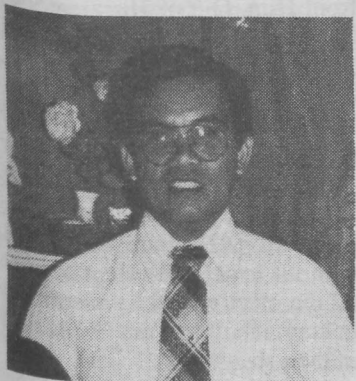


WHAT KIND OF HEART DO YOU HAVE?

By Velmer B. Paler
Philippines

My text is found in Luke chapter eight, verse four through fifteen. It tells about the parable of the sower. I felt led to bring forth this message; praying that the



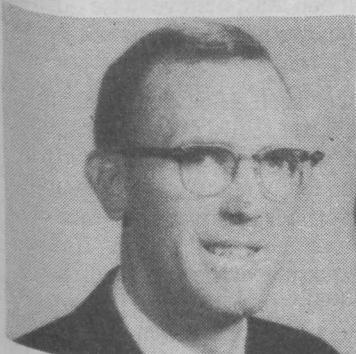
Velmer Paler

Holy Spirit will lead you to His saving grace.

Farmers who sowed the seeds are sowing in the right field where the seeds are suited to grow. It can't be denied that some seeds will fall by the wayside and the next day you will find them crushed and devoured by the fowls of the air. Some of the seeds fell upon the rock and it sprang up easily, only to wither away under the heat of the sun, because there

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 4)

EXAMINE YOURSELVES



Willard Pyle

A self examination for individuals and for churches is ever profitable, both in relation to salvation and to service. We need to have the assurance that we are saved and that we are serving God

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A fool cannot be silent long.

THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE

By Ray Brown

We are going to study the importance of the knowledge of God in the person of Jesus Christ. It is very important to have understanding. If a person doesn't have understanding he is in bad shape. It is the same spiritually, if we don't have a spiritual understanding. God reveals this knowledge through His Word by revelations through the Lord Jesus Christ. A sinner needs this knowledge. Without it he is unable to comprehend Christ or the Scriptures. He might make some kind of decision in his life, but it won't be a decision based upon the knowledge he has of Christ or of what the Word of God says. He will be a pretender, and he will go out to meet God in that state. We have millions of people like that

today. They have never had this divine revelation from God which one has to have to be saved.

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his



Ray Brown

disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" (Mat. 16:13).

He realized what He was asking them here. He knew they didn't know. He didn't give the direct answer to the disciples here. He didn't directly approach them on this question. He wanted them to open up their understanding. He wanted them to understand who He was. He gives them a line of thought here. That is what the sinner needs first. He needs the time of thought. His thoughts need to be drawn from the things of the world and they need to rest upon another object. That is what the gospel does. It takes the mind off the things of the world and puts it upon Christ and the things

(Continued on Page 6, Col. 3)

THE HEART

John M. Alber, Pastor
"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins,



John Alber

even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings," (Jer. 17:9-10).

In our day we have learned a lot about the heart that beats in our chest. Modern medicine has been able to transplant one heart of a human into the chest of another human with a certain amount of

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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.

WHOLE NUMBER 2564

ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, JULY 8, 1989

VOL. 61, NO. 14

THE "GAP" THEORY

by Timothy Fellows

Text: "And the earth was without form and void."

Although godly people are warned they should "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3), many are the most accommodating people in the world.

Take, for example, the so-

called "gap" theory which has been popularized by Dr. C. I. Scofield and by the Bible that bears his name.

In his day, the theory of evolution was adopted by many scientists, but instead of denouncing it as the pagan concept that it is, many Christians were unwilling to be stigmatized as ignorant. Instead, they at-

tempted to accommodate this godless system by harmonizing it with the Word of God.

Historically, Genesis chapter one, verse two, has been translated as it is found in the King James Version: "And the earth was without form, and void." Dr. Scofield sought to correct the Bible and translated

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SIN II by Marion G. Lawson

We will continue with our second in the series of messages on "Sin". Our message is on "The Origin of Sin". Our text Scripture is taken from Genesis 1:2, "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep".

We have here the results of sin.

There is no way to tell when this chaotic condition happened. Time, as we know it, had not started yet.

There are some questions: How did sin get started? How was a good creation thrown into rebellion against its Creator? By whom and how was sin originated? I would say that the "Origin of Sin" is one of the most difficult ques-

tions in theology.

But there are some necessary inferences: (1) Sin is not eternal; it had a beginning. (2) Sin was not created by God. He is not the author of sin. Men and angels were created sinless and perfect. Speaking of the archangel that became Satan, Ezekiel 28:15 reveals

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THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

by John R. Gilpin

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).

Quite often as a result of our sermons, and especially as a di-



John Gilpin, Sr.
(Now in Glory)

rect outgrowth of this radio program, we receive criticism and Satanic sarcasm. I recently received a letter in which it was said, "You ought to be ashamed to preach the doctrines which you preach." May I say in the very beginning of this message, beloved, that I am not ashamed. There is no message that I preach that I am ashamed of, for every message we bring is founded upon the Word of God, and "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim 3:16,17). The Apostle Paul further said, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke,

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

SALVATION ONLY IN JESUS CHRIST

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

It is Christ or hell; there is no third option. If men reject Christ, God will not provide for them some other way of salvation. Jesus Christ has made one offering for sin. There can be no other offering. There will be no other offering. We are to preach Jesus Christ and His saving gospel to

every creature. In this gospel there is the free offer of eternal life to all who hear it. Call me Arminian if you will (I surely am not such), but I verily believe in the free offer of the gospel. I believe adamantly in the doctrines of grace, but those who teach that these doctrines oppose a free offer of the gospel, have misunderstood, and perverted those blessed truths. Belittle it if you will, deny it if you dare, call it "hawking Jesus" is you desire; but we are authorized and obli-

gated to say to all men everywhere, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." And my friend, that surely is a free offer of the gospel.

What is salvation? Though the word "salvation" may sometimes be used in a restricted sense; I believe it is sometimes used, and I so use it in this sermon, as the big word that includes all that God does for His elect in bringing them from the state of total

(Continued on Page 2, Col. 1)

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SALVATION

(Continued from Page 1)

depravity to that of eternal glorification. I consider it the inclusive word. There is regeneration: the giving of spiritual life and spiritual birth, the giving of a new nature, the making of a new creature in Jesus Christ. There is forgiveness: the taking away of the guilt of all the sins; past, present, and future. The forgiven one stands before the Lord as if he never had committed even one sin. There is justification: the imputing to the believer the absolutely perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. The justified one stands before God as if he had always completely obeyed every law of God. Forgiveness is subtraction; it subtracts, from the believer the guilt of all his sins. Justification is addition; it adds to the believer the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. There is sanctification: the day by day work of the Holy Spirit conforming the believer more and more to the image of Jesus Christ. There is glorification: this is when the work is completed. God elected a people and predestinated them to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. He calls them to the salvation experience by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit. He justifies them by the work of Jesus Christ. He will one glad day glorify them and make them just like Jesus Christ. I believe that salvation is the big word that includes all these things. Doubtless there are other things that could be mentioned, but these are

enough to set forth what I mean by salvation.

Salvation is man's greatest need. We might say that man needs many things. We might speak of food, clothing, shelter, and health as things that man needs; but these all pale into insignificant nothingness compared with man's need of salvation. What if a man has all these needs given him through a long life, and then dies and goes to hell? What has he gained? It would be infinitely better for him had he never been born. Yes, salvation is man's greatest need. Jesus said,



Joe Wilson

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk. 8:36).

Man needs salvation because he is an eternal being. When God gives man life in the womb - and life is given by God, it is a life that will last forever. Man will exist somewhere knowingly,

feelingly, consciously for ever and ever. Soul sleep is a lie. Annihilation is a lie. Man is an eternal being. There is a heaven that is wonderful beyond the power of mind to conceive or words to describe. There is a hell that is as bad as heaven is good. The hell has never been told about heaven - or hell. These two are all there is. It is heaven or hell - for eternity. Men are born in sin. Men are sinners by nature, choice, and practice. The wages of sin is death, and that death is the second death in the eternal lake of fire. Salvation is the only way a man can escape hell fire and spend eternity in heaven. Surely, it is clear why salvation is man's greatest need. Oh, ye sons of men who are seeking to obtain the needs of your physical life, why show ye no concern about the infinitely more important spiritual and eternal things? What destructive folly!

I have good news to bring to lost and undone man. There is salvation in Jesus Christ. In and by Jesus Christ, God has provided a free and eternal salvation for all who desire it. No man, wanting to be saved, need be another moment without salvation. Are you hungry? Christ is the Bread of life for the hungry. Are you thirsty? Christ is the satisfying water of life. Are you wandering about, not knowing the way to the city? Christ is the way. Are you bound down in the prison house of sin? Christ came to set the captive

free. Are you heavily burdened with the load of many and great sins? Christ will take that burden and give you sweet and precious rest. Are you sick of sin? Christ is the great Physician who heals all who come to Him. Yes, my friend, there is salvation in Jesus Christ for any who desire it and Him.

How is there salvation in Christ? How is it that Christ is the saviour of those who come to Him? Salvation is not in the example of Christ. Oh, to preach that would be no gospel at all. Rather, it would be a message that condemned all men to eternal hell with no possible hope of salvation. No man could ever fully follow the example of Christ. He lived all the days of His earthly life without sin in desire, thought, word, or deed. Who among us that is not totally condemned by that life? Salvation is not in fully understanding and totally obeying the teachings of Christ. Again, such would be a way of condemnation and not of salvation.

