys. The kiss was to convey sincere Christian love, concern, and affection for one another. We certainly are to love one another with a pure heart fervently according to I Peter 1:22. I

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believe that can all be expressed in a hearty handshake between brothers and sisters in Christ, especially in this day of moral degeneration and its fruits. The "holy kiss" would not be wrong if given in the proper way, but I believe today all would be more comfortable with a handshake. The important thing is that that which is to prompt the gesture must stem from true love and concern in Christ. Beloved, "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" (Romans 12:9).

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II. Corinthians 13:12: "Greet one another with a holy kiss."

A kiss in those days was an expression of fellowship and affection. It was and still is a common mode of greetings among friends in the Mid East. The phrase "holy kiss" is used to describe the people greeting one another, but in particular the attitude in which they are greeting one another. It is not to be a kiss of hypocrisy, like the kiss of Judas. It is not to be a kiss of obligation. It is to be a kiss that portrays genuine feelings for one another. It is to manifest love and affection and fellowship for one another. I wish that the members in our church felt this way about each other. It would greatly help our services.

Now to the question, "should we greet one another with a holy kiss?" Let me first say that we should greet one another with the same attitude as is expressed in Paul's statement. I do not believe that attitude must be expressed in a kiss. I think that the custom of our day of shaking hands is sufficient. I think it should be a good firm handshake that says something with it. It should be a handshake that portrays affection, appreciation, and a desire to fellowship with one another. I would probably say that it would be best for us not to greet one another with a kiss in this day and time. Let me mention a few reasons. One, that kiss might be misinterpreted by visitors in attendance. Two, if you did not use this form of greeting for every member it could bring about hard feelings in the church. Third, it would be interpreted by many to be hypocrisy and not genuine since the accepted custom of our day is a handshake. I do not believe this is a command of perpetual obligation except in spirit. We should express our love in the way of our age and community. I believe that is by handshake. I am not saying it is

wrong to greet one another with a holy kiss. I am simply saying that it is not necessary Scripturally. May God bless you all.

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"Greet one another with an holy kiss" (II Cor. 13:12).

The kiss is one of the oldest forms of greeting. We find in Genesis 27:27 Isaac telling Esau, "Come near now, and kiss me, my son, And he came near, and kissed him--" Also in Genesis 29:13 it is said, "--when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob --- he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him--" The kiss is still used today in many of the Eastern nations as a form of greeting. It is used as we use the handshake or an embrace.

It is interesting to note that this same command is given in Romans 16:16, I Corinthians 16:20, and II Corinthians 13:12. This should tell us that this command is to be carefully observed. In each passage the emphasis is on the word "holy" and not on "kiss." The apostle Paul had just written the church at Corinth to, "--be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you" (II Cor. 13:11). There was trouble in the church. There were divisions among them. He was telling them, as children of God, to stop their fighting and be at peace with each other, then when they greeted one another it would be sincere, a holy greeting that came from the heart. As the kiss was the method of greeting in that day, it would be a "holy kiss." Today it could be a holy embrace, a holy handshake, or even a holy kiss.

Some greetings with a kiss are not holy, as the one Joab gave Amassa where it is said, "Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him" and at the same time with his sword, "--smote him therewith in the fifth rib, and shed out his bowels to the ground--" (II Sam. 20:10). The greatest example of an unholy kiss is found where it is said, "--while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, --And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: --- and as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master, and kissed him" (Mark 14:43-45).

In I Peter 5:14 we are told to, "Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity." If we love one another as the Lord has commanded us, then our greeting to one another, regardless of the method, by a kiss, by an embrace, or by a handshake, will be a holy greeting. The method of greeting is not what is important, but it is with what spirit we greet our fellow Christian. Is it with a pure true love for that one? "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, seeing that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:" (I Peter 1:22).

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The HOSIOS PHILEMA, or "holy kiss" was practiced by the members of Baptist churches as late as the 4th century A.D. (Vines). The holy kiss such as found in II Corinthians 13:12, Romans 16:16, I Corinthians 16:20, and I Thessalonians 5:26 seems to have been a custom in the early churches that grew out of the ancient Hebrew greeting and farewell kiss. That is, -greeting someone by kissing first the right cheek, then the left, (Manners and Customs of Bible Lands, by Fred H. Wight). It remains a common custom in Bible lands even today. Russians, Germans, and French also practice this custom, though not as much as those of the Middle East. There are several Bible examples of the PHILEMA, (kiss) in both the Old and New Testament. Genesis 27:27; 33:4; 45:15; 48:10, Exodus 18:7, 1 Samuel 20:41, Luke 15:20, and Luke 7:45.

Since many of the churches such as Jerusalem, Rome, Corinth, and Thessalonica were made up of people from different levels of society, perhaps it was a sign of unity, or humbleness. That is, showing proper respect, and oneness of heart and mind whether you were a slave or master; whether you were rich or poor; whether you were Jew or Greek.

As far as this custom being practiced in America it seems to have evolved into, the "holy handshake" of the right hand.

It is common both in the churches and in general to greet or bid farewell to some with the shaking of the right hands. Whereas the "kiss" was only practiced with someone of the same sex, the hand shake is practice with either sex. Though the HOSIOS PHILEMA is Scriptural, I would not say that it is a specific commandment, though we ought to greet one another warmly each time we meet. Neither would I advise you to try the "holy kiss" on any of your brethren, as most would probably be offended, and/or misunderstand your intentions.

FAITHFULNESS

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way at that time.

God is faithful to His people in resurrection and eternal glory. Many of them have been dead a

long, long time. Their graves are unknown to man. But He knows where the body of His child sleeps. He will not forget a one of them. He knew where Moses was buried though no man ever did. In the resurrection, He will not forget a single one of them. He will bring each one forth with a glorified body. And He will take each one safely home to eternal glory. He started out with a purpose. He will not rest until that purpose is fulfilled in the glorification of every one of the elect.

God is faithful to His promises. They are many. They stagger the mind of men. They may even seem impossible - witness the promise that Abraham would have a son when he was old. No matter what it takes, God will be faithful to His promises. Men sometimes make promises they never intend to keep. They sometimes mean to keep them, but are unable to do so. They sometimes forget the promises made some years ago. Not so with God. He is sincere in His promises. He never forgets them. He is able to, and He will keep them. A pastor visited an aged sister of his flock. He looked through her Bible. He notice the letters "tp" in the margin in many places. He asked what this meant. The sister said they mean "tried and proven." They are beside promises that I have proven in my own experience.

God is faithful to His prophecies. Many things are written in God's Word as to the future. Many of His prophecies have already been fulfilled, literally and in great detail. The rest of them surely will be fulfilled the same way. There will be a tribulation. Before that, there will be the rapture of those saved up to that time. Russia will invade Israel and be destroyed. There will be a glorious millennium of peace, prosperity, and holiness all over the world. God said it. He will perform it.

God is faithful to His warnings. Mother says to her child, "If you do that, you will get a spanking." The child does it. The mother forgets her warning. Not so with God, not so. He has warned that if one dies without Christ, he will go to hell. Many are already there bearing testimony to God's faithfulness to His warnings. God warned individuals and nations in the Bible. He has always been true to these warnings. Israel fell and went into the Assyrian captivity. Judah went into the Babylonian captivity. Jerusalem was destroyed. The old prophet who disobeyed God and went home with the lying prophet, died as God had said. Nebuchadnezzar lived with the animals in the open for seven years as God warned. My friend, do not risk your soul on God's failing to do as He has said. God will not change on His Word. He that believeth not shall be condemned. He that believeth not shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. God will prove faithful to His warnings.

God is faithful to His gospel. Jesus Christ is God. He was born of a virgin. He lived a sinless life. He died on the cross. He arose from the dead. That is the gospel. The gospel is who Jesus is and what Jesus did. The promise of God is that if you will believe that gospel, you will be saved. This promise is made, in different words, over and over. God is faithful to this gospel.

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The Baptist Examiner Forum II

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

Explain the "Gap Theory". Do you believe it?

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Creation does not occupy a great deal of space in the Bible, but is clearly presented in Genesis 1-2 and Hebrews 11:3. The Bible clearly teaches that the universe, and all matter, had a beginning, and came into existence through the will of our Sovereign God.

It is sometimes said that the Bible begins with two contradictory accounts of creation. To say that it begins with two creation accounts is like saying that an atlas begins with two maps. A map of the world and a map of the United States would overlap. The first two include a great deal of territory not included in the second. The second would include a great deal of detail not mentioned in the first. This is exactly the relation between the two creation accounts. Genesis 1 describes the creation of the universe as a whole. Genesis 2:4-25 gives a more detailed account of the creation of man and says nothing about the creation of matter, of light, of the heavenly bodies, or of plants and animals, except to refer to the creation of animals as having taken place at an earlier time.

It is sometimes argued that Genesis 2 gives a different order of events of creation than Genesis 1. If we look at this really close, we see only two creative acts involved in Gen. 2, the creation of man and that of the woman. It is settled. There is no contradiction between the order in which they are described and that of Genesis 1.

If Genesis 1:1 is true and creation was destroyed by a cataclysm, and God had to recreate, then God is doing His work over because He didn't do it right the first time. God works in perfection, and He has never, and never will make a mistake or He could not be trusted to fulfill His promises to us. Arthur Pink is a great writer, and I love his books, however, I only follow man as he follows the Bible and the Lord.

Do I believe that there was a gap between Genesis one and two. No!!!

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I do not believe in the "Gap Theory." I had not heard of such until just a few years ago. I suppose the question refers to some space between Genesis 1:1

and Genesis 1:2. I don't think there was any lapse between the two verses. If there was some space in between those two verses it was not a gap. That would imply that there was some loss of time or eternity. I believe that God was carrying on His work, whatever it might have been. We just don't know what He was doing, just as we do not know what He was doing in what we call the silent years in between Malachi 4:6 and Matthew 1:1. God was silent so far as we are concerned, but He was carrying on His work. We just don't know what it was.

I am not able to explain what took place before Genesis 1:1. I cannot agree with some of the explanation given by some of the creative week. On page nine of paragraph two in the booklet by Dr. D. E. Martin, "God And His Creation," he gives a quote from an old Bible printed in 1599, which said, and I give his quote, "God made heaven and earth of nothing, as a rude lump."

I do believe that God made heaven and earth from nothing, but I do not believe that He made it from a rude lump.

Again on page seventeen at the top of the page in the same booklet, Dr. R. E. Martin states, "but when they saw God create the chaotic material," I do not believe that God created a chaotic ball of mass and then made the heavens and the earth from that shapeless ball of mass.

Dr. R. E. Martin says on page nine in the middle of the page of this same booklet, "that man was not created in vain, or without form, a shapeless mass, but perfect in all his parts." I agree with that.

If God can create a man without a shapeless form create him upright and perfect in all his parts, it seems that He could do the same thing in creating the earth and the heavens.

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"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Genesis 1:1-2). The Gap Theory declares that this creation, the original creation took place in a dateless past. It was a beginning that preceded the six days work described in Genesis 1:3-31. The work described during the six days is called a recreation of the earth to its original condition before it was made "formless and void" and submerged in water and darkness. It is said that this is the world to which Peter referred when he wrote concerning the earth that perished. "For this

they are willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." (II Peter 3:5-7). It is referred to as the Pre-Adamite earth. This original creation became a waste that was formless and void. It is not intended to be the earth of Noah's time, for that earth did not perish, but is to be held in store for judgment.

Was this Pre-Adamite earth inhabited? This theory supposes that there were inhabitants of the earth. They were there as keepers of the earth. It supposes that Lucifer, with his followers, was given this charge. "Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him. Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth: and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee" (Ezek. 28:12-15). We know from this that sin existed before man was created. This sin is supposed to have brought about the chaotic conditions that followed the expressed desire of Lucifer to ascend above the throne of God. "How art thou fallen from heaven. O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart. I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the most High" (Is. 14:12-14).

God spoke to Job and questioned him concerning a time that seems to be before the recreation. "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations

of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? (Job 38:4-7). Stars are spoken of as angels.

Finally, this theory raises a multitude of questions. Many that have not even been discussed, many that will be raised. One question is raised in Genesis 1:28. It is the word replenish. "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (Gen 1:28). Replenish seems to indicate that life was there before. This is the same statement that God made to Noah when he came out of the ark after the flood. "And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Ge 9:1). This theory has been expounded since the middle ages. It has found support from some well known men down through the years. Many people feel that this theory, and remember that it is a theory, if true, would only be used to prove some of the erroneous beliefs that modern man holds. Those beliefs include the ice age, large extinct animals, and a variety of other things. Look at it from the perspective that, if it were true, it still honors God as the creator and is in harmony with the whole of God's Word. It brings Him the honor and glory He deserves as Creator. Do I believe it? At this point, I honestly have not studied enough to answer the question. Each answered question begets another question. We should have no problem subscribing to any doctrine if the Holy Spirit directs our minds and heart to that teaching.

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I have never read much concerning this theory, but from what discussion I have had with some others that have studied it, I believe the theory states that a period of time elapsed between the creation of heaven and the earth recorded in Genesis 1:1 and verse two while "the earth was without form and void." Just how much time elapsed, or what took place in that time is pure speculation. Some say that millions of years passed and that dinosaurs lived in this time, and that the ice ages came and went. And, that time was needed for coal and oil and diamonds, etc. to form. Many men who believe this theory also believe that man evolved during this time from monkeys.

I don't subscribe to this theory,

but I believe God created the heavens and the earth and man just as they are. Of course the flood recorded in Genesis brought much change on the earth, but the theory that creation is millions of years old is man's theory.

Some need to hear again the admonition of Paul. "Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do" (I Tim. 1:4).

FAITHFULNESS

(Continued from Page 4)

There is not now, and there never will be, a witness to the contrary. There has never been one who has come to Christ, desiring salvation, trusting in the Saviour, who has gone away lost and undone. Praise the Lord. God is faithful to the gospel. He does save everyone who trusts in Jesus Christ. Dear lost, unsaved friend; would you trust Him just now? He will save you. He will save you. He will save you now.

God is faithful to His warnings, and all who die without Christ will go to hell. God is faithful to His gospel, and all who believe in Jesus Christ will be eternally saved and will go to heaven. God is as faithful in one as in the other. You will eternally demonstrate the faithfulness of God. In hell you will demonstrate that He is faithful to His warnings, or in heaven you will demonstrate that He is faithful to His gospel. Which will it be? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. God bless you.

MOSES

(Continued from Page 1)

persons as we find in Romans 2:11 or to the age of any one person. He could and did use a lad on many occasions in the Old and New Testaments, but on this one occasion, God was going to use an elderly man to deliver the children of Israel out of the hands of the Egyptians. The Bible tells us that God uses the weak things of this old world to confuse the wise and in so doing, bring honor to His eternal matchless name.

Exodus 5:1, "And afterward Moses and Aaron went in, and told Pharaoh, thus saith the Lord God of Israel, let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness." After what? In the previous chapter, Moses did his very best to convince God that he was not the man for the job. Five times he gave sufficient reasons as to why he could not do the job. Five times God answered each of those objections. Moses gave in and said that he would go as God had commanded. Beloved, when God is done dealing with us, there is but one answer that will suffice, "Here am I; send me," Isa. 6:8. Moses was ready to go and do the bidding of Almighty God. That old man that was meek and would not harm the head of anyone, would soon

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MOSES

(Continued from Page 5)

stand before Pharaoh with power and strength that would even surprise himself. God equips and gives the necessary power to His servants in the hour of need. Moses was no exception to the rule.

Now, would you note who was with Moses: Aaron. Just as Moses had a man that would go with him into the court of Pharaoh, the man of God today needs a man that will stand with him when the road gets rough. That ought not be the reason that the man of God serves the Lord, for too often he may have to stand alone. Nevertheless, Aaron was with Moses and stood faithfully with him throughout this whole ordeal. What the church of God needs today are some men and women who are willing to count the cost as did Aaron, and to stand for what is right.

Again, would you note what was said unto Pharaoh. **"Thus saith the Lord God of Israel,"** vs. 1. We are living in a day of compromise when people do not want to believe God, much less obey His commands. It is hard to find ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that will teach the Word of God instead of a social gospel. It has become so easy to let things ride and never stand up for the things that are right. Moses knew ahead of time that Pharaoh would not obey the command of God. But that did not do away with his responsibility to take the message to him that God had commanded. Moses was not to sugarcoat it and water it down, but to tell Pharaoh the way it actually was. That he did, and so should every minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Moses did not have an easy job. Pharaoh would only laugh at his ideas. The children of Israel would sit by and let someone else do the job. He would be an island unto himself in a world that couldn't care less as to what would take place. These three groups of people - Moses and Aaron, Pharaoh and the children of Israel - represent the world today. Moses and Aaron, God's servants, out in the world trying to do a job for God in a hostile environment. Pharaoh, the representation of a Godless world that could not care less about the things of God. Israel, a people who would complain and gripe about their lot, but unwilling to do anything about it.

Moses and Aaron did not expect to see a change take place in Pharaoh because God told them ahead of time what was going to take place. But Israel was another story, for they belonged unto the Lord and should have cared as to what happened to them. But they did not care and only added confusion and frustration to Moses and Aaron as they attempted to lead them. To make matters worse, Moses and Aaron at times did not help the situation. Aaron was afraid of the people while Moses was on the mountain for many days, and built a golden calf so that they could worship it. Moses got angry with the people and smote the rock when God told him to speak unto it.

Pharaoh - the one that repre-

sented the world and all that it offers, said, **"Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?"** Ex. 5:2. The world would tell us today that they are not interested in the things of God. They have said that they do not want prayer in public places or the Bible in our classrooms. They have refused to teach morals in conjunction with their way of education. Pharaoh is a perfect example of mankind trying to make a world a place to live in without God and the responsibility that man has to God. We are living today in a world that is just like it was in the day that Moses and Aaron stood before Pharaoh: calling into question everything that God said and did because we do not want to obey His every command. Things have not changed!

Forgive me, but our God laid down certain rules and regulations that were for all men. When those rules and regulations are violated, man is going to pay the price for his sin. Man cannot expect to live in sin without getting burned. **"be sure your sin will find you out,"** Num. 32:23. That is a Biblical truth that applies to both the saved and the unsaved alike. The world will tell you, like Pharaoh of old, that they do not know God and are not subjected unto Him, but the truth of the matter is, some day they will stand before God and give an account of their deeds. Pharaoh did not want to hear what Moses and Aaron was going to say, but they had no choice in the matter, God had commissioned them and sent them forth with the words that He would have them to deliver.

Beloved, it is not easy to stand alone! It is much easier to run and hide when the world shouts out their defiance against God and the children of God. The world does not like to hear the truth about sin and the depravity of mankind. The world does not like to hear that God has chosen us in Christ Jesus. The world does not like to hear that salvation is by grace through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The world does not like to hear that our Lord is coming back to reign and rule. When He does, the Bible tells us that our God will reign in true judgment and that there will be peace on the earth for a thousand years. The world does not like to hear that God will judge the sinner and send him to a place called the Lake of Fire because of his rejection of Jesus Christ. The world does not like to hear that the only way of escape from that place is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

As the ministers of God, we declare, as did Moses and Aaron many years ago, **"The God of the Hebrews hath met with us,"** vs. 3. It is not a matter of trying to say that we have something that the world does not have; though that is true to a certain degree. It is not a matter of trying to show someone else up and that our way is right; though that is most certainly true. It is not a matter of showing off and being somewhat obnoxious in our attitude, but sharing with others the good news that Christ Jesus is the answer to life.

When the child of God or the minister of God obeys the Word of God, the world will get somewhat upset as did Pharaoh when Moses and Aaron asked that he let the children of Israel go. Again, Moses and Aaron knew what was going to happen and

that Pharaoh would not obey the command of the Lord. As a pastor, it often hurts when the Word of God is preached or testified to, when the people present refuse to obey its every command. From the Word of God and from the experiences of life itself, the man of God knows just what is going to take place when the people rebel against God's Word. If the man of God is like Moses and Aaron of old, they will hurt and cry out to God about the matter. Nevertheless, they will continue to preach the Word as did Moses and Aaron. It may seem at times that there is no hope in sight, and yet the man of God must do as commanded; preach the Word of God. Moses did! We should! God help us to be found faithful in this business.

Ten times Moses would stand before this wicked king, Pharaoh. Ten times he would harden his heart and refuse to hear the Word of the Lord. Each time God would demonstrate His displeasure in their gods and prove beyond doubt that He was the true and living God. Pharaoh would be forced time and time again to see that the Almighty was indeed, the God of Heaven, the creator of heaven and earth. And yet, he would refuse to bow his head and acknowledge God as Lord and Saviour. That is the way it is today! Man can see from the heavens that God created all that consist therein; and yet, when they see His handiwork here on this earth, they reject Him. Things have not changed that much. Men will not turn to God so that they might have life. That is foolishness unto them. Religious of course, but to turn to God, never in a thousand years. That would be out of character. Man will not of himself turn to God any more than Pharaoh did some thirty-five hundred years ago. No man had more of an opportunity and saw the mighty hand of God than did Pharaoh, and yet, that in itself was not sufficient. God help us to get the message of grace out as did Moses and Aaron, and yet, we should not be surprised when men reject and turn their back on the truth. The Lord taught that the people would not come to Him that they might have life. They will not today, until God does business with them first. **"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life,"** John 6:63. Beloved, that is simple Bible. **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost,"** Lk. 19:10. The Bible teaches that **"Salvation is of the Lord,"** Jonah 2:9. You see, our salvation must begin with and end with God as the author and the finisher of our faith. Anything less than that, works of any kind, is not of God. The Bible plainly teaches that we are saved by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. That we can add nothing, whatsoever, to our spiritual standing before God. It must be all of grace or not of grace at all. If it is to be God's way, then we must trust God's way as the only means whereby the lost sinner is going to get saved.