How is there salvation in Christ? It is by His death and resurrection. "Be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before: you whole" (Acts 4:10). These preachers in Acts preached the saving gospel of Je-

sus Christ. What did they preach? Read their sermons. They told the people that Jesus died and that He rose again, and that whoever believed in Him would be forgiven and justified, freely and forever. Jesus Christ lived a sinless life. Had He sinned, He could not die for others sins; but would have had to die for His own. Being the sinless Lamb of God, He qualified to be the sin offering for others. We are redeemed with, "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:" (1 Pet. 1:19). Jesus Christ laid down His life for His sheep. No man took it from Him. Out of His great love for His own, He of His own voluntary will, laid down His life. He took upon Him the guilt of all the sins of all of the elect of God. God then poured out His wrath against those sins on His own darling Son. He held back not a drop. He punished Christ with the exact equivalent of what all the elect would have suffered in eternal hell had not Christ died in their stead.

But that is not the end of the gospel story. After three days and nights in the grave, Jesus Christ arose from the dead. He took up that life that He had laid down. He came out of the grave; victorious over death, hell, and the grave. He came forth, having gained, purchased, and guaranteed eternal salvation for all those for

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 1)

FROM THE EDITOR

"MOREOVER, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scripture And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:1-4).

I am a sovereign gracer. I believe most firmly in all five of the doctrines of grace. I preach these doctrines strongly and frequently. I do not preach or practice anything that is contrary to these great and glorious truths. Arminianism is a hated doctrine to me. I bear it no good will at all. I stand against it most adamantly.

I am a gospel preacher. I believe that hearing and believing the gospel is necessary to salvation. I am by no means a Hardshell. I do not believe that one can have life apart from the gospel of Christ. I believe that the Holy Spirit uses the Word of God in giving spiritual life. I am falsely accused of being a "gospel regenerationist." Men who thus accuse me prove thereby that they are "Spirit regenerationists." I am neither, or I am both, either way you want to look at it - so long as you join the two together with an unbreakable bond. I believe what Arthur Pink believed when he wrote his great book on the Gospel of John - before he wrote his book on the Holy Spirit - before he began to teach falsely on this subject. When he was sound on this truth, he said that the Holy Spirit is the agent of regeneration, and the Word is the means used by the Spirit. I believe that. I stand there.

Many of our men who once stood there with me, have now changed to the Hardshell position on the gospel and regeneration. We have talked about this subject. We have had good fellowship, agreeing on this important matter. Now, some of them are on the Hardshell side. I stand where they stood when we stood together. I plan to stand there until they come back - or if they never come back.

Since these things are true - the doctrines of grace, and the necessity of the gospel to salvation - it is very important that we understand clearly what constitutes the gospel, and that we preach that true gospel plainly and repeatedly. We must not leave out any essential part of the gospel. We must not add to it anything that is not a necessary part thereof.

Some time ago I read a booklet, I have recently read a paper and another booklet. In these three writings it was taught that the doctrines of grace are an essential part of the gospel. One of them taught that one cannot be saved without the gospel (good for this much of it), that the doctrines of grace constitute the gospel, that one could not be saved without hearing and believing the doctrines of grace, and that one who is saved now was not saved before he heard and believed these doctrines.

I yield to no man in my firm attachment to, my love of, my standing for and preaching of the doctrines of grace - all five of them. These doctrines are frequently in my preaching! But I draw back in holy horror from making a belief in these doctrines essential to salvation, I consider such a doctrine to be close akin to the "be dipped or be damned" doctrine of the Campbellites, and the "be a Baptist or go to hell" heresy of some non-Baptists who call themselves Baptists.

My text, at the head of this editorial, sets forth the gospel of

salvation. It gives the essential ingredients of the gospel. Let the "gospel cook" beware of adding any other ingredients to this Bible recipe, lest he be preparing "death in the pot", instead of wholesome and saving truth. Let the preacher beware lest, by adding to the clear Bible teaching as to what is the gospel, he come under the curse of Galatians 1:8-9. I tell you now that the man who says that the doctrines of grace are a necessary part of the gospel - that one must believe these doctrines in order to be saved, is preaching another gospel which is not the saving gospel of the Bible.

Please note that the man who preaches such a doctrine is thereby, so far as possible to him (thank God it is not really possible) sending a vast multitude to hell who believed the gospel as set forth in my text. Are those men who preach this doctrine really ready to say that all men who died without believing the five doctrines of sovereign grace are in hell? If they mean this, let them come out and say so plainly. If they do not mean this, let them cease from equating the gospel with the five points. And brothers and sisters, how many of us believe that we were truly saved before we ever heard of, much less believed in, the five doctrines of grace? This doctrine - that the five doctrines of grace are a necessary part of the saving gospel - is one of the doctrines that I praise God are not true.

What is the saving gospel? My text gives the one and only true answer to this question. The gospel is Jesus Christ: Who He is and what He did. He is God. He was born of a virgin. He lived a sinless life. He died on the cross for our sins. He was buried. He rose again. This is the saving gospel of the Bible. The one who truly believes this gospel, who trusts this Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who trusts what this Jesus Christ did for salvation that one is saved, saved without anything else, and saved forever, praise the Lord! The doctrines of grace do not constitute the gospel. Church truth is not the gospel. The gospel is not the totality of the Word of God. The gospel is that part of the Bible which tells about Jesus Christ: Who He is, and what He did. That is the total gospel. There is nothing to be added to that. There is nothing to be taken from that. To add to or take away is to construct and preach another gospel which brings one under a curse.

I am not an Arminian. I abhor Arminianism. But I verily believe that there are Arminians who have believed the gospel of 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, who are truly saved, who are our brothers and sisters in Christ, and who will be with us in eternal heaven. Let us stand boldly against the errors of Arminianism. Let us believe the doctrines of sovereign grace. Let us love these doctrines and rejoice in them. Let us preach them boldly and frequently. But let us not misuse them or abuse them. Let us not make them a necessary part of the saving gospel. Let us not (so far as lieth within us) send all those who do not believe these truths to eternal hell. Oh, my brethren, let us not do this. We are to preach the whole counsel of God, but we are not to corrupt the saving gospel of Christ by making parts of the whole counsel of God to be a part of the every doctrine of the Bible in order for him to be saved? Of course not. Let us keep the gospel pure. Let us take nothing away from it. Let us add nothing to it. Let us gladly, sincerely, freely tell all men everywhere, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." God bless you all.

SALVATION

(Continued from Page 2)

whom He had died.

This is how there is salvation in Jesus Christ. By His death and resurrection He has obtained eternal redemption for all who obey Him in saving faith. When God would make this vast universe, it was an easy task for Him. He just willed it into being. He spoke out His will, and the heavens and the earth came into being out of nothing. But when He would save the soul, it was not such an easy task. He could not just speak His will, and save men with nothing further. It took more than just the desire and will of God to save the soul. God must give His own Son to save men. Jesus Christ must live, and die, and live again if men are to be saved. And, not just any death, but the death of the cross, the suffering of the hell of the elect this it took to save the soul. The saving of the soul is the greatest work God has ever done. The saving of the soul is the greatest miracle (and it is a miracle) that He ever performed. Yes, there is salvation in Christ; but we need to realize and understand how that salvation came to be in Christ.

This salvation cannot be separated from Christ, and cannot be had apart from having Jesus Christ. Just and devout Simeon, waiting for the consolation of Israel was told, "that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ." He was led by the Spirit into the temple at the time Joseph and Mary had brought Jesus there as a babe. He took the babe up into his arms and said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." (Lk. 2:29-30). Oh, the only one who can leave this life in peace is the one who has seen and received Jesus Christ who is the Saviour and the salvation of men. "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:12). Oh, read that again. If one has Christ, though he has nothing else, he has everlasting life. If one has not the Son, no matter what else he might have, he has not salvation nor eternal life. Salvation is not something that Christ will give you apart from Himself. Salvation is that which a man has in Christ, if he has Christ. It is a package deal. Salvation and Christ come together. You can't have one without the other. Have you had a real, saving experience with Jesus Christ? Is He real to you? Is He your personal Lord and Saviour? Salvation is not received as a gift from Christ; it is received with and in Christ.

There is no other way of salvation. Salvation is only in Jesus Christ. Read the text again. It is Christ or hell. There is no other option. Believe on Jesus Christ, and you will be saved. Refuse to believe on Him, and you will go to eternal hell. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). I could quote many verses of Scripture setting forth this truth, for this is a prominent subject therein. Salvation is not in works that men perform. Salvation cannot be by good works, for an unsaved man cannot do even one work that is

good and acceptable in the sight of God. Man's righteousness are filthy rags in God's sight (Isa. 64:6). The plowing of the wicked is sin, and the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination in the sight of God. So says the Word of God.

Man cannot be saved by religion. Baptism avails nothing towards washing the soul from its sins; though after salvation, proper baptism is important. To eat the Lord's Supper to obtain or maintain eternal life is to eat and drink damnation to the soul. To join the church obtains nothing as to salvation. The unsaved church member is twofold more a child of hell. Holding office in the church adds to one's condemnation when Christ is not known as the Saviour of the soul. Salvation is in Christ, and salvation is only in Christ. Trust Him and be eternally saved. Trust all others and all else, and be damned.