Pharaoh had the opportunity, but like the depraved sinner today, turned a deaf ear to the message of Moses. Don't be surprised at all of this! Man has never shown, of himself, any interest whatsoever in the things of God. The difference between religion

and Christianity is this: Christianity is God seeking man and religion is man seeking God. That has never changed! It is still true today. Religion has never saved anyone any more than it did the people in Egypt that worshipped the false gods of the day. This whole contest in Moses' day was to show once and for all who the one true God really was. You read the story and it will surprise you that Moses and Aaron won, hands down. The world may not like our message of grace and substitute it with their own message, but when everything is said and done, like Moses of old, we will also win the battle.

Moses stood before Pharaoh knowing that he would reject his message and that God would have to intervene. I stand before the world today and preach God's message of grace, knowing full well that the average man will reject that message for one of works. That breaks my heart! Why don't they just believe! Oh, if they would only listen long enough, perhaps maybe, but no, that is not God's way. His ways are not our ways. If I could do something that would change their mind. Moses tried every trick in the book and got nowhere. If the Spirit of God is not working in the heart of the lost sinner, there is no hope whatsoever. I am so glad that the Bible teaches us that the work of saving lost sinners is not my business, but His. I am so glad that the Bible teaches us that God will save sinners, in spite of their own refusal to do business with God. How? I do not entirely understand or comprehend. But one thing that I do know, God is still in the business of saving lost souls and that for His glory. He uses the preached Word of God to touch the heart of some lost soul. How? Again, I really do not understand how. But He does nevertheless, reach down and touches the sinner and gives life everlasting. Our job is to tell others about this good news. Let us be about our Masters bidding.

STUDIES

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4:17). The phrase, **"if need be"** shows that there are times in our lives when it is necessary for afflictions to come. There are times when God sends trials to discipline His children. **"Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word"** (Psa. 119:67). Other times they are needed to help us grow spiritually or to help prevent us from sinning. **"And lest I should be exalted above measure---, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure"** (II Cor. 12:7). We may not always know what is the need, but we can know that God sees to it that it is always for our good, for we know on God's authority that **"all things work together for good to those who love God--"** (Rom. 8:28). **" manifold temptations"** or trials means that the trials are varied. We may not face the same trials each day. Neither may each of us face the same kind of trials. God sees to it that each trial will meet each of our needs. Trials may cause you to be **"in heaviness"** or **"ye have been made sorrowful."** Even though we know the trials work

with all things for our good, yet the trials often bring grief and pain. All trials are under God's control. He knows exactly how much we need in order to teach the lesson to be learned.

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (Verse 7). Here we are told the reason and purpose of the trials that come our way. It is that at the coming of Jesus Christ these trials of our faith may result in praise, honor and glory. To **"be tried"** means putting someone or something to the test. Trials put our faith to the test. Many claim to have faith; but when trials come, they prove to not have true faith. Abraham's faith was put to the test when he was told to sacrifice his son. Is there any doubt as to Abraham's faith? Job's faith was put to the test when God permitted Satan to attack him. Is there any doubt as to Job's faith? Faith is the most important thing in our lives. The apostle John wrote, **"this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith"** (I John 5:4). Faith not only brings victory, but faith is the victory as B.H. Kasee stated in his book, **"Faith is The Victory."** Those who stand the test show that their faith is a genuine, God-given faith and they will one day hear, **"well done, thou good and faithful servant."**

Verse 7 tells us that this testing of our faith is much more precious than of gold. The gold ore is put in a vessel and put over heat. As the ore melts the impurities rise to the surface where they can be removed. It has been said when the goldsmith could see the reflection of his face in the gold he knew he had nothing but pure gold. So it is with God when He puts His children over the fires of suffering in order to remove the impurities of sin from our lives. When these impurities are removed from our lives then we will reflect the face of Him who died for us. **"But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord"** (II Cor. 3:18).

"Whom having not seen, ye love: in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (verse 8). The ones to whom Peter was writing had not seen the Lord while He was here on earth, yet they loved Him. They had never seen Him with the natural eye, yet with the eye of faith they had seen Him, and believing, **"ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."** We often think what joy we would have had if we could have seen Jesus Christ as He walked in Judea, and have heard Him as He spoke to the multitudes. To have watched as He healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, and raised the dead; but we have a greater joy if by an eye of faith we behold the glorified Saviour. The word **"unspeakable"** means unable to express. The thought is, there are not words to express the joy one has who has seen Christ with the eye of faith. I think Peter got a taste of that

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INTERCOMMUNION: INCONSISTENT & UNSCRIPTURAL:

ECCLESIA, WHAT IS IT?

Part II, Chapter 4b by J. R. Graves

The kingdom of Christ; what is it? I propose to construct it out of the ground truths admitted by our standard writers.

Dr. A. P. Williams, the profoundest thinker Missouri has produced, says: "The churches are each integral parts of the kingdom of Christ."

If so--and I accept it--the churches, as such, are the integers of the kingdom of Christ. The local churches, then, compose the kingdom. Other able writers admit that a local church is not the kingdom, but a constituent of the kingdom, and I accept this also. Then, it follows that the local churches are the constituents of the kingdom of Christ. Then must the local churches constitute the kingdom of Christ--not individuals on earth or in heaven, but churches, are the units of which the kingdom is composed. And this is the fact to be kept in mind--That the kingdom of Christ is not composed of individuals, as such, baptized or unbaptized; but of churches, as such, and only of individuals as composing local churches.

This conclusion incontrovertibly follows: That the visible kingdom of Christ, which is also called "kingdom of God," "of heaven," "of God's dear Son," cannot exist without one or more of its constituents--local churches; and, therefore, it did not exist on earth before, or independent of, a local church.

But "the kingdom of heaven" did exist, not only during, but "from the days of John the Baptist"--the commencement of his ministry.

This cannot well be doubted, since he proclaimed that it had approached. The first public proclamation by Christ was that it had approached. Subsequently, he declared that, "from the days of John, it had been assaulted, and violent men sought to destroy it; and that the law and the prophets were until John, since which time the kingdom of heaven was proclaimed, and all men were opposing it" not pressing into it, as our version has it (see chapter II). We know it could not be assaulted and outraged unless visibly existing. Christ further says, that while scribe and priest were endeavoring to shut up the kingdom against men, publicans and harlots were going into the kingdom before their eyes; and, when asked "where the kingdom was," he answered, that it was "among them"--upon the soil of Judea, although the Jews did not apprehend it.

But since the kingdom cannot exist without one or more of its integral parts, or constituencies, then there must have been one church, at least, in existence "from the days of John the Baptist," and that one was the only manifestation of the kingdom until other churches were multiplied; and during this period the church visible, and the "kingdoms of Christ," were one and the same institution, and practically synonymous terms.

The Christian church, in connection with the kingdom of Christ, may be considered as a progressive institution, and developed in three periods:

1. In its inchoate, or formative period, embracing the period from the ministry of John the Baptist until the close of the first Pentecost.

cost after the Ascension of Christ.

During this period, the little stone was cut out of the mountain without hands--creative agency--and commenced rolling onward toward the image which symbolized all earthly opposing kingdoms (Dan. 2). During this period the little mustard seed germinated, and blade and stalk, with its tender branches and leaves, appeared in the garden of Judea; but the time of its blossoming, and full expansion into tree-form and fruitage, was not yet, but it was none the less "a mustard tree," or plant.

When Aeneas, with his handful of heroes, having escaped from burning Troy, and the disasters of the sea, reached the Lavinian



shore, and established his kingly jurisdiction, that little band was as much a Roman kingdom as it was when the legions of Caesar had conquered all the known world.

Baptists have been tauntingly asked to show the semblance of a church or kingdom of Christ before the days of Pentecost; and some of our writers have strangely conceded that there was neither before Pentecost. I think a kingdom can be found; and, if a kingdom, then a church, since the former cannot exist without the latter. Let us carefully examine the inspired records.

John was sent to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, and he had a people in readiness for his Master, and the Lord accepted them and associated them as His disciples. In this body of disciples, under the authority of Christ, and obedient to His authority, we find all the elements of a Christian church, viz.: Called out from the world by conversion and baptism, associated in a visible body according to the direction of Christ their only Head and King, and submitting in all things to His authority. This was Christ's church in its inceptive state; and John applied to it the very name given it in the Apocalypse of Christ--the Bride (Rev. 21:9); that is, one day to be "the Lamb's wife." The name Christ ere long gave to this body of disciples was significant--an assembly; a body that could, and must often, be assembled in one place for worship, and the transaction of business. He several times assembled these disciples before He gave them the title of His "assembly"--church.

The first full church meeting--a gathering together of His disciples into one place for general instruction--is recorded by Matthew (v.1): "And seeing the multitude, he went up into a mountain, and having sat down his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth and taught them, saying."

These "disciples" were not the twelve apostles, nor yet the seventy merely, for they had not yet been chosen from the whole body, but the multitude of His disciples. So Alford: "The disciples, in the wider sense, including those of the apostles already called, and all who had, either for a longer or shorter time, attached themselves to him as hearers...The discourse was spoken directly to the disciples," etc.

Here, then, is a real church meeting; a visible assembly of men, possessing certain qualifications, called out from the oklos (multitude) for a specific purpose, and this is the essential signification of ecclesia in Greek. We may add an organized assembly, since they recognized the supreme authority of Christ over them. At this first general meeting of His disciples, which soon after He named His ecclesia--His assembly, church--He instructed them touching their individual Christian duties, and clearly indicated their mission as His assembly. "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill... Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and may glorify your Father which is in heaven."

This I consider Christ's first great commission to His church, and by which He made it the great missionary agency for the gospel enlightenment of the whole world; for it was of the whole world He constituted His church to be the light.

Here was a church, of which Christ was the living, present Head, and the source of all law and government: but as yet there were no commissioned officers, since the apostles, nor the seventy were chosen for some time after this (see Matthew 9:9).

The second general gathering together of His disciples into one place was by a special summons. Luke thus records it in 6:12: "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called (unto him) his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles...And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, (not all in this instance) and a great multitude of people out of all Judea, ...And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed are ye, poor for yours is the kingdom of God."

Those disciples at this time alone composed the kingdom of God, and it was indeed literally theirs, being entirely of them. "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also and sent them, two and two before his face into every city and place, whether he himself would come" (Luke 10).

It is not much to infer that after these two general meetings of the whole or main body of the disciples, and the appointment of officers, that His disciples would understand Christ should He call them His assembly, and as constituting the kingdom which, as Messiah, He was to set up on this earth. This was soon for-

mally announced: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven..." (Matt. 17:18, 19).

There was a kingdom and a church in existence at this time, but not as separate organizations; for the kingdom included the church and the church composed the kingdom.

Soon after this the Lawgiver delivers to His church the fundamental law for dealing with all personal offenses among the members, which has never been modified or abrogated; and the giving of this law and the express mention of the body of His disciples as a church, puts it beyond all question that there was an organization at this time, since laws imply and necessitate organization.

The third general meeting of the brethren of His ecclesia was after His resurrection, where, at a place He appointed before His death, he met more than five hundred brethren at one time (I Cor. 15:6).

The number with Christ as witness of His ascension is not told, but it seems that one hundred and twenty upon their return, held a church meeting in an upper room in Jerusalem, where they, by popular vote, elected Matthias to fill the place left vacant by the death of Judas.

The body of brethren which Christ had three times gathered into an assembly, and had designated as His church, and spoken of as His kingdom, the Holy Spirit expressly calls a church after the ascension of Christ. We have not the slightest intimation that there was the least modification made in its organization, much less that a new and unheard of body was originated by the apostles. To the body which Christ left, the three thousand were added by baptism on the day of Pentecost; and it was to the church then existing that the saved were added daily for some time afterward. The closing days of this period were marked by great activity. Since it entered with the zeal of a new convert upon the work assigned it by its risen Head; the gospel was preached, converts baptized in large numbers, and the Lord's Supper observed, the doctrine of the apostles steadfastly adhered to, and brotherly love abounded. Let this be borne in mind, that before the days of Pentecost and the great revival that marked those days, a church was in existence, and that no church was organized during the days of Pentecost or afterwards in the city of Jerusalem, and that this body of disciples constituted the kingdom of Christ during this period.

The second period of church development and extension of the kingdom of Christ, embraces the whole intervening space between the close of the first Pentecost, after the Ascension, and the second advent and coronation of Christ upon the throne of His father David as "King of kings and Lord of lords." It is during this second period that the mustard plant of the last "becomes a great

tree, so that the fowls of the air lodge in its branches"--that the prophetic stone reaches the feet of the image (Daniel 2), crushes them and breaks the image in pieces.

Space does not allow me to trace at any length the development of the church Christ left on earth. We soon see it again exercising its democratic principles in electing seven deacons (Acts 6), to take the ministry of its temporal affairs that its ministers may the more fully give themselves to their spiritual vocations; and a little further on we see the church at Antioch clothed with, and exercising the full prerogatives of a complete and independent church, empowered to ordain and commission two of its members to go forth as foreign missionaries to carry the glad news of salvation into Asia and Greece.

The relation of the kingdom to the churches of Christ is thus indicated by Dr. Harvey in his late work, "The Church." "The church--[i.e., churches] is the visible, earthly form of the kingdom of Christ, and is the divine organization appointed for its advancement and triumph. Organized and governed by the laws of the invisible King, and composed of the subjects of the heavenly kingdom, who, by the symbol of fealty, have publicly professed allegiance to Him, the church [es] fitly represents that kingdom. Hence the apostles in receiving authority to establish, under divine inspiration, the form and order of the church, received the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whenever they gathered disciples they organized a church; and at their death they left this as a distinctive and only visible form of the kingdom of Christ on earth" (pp. 24-25).

The third period of the church's history, in connection with the extension of Christ's kingdom, will commence with the coronation and enthronement of Christ as the "One whose right it is to rule," the subjugation of all the nations of earth to His absolute dominion, and the association of all His saints, now fully redeemed and glorified, with Himself as heirs and joint heirs with Himself in the government of the nation as kings and priests.

The following Scriptures refer to the kingdom in its third universal and glorious extension: Luke 9:27; 22:16,18; Acts 14:22; I Corinthians 6:9; 13:50; Revelation 12:10; 11:15; Matthew 8:41; 16:28; II Timothy 4:1.

The Stone of Prophecy (Dan. 2) now becomes the great mountain (government) and fills the whole earth. The subjects of the kingdom in the former periods now inherit it, and become associated with their king in the administration of its government. All the nations and kingdoms of earth, as such, will become and constitute the kingdom of our Lord, and the subjects over whom the saints, with Christ, rule and reign (Dan. 8:27; Rev. 5:10; 20:6). Now will be fulfilled that prophecy "when the mountain (government) of the Lord's house shall be established on the tops

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of the mountains (over all governments), and all nations shall flow unto it" (Isa. 2:2).

It now remains to gather up the ground truths of the above standard authors, and construct a definition of kingdom of Christ that will be in accord with the teachings of Scripture.

Dr. Williams says that "each local church is an integral portion of the kingdom." Dr. Taylor: "That the baptized alone are in the kingdom."

Dr. Gardner: That all the true churches of Christ are in the kingdom of Christ. Dr. Fish: The churches are the executives of the laws of the kingdom, and of course are in it. We must suppose he meant all the visible churches.

Dr. Harvey: That the church is the earthly form of the kingdom of Christ. **The church fitly represents that kingdom.

This, then, must be the definition to embrace all these propositions: The kingdom of Christ, of God, of heaven, is constituted of the sum total of all His true visible churches as constituents, which churches are the sole judges and executives of the laws and ordinances of the kingdom.

From this we learn:

1. That all the officers, save the king, belong to the churches, and receive their authority to officiate from the churches.

2. That the churches being intrusted with the administration of the laws and ordinances, they must be administered under their supervision and upon their fellowship, since they cannot delegate their trusts to others.

3. That, by baptism, we become citizens of the kingdom of Christ, only because it introduces us into one of its constituents—a local church—just as we become a citizen of this Republic only by becoming a citizen of some one of its constituents—a state.

4. We learn that all our church rights, privileges, and franchises are limited to the particular church of which we are members, as those of a citizen are limited to the state of which he is a citizen. Nor can one church constitutionally extend her franchises or privileges to persons without and beyond her jurisdiction, any more than one state can extend her franchises to citizens of other states.

5. That since the Supper is one of the ordinances, and committed to the guardianship and administration of each local church, no member of another church has the least right or title to partake of it only in the church of which he is a member; since Christ has not given him the right, and since Christ has not authorized His churches to legislate so as to change, in the least particular, His appointments, they cannot grant, under the plea of "courtesy" or fellowship, a right or privilege which He has, for wise purposes withheld.

Objection: That the kingdom of Christ had not come during the ministry of Christ, is evident from the prayer He taught His disciples to pray, which we call "The Lord's Prayer."

Answer: Christ did not teach His disciples to pray that His

Messianic kingdom might come—the prayer has no allusion to His kingdom—but that the Father's kingdom might come and embrace this ruined earth as it now does the heavens.

Often we mislead ourselves by our misreading. The Prayer being thus: "Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

When this prayer is answered, God's will will be done on this earth as it is in heaven, and then earth will be heaven. This will take place at the close of Christ's mediatorial reign with His saints on this earth, when He shall have consummated the work He undertook to do in the covenant of redemption—have redeemed and regenerated the whole physical earth (Rom. 8); making new heavens and a new earth (II Peter 3); and have redeemed and saved enough of Adam's race to people it. **"Then (Paul tells us) cometh the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he (Christ) must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet"** (I Cor. 15:24).

It is for this ultimate triumph, and the ample re-establishment of the pristine kingdom of the Father over this earth, that Christ taught His disciples to desire and to pray in that prayer; and it is what every child of God does desire, and for which he should pray.

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future glory when he was on the Mount of Transfiguration with Christ (Luke 9:28-36).

"Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you" (verses 9, 10). What is being said is that even today, while we may be facing trials and troubles, yet we can experience some of the glory that is yet before us. Spurgeon is quoted as saying, "Little faith will take your soul to heaven, but great faith will bring heaven to your soul." What Peter is urging us to do is to remain faithful, looking forward to the coming of our Lord, thereby receiving some of the future glory even in the midst of suffering. When Christ returns for His own, then will our salvation be complete both soul and body. Verses 10-12 show us that this salvation was not something new, but had always been part of God's plan for His people. The Old Testament prophets wrote concerning this salvation. God had revealed to them both the suffering of the Messiah and the glory that was to follow, but they did not understand the connection between the two. When Christ was on earth, the Jews expected Him to defeat their enemies and set up His kingdom here on earth, which had been prophesied by the prophets. Even His disciples were confused as to the need of His death and as to when His kingdom was to be established.

God had revealed to the

prophets concerning the suffering of the Messiah and His return, but they could not see the long period of time between the two events—the period of time in which we are now living. It was of this which they, **"inquired and searched diligently."** **"Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow"** (verse 11). **"Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you which the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven: which things the angels desire to look into"** (verse 12). If the prophets of old searched so diligently concerning the truth of salvation, even though having been revealed so little, how much more ought we to study and look into this subject, now that we have the complete revealed Word of God. Some people state that the gospel is not to be found in the Old Testament, but Christ can be found in all parts of it. Yes, the way of redemption is found from Genesis to Revelation.

"Which things the angels desire to look into" The angels desire to look into these things. The word "look" carries the meaning "to look carefully into, to inspect with care." The angels are created beings. Even though they have no part in the plan of salvation, yet they have a great desire to look into it. Do we who have received that salvation have as much desire to look into it?

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:13).

The **"Wherefore"** means though you may be facing many kinds of trials, yet in view of that inheritance awaiting you in heaven, you are to **"gird up the loins of your mind."** "Gird up" is an expression referring to an act of a robed man, pulling up his robe with a belt or girdle so as to walk or run. God told the children of Israel to eat the lamb, the night of the Lord's passover, **"with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover"** (Ex. 12:11). The thought is they were to be ready to leave the land in which they were sojourners and to begin the journey to the land promised them. Peter is here bidding God's elect to gird up the loins of their minds, that is bring every thought into subjection to the revealed will of God, for they like the Israelites are strangers in this world, and at God's signal we will depart this world for our home in heaven. We are to ever be ready for that signal. We are to center our thoughts on the return of Christ, knowing that **"the last trump"** could sound at any moment. Doing this will keep us from doing many things that would hinder our spiritual growth. A child of God who is looking for that glorious day will have a greater motivation for obedience to God's Word that one

who gives it no thought. While Abraham, by faith, was looking for that heavenly city, Lot was looking toward Sodom. Abraham's look brought blessing, Lot's look brought judgment.

We must not only gird up our minds "with truth" (Eph. 6:16), but we are to have "sober" minds; that is minds that are calm, steady, settled, to weigh matters carefully. This means not to jump to sudden conclusions. Keeping in mind the return of Christ should help us to be calm and collected even in the midst of many trials. I Peter 4:7 tells us, **"But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer."** Here in verse 13 he continues, **"and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."** This means we are not to become faint or weary in this journey of life even though the road may be rocky and rough. There may be many trials and sorrows along the way, but we are told to look to the end for the grace that is to be ours at the revelation (coming) of Jesus Christ. Then, **"The toils of the road will seem nothing when we get to the end of the way."** Peter is reminding his readers of what lies ahead for those whose faith is in Christ; and that what ever they face in this life is nothing compared to what awaits them at our Lord's return.

"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: 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" (1:14-16).