This is the church's message as to salvation. "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2). This is a very misunderstood verse of Scripture. Many use it to teach that this is all one should ever preach. If this is all one should preach, why did God give us a whole Bible and tell us to "preach the word." This most certainly is not all that Paul preached (search and see). This is not all that Paul preached in the book of First Corinthians (again, search and see). What, then, does this verse mean? It means that this is all that Paul preached for salvation. Of course, a true preaching of Christ crucified will involve a preaching of His resurrection from the dead. Paul preached Jesus Christ: Who He is and what He did as the only and saving gospel. He preached many more things, even declaring the whole counsel of God, but he did not preach those other things as the way men are saved. We are also to preach the whole Word of God, but our one and only message as to salvation is the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.

This is to be our main message to the unsaved. We are to preach all the Bible, and the unsaved may be present in the services when we so preach. But when we address ourselves to the unsaved, the message of salvation in Christ is to be our major message. We may preach church truth, the doctrines of grace, prophetic truth, and many other things in the presence of the unsaved as they are in our audience. But when we preach to the unsaved, directing our message to them, we preach the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. We are not really interested in instructing the unsaved in the other doctrines of God's Word; we are interested in his salvation. I would urge every preacher, even as I urge myself, bring the gospel into every sermon you preach. I have not always done this. I may not always do it now. But I am trying more and more to do this. If we would win the lost, we must do it with the gospel. Men are not saved by believing the other doctrines of the Bible; they are saved by believing the gospel.

"This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner" (Acts 4:11). This message is despised and rejected by the men of this world unless and until they are effectually wrought upon by the Holy Spirit. Yet, it is our

business to preach it again, again, and again. It is our responsibility to preach the gospel to every creature. It is man's responsibility to receive it. Let us be faithful in our duty, whatever our listeners might do as to theirs.

"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them...." (Acts 4:8). This gospel message about salvation in Jesus Christ must be preached in the power of the Holy Spirit. The condition of the unsaved is such that only the Holy Spirit can produce salvation. Man is totally depraved. Man is dead in trespasses and sins. Man is blind to the beauty of Christ and His gospel. Man is deaf to the message we bring. Man is in love with sin. Man hates God and His righteousness. Oh, the case is hopeless if it depends upon the power of man. Then, the preacher of the gospel is totally unable to produce any saving effects from his preaching. We must preach the gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven (1 Pet. 1:12). We must be filled with the Spirit as Peter was. We must be anointed with the Spirit. Oh, brethren we must have the Holy Ghost. I know that we have Him in salvation. I know that He eternally indwells the born again one. But we must have Him in our preaching. He must give the message. He must anoint these lips of clay. He must breathe forth in saving power in our preaching. More of the Holy Ghost! More of the Holy Ghost! This is the need of the hour. This is the necessity of the preacher. You say that it is theologically unsound to seek the Holy Spirit. Well, be theology as it may, I verily know that we preachers need to seek more and more of the Holy Ghost in our lives and upon our preaching. Name it what you will, but let us have more of the anointing and power of the Holy Ghost in our ministries.

This message must be preached with holy boldness (Acts 4:13). We are not to preach timidly and in great fear of men. We must be decided and bold men. We must not cower before man in fear thereof. We must be bold as a lion as we give forth the gospel men need.

This message must be preached by those who give evidence in their lives that they have been with Jesus, that they have experienced the saving power of this message for themselves.

"Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13). This is one of the more important points in this message. Unless men can tell that we have been with Jesus, our message about Jesus will have little or no effect upon them. When the life of the messenger is contrary to the message he gives, the message will not be well and effectively received. Men must be able to tell, by our lives, that we have been with Jesus. And, oh my brother, if we spend time with Jesus, it will tell in our lives. The way for men to tell that we have been with Jesus is for us to spend much time with Him. Remember the shining face of Moses that told of time spent in the presence of the Lord? Let us spend much time with Him. Let us go forth from the closet of

prayer and give the gospel message to others. If we preachers are ever going to have power in the pulpit, we must obtain that power in the closet. A ten day prayer meeting followed by a half hour sermon brought three thousand to salvation on the Day of Pentecost. If we would have more power, we must have more prayer.

Also, we are to live daily, even moment by moment, in the presence of Jesus if we would impress men that we have been with Jesus. Let us pray more. Let us walk in closer fellowship with our blessed Lord. May we reach the place that our friends in our conduct will see the likeness of Jesus Christ. When men see that we have been with Jesus, our message about Jesus will doubtless have more effect upon them.

My friend, do you know this Jesus in saving power? Have you received Him as your Lord and Saviour? I beseech you, delay no longer. I close with the gospel offer today. Believe on Jesus Christ just now, and you will be eternally saved. Dear saved friend, are you living in close and daily fellowship with Christ? Can others see Jesus in you? Are you giving this glorious and saving gospel to the unsaved around you? Let us immediately begin to do these things. May God bless you all.

WHAT

(Continued from Page 1)

is no moisture in it. Other seeds fell among thorns and grew, but the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. The seed, of course is intended for the good soil that is prepared and ready to be sown because this ground is prepared and you can expect the seed to grow and of course it will bear fruit.

In this parable, we know that the sower is the preacher and the seed is the gospel. Well, the preacher does not make the seed; the seeds which are given by God, is the gospel. God's mandate of the church is to preach the gospel to every man throughout the world. But, if the preacher knew where the best soil was to be found, perhaps he might limit himself to scatter precious Word. Jesus, in this parable, refers to the hearts of men who were the hearers of the Word. Now, there are four classes of hearts which you and I should consider. What kind of a heart are you?

We find in our text, first of all, a careless heart. "A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." (Lk. 8:5, 12).

Heedless heart. What a careless one. He is just hearing and hearing but doesn't care what is the message of God for him. He hears and hears about the Word of God but does not intend to get the blessings from the Word of God in his heart. Well, the wayside will never be intended for a rice field or a corn field. If there are seeds scattered along, this wayside hearer, cannot understand it and if it be placed inside the heart in an interesting style, it will lodge for a little while but the fowls of the air will crush them all and eat it up. The wayside hearts are the high-

ways where you can see the footprints of the Devil all the time. These are the footprints of uncleanness, covetousness, drunkenness, lying, swearers, railers and backbiters, and thieves and extortioners, and all that do ordinarily live in the profane neglect of God's message that do not mind their souls, but are living without God in the world. Look at the chariot of pride and busy mind that he became busy here and there, but is careless of his soul. Oh, a wayside hearer.

Hearer only. He is not the doer of the Word. There were many times that the seeds of the gospel almost sprouted, but because many feet of wickedness have passed this way, the seed crushed down and the false prophets and false teachers will introduce heresies and deny the Sovereign Lord and bring them swift destruction, for Satan is like a roaring lion waiting to devour them.

Highway hearer. Oh, a highway hearer of God's Word that the unmortified heart of pride makes his heart hardened and is calloused and the seed of truth cannot penetrate it. What a calloused heart he is that sleeps under the hammer of God's Word while the sparks of damnation surrounds him, yet he is never astonished and never startled. How many sermons, how many preachers have preached so many messages, how many visits and Bible studies and how many Sundays have been wasted and he never cares about his soul and his life after death and of the saving grace of God. Here comes the fowls of the air and takes away the Word from the heart; and the results; this heart believes all the lies and deceits. Is this your heart? What kind of a heart are you?

Then secondly, is the corrupt heart. "And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away" (Lk. 8:6, 13).

Emotional One. These are the kinds of hearts who receives God's Word with joy. They were easily impressed with feeling upon hearing the preaching of God's Word. Yes, they rejoice upon hearing it, but deep inside are the rocks of wickedness and corruption. When the gospel-seed falls on this rocky heart it sprouts and grows, but no deep principal root of the saving grace, but a temporal and natural faith. They have resolved and yet have procrastinated, as if this heart is ready for the Word, as you can see him rejoicing and thinking of himself that the whole world approves of him now that he has become a so-called Christian. But, when he is under the trials and testings, hardships and persecution under the heat of the sun, it falls away and no work is done. Oh! "it is a fearful thing to fall in the hands of the living God. They are the hearts that could be carried away with elated emotion, and think that what they feel is their faith, but when the hurtful feeling of discouragements and persecution come they fall away and no work is done.

Easily moved, but hard inside.

(Continued on Page 5, Col. 3)

The Baptist Examiner Forum I

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

How much and what kind of authority does a pastor have over the church he pastors?

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"But Jesus called them unto him and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." (Matt. 20:22-28). These verses record their response from our Lord when the mother of James and John asked Him to allow them to sit on His right and the other on His left hand when He set up His kingdom. You have to hand it to this dear lady; she had an enormous ambition for the future of her two sons. But let us look at a principle that is laid down here by our Lord. He says that even in the kingdom to come that those who would be great among the saints should be their ministers, and even Jesus Himself came to earth and took upon Himself the form of a servant that He might serve His elect as their offering for sin.

Of course the calling to the ministry is a high calling indeed; there is none greater and yet those who are called are to minister to the spiritual needs of others. The word "minister" which is used frequently in the New Testament has reference to preachers as well as deacons. It means attendant, or servant. In Acts 13:5 John Mark is called a HUPERETES, or under-rower. More specifically, one who acts under the direction of another. A POIMEN, or pastor is a shepherd, one who tends herds or flocks. According to Vine's Expository Dictionary on New Testament Words "This involves tender care and vigilant superintendence."

This seems to be somewhat distant from the definition of the word authority which in the sense noted in this forum question means to rule or lord it over one or many. Webster's New World Dictionary defines authority as the power to give commands, enforce obedience, take action, or make final decisions." In Hebrews 13:17, 17, and 24 the word rule is used in the KJV in reference to the elders of that church. However, the word used is HEGEOMAI meaning to lead, or guide, not to

lord it over.

In the context of the above definition of the word authority and the word pastor I must conclude that it would be impossible to use both words in harmony with one another. The pastor has no authority over the church that he pastors. He cannot baptize, exercise discipline, or even administer the ordinances except by the authority of the local assembly that he pastors. A church that is functioning in a Scriptural manner will not allow one individual, or group of individuals to lord it over them. Peter's instructions to the elders in I Peter 5:1-4 is quite clear as to their "authority" as bishops. Read these verses and note that he says, "Feed the flock...taking the oversight...Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock..." Dear one, the authority of any Scriptural church does not lie in the pastor, nor does it lie in any board of bishops ruling over several congregations. The authority of a Scriptural church lies in the "Chief Shepherd", "the blessed and only Potentate", Jesus Christ the Lord. Thenceforth, from the time that He ascended into heaven He has given authority to His churches to carry out the commission to preach the Gospel, perpetuate His churches, observe the ordinances, and exercise discipline within the respective assemblies. Anything other than that is either un, super, or extra-scriptural, take your pick.

The pastor is the servant of the flock in spiritual things. But please understand that he is not a door-mat for the people to walk on, nor is he the church's handyman to take care of all of the odd jobs. Because the Scripture demands the pastor to be blameless, above reproach, an example to the flock, and having a flawless testimony before those who are within as well as those who are without, it is a very dignified office. Though each pastor must earn the respect of those whom he has been set over to lead and to feed, as well as the community, the office itself commands respect from all. How be it, he acts under the authority of the body of Christ, the local assembly.

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Hebrews 13:17: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

The word "rule" in our text means, according to Vine, to lead or guide. I believe that just about

sums up the authority of the pastor over the church. The pastor is the God appointed, and church hired leader. He is to be led by the Spirit of God, and then to lead the church by that same Spirit. There are some pastors who exercise too much authority in the church. There are others who do not exercise as much authority as they should. There are also churches and members who will not let the pastor do the job of leading the church. The church should follow the guide of their pastor unless they know he is wrong. He usually has thought things through, and has spent much time in prayer over a matter. He will have the best interest of the church in mind. If you cannot follow his leadership; then you need a new pastor, or more probably a new attitude.

Let me make this point clear. The pastor does not run the church. He does not have any more say in matters of business than anyone else. By this I mean he has only one vote like everyone else. I personally do not believe in the pastor, as moderator, not voting except to break a tie. I believe he has a right and an obligation to vote like every other member. You cannot have a democratic form of government if the pastor is restricted in his voting.

So far as the amount of authority a pastor has over the church he pastors, I think that often times that is left up to the individual church. Some churches demand that their pastor get permission for everything. If he wants to go and preach a revival, he must have the church's permission. If he wants to have a guest speaker, he must have the church's permission. I think this is going overboard. A church should have enough confidence in her pastor's judgment to allow him to make these decisions. If he began to abuse these decisions then he could be talked to by the church. I believe there are times when the church wants the pastor to know that they are still the boss. This is, thankfully, a rare occasion. On the other hand the pastor cannot just make all the rules he wants. He cannot just schedule special services whenever he wants. He does not have authority to exclude or discipline members. He does have the authority and obligation to chew them out once in a while. Wouldn't it be great if we, as pastors and churches, had such a relationship that this question need not be asked. May God bless you all.

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"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you

overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). "And he gave some,---pastors and teachers: For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:" (Eph. 4:11-12). "The elders which are among you I exhort, ---Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof," (I Pet. 5:1,2).

The words, pastor, bishop, and elder, are all titles of the same office; the leader or overseer, the shepherd of the flock. Looking at the passages concerning this office we see that the pastor of a church is set there to lead, feed, and protect the church. The pastor is to feed the church by giving them the Word of God. It is only the Word which will perfect the saints and edify the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12). The pastor has no authority to preach and teach anything that is contrary to the Word.

The pastor is to lead, not drive the church. He cannot lead by driving. The apostle Peter tells us the elders (pastors) are not to be "lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (I Pet. 5:30). Instead of being a dictator, the pastor is to be an example for the flock to follow. As under-shepherd of the flock, the pastor should follow the example of the Chief Shepherd. "And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him:" (John 10:4). The pastor is to protect the sheep. The members of the church are constantly under attack, both from without and within. The pastor is to watch and guard against those who would sow error and scatter the flock. Paul told the elders of Ephesus, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch" (Acts 20:29, 30, 31).

While the pastor has authority from God to lead, feed, and protect the church; his authority is limited in that the church has the authority under the leadership of the Holy Spirit to call and to dismiss a pastor. While God sets pastors in churches, He does this through the churches themselves. We see how this is done in the example of how God sent Paul and Barnabas as missionaries. The Holy Spirit called them to the work; the church at Antioch sent them out (Acts 13:1-4). In church business meetings the pastor has no more authority than any other member. He can advise and recommend, yet he has no authority to act contrary to the vote of the church.

For a fuller discussion of this subject I refer you to the "Studies of I Peter" chapter 5 that is soon to be printed in T.B.E.

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The authority (the right, the permission) for a pastor to preach and to perform certain other duties is, of course, given by a local

church to the one she calls, or elects to that office. The authority of a pastor is good for only so long as he shall remain in the office of pastor for that particular assembly that he serves. The pastor's authority over the church he pastors is limited by the Scriptures and by the church itself. The latter limitation is usually peculiar to an individual assembly when compared to others of like faith and order. Since Christ gave His church the commission and authority to do His work, the church is independent of any other body. The church calls, or elects a man to the office of pastor for the basic purpose of preaching the gospel, teaching, and administering the ordinances. He may be authorized to conduct a radio or TV program, or edit a paper; but he does so only as authorized by the church whose works these are. Therefore, we say that the only kind of authority, as well as its extent, or scope, that a pastor has, is that given to him by his church.

The Scripture sets some limits on the type of authority and its extent that a pastor is given by the church he serves. For example, many men quote I Timothy 5:17 which says, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." Oftentimes this is taken to show that a pastor is to "rule" over an assembly in an absolute way. This is no authorization for "ruling elders", however, and is speaking of overseeing and leading. The pastor is not a dictator, running things to suit himself; but what he does is to be for the glory of God and the good of the assembly. The Bible here is speaking of a pastor leading his assembly through teaching, preaching, and the example of life. He oversees the assembly and its spiritual guidance and need according as God has, or does, reveal it to him. The pastor "watches" for the spiritual good of the members. The proper context for this duty is co-operative as we see from Hebrews 13:7 which says, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." The members are to pay attention to, be mindful of the pastor who rules (literally, "leads") them and follow him. Indeed, Hebrews 13:17 further tells us, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." As the pastor carries out his duties, he is to lead in an authoritative, but humble manner. He is to remember that the Scripture tells him, "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock." As the pastor leads the assembly, the authority by which he does so never changes. His conduct within that authority must ever be an example to the flock which he feeds and oversees, as well as to those who are outside the assembly.

I know that some men who have embraced the doctrine of election have become indifferent to holiness of life. Such men would probably have found other excuses for their misdeeds if they had not heard of election. The sun will ripen the smelly weed as well as the fruitful plant, but that is not the fault of the sun but of THE NATURE OF THE WEED.

--C. H. Spurgeon

The Baptist Examiner Forum II

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

Is hell dark? If so, how can there be fire there?

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To tell you the truth, I don't know. I haven't been there and by the grace of God I never will. I believe the Bible and the Bible tells me there is a Hell. So Hell is a place. The Bible tells me that there is fire in Hell, I believe that also. Hell is described as outer darkness, I believe this also. Now you would have me to explain all of this.

The old saying is, where there is smoke there must be fire. Let us turn this around somewhat. Where there is fire there is smoke. The Bible tells us in Revelation that death and Hell will be cast into a lake of fire. The fire is called brimstone the same kind that was rained down on Sodom and Gomorrah which wiped that twin city from the face of the earth. We have witnessed volcano eruptions on television with all that molten fire shooting up into the air and running down the side of it with smoke that sometimes covers the sky for miles. It is a scary scene, but nothing compared to Hell. This is just one of the things to think about concerning the darkness of Hell.

The real answer is the separation from the presence of Jesus. We are told in the gospel of John that He is the light of the world. Without Him there is no light, yes, He is Omni-present, but not as a light in Hell. Consider this, apart from all this, being engulfed in a lake of fire burning for ever with worms crawling in and out of one's ears, mouth and nose with the pain of the fire and the continuing wailing of never dying souls day and night, who cares whether it's light or dark. There's no escape; burning, burning, burning forever, ever, ever, ever; no end.

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Hell is dark. The New Testament verifies this fact in a number of places. "These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved for ever" (II Pe. 2:17). "These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by

the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever" (Jude 12;13). The word darkness comes from the Greek word SKOTOS and is used to describe not only a place of punishment, but also a place of physical and spiritual darkness. Peter refers to this place of darkness as a regard of unrighteousness.