What Peter is saying is that as God is holy, His children should be holy. As children inherit the nature of their parents, those who have trusted in Christ have been made **"partakers of the divine nature"** (II Peter 1:4), therefore they ought to reveal that nature in the way they live. Peter reminds us of what we once were, **"not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance."** Now that we are children of God, our whole manner of life is to be changed from what it once was, **"be holy in all manner of conversation:"**

"Because it is written" Is a statement that should be of great concern of every Christian. From God's Word we learn the mind of God for our lives. Our whole life should be controlled by the Word of God. How are we to be holy? First we must ask, **"What does the Bible say?"** In the Word of God we find that which will guide us in all things.

IMPRESSED

(Continued from Page 1)

we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:" (Phil. 3:20). Not only is our conversation in heaven but our thoughts are also there. We are to be anticipating and looking for the coming of Jesus Christ.

"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:21).

So our manner of life is to be in heaven. Also we are to look for the coming of Christ. Why should we be looking for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ? Notice what Paul says in Col. 3:1. **"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."**

Our thoughts, the very atmosphere of our life, the very things we seek after and long for are sitting at the right hand of God in heaven. That is what He is talking about. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mt. 6:33).

If we set our affections heavenly and set it in the atmosphere of heaven then all our energy and affections will go out to Christ. If we showed our affections toward Christ like we do toward our wives or our husbands what do you think Christ would think about that? We need our embers of affections to be fanned into a flaming fire. We are so prone to forget. We need to be reminded what Job was talking about. **"Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book!"** Job said I want this to make some kind of impression upon your heart. I want my life to make an impression on someone so that someone can look back and draw strength from my life or some event that has taken place in my life. That is what serving God is all about.

"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:2-3).

Our heart should go out to Him because He is the one who died for us and shed His blood for us. You are dead to the world and alive unto God.

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:4).

He is our life, our heart, our joy, and our peace. Where is your glorification state? Sitting at the right hand of the Father. When will you receive it? When He moves you will receive it. When He steps from the right hand of God. When He steps out on the clouds then your glorification state and your life shall appear. Your life in Christ. The glorification state. Then you shall appear with Christ in glory.

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;" (Titus 2:12).

It will promote Christian conduct. The more we anticipate the coming of Christ the more it becomes part of our very life. The more we live it and the more we breathe it, the more it will work Christian conduct in our life. It will give us more of a holy life, a righteous life. You talk to a lot of Christians today, they say, "Oh, he's going to come someday."

"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might re-

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deem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:13-14).

Did the Lord make an impression on Apostle Paul? Paul answers in Gal. 2:20. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Paul isn't talking about his love toward Christ. He is talking about Christ's love toward him.

DEBTORS

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you are getting from the church but concentrate on what you are giving the church. Many of who read this article, and certainly many who do not, will answer to God for unpaid bills when it comes to their obligations to God.

The first thing I want to mention is that every saved person owes Christ membership in a true church of Jesus Christ. By a true church I mean a Landmark, Sovereign Grace, Missionary Baptist church. I believe that is the kind of church that Jesus started, the kind that He has perpetuated, and the only kind that He recognizes. If you are not a faithful member in this kind of church I urge you to find one and join it immediately. The Biblical first step after salvation is baptism into a true church of Christ. I Corinthians 12:13 tells us that baptism is the door into a true church. The great commission establishes the fact that after salvation, baptism into the church should follow, and then they should be taught in the church. The Bible is full of examples where baptism into the church immediately followed salvation. Our message to lost people must be the gospel. Our first message to saved people is baptism.

Let us now notice some things that a church member owes to his church. After I have followed the Scriptures by uniting with a true church of Christ through baptism, what are my obligations to my church? Please realize that this is a debt. This is not something that is optional. These are not things that God leaves up to you to decide if they are right or wrong for you. These things are commanded of you by your Saviour. I urge you to be faithful in paying your debts to God and to the church.

First, as a member, you owe your church faithful attendance in services. Let me stress this one point that should not need stressing your obligation of faithfulness is to the church you are a member of. It is not to just any church you might want to attend. It is not to the church that is closest to your house. It is not the church that makes your loved ones happiest if you attend. It is not even a church of like faith and order. Your obligation is to the church that you are a member of. If there are things that hinder you from being faithful to this church then you should see that those things are removed from your life. Many of our church members have put themselves in circumstances where it is

impossible for them to be faithful to God's house. They have taken jobs that are too far away for them to be faithful, jobs that require them to work Sundays instead of being in God's house. Beloved, you have shirked your responsibilities to God just to please yourself. I again mention here that this is not something that is up to you, 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."

This verse very plainly teaches that to miss church is a sin. I might add here that it is a premeditated and deliberate sin on most occasions. You are aware of what the Bible teaches. You are aware of what the church expects, and yet you still forsake the assembling of yourself together. This is nothing more than a spit in the face of God's commandments. This is rebellion to the nth degree.

Let me mention a few evils of non-attendance. First, it is an act of rudeness to your pastor and to other members. Ladies would not like it if they invited you to a meal, they worked hard to have the house all clean, and to prepare a fine meal. You were supposed to be there at a certain time, and had made this commitment. If you fail to show up, surely you could not blame this lady for being angry. Beloved, this is just how the preacher feels when you fail to show up for the meal he has prepared for your soul. You are a very rude person. By joining this church you made a commitment. You have not honored that commitment.

Secondly, your attendance, or lack of it is a spiritual thermometer that tells your pastor and fellow church members your spiritual temperature. Don't try and tell me how godly you are living if you are not faithful in the church. Your church attendance can serve as a gage to let you and others know just how dedicated to God you really are. Thirdly, your failure to attend hinders the church service. The church cannot function as it should unless every member is present. The Bible plainly teaches that we are a body fitly joined together. If there is one member absent then the services are hindered. Do you want that on your conscience. The fact is that instead of being a plus to your church you are a minus. Fourthly, non-attendance will hinder your individual service to God. You cannot be the Christian you should be unless you faithfully attend a true church. Fifthly, it reflects negatively on the whole church. It makes it look as if your church is not worth going to. It makes church look very unimportant to you. How does it make our churches look when members are on the lake, at Aunt Sue's, or just home sleeping? Lastly, your non-attendance reflects negatively on the work of Christ. It makes it look like Christ did not do much of a job in saving you. It looks as if you do not think much of His salvation and His leading you into a true church of Christ. Before leaving this part of the message, I ask you a question. Are you properly paying this debt? If not, why? Please realize that God will not accept your feeble lies and excuses. God expects you to sacrifice for the cause of His church. After all did He not

sacrifice for you? Pay this debt. I assure you it will benefit you greatly.

The second thing I mention is that we are debtors in that we owe our attention while in church. Acts 8:6 says; "And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did."

This verse tells us that they were not only present, but they paid attention to what Philip was preaching. We need to be present in body and spirit. Our minds should not be on the things of the world, but on the things of God. If God worked in the heart of a church to call a man as pastor, then the members of that church owe that pastor their undivided attention while he is preaching. If God gives me a message to preach to you, then you owe it to God and yourself to listen. Sometimes church members are just plain rude. Let me mention a few things they do that is rude. There are the people who just cannot stay awake during church. I have no sympathy for most of these people. They should have gone to bed earlier the night before. Those who sleep in church will find a way to stay awake for worldly entertainments. They fall asleep because they are not interested in what is being said. This is a disgrace to God and the preacher.

When people start telling me they are not getting much out of their church services, I like to ask them what they are putting into their church services. If you are not getting what you think you should be getting, then I would urge you to examine yourself and see if you are paying proper attention. Another rude thing people do is to whisper. This behavior is not even tolerated in schools. By whispering you disturb your pastor, the person you are whispering to, and anyone else who is sitting close by. If you have something that important to say, then ask the pastor to be quiet and tell every one. I am sure that whatever you have to say could wait until later. Then we have those people who are always getting up and disturbing services. They get up to go to the bathroom, water fountain, or to take a child out. I would urge you to be careful about taking your children out of services when they cry or misbehave. They must learn to sit in church. Take them out, give them a spanking, and then bring them back in until they realize they are not going to get by with that behavior in God's house. Go to the bathroom before or between services I know this is not always possible, but don't make a habit of getting up during services. The last thing I mention is the look on your face. I don't mean the way your face looks, but the look on your face. There are the people who are just looking off into "la, la" land. The preacher can tell their mind is miles away. If you are not interested, at least have the decency to look interested. You have those people who are always looking around at other people. This is especially true of adults looking at young children when they do something cute or funny. The thing to do is to ignore this action so as to not urge the young person on. Beloved, the position God has given to the preacher demands your attention. Your soul and the difficulties it must face demand your attention. What the preacher has to say,

might be just what you need.

The third thing I mention is that we are debtors in that we owe the church reverence. There should be something special about God's house. We should realize that we are not just coming into a building, but that when we assemble together, this building becomes God's house. We should be careful of what we say and do in the church. Our thoughts and conversations too often involve the things of the world and not the things of God. There should be a feeling of awe when we assemble together to worship God. I am afraid that sometimes we forget that the purpose of our assembling together is to worship Jehovah. The church is the place that God has chosen for us to properly worship Him. May we treat His church with proper reverence.

The fourth thing I mention that we are debtors in, is that we owe the church knowledge. Acts 17:11 says; "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Beloved, you have an obligation to know what your church believes and stands for. You should know what their opinion is on every subject. However, knowing what your church believes is not all you should also be able to defend what you and your church believes. This is not just the job of the pastor. You should not have to go running to your pastor for help everytime you are in a theological discussion. My brother-in-law has been in some interesting discussions with a pastor in South Dakota. He has tried to discuss some doctrines we believe with some of the members. He has found that they will not discuss the doctrines of grace with him. They say, go see the pastor. This is what one of the leading men in the church there told him. He said he believed what the pastor believed, but he could not discuss it because of ignorance. I might add that the man insulted me as Tim's pastor by saying his preacher must be right and know more than I do about the Scriptures and doctrine because he has more education. Well, I know that this man and his pastor receive this paper. This dumb, uneducated preacher from Michigan will be glad to come to South Dakota and debate the educated preacher from there on the doctrines of grace. These people fail to understand that I have the only degree required to understand the Bible. That is a B. A. degree. I do not mean a Bachelors degree but a "born again" degree. I therefore issue that challenge to this South Dakota church and pastor. I do not fear education in this matter, for I know that truth is on my side. Friend, you never know when you might be called upon to defend what you believe. Study God's Word. Do not embarrass your church by being ignorant of the truths your church believes. You owe a debt of knowledge to your church. This debt can only be paid by study, and the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Seek to pay this debt.

The fifth thing I mention is that we owe the church our participation. The fact that we are a body fitly joined together proves that we must all function together. We have need of each other in our services. Beloved,

you cannot say that you or anyone else is not important when it comes to church participation. Let me mention a few areas of participation in which every member should join. First, there is the matter of singing. The Bible tells us to make a "joyful", and "loud" noise unto the Lord. Singing is a great way of doing this. Personally, I believe it is sin not to participate in your church's song service. As a member of that church you owe it to the church to participate in the singing aspect of services.