Hell is on fire. "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13:41-42). "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murders, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Re. 21:8). Hell is also characterized by the words furnace and lake. It is also emphasized by the word burn, but those in the fire are not consumed. It is God, and God alone, that has the power to cast man into the fire of Hell.

How can these two seemingly opposite descriptions exist together? One signifies darkness, and one signifies light. Man can only understand that which he can explain, and it is most difficult to explain these two exact opposites. The only way that I can explain this phenomenon is to believe that God is able to create, in fact has already created, the way that these two opposites can exist in the same place at the same time. My suggestion to answer this question is the element hydrogen gas. I am told that hydrogen burns without making a flame. That is, it burns without being seen. The men that work with this gas are taught to be very cautious when they suspect that it is on fire. When they suspect that there is a fire, they are to roll up a newspaper and approach in a very slow manner until the paper bursts into flame. This is the only way they have of locating the fire.

Now, God created the gas, He can also control the actions that the burning gas produces. That is, the non-consumption of that which is in the flames. Hence, He tells us that man will burn in darkness, but will not be consumed.

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I was carried on a tour through a paper mill some few years ago. This mill took pine trees that had

been cut into lengths about five or six feet, and chipped them up into small pieces. These chips were then conveyed into a large cooker. To cook these chips, the bark of the trees was added to the fuel oil to make the fire. There was a man who attended the fire and kept watch on the temperature so that it would be maintained at a certain temperature.

These wood chips were put into an enormous size boiler. The fire that cooked the chips was at such a high temperature until the chips would literally melt into a liquid and yet would not burn or scorch. This fire that did the heating to cook these chips was a great fire. This fire reminded me of the fire of hell, the lake of fire. Our tour guide took us to where we could see the fire. I would see the fire but I could not see through it. There was light outside of it, but dark on the inside of it.

If you build a fire, even a small fire, you will notice that you cannot very well see through it. A fire will give light outside of itself but is dark within. The unsaved will be turned into hell. They will not be on the outside of the lake of fire but will be in it. If they were on the outside of the fire they might have some light. The Scripture teaches us that the wicked and all nations that forget God, the reprobate, the beast and the false prophet, will be cast into the lake of fire.

The unsaved dead will be as the "...wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever" (Jude 13).

Men need not so much worry or wonder about how it will be dark in hell, but seek the Lord Jesus Christ who is the way to heaven. The Bible says, "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13). There is light where Jesus is.

WHAT

(Continued from Page 3)

They respond to the Word in their heart quickly, and you can see them jumping with shoutings of "hallelujahs" and "praise the Lord", but only taking Christ by halves. Yes, he is all for salvation of Christ, but he is not for sanctification. He is for the joy with Jesus, but he is not for suffering. Oh, they profess like a Christian and suddenly they spring up like the sparkled plant at the rising of the sun; they rejoice but at the noon day heat of the Sun of persecution they fall away. Why? Because deep inside of this heart there is a rock of corruption and wickedness and no deep conviction from the Holy Spirit. Yes, they are impressive in appearance but when put to fire they are proved and consumed in the furnace because there is no moisture of grace in his heart.

Energetic, but no root of perseverance. They are the people who are full of imitations. Yes, they copied the Christian joy and peace. They like the preaching and en-

joyed much of the preaching and easily became a follower of the preacher's "do's" and "don'ts," and when they are tried they are proved and consumed by a fiery furnace. "Judgment begins at the house of God" Is this your heart? What kind of a heart are you?

Then thirdly, a choked heart. "And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life and bring no fruit to perfection" (Lk. 8:7,14). The first two characters were bad. The wayside was not the proper place and the rock was not fit for the growth of any plant. But, this third hearer seems to us good, as you can see that the soil is good and the seed grows, and it becomes a plant. The worst thing you can see is that it grows thorns and thistles and later it choked the plant.

A Christian in name. These hearts seem to persevere in growing, but it never comes to anything. Conversion is not the taking upon us the profession of christianity. Christianity is more than a name. It is not in word only, but in power of the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit. He is a Christian by profession and has a name to live only; but because they have a name they are condemned by God and are rejected. He claims to be a Christian but loves to live with the world and its allurements. He cannot stop sinning. Yes, he lives as if he would bring fruits but the fruits are poisonous, for there are worms of the love of money. Worms of sins and wickedness that when eaten by men they become poisoned. This is the sure evidence of an unsanctified heart. By their fruits ye shall know them. How often does this sin lurk under the fair cover of forward profession.

"If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15). What a heart full of deceitfulness! Yes, such a power of deceit is there in this sin that many times, when everybody else can see the man's worldliness and covetousness, he can't see it in himself, but he has so many excuses and pretensions for his eagerness after the world that he blinds his own eyes and perishes in self deceit. How many professing Christians are there whom the world has more of their hearts and affections than Christ, "who mind earthly things" and thereby, evidently after the flesh, ended their destruction? Oh! their greatest satisfaction is in the world and their greatest care and main endeavor is to get security of the world.

Allurement is alright and to go with the world is not wrong. "It is not sin," they said. What a spirit of hedonism and antinomianism. The name of Jesus is so sweet to him, but he has no divine love, which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit, to love God sincerely. They would be content to have some of their sins destroyed, but they cannot leave the lap of Delilah or separate the beloved Herodias.

Alien to God's sanctifying grace. This kind of heart is living to bad purpose. It's the very cage of an unclean bird, a sepulcher of wickedness and rottenness and a loathsome carcass full of crawling

worms. They like to go with Baptist people, but they don't want to be a Baptist, but rather loves the world's philosophy. They like just people, but never to be dealt with the Word of God justly. They like to be a Christian but they cannot forsake being worldly. Yes, riches are good, money is great, if it is the will of God who wants you to prosper; but when you begin to love money, evil comes to it. Oh! dreadful case! Do you not see a change to be needful? Would it not have grieved one to see the golden consecrated vessels of God's temple filled with idolatry? Be a Christian and follow the trends of this world, they said. Oh! indignity intolerable! Better you are dashed in a thousand pieces, than to continue your vile wickedness and at the same time profess to be a Christian. What can I say to you, dear heart? You are the hearer where the seed of the gospel has fallen in your thorny heart, where the thorns of this evil world choke it up with pleasure and love to it. Is this your heart? What kind of a heart are you?

Now lastly, we will come to the good ground which is a chosen heart. "And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (Lk. 8:8,15).

A ready heart. It is an honest and good heart. A good and fertile ground is ready to receive the seed. Once it is sown, it will spring up and surely will grow and be ready to bear fruit. So is a chosen heart. God has chosen it before the foundation of the world. In His own and predestinated time he received the Word and by the Holy Spirit's conviction, God ploughed it under the preaching of His Word. The Holy Spirit stirred it with the plough of conviction and makes his heart ready to receive Christ as his sovereign Lord and a personal Saviour.

A regenerated heart. When God prepares this heart, it is deeply disturbed by the plough of conviction to make this heart wise unto salvation. Oh, if we are washed from sin it is because of the Word. If we are sanctified, it is because of the Word of truth and this generates faith and repentance that we are regenerated through the incorruptible Word of God. The new man takes a new course. His conversation is in heaven. When God has given the new heart and has written His law within, he henceforth walks in His statutes and keeps His judgment. He bears fruits of holiness, good works and many more. Though he makes many blots, yet the law and life of Christ is what he looks at as a pattern and he has an unfeigned respect to all God's commandments. This heart will sing a new song, pray earnestly, be faithful to the Lord, and services to Him in the local church. See him behind the work of the church. See him behind his pastor. Listen to him in his conversation where you can harvest from him fruits of godliness, helpfulness and love for bringing souls to his Lord.

My friend, if you have any need of the saving grace in your soul,

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WHAT

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and if you are not despisers of the Spirit of grace and would not shut the doors of mercy against yourself - REPENT AND BE CONVERTED. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. Is this your heart? May God bless you. Amen.

EXAMINE

(Continued from Page 1)

in an acceptable manner. As for the churches, we need to know that our beliefs and practices are according to the divine pattern, (Heb. 8:5) and that we are doing things, "decently and in order" (I Cor. 14:40). Further, we need to desire to do all to the glory of God (I Cor. 10:31). This means to make sure we have the right motive, "the love of Christ constraineth us" (II Cor. 5:14), as well as doing the right.

We are so prone to forget, or to become neglectful, and ever prone to wander; so we need to cry out with the Psalmist, "Search me O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psa. 139:23, 24). This is one excellent way to keep, "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace", both among the churches and among the preachers. We need to examine ourselves because it is so easy to point out the faults of others while failing to see our own faults; therefore, we usually do more damage than good. May we reread Matthew 7:5, "first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye". In fact, if we do this, we may find our brother wasn't wrong after all, and then we should immediately say, "I am sorry."

One of the sad things, at least it seems this way to me, is among those of us who are preachers. No one ever is wrong, that is, as we look at ourselves. This also is a problem among the members of our churches. We will bend over backwards to justify ourselves, but we strain at a gnat to condemn others, while making little or no effort to restore them. Brethren, these things ought not to be (Neh. 5:9). Not only are we hurting our testimony before the unsaved but we are hurting the young Christians among us and some of them are young preachers. Beloved, we reprove the world for the example they set and then fail to set the right example ourselves; but above this we are bringing reproach on the name of Christ. May we sit down by the river Babylon and weep as we remember how it used to be in our homes and in our churches and among the churches of like faith and practice, and among our brothers in the ministry. How we need to cry out, "Lord is it I" and "Lord what wilt Thou have me to do?" Brethren, it is not a sin to say I have sinned! This is not to say that every preacher and every church is totally wrong, but beloved, when we have churches which are divided and preachers which are

sound churches and sound preachers that used to walk together and preach together; I am convinced there is something wrong. How we need to, "examine yourselves". May we again pause beside the river Ahava and "seek a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance" (Ezra 8:21, 23). Beloved, we need to, "fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your homes," we can add, "and your churches" (Neh. 4:14). Surely this is worth going the second mile for; it is worth laying down our lives for, if need be; it is worth bearing and forbearing.

Brethren, while we have been careful and troubled about many things, and while we have gone to sleep in some areas, the Devil has robbed us! Again, I know in some ways God has, in mercy, blessed us and there is on occasions wonderful fellowship in our services and among some of the churches; but can we be content when some of our churches and some of our preachers are hurting? Can we be content when we remember how it used to be? We need some who will, if possible, be like Abraham who went out to seek to bring back Lot. Maybe as we, "examine yourselves" this can be done. Oh, how we need peacemakers who are willing to spend and be spent. Those who are willing to forgive and to ask for forgiveness. May we remember, "charity shall cover the multitude of sins" (I Pet. 4:8); "Charity suffereth long, and is kind charity envieth not; Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth" (I Cor. 13:4-8).

We are not pleading for compromise or for overlooking things which are wrong; but for compassion, for consideration, for contemplation, for carefulness and for prayerfulness. May it be true of us what is said of the Thessalonians, "your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth" (2 Thess. 1:3).

How I remember, as I examine myself, how much help I have received over the years from my brothers and sisters in Christ. I remember your care and concern for me and my family in our times of need, your encouraging words, your material support. Yes, your care for me surely flourished (Philipp 4:10) and even now I know you care. How my heart rejoices as I examine myself and remember those glorious times we shared in the Lord's houses; as we sat at Jesus' feet and heard His Word, and then lifted our voices together in songs of praise and adoration and thanksgiving; and as we called on His name in seeking His blessings. I look forward to these themes again, if God permits, only in a greater way and on a larger scale.

I weep as I sit here and examine myself and realize how much I have received and how little I have given. Please forgive me for failing to show my appreciation as I should and for failing, by God's power, to help to do more to see

that this spirit of fellowship continues.

In closing, as I sit here examining myself, and realize our sojourn on this earth draws to a close, oh how I want to do something to help our families and our churches. I would love to be like Joshua and leave behind, if I die before Jesus comes back, great encouragement (Jos. 23:14); and to be like Peter (II Pet. 1:12-15). I believe if I examine myself and keep my eyes on Jesus I can (Heb. 12:1, 2).

I am unable to say what I would like to say and am concerned I will say the wrong thing, but I trust these words will be received in the spirit in which they were given, and I believe they will. May God bless all of my preacher brethren and all of our churches to His glory. May He draw us closer to Him and to each other, is my prayer.

KNOWLEDGE

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of Christ. This is what Jesus is doing.

"And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mat. 16:14-16).

What a confession of faith this is! This is a complete confession of faith. This shows a complete knowledge of God and the knowledge of Christ. Notice how Peter knew this.

"And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jana: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Mat. 16:17).

Jesus said all the time Peter you and the disciples have been with me and all the things you have seen me do; this did not reveal unto you who that I am. Jesus Christ is making a very definite statement here. Peter knew the Old Testament. So did the other disciples. They knew the prophecies in the Old Testament concerning Jesus Christ, and they also knew how manifestly Jesus Christ fulfilled all of those Scriptures. But that wasn't enough to produce in them the saving knowledge that he was the Messiah. Even though Christ was in their midst every day, they heard Him preach, they watched Him heal the sick and raise the dead; but this wasn't enough. Proof of this is supplied by the Pharisees and Sadducees in their rejection of Jesus Christ. The Pharisees and Sadducees weren't saved. Although His wonderful miracles were enough to bring spiritual assurance to Peter's heart, there had to be a super natural application of the truth made in his heart by the special power of God before he could spiritually comprehend it. This is what Jesus Christ is showing us here by His discussion with the disciples.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14).

The things of the Spirit signify here the contents of the Word of truth. Man is saved by the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. He

can't be saved any other way. You might try to force a decision out of someone; beg and plead with them, but walking up front will not save one. One comes up front to confess that he is saved, because God has already given him a divine revelation. The power of God has already quickened him, opened his mind, cleansed his heart, and brought him to the foot of the cross. He has already trusted the blood of Jesus Christ and wants to tell someone about it. Many people slip out into a Christless eternity because they tried to receive Jesus Christ by human understanding and human wisdom. Because Mom and Dad or the preacher wants them to be saved so badly that they make a decision for Christ outside of the divine knowledge given by the power of the Holy Spirit, and they are lost eternally and forever.

Peter made a profession of faith, but he made it under the influence and power of the divine revelation from Almighty God. A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven. That is what John the Baptist said in John 3:27. A man must want Scriptural baptism to have it. If he doesn't desire and have it, then he doesn't want it. There are many people saved that don't have Scriptural baptism. They are not in the Lord's church. It takes the super natural working power of faith through the gospel to bring a man into the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. God can only be the one. He is supernaturally revealed to the heart by the Spirit through the Word of God. That is the only way that He can be known. This is a supernatural power that quickens the understanding, enlightens the heart, and purifies the soul. It is something that you don't possess and cannot get on your own. It is something that God gives. It comes straight from heaven. Jesus told Nicodemus, "you must be born again before you can enter the kingdom of God." You must be born again before you can see the kingdom of God.

Peter was very enthusiastic about this encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice what he wrote in closing out his epistle in II Peter 3:18. I'm sure the apostle Peter was thinking about this event with the Lord and how Christ was revealed to his heart. What a great blessing it was! He was able to fully confess Jesus Christ as the Lord, the Christ.

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen" (II Pet. 3:18).

Peter is talking about the marvelous sovereign grace of Almighty God, and his knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The knowledge of Christ is what Peter is saying in his treasures.

The knowledge of Christ is a supernatural power of God given through the Word of God by the power of the Holy Spirit. This knowledge of Christ is a treasure. A treasure given to the sinner by God. The mind of Christ becomes his evidence. Peter experienced this with the Lord. The love of Christ was his song. Peter is talking about growing in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To understand that you are a child of God and to want to grow in his knowledge, you must have this knowledge. If you have this knowledge, then it's your treasure, and the mind of Christ is your ev-

idence. The love of Christ is your song. Conforming to Christ is your life. To be with Christ is your desire. By faith you receive Christ, and you have all these desires, the treasures, and all these

things; you crave Christ. You hear Christ's words, tread in Christ's steps, and seek Christ's approval. These are the evidences that one has a saving knowledge of God in the person of Jesus Christ. This supernatural power of God is implanted that you may receive Christ and want Christ above all. You want to adopt His cross as a principle of your life and to cut off thy right hand and pluck out thy eye. Many people believe when they come to Christ they are getting an invitation to ride the band wagon. When you get an invitation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, you are getting an invitation to be called into His vineyard. You are getting an invitation to take His yoke upon you and learn of Him, as Jesus Christ said in Mat. 11:28-29. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest upon your souls."

You are to put yourself in the harness. This means being in subjection to Jesus Christ. This means submitting to His rules and His ways. It means taking up your cross daily and following Christ. To suffer for and with Jesus Christ, that is what the call of the gospel is. The call of the gospel tells a man to sit down and examine the cost. It is going to cost you something. You are to bear the cross of Christ, to walk in His steps, to adopt His doctrine and His teaching as your principle and rule of life. The knowledge that God gives from heaven is the rule, and the principle of life you are to follow.

Paul, in Romans 1:16 is talking about the power of God. He said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." It takes the power of God to save a sinner, not a change of life, not some kind of resolution, not quitting a habit.

Why couldn't Peter and the rest of the disciples understand that He was the Christ? As it is said in John 3:27, a man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. In other words, Jesus Christ said you must have a new nature of enlightenment by the power of God.

"And Moses called unto all Israel, and said unto them, Ye have seen all that the LORD did before your eyes in the land of Egypt unto Pharaoh, and unto all his servants, and unto all his land; Yet the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day" (Deut. 29:2,4).

He said you saw what He did to Pharaoh. You saw what He did to them at the Red Sea. You saw how God brought water out of the rock. You saw all the powerful performances of God. But God must give you ears to hear. He must give you eyes to see. God must open your ears, eyes, and heart and give you an understanding to perceive and

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INTERCOMMUNION: INCONSISTENT AND UNSCRIPTURAL

Part III, Chapter 2b

by J. R. Graves

We also learn---

5. That the Lord's Supper is not a sacrament, as the Catholics and all Protestants teach.

A sacrament, in the ecclesiastical use of the term, is a physical medium, appointed by God, through, and in connection with which, He transmits all the benefits of Christ's death to our souls--as remission of sins, spiritual regeneration, sanctification; in a word--the salvation of souls.