Secondly, you should participate in the praying portion of church services. I am not advocating women praying aloud. I am saying that when one man is leading in prayer, the rest of the church should not be thinking of other things but should be joining in and praying also to God. Thirdly, each member should participate in the witnessing ministry of the church. I am not opposed to visitation programs, but if every member was as active as they should be in this area of witnessing, visitation programs would not be necessary. As a member of your church you have an obligation to witness to other people. We are Missionary Baptists. That holds true for every member of the church. Each individual member should participate in the witnessing activities of that church. Fourthly, we should all participate in fellowship. This was a mark of the first church. They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship. If your church has a get-together, you should make every possible effort to be there. You should not arrive at church at the last minute and leave as soon as church is over. You should arrive early and leave late. The time before and after services should be used for fellowship with every member participating. The fifth thing I mention is the Lord's Supper. Every member should go to great extremes to be present at the Lord's Supper. This is a sacred ordinance of God. I am not sure that a member who does not make special efforts to be present at the Lord's Supper should even be a member. This is a church ordinance. It should be observed by every member of the church. Don't you love God and His church? Then why do you not participate? To their disgrace I admit that there have been times when we have had members here for Sunday A.M. services who live 100 or more miles from the church. They knew that the Lord's Supper was that night and yet they did not attend that night. Why? You will have to answer that one for yourself. Lastly, you should participate in speaking when the pastor is away. This only applies to the men. This burden should not just fall upon a few, but each person should take his turn. I might mention here that the women should participate in feeding guest revival speakers. I leave that between you and your Lord. Let us all realize that as church members we owe the church participation.

The sixth thing I mention is that we are debtors in that we owe the church holiness. May all of us realize that the life we live will have a direct reflection on the church of which are a member. We should make every possible effort to be holy. (Continued on Page 10, Col. 1)

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sible effort to make sure that reflection is positive.

You cannot escape this fact. You owe it to the church to live a holy and separated life. We should always have the thought in mind that what we say, or do, reflects on our church and what that church expects of us. Let us think about Christ's great love for the church. He has shown His desire that His church be holy and without blemish. This can only happen if every member does his part. Beloved, holiness is not just for church services. It is not enough to be there on church days. Our holiness must be an everyday affair. This is a debt that all of us can pay if we make proper usage of the resources that God has given us. If we read God's Word, pray, are faithful in church attendance it will greatly aid in our lives outside of these things. We must separate ourselves from the things of the world and unto the things of God. May we pay the debt of holiness that we owe the church.

The seventh thing I mention is that we are debtors in that we owe our prayers. Read Acts 1:14. We find that one thing that made the church there successful was that they were united in prayer. Much of our prayer life should concern the church. How often do you pray for the church? You should make an effort to pray for every individual member of the church. I mean to call them by name before the Lord. I have given every member of the church here a prayer list. On the top of that list is the name of every member of the church here. After that there are churches and pastors. There are missionaries, etc. I believe it will strengthen our relations one with another if we pray by name for one another. You should spend much time praying for your pastor. He has a great burden. He needs your prayers. I believe it would make members more attentive and appreciative of their pastor if they spent more time praying for him instead of criticizing him. We should pray for ourselves. Pray that God will make us the kind of church members we should be. The kind that faithfully serves God in and through the church.

The eighth thing I mention is that we are debtors in that we owe our money. It is hard for me to respect a church member who does not tithe. The Bible says they are thieves and robbers. How can we have respect for people who steal and rob God? I would like to ask the non-tither Why? Why is it that you do not tithe? What is it that is more important for you to spend your money on than the work of God? I refer to these people as welfare saints or members. They want to have a full-time pastor. They want to have a nice building. They want to have padded pews, robed choirs; but they want every one else in the church to pay for them. Realize friend, that you are tempting God by withholding that which belongs to Him.

You are robbing a Judge who always deals justly with men. He will not allow this sin to go unpunished. Pay this debt to God and the church. God will bless and reward you for it. He will open up heaven and bless your soul. You cannot out-give God.

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The ninth thing I mention is that we are debtors, in that we owe the church our love. The basis of success for any Church is that they have proper love. First, we must love Christ. Oh, if our love for Christ was what it should be we would surely pay our bills to the church. Why is it that we don't love Him more? Has anyone ever done for us what Christ has? May God increase our love for Him. Secondly, we owe love to the church as a body of Christ. Christ has bestowed a great privilege on us by making us members of a true church. Surely, since this church means so much to Christ, it should mean much to the members thereof. Thirdly, we should have love for each member of the church. The Bible stresses this fact. We, as children of God, and in particular, members of the same church owe it to God and to each other to love one another. Fourthly, and lastly, we should love the truths that our churches stand for. Don't be ashamed of your church regardless of the size. If we really loved the truths we would never feel shame but only pride and joy. May God help us in paying this debt of love to the church.

I ask you in closing; are you paying your debts to the church? Are you a welfare member? Do you really love the church? Do you want to see your church grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ? Have you honestly examined yourself and your debts to the church? How do you stack up in this evaluation? I have tried to point out some debts we, as members of true churches, owe to the church. May God help each and every one of us to get busy at paying all of these debts. May God bless you all.

THE WOMAN'S

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passages before us, may we avoid the spirit of the day and come to the Word with a desire to honestly know - "What saith the Lord?"

The simplest way to approach this subject is to note eight outstanding facts: Three Heads; Three Glories; Two Coverings.

If we can see how these relate one to another, we shall be able to come to an understanding of some wondrous truths which, heretofore, may have been hidden from our eyes.

The Three Heads (vs. 3-5): The first is God; the second is Christ; and the third is man. God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of man. And man is the head of the woman. This does not mean to imply "inferiority" as some might think. It is divine order that is in view here. Only as we recognize headship will we be able to appreciate God's order, Godward and manward. In the universe, Satan, the usurper, failed to recognize the headship of God and fell. In the garden, the woman failed to recognize the headship of Adam and fell, pulling the entire human race down with her, even as Satan drew a vast number of angels with him in the original fall.

The Three Glories (vs. 7-15): 1. Man (v.7). Man is the glory of God. 2. Woman (v.7). Woman is the glory of the man. 3. Woman's Long Hair (v.15). Her personal glory.

In Scripture, a covering denotes "subjection." Thus, when Rebecca saw Isaac, she "covered her-

self" (Gen. 24:65) as much as to say, "Isaac is my head." In Isaiah 6:2 we notice that the seraphim have six wings. With two they did fly and with four they did "cover" themselves before the presence of God. It took twice as much energy to cover themselves as it did to serve, seeing they covered with four wings and flew with two.

Keep in mind, then, that a covering or a "head-covering" denotes subjection and you will understand why the man wears no covering on his head. He represents the glory of God - therefore he wears no covering, for God is subject to no one. The woman, representing man's glory, is covered. She teaches with her veiled head that man is in subjection to God and that his glory is out of sight, veiled, hidden - only God's glory is to be seen. At the same time, when the woman covers her head, she not only covers man's glory but her own personal glory which is her hair. Thus, when the saints are come together for some purpose, we see the man uncovered, for he teaches by so doing that God's glory alone is to be seen. The woman, with covered head, not only veils her own glory but, with her head covered, teaches that in this place, man's glory is not to be seen.

The first woman, Eve, did not recognize headship. Satan caused her to be deceived into thinking she could raise herself by taking things into her own hands. Instead of lifting the man up, she pulled him down. The New Testament woman, on the contrary, with her head covered, teaches that she knows what Eve failed to regard - divine order. She bows to God's Word. Eve transgressed. Eve took man out of his rightful place but the New Testament woman, under grace, is going to keep him there. What an object lesson for man to see, to be reminded of every time the saints come together!

"For this cause ought the woman to have power (authority) on her head because of the angels" (v.10). This is deeply significant for it reminds us that the angels of God are interested spectators of what goes on in the assembly. None know divine order and headship better than the angels. How they must watch in amazement, beholding the silent ministry of the veiled head and the loving obedience of a devoted heart.

The Two Coverings (vs. 5-6:15): The best commentators see two coverings - one which is put on the head over the hair, and the other being the hair itself. The woman's long hair is her personal glory. But when the saints meet for some purpose, she then places a covering on her head, thus not only veiling man's glory, which she represents, but also her own personal glory.

Recently at a DVBS, a sister with uncovered head approached me and said, "If I offend you by not wearing a hat, I will wear one tomorrow." I said, "You do not have to put one on for my account." "Oh, I know," she replied, "it is just something you do for your husband." "What about women who have no husband?" I asked. With this, she paused in thought. "Well, then, why does a woman wear a hat?" I then proceeded to show her some of these Scriptures in Corinthians. When we finished, she looked up and said, "In all the years I have been in the assembly, I never knew what the head covering really meant. This is

wonderful! Now I want to do it for I see what it means!" The next day several other sisters sought me to explain these passages. Without a single exception they gladly bowed to the truth, joyfully desirous of carrying it out. One lady explained it to her teenage daughter who said, "Mother, I never knew it meant that. Now I want to wear a covering on my head as unto the Lord." No wonder angels watch in amazement the response of the New Testament woman.

Sometimes sisters will wear a covering when they go to the chapel, but when they go to a cottage meeting, they wear no covering. These dear sisters miss the whole point - it is not where you go that determines the covering, but what the gathering is for, regardless of where it is.

Again, some sisters wear a hat when the assembly meets, but if it is a sisters' meeting they wear no covering. Here again many miss the significance. "...every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoreth her head..." (v.5). Notice: nothing about where, but what are they doing? Praying...prophesying (teaching) for there are times when the woman may pray and teach. Thus, women in a women's prayer meeting are covered. Or, if a woman teaches a women's class, or children, she is covered.

What about the sister in the home as she does her housework. Suppose she utters a prayer...should she get a hat? It would seem that in a case like this, her hair is sufficient for private communion. Prophesying of a necessity involves others and it follows that the injunction is true for prayer, where there are others involved. It is difficult to draw a hard line. Most commentators see the instruction in I Corinthians 11 as pertaining to assembly gatherings.

I have often said, there are four reasons why any woman wears a hat. I will start with the most remote reason and come to the better one. She wears a hat because...

1. It is socially correct.
2. She sees other women wear a hat.
3. She doesn't want to, but does it to keep peace.
4. She sees the teaching and does so as unto the Lord.

Which category are you in? Several years ago, I ministered at a camp for young people. I spoke from the book of Philippians - a chapter each morning. Friday found me with time for another subject and I wondered what the Lord would have me take up. Of the hundred or so young folk, among the young ladies only one or two wore a hat. So, I decided to speak from I Corinthians 11:1-16! When I finished the study there was a rush to the platform by a number of these young women. The first one to reach me with blazing eyes and tight lips, said, "You'll never get a hat on me!" Looking into an angry face I said, "Don't worry, if God can't put one on you, I won't try." The next girl stepped up and said, "You know, I never realized until today what a wonderful truth the woman's head covering taught and I will be so happy to wear one from now on!"