Protestant sects, as well as the Catholics, teach that both baptism and the Supper are sacraments of salvation. To teach that baptism and the Supper are sacraments--i.e., the ordained channel to convey grace to the soul through physical media, the application of water to the body, or by the receiving of bread through the mouth, even when the subject is unconscious--is a most absurd delusion. There is no dogma of Rome more unscriptural or shocking to our common sense, or more utterly subversive of Christianity, modifying the language of the Bishop of Cork. To teach that in baptism, or the Lord's Supper, we are made one with Christ, clearly implies that we cannot be one with Christ without it; whereas, the Word of God teaches that we have no right to come to baptism, or the Lord's Supper, until we are, by personal faith, one with Christ. "For ye are all the children of God by faith..." (Gal. 3:26). And not by sacraments, as baptism and the Lord's Supper. To teach that baptism and the Lord's Supper--purely physical acts--were appointed by our Savior as the media by which He comes to live in us, as if by no other means could He enter our hearts and live in us; whereas, He Himself teaches us that we have no fitness to come to baptism or the Supper until He comes to us first and lives in us, until we come to Him and live in Him. I emphasize it, that it is subversive of the whole plan of salvation, and an utter perversion of the ordinances, to teach that in and by baptism or the Supper Christ forgives our sins and releases us from their guilt; whereas, all this is done before we can rightly come to baptism, or the Lord's Supper. We come to Christ for forgiveness, and to baptism with forgiveness. We come to Christ for life, and Supper proclaims that the one partaking is alive in Christ, and comes to it for the strengthening and refreshing of his soul by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by literal bread and wine. A dead body cannot receive nourishment--it must first have life. The sinner, by faith only, gets life from Christ, and lives in Christ, and Christ lives in him; and to refreshen and strengthen this life, by a lively remembrance of Christ, who is our life, this Supper is eaten. The living soul, not a dead soul, is fed. To use the Lord's Supper as a sacrifice, or a sacrament, is evidently to eat and drink unworthily.

6. The Supper was not appointed to be a "Seal of the Covenant of Grace." The Presbyterians teach that the Supper was appointed to be one of the two "sealing ordinances." See "Confession of Faith." This implies that the covenant of grace



has two seals--baptism and the Supper; and, if this be so, no one ever was or can be saved without both--one, at least, all will admit. But nowhere, save in the "Presbyterian Confession of Faith," do we learn that either ordinance was appointed to be a seal of the covenant of grace, or any other covenant, or of anything connected with Christianity. If either rite is a seal of covenanted blessings, who was ever saved without them? for no unsealed person ever was saved. But the monstrosity of this doctrine can be seen, not only by its consigning all the unbaptized, and "uncommunicated," of the ages past, to hopeless perdition, unless they can show that God had still another seal before these church rites were instituted, but the doctrine takes the sealing out of the hands of the Holy Spirit, and puts it into the hands of sinful men, who cannot tell when the subject is prepared to be sealed, thus making ministers, priests and mediators between man and God! What saith the Scriptures? "...in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13)- "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30).

7. Nor do we find the Lord's Supper observed as a social rite.

Not as a mark or expression of Christian fellowship on the part of those who partake of it together. A moment's thought will convince any one that, if this was included in the design, it could never be celebrated again. For what pastor, who has an intimate acquaintance with his church, believes, in his heart, that all are Christians, and would be willing to declare it by his word or act? His saddest convictions are that many, very many, are strangers to "regenerating grace," love this present world and have not the mind of Christ!

Is it better with the members or our churches? Would the membership of any church existing ever again assemble to observe the Supper if they understood that it was, on their part, a solemn declaration before God that they, in their hearts, regarded all members with whom they partook, as Christians, and that they sincerely fellowshiped them as such? It is the thought

or fear that this possibly may be implied by the joint participation in the rite that deters so many hundreds of our conscientious members from coming to the table. It was not observed by Christ as a social feast, for but eleven of His disciples were present; even His mother, and His own brethren, according to the flesh, were not invited. In all the

other cases, we see it strictly limited to specific characters.

8. Nor was it appointed to be used as a mark or expression of "courtesy" and "comity" toward, or good feeling for, our brethren of other churches or Christian friends.

Let the reader read over every account of its observance, and every direction given, and see if he can gather the faintest idea that Christ instituted the rite, or the apostles delivered it, for any such purpose. The idea is utterly opposed to the very spirit of the institution.

Why did not Christ insist upon His mother's attendance, or His own family, according to the flesh? Why did Paul so severely rebuke the members of the church at Corinth, whose practice looked so strongly in the direction of "courtesy" and the social idea? To degrade the terms of the sacred Supper to the conventionalities of the parlor and drawing room, or the common feast, to which we invite our neighbors and special friends, as an expression of our courtesy and good-feeling toward them, is certainly to profane it. Well might the apostle remonstrate with those who advocate this use. "What! have ye not houses to eat and to drink in, parlors and drawing rooms for such expressions of courtesy and friendship, or despise ye the church of God?"

THE NAME GIVEN TO THIS ORDINANCE

Mass: The Catholics, as we have seen, regard it as a real sacrifice for sin offered by the priest. The term is from the Latin "missa," from the verb "mitto," to send away. In the ancient Catholic churches, the public services at which the catechumens were permitted to be present, were called missa catechumenorum because, at the close of them, proclamation was made thus: "Ite missa est ecclesia," then followed the communion service, which was called missa fidelium, and which, under the name of mass, is still celebrated.

The reader can see that there is nothing in the appointment or observances of the Supper that warrants this name.

Sacrament: All Protestants, as well as Catholics, regard the rite as a sacrament, and hence the name. But, as we have seen, there is nothing in the Word of God to warrant the idea, and therefore the name is unwarranted and misleading. We have been pained, all our life, by hearing Baptist ministers speaking of this rite as "the sacrament," and "sacramental occasion," and "sacramental board," "sacramental bread," and "sacramental wine." It is aping the language of Ashdod. Such terms are not found in the Word of God, and should be unknown in a Baptist vocabulary. What have Baptists to do with anything sacramental?

Eucharist: It has been called the eucharist, because the Lord gave thanks--eucharista meaning thanksgiving. But it is nowhere spoken of as "the thanksgiving" in the Scriptures.

The Communion: It is quite generally called the communion, as communion service, and partaking of the communion, etc. This word is derived from the Greek koinonia, which signifies

fellowship, joint participation, and also communicating. The Scriptures seem to justify the use of this term. Paul says: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (I Cor. 10:16). John says: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:3). It is with Christ, and not each other that we commune the Lord's Supper. There can be no doubt about the scripturalness of this name, for Paul, by inspiration, called it "the Lord's supper," (I Cor. 11:20). These last titles will be the only ones I shall use in this book.

QUALIFICATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Now let us examine the passages submitted, and learn the invariable qualifications of the participants of the Lord's Supper. We find:

1. That in every case those who partook of the Supper had been baptized. In the first instance it is clear that all those who continued steadfastly in "breaking the loaf" had been previously baptized.

In the second account Paul addressed his letter to the members of the church at Corinth, and these had all been baptized; because there never was a church of unbaptized Christians. Dr. Rice (Presbyterian) says: "I admit that we cannot get into a visible church without baptism."

All denominations, save one [The Methodists, believing that the Supper, as well as baptism, is a sacrament of salvation, offer it to the unbaptized impenitent to secure pardon, etc. (See future chapter)], are agreed that the Supper never was, and cannot scripturally be given to anyone before baptism.

Without multiplying authorities let one suffice for all. Dr. Wall, in his "History on Infant Baptism," says: "No church ever gave the communion to any person before they were baptized; among all the absurdities that ever were held, none ever maintained that any person should partake of the communion before they were baptized" (Part 2, c.9, p.484).

We also learn from these accounts:

2. That all who partook of the Supper were church members.

They had, therefore, professed a change of heart, and been baptized. It is specifically stated that three thousand were added--i.e., to the church, for it was into a church they were all baptized, (see Acts 2:41, and last clause of v.47). "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

In the third reference (I Cor. 11) no one questions that all who ate the Supper were church members. From these accounts we are warranted in the conclusion that all who partook of the Lord's Supper in the apostolic age, were: 1. Professedly regenerate persons; 2. Scripturally baptized; and, therefore, 3. Members of Scriptural churches; and 4. That the Supper was under the special and sole control of the local churches to whom it, with baptism, was delivered by the apostles. (For the discussion of which, see chapter 5, part 2.)

We learn conclusively that the Lord's Supper is not like the worship of God by praise, or prayer, or a social service.

A company of missionaries on shipboard, bound for heathen lands, may not partake of the Supper; nor a company of ministers, though they should by chance meet some Sabbath morning on Mount Olivet or Calvary, celebrate the Supper, for they are not a church. [An account of a company of ministers of different denominations meeting on the top of Mount Olivet on Sunday morning, and the thought occurred to celebrate the Supper, which they did, with the bread of their lunch and a bottle of wine, recently appeared in

American religious papers without condemnation. The communion of outgoing missionaries on shipboard is often mentioned with pious favor.] Neither may a pastor, though with a number of his church members, even with the permission of his church, attempt to celebrate the Supper in the room of a sick or dying Christian, although a member. That gathering would not be a church, and the church has no authority to allow such an act to change the rite from a church to a social ordinance. [If the church cannot delegate her authority to her pastors and deacons to administer the Supper without her presence, how can she delegate her pastor to baptize without her presence and approval of the Christian character of the subject?] How often do we hear of the ordinance administered in such like circumstances, and spoken of as commendable and pious acts, when they are solemn profanations of the sacred Supper.

Let it be borne in mind, ever, that the rite is only the Lord's Supper when observed by one church, and as one church.

The divine symbolism of the Supper remains to be developed, the right understanding of which will determine all things not hitherto considered, and that solemn question, "What is it to eat and drink unworthily?"