Speaking to a group of young men one day on this subject, I related the above experience at the Bible Camp. Then I asked this

question, "Fellows, if you were to make a choice between the first and second girl as a partner for life, which do you think you would prefer?" One fellow thought a moment and replied, "I'd probably prefer the second. That first one...wouldn't she be something to live with, - with a disposition like that!"

Where there is loving submission to these truths, you find a sweet spirit, either in the things of God or the things of man. I am not saying that all sisters who wear a hat have such a disposition, for some wear it in a slavish kind of way with a rebellious heart; but I say where there is an intelligent, loving obedience to the teaching of the Word, you will find a submissive, God-honoring spirit in everything else; and where you find sisters with blazing eyes and hard faces rejecting it, you will find that same spirit of rebellion and hatefulness in almost every other phase of her life, either in the assembly or in the home.

Undoubtedly there are many dear Christian women who have not known these truths and it is not fair to put them in such a foreboding character. However, when they do see these truths more often than not, they are glad to carry them out.

A last word or two. What about the woman's long hair. How long should it be? I think any woman knows what long hair is in contradistinction to a man's hair which is naturally shorter. Her hair is her personal glory. If she wants to cut it off, that is her prerogative and her shame (v.5). If a man wants to wear long hair like a woman should, which would be her glory, it becomes a shame to him (v.14). For nature itself teaches us that it is a shame for a man to have long hair. Mind you, nature teaches it. That is why even in the world, many unsaved people shun the shamefulness of men with long hair.

The sixteenth verse seems to be a mystery to some, "But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God," and take it that if this matter of wearing a covering brings contention, don't bother with a covering. How ridiculous! What Paul is saying in fact is, "If anyone is argumentative after all I have said on this, we have no custom of women with uncovered heads, neither the churches of God." Paul does not teach the significance of head covering for fifteen verses and then say in the last, "If you don't like to do it, don't, for none of the other churches do either." The custom he refers to was the "uncovered head," not the head covered in subjection to the risen Head and in obedience to His blessed Word.

BARREN

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Hannah prayed for was to be a prophet of God? And this prophet was to anoint David King, and this kingship came up to our blessed Lord, the King of kings and Lord of Lords.

Let us look at one more of the great women of the Bible that was barren. As we look in the New Testament, we go to Luke 1:5-7, "THERE was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea a certain priest named Zacharias, of the

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course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth: and they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years."

Let us go back now. We talk about four barren women of the Bible, and Elisabeth the fifth, and the children the Lord gave them. Oh, the blessings that flow from God through these barren women when God opened up their womb and gave them children. Abraham and Sarah had Isaac. Hebrews 11:17-19, "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the

promises offered up his only begotten son. Of whom it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in figure."

As we look at Isaac and Rebekah, we see how God blessed them, and their sons, Esau and Jacob. And Jacob, Leah and Rachel and the twelve tribes of Israel, and the tribe of Judah. In Revelation 5:4-5, "And I wept much because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." This ought to make a Baptist shout and praise the Lord. And how

God blessed Elkanah and Hannah, and gave them Samuel the prophet that anointed David King. You know God so loved Elkanah and Hannah that He gave them more children.

In I Samuel 2:21, "And the LORD visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the LORD."

Let us look now at Zacharias and Elisabeth. They were in old age now, and God blessed these dear people. Elisabeth was barren and saddened for she knew she would never have children. But our ways are not the ways of God. In Luke 1:37, "For with God nothing shall be impossible." And verse 13, "But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John."

Let me say some things here. The angel said to Zacharias, "thy prayer is heard." Are we to give up praying for loved ones and lost souls? You know Isaac intreated the Lord for twenty years for Rebekah. Isaac took Rebekah to wife when he was forty years old, and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare sons. Threescore years means Isaac was sixty years old, so he prayed twenty years for his sons. The Bible says Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife. Intreated means to plead or beg, and Isaac pled and begged God twenty years. Are we to give up on loved ones? No, no, a thousand times no. Intreat the Lord, plead and beg for loved ones and lost souls.

Here the angel said to Zacharias, "thy prayer is heard. Elisabeth is going to have a baby." Look at verses 57 to 60, "Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought

forth a son. And her neighbors and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her. And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. And his mother answered and said, Not so but he shall be called John."

Look in Luke Chapter 3:4, "As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord, make his path straight." So you see John was predestinated some eight hundred years before he was born. As we look in the gospel of John Chapter 1:6, "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John." Listen to what our blessed Lord says about John in Matthew, Chapter 11:10-11, "For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold; I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of woman there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

Now we see our blessed Lord is calling John, "John the Baptist." And we look now to the gospel of John, Chapter 1:26-29, "John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you; whom ye know not. He it is, not coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and said, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

Oh, dear saints of God we can only bow our heads and praise the greatness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, for with God nothing shall be impossible. We know there are other barren women in the Bible, but these five women God so graciously used in the lineage and bloodline of Christ. As we see in Luke chapter 1:30-31-32, "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David."

In Luke 1:37, "For with God nothing shall be impossible." And in the book of Jeremiah Chapter 32:27, "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me?"

In closing, give all the praise and glory to our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF ELIJAH—THE WIDOW'S REWARD

"And the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth. And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth" (I Ki. 17:22-24).

The brook had dried up. But God was still on the throne. He was still able to provide. He ordered Elijah to get to Zarephath, and that a widow woman there would sustain him. God will take care of you. You can depend on that. You just be true to God, obey Him in all things. He will do the rest.

When Elijah got to Zarephath, the widow woman was there as God had said; but it did not look like this was a very good means of Elijah's being taken care of. The widow woman was gathering sticks. Elijah called to her and said, "fetch me I pray thee, a little water in a vessel that I may drink." As she was going to fetch it, he called to her to bring him also a morsel of bread. She replied that she had only a handful of meal, and she was gathering the sticks to bake this for her son and her to eat, and then they would die.

I speak to you now on "The Widow's Reward." We have seen Elijah tested in three spheres of life. He had been tested in public as he fearlessly and faithfully delivered God's message to Ahab. We saw him tested in solitude by the brook, Cherith, where he drank of the brook, and ravens brought him flesh and bread twice a day. Doubtless, he had sweet fellowship with the Lord there by the brook.

We have seen him tested in home life as he dwelt with the widow and her son. We saw his contentment with whatever God had provided. We saw his gentleness with this widow woman in the face of her harsh and unprovoked rebuke of him. We saw his helpfulness. Would not our homes be much more wonderful if they were filled with contentment, gentleness and a willing-

ness to be helpful wherever we could?

Well, we have seen the story of Elijah when the brook dried up, waiting upon God. We saw God tell him where to go. We saw his long and dangerous journey across the land of Israel, where Ahab was determined to find Elijah. God conducted him safely on that journey and into the territory of the home of Jezebel. God manifested His sovereignty by providing safety and provision for Elijah, even in the land of the idolatrous and murderous Jezebel. We saw Elijah come to Zarephath. The widow woman was there, but that did not look very promising at the time. The drought that produced the famine lasted three and one half years: six months before Elijah brought his message to Ahab, and three years after that. Part of that three years, Elijah was by the brook, Cherith, and part of the time with this widow woman. So far as I know, the Bible does not tell how long he was at each of these places.

I want you to think, first of all, about this woman's spiritual condition. I believe that this woman was saved. She said in I Kings 17:12, "...as the LORD thy God liveth..."

She lived in the land where Ashtaroth and Baal were worshipped. Her neighbors and the whole country worshipped these idol gods. Yet she seemingly knew that these idols were dead gods, and that the Lord, Elijah and Israel's God, was the living God. I believe she was a saved woman. I do not believe that God would have called an unsaved woman to provide for Elijah during this time.

I believe that this woman was a saved woman because of her faith and her obedience in doing what Elijah requested of her. Some might think that, "...now by this I know thou art a man of God..." (I Ki.17:24) indicates that she was not saved until after her son was raised from the dead. I take this as a matter of growth in grace and understanding. She already knew that he was a man of God, or she would not have provided for him as she did. Now, with the raising of her son, her faith took a giant step.

Let us notice the test of this widow. She is a widow woman.

She is in a time of drought and famine. All she has in the world to provide for her and her son is a handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse. She is thinking that this is the end of life for her son. She is getting some sticks so she can cook what little she has, and then she and her son will lie down and die. Then in such trying circumstances, the prophet asks her to make him a cake first. She had the promise of this man of God. That is all she had to go on. She did not have yet any extra meal or oil. All she had was the command and promise of Elijah. But that was enough for her. She was enabled to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, believing that He would provide all her needs. She is commanded to put God and His work first. What a test! but she passed it.

Then her test was related to her darling son. She, so to speak, was to take the bread out of her son's mouth and give it to Elijah. She was not to love son or daughter more than the Lord, or she would have been unworthy of the Lord. I think we, who are parents, will agree that this was the hardest part of her great test. Giving up her own meal was not near as hard as taking her son's meal. She was asked to take what she thought would be her son's last meal on this earth, and give it to God's man. Matthew 10:37, "...he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" had not been written yet. But the writing thereof did not make this true. It was already and always true. Was her love to God greater than her love for her own son. That was the test, and she passed it, praise the Lord. I Kings 17:15 records her obedience, "And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah..."

As I studied and thought about this, and prayed about it; it seemed to me that here is one of the outstanding and amazing examples of obedience in the Word of God. Dear friends, some things that God tells us to do are comparatively easy. I read a cartoon in which a man said that the easiest commandment for him to obey was to not lay up treasures on the earth. He said he did not have much trouble with that. Some of God's commandments

are easier for us to obey than others. Surely, you will agree with me that the test of this widow was a hard test, and her obedience is one of as amazing an example of obedience and faith as you can find in all the Bible.

I want you to understand the connection between faith and obedience as set forth here. First there is a Word from God. God says, do this and I will take care of you. The meal and the oil will not fail. There is a command. There is a promise based upon the obedience. There is the fulfillment of the promise. In between the promise and the blessing is the faith and obedience. It was her faith in the promise of God that enabled her to obey the command of God. If she had not believed the promise God gave, she would not have obeyed the command. Obedience is based upon faith, and faith produces obedience. She took God at His Word and acted accordingly. She had no more meal or oil than she had before. All she had was the naked Word of God. She believed, and then she obeyed.

I insist, friend, that faith, true faith, always produces obedience. No obedience, no faith, it is as simple as that. Let me illustrate. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now here with, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open your the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mat.3:10). If a man believes this Word of God, he will obey God in giving his tithes into the Lord's storehouse, knowing that God will bless him and provide for him; knowing that he will lose nothing materially by tithing; believing that he will gain thereby, even in a material way. All faithful tithers that I know of, admit that they have gained materially, and have surely gained spiritually by tithing. God said He would bless you. If you really believe God, you will obey Him in tithing. True faith produces obedience. No obedience, no faith. This widow woman believed the Lord; and on the basis of her faith,

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because of her faith, moved by her faith; she obeyed God. You can follow this "faith - obedience" principle through the Bible.

God said to Noah, "there is going to be a flood. You prepare an ark to the saving of your house." Noah believed God. So far as I know, it had never yet rained on the earth. Noah had never seen a flood. But God said "there is going to be a flood," Noah believed God and Noah built the ark.

God told Abraham, you get out of this country to a land that I will show you, and I'll give you that land. Abraham believed God, left his home and travelled to that promised land.

Peter told the Lord, if it is You, bid me to come to thee. The Lord said come. Peter stepped out of the boat and walked on the water. He took his eyes off of the Lord, his faith grew weak, and he began to sink. But he walked awhile on the water - rather on the Word of God.

We see the example in this widow woman of faith producing a remarkable obedience in her life. I ask you a question: do we really believe the Lord when we will not obey? The unsaved man says that he believes that if he does not trust Christ he will go to hell.

Does he really believe this? Not in the Biblical sense of "believe"; for if he really believed this, he would repent of his sins and trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

My message is "The Widow's Reward." We have the test God put before her. We have her faith and obedience. She passed the test. Does it pay to obey God? Does it pay to serve God? Did the widow lose by obeying God, or did she gain? Did she and her son die without that last meal she was planning for them, or did she gain by her obedience to God? Matthew 10:41 tells us, "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward...." God had been providing for His prophet. This widow received a prophet in the name of a prophet, and the Lord provided for her and her son as He had provided for the prophet. Jesus said that if you give a cup of water to one of His and in His name, you will not lose your reward. She fetched a cup of water for Elijah, and God rewarded her for it - yea, many times over.

I want to say before I go any farther, and I'll say it again and again, the least thing you do, the most minute thing you do for the Lord, because you love the Lord, because you love the Lord's people, for the glory of God - the least thing, no matter how small it might be in the eyes of the world; it is exceedingly valuable in God's sight, and He will reward you for it. You say; I can't sing, I can't preach, I can't do great and mighty thing, but the little things you do for Jesus are remembered by Him, are valuable to Him, and will be rewarded by Him.

What could be much smaller than a piece of bread and a cup of water? Almost anyone could do this. Yet, the widow was richly

rewarded for this. There are present rewards, and there are eternal rewards. The widow received some rewards in this life, and she will receive rewards in eternity. Oh, the goodness of the Lord! Some people say that you can't eat your cake and have it too. Maybe not as to cake; but you can as to serving God. You can have blessings now, and have blessings at the judgment seat of Christ, both for the same one good work. By serving God, living for God, and working for God; you can have the most wonderful life here on this earth - you can have the happiest life possible on this earth; and then in eternity you can have many wonderful rewards - for that for and in which you have already been blessed upon the earth. But, if you don't serve God here, you will suffer chastisement for it here, and then lose rewards at the judgment seat - I speak of true Christians. Jesus told Peter that there was no man who left things and people here for Christ, but that he would be rewarded in this life and in the life to come. So, there are rewards and blessings now for serving God, and there are rewards in the future.

Let us see what the widow gained in this life. One big thing that she gained was that she and her son were provided for through the rest of the famine. She thought they would eat one last meal, and lie down and die. She obeyed God and gave Elijah a cake first. Wonder of wonders, she did not lose by this; God provided from that barrel and that cruse enough to last her, and Elijah, through the famine. The barrel of meal wasted not, and the cruse of oil did not fail. Matthew 6:33, not written yet but always true, was fulfilled for her. She put God first, and all her material needs were provided. My friend, let the unsaved worry about the material things of life. But let us who are saved put God first in all things, and God will take care of our needs. He will supply all our needs. The unsaved may not have his needs met by working and worrying about them, but the saved will have his met by putting God first. This widow, instead of one last meal and death by thirst and starvation, had her needs provided through the famine.

Another present reward that this woman received was that of fellowship with Elijah through the rest of the famine. Surely, this was a great blessing; to have one of the greatest of all the prophets to live in one's home, to pray with one, to talk with one about the things of the Lord. What a blessing it was to sit there and fellowship with this man of God. How much she must have learned, how much she must have grown in grace during those days of fellowship with Elijah. Wouldn't you like to have Elijah come and stay in your home awhile, to sit at your table, to pray over your food, to talk with you about the things of the Lord? Wasn't that a great reward that this woman received?

A third reward was this widow's spiritual growth during these days. I think you will agree that one could hardly help but grow in grace under such circumstances. This growth was illustrated, in part, by growing awareness and conviction of sin. There was sin in this woman's life. I do not know what it was, but it was there. When she lost her son, though she tried to blame Elijah, she realized that it

was her sin. In v.18, she referred to this sin being brought to her remembrance. There was sin in her life. She had failed to deal with it. Through Elijah's presence in the home this sin was brought to her mind. Listen, children of God, in order to grow in grace, we must deal with sin in our lives. Sin is a growth killer. Sin will stunt your spiritual growth, and instead of being a giant for God, you will be a pigmy. We must deal with sin if we would grow in spiritual things. This is one thing that took place in the widow's life.

The next reward that I mention - and oh, what a reward it was - was the raising of her son from the dead. Here is a poor widow woman, and her only son is dead. Her heart is broken, and in her hurt she lashes out at the prophet as if it was his fault. Actually, if it had not been for the prophet, her son would have already been dead. Had she forgotten that when she met the prophet she was preparing a final meal for her and her son, and that she expected them to then die? Did she not realize that it was the presence of the prophet that God had used to keep her son alive these many days? God had sent Elijah to her home, and through this prophet God was providing for all three of them. But now, in her great hurt, she lashes out at the prophet.

However, as a part of her present reward, God raised her son from the dead. Who would not want to serve a God like this? God had provided all her needs. He had given her her son to start with. When she did not know where her next meal would come from, God sent Elijah to her, and God provided for her and her son through a time of famine. God gave her the blessing of fellowship with Elijah; and now came the crowning blessing, God raised her son from the dead.

And what did she do to earn this mighty reward? She gave a cup of water and a piece of bread to a hungry preacher. Oh, how gracious is our God in the matter of rewards? How well does He pay for service done unto Himself.

Let us think a little about Elijah raising the widow's son. There were not many such cases in the Old Testament. So far as I remember just now, we have only the cases of Elijah and Elijah in such matters. Notice Elijah's gentle and compassionate dealing with this grief stricken woman. She lashed out, "what have I to do with thee?" He gently replied, "Give me thy son", and he took him out of her bosom. Then notice Elijah's deep concern in this matter. He laid the dead son upon his bed and then cried out to the Lord for the life of this one. Then notice his personal involvement. Oh, I sometimes think that our failure in seeing dead sinners raised to spiritual life is due to our lack of personal involvement. What think you as to this? You and I should be involved in this matter of raising people from the dead. When sinners are saved, that is raising people from the dead, and that should be a part of our task in this cemetery of a world in which we live. If you and I are ever successful in this business of raising the dead (of course, God must do it, but He uses others therein), we will have to get involved personally. It is not enough to attend church and pay the preacher, and pray that someone will be saved during the ser-

vice. We must get personally involved in this work.

Elijah takes the dead child into his room and lays him upon his own bed. He prays for the child. He then stretches himself three times upon the dead body. Think of the revolt in that, of stretching yourself upon a dead body. But, I tell you dear friends, if we are not willing to humble ourselves and come in contact with dead, depraved, filthy, stinking sinners - I don't mean going to the beer joint and drinking with them or going to some of their wild parties - but unless we do get personally involved in visiting, loving, and witnessing to dead sinners, we are not going to be used of God in raising them from spiritual death. I do verily believe that lack of personal involvement is maybe our major problem in our lack of seeing people saved. We just do not want to get too close or too involved.

You can't get any closer than Elijah did. You can't get any more involved than he did. Now, notice Elijah's humility. There are some Christians who will never win a soul to Christ because they think they are too good to have anything to do with dead sinners. You know what I am saying. You will never win a soul that you are too good to talk to. The priest and the Levite could not help that poor man who had fallen among thieves. A certain Samaritan came where the poor, half dead man was. He went to him. He got involved. He touched him. He helped him. He went out of his way for him. And he was used in the salvation of that poor man. So Elijah humbled himself and got close, and got involved, and the dead

was raised.

Elijah recognized the sovereignty of God. He knew that life and death are in the hands of God. He knew that it was the Lord who had brought death upon this son. He knew that only the Lord could raise him again. And he knew that God was sovereign in life and death. There was humble, persistent, fervent praying by Elijah. Then there was God's gracious answer in the raising of the widow's son.

See the widow sitting downstairs. See her weeping in her grief. Her only son is dead. What will she do now? See Elijah bring her son down the stairs, alive now. See Elijah give her son to her. See her hold again in her arms her son who had been dead but was alive again. Oh, what joy must have flooded her soul at this time. Why, her joy was as strong and great as her grief had been.

What a reward! It pays to serve Jesus. It pays every day. It pays every step of the way. If you don't believe it, ask that widow who held again in her arms, her own darling son. That was a part of the widow's reward. Oh, what high dividends one gets from his investments in the service of the Lord. This woman invested a cup of water and a piece of bread; and oh what wonderful rewards she received in return - and is still receiving. The best place to work is in the service of Jesus. The best paying job is working for the Lord. The best bank in which to place your money is the bank of heaven. Serve the Lord. Live for the Lord. You will never lose. You will never be sorry. May the Lord bless you and me to be more faithful in the service of the Lord.

ANNOUNCEMENT

We at Victory Baptist Church of Courtland, Virginia would like to thank each church and individual who has helped us with our remodeling project on our new church building. Your love and generosity are deeply appreciated and we thank God for you. However, we are still short on the necessary funds to complete the job. This is God's work and we want to do it His way, so we're now asking the Lord's churches to make us a loan which we will gladly pay back with interest. Those interested in helping should contact Tim Parrish, Route 3, Box 80, Courtland, Va. 23837. Phone (804) 653-2065 or Don Pennington Route 1, Box 359, Courtland, Va. 23837. Phone (804) 653-9204. Thank you.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The editor will be preaching in revival services at the Landmark Missionary Baptist Church at Moncks Corner, South Carolina April 10-16. The church is located on Highway A 17, 9 miles north of Summerville, S.C., across from Star Ready-Mix Concrete. Services will be at 7:00 p.m. nightly. Services on Sunday will be at 10 and 11 AM, lunch at the church, with closing service at 2 PM. For further information call pastor David West at 803-761-1950. Attend these services if you can. Pray for this meeting.

If sinners are not saved by the preaching of the truth of Christ, they will not be saved by the telling of lies. If "all the counsel of God" (His character, our condition, Christ's person and work) has no effect on sinners, our toning down the truth or mixing it with human works will not bring them to God. There is but one gospel for all purposes and for all people; the very gospel that comforts the saint is the gospel which saves the sinner. Some have the idea that we get men saved by whatever means, then we teach them "the doctrines of grace." Not so! It is grace that saves, grace that motivates, and grace that comforts.