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understand and receive these things.

Men have a form of knowledge in their head, but are totally strangers to the power of it in their hearts. The divine power communicates life to the soul, life to the understanding, sincerity to the conscience, strength to the affections, and a death wound to the love of sin.

So then, the supernatural working of faith through the gospel of the power of God overcomes the strongest opposition. "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens" (Heb. 11:33-34).

This is what faith is. Faith does all this. The supernatural working of faith overcomes the strongest opposition. In Acts 15:9 it says

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that God purified the heart by faith. It not only removes all the obstacles; it also overcomes all the powers of this life and in this world that would keep one from Christ. It will also purge the deep-seated corruption from within. It resists the most charming allurements of a bewitching world. In I John 5:4. Our faith over comes the world. Nothing short of the mighty power, which raised Christ from the dead and exalted Him to the right hand of God, can enable a depraved sinner to savingly come to Christ.

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Eph. 1:17-21).

People are trying to be saved in all kinds of different ways. But the only way they can be saved is through the gospel of Jesus Christ. It takes this power. His glorious power. The power of God. The power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The power that goes out in the gospel of Jesus Christ. It takes the power of God to save.

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise" (Eph. 1:13).

HEART

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success. They have also been able to give man a mechanical heart that works for a short period of time. But the medical doctor has not been able to fix a man to work without a heart of some kind. The heart is necessary to life itself. Now, in the spiritual realm, the heart has a lot to do with our standing before Almighty God.

I. By nature, the heart of man is deceitful and very wicked, according to our text. At a glance it does not appear so, but when put under God's inspection, the heart comes up short of being what it should be by God's divine standards. We are living in a day when the world does not recognize the depravity of man. The Bible teaches us that the heart is wicked! Several years ago while visiting with a number of pastors from the Dallas, Texas area, the question came up with regards to the depravity of man. A young pastor (40-45 years old) was having a very hard time un-

derstanding the need of God's elective grace. He just shook his head and said, "I do not understand." The pastor that was trying to convince him was strong in the area of the doctrines of grace, but was getting nowhere that evening. I could not sit still and had to enter my two cents worth. I turned to the pastor and said, "until you can see and understand the depravity of man, you will never be able to understand God's elective grace." The pastor that was trying to convince him agreed with my thought. Needless to say, we did not get the job done that evening. That pastor was taught that man had a spark of good in him, that is, all he needed to do was find that good. But what does our Bible say, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Jer. 17:9.

Then, several months later while the Lord gave us the work in Southeast Texas to pastor, an older pastor made it very clear to me that he did not believe in the doctrines of grace. He made it a point to prove to himself and everyone else, that there was some good found in every man. I tried to convince him otherwise, but a person that has made up his mind and does not want to be bothered with the facts, will not change his mind, even though he sees it in black and white. Why is that? Man does not want to admit that his heart is deceitful and desperately wicked! But it is. Beloved, until a man can see himself as he is, he will never get saved. Man is lost and that because his heart is wicked and very deceitful. He inherited that from his parents and they from theirs, right on back to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

II. By practice, the heart of man is found in hypocrisy - Psalms 12:2, "They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak." It does not take long and anyone can see this if they have a mind to investigate. Man begins his long life trying to prove to himself and everyone else that he is something that he is not. Our practice gives us away. The book of Romans and the third chapter proves that without question. The medical doctor has examined man and found him to be wanting. His conclusion; man is sick from the top of his head to the bottom of his foot. The lawyer examines man and finds that his deeds give him a record as long as your arm. Thus, the judge of the universe has no choice but to say that man is rotten to the very core. His whole life proves beyond a doubt that he is lost and in need of God's forgiveness.

III. In reality, the heart of man has been deceived through his own ignorance. "He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" (Isa. 44:20). Here is the problem that each of those pastors had: a deceived heart. Good men, yes, but they could not see nor understand the truth about the heart of man. The tragic thing is they have taught their doctrine to men; and they and their congregations have believed them, even though what they have been taught is a lie. They have willingly been deceived and are deceived because they do not want to know the truth of God.

IV. By choice, the heart of man has been hardened through unbelief. That should not surprise the

one that has looked into his Bible and knows what it teaches. Does man have a choice? Yes, he does! But the choice that man makes, the only choice that he can make, is to deny the truth concerning himself and his need of redemption. Will man turn to God? In himself, never, never in a thousand years. He cannot and will never turn to God because of his own depravity. He is unable to save himself. Man can not pick himself up by his own bootstraps. The only choice that man can make is to continue in his lost ways. He does not have the ability in himself to turn to God. He is lost and does not even know it.

V. By divine intervention the heart of man has been opened by God Almighty. This is proved over and over in the Word of God. No man can come unto the Father but the Holy Spirit of God draweth him. And the Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit of God only works on those that the Father hath chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Thus, the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ came into this world to do the work of His heavenly Father. What was that work? To die for those that the Father hath given to Him. You see, the Bible teaches that if this lost sinful man is to get saved, it will be because God has intervened and done a work in his heart. Salvation is God's work, business, if you please. If we are to be saved, it will be because God has seen fit to save our soul. We do not deserve to be saved. If it was left up to man, he would die in his sins and never see the light of day. But that is not the way our God works. He loves His own and will see to it that they come to know Him in salvation. Man needs to be saved, redeemed. But that is not possible apart from the work of the eternal God-head in our behalf. Man's heart is wicked! But it has been our God's way of saving lost sinful men by the preaching of the Word of God. As to how all of this works is a real mystery. It is not our business to figure this all out, but to present the Word of God to every creature and let God do His work! He must save us if we are to be saved. Our salvation is all of grace or it is not of grace at all.

GOSPEL

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exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (II Tim. 4:2). I tell you I am not ashamed of anything I preach, especially in view of the commission which Jesus gave, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:18-20).

Thus, beloved, I am not ashamed of any of the Word of God which I preach, and particularly I am not ashamed to preach the gospel, for Jesus said, **"...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).**

I. In the very beginning of this message, may I tell you the

content of the gospel. Long years ago, while the shepherds kept watch over their flocks by night, an angel of God spoke unto them saying, **"...Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10,11)** The Greek word translated "good tidings" in this instance, is the same word which is elsewhere translated "gospel."

The gospel thus is good tidings--it is good news--the best news that ever fell upon the ears of a sinner.

We shall suppose that while you listen to this message, a telegram is handed to you by a uniformed messenger boy telling of a fortune to which you have fallen heir. Of course, that is good news. The gospel of Jesus Christ is just this. It is the best news, for it tells of an heavenly inheritance which is wrought through Jesus Christ. It is the best news that ever fell upon the ears of man.

Beloved, would you know the content of the gospel? Then listen: **"MOREOVER, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:1-4).**

Thus we see the content of the gospel is the death of Jesus at Calvary. His burial in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, and His resurrection therefrom. Baptism, church membership, and a clean life are important to their respective fields, but neither is a part of the gospel. The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus is the entirety of the gospel.

II. Interesting as the content of the gospel is, it cannot begin to equal the interest of the extent of the gospel. **"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:22).** Note those words: **"The end of the earth."** This clearly indicates the extent of the gospel.

In the early chapters of Genesis, two men came to offer a sacrifice--Cain and Abel. When Cain offered his sheaf of golden grain and when Abel offered the lamb dripping with its own blood, each was thinking only of himself. The only one that either Cain or Abel was thinking of was "number one." That was the extent of the gospel to them.

A little later on in the history of the Jewish family, when in Egypt under God's direction, the Jews instituted the passover, the father of each home killed a lamb, caught its blood in a basin, dipped a bunch of hyssop in the blood and struck the door posts on each side of the door and the lintel above the door with this blood. In this case, the father was thinking in terms of his family. The concept of the extent of the gospel had grown. Unlike Cain and Abel, who were thinking only of themselves, the

father was now thinking of his family.

Still later, on the great day of atonement, the high priest of the Jews made a sacrifice for the entire nation. It wasn't an individual that the priest was thinking of, nor yet was he thinking of a single family on this day of atonement; his sacrifice was in behalf of the entire Jewish nation. No Jew has gotten beyond this with reference to the gospel. No Jew in the Old Testament could ever see that God could be interested in the salvation of any one other than the Jew. Jonah is a good example. He just couldn't conceive of God being interested in the salvation of the people of Nineveh.

When Christ came, His death was for all classes. Unlike the father in Egypt on the night of the first passover, He wasn't thinking of one family; unlike the high priest of Israel on the great day of atonement, He wasn't thinking of a nation; He was thinking of all individuals, all families, and all nations. When Jesus died and was raised from the dead, we hear Him saying, **"...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).**

This, beloved, indicates to us the extent of the gospel. On the day that Christ was crucified, the inscription on the cross was placed there in three languages--Greek, Hebrew, and Latin. Each of these three nations, who spoke these three languages, had made a special contribution to the world. It was the Greeks who had contributed culture. It was the Hebrews who had given the true conception of the living God. It was the Romans, those who spoke the Latin language, who gave the great principles of the law. Thus, beloved, this inscription in the three languages, revealed that Christ died to save the cultured Jew, the religious Hebrew, and the legal Roman. The gospel was thus extended to all.

To Noah and his wife, three sons were born, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Ham gave rise to the Negro races of the world; Shem gave rise to the Jewish inhabitants; and Japheth gave rise to the Gentiles. When you come to the New Testament--to the book of the Acts--you find in the eighth chapter, the story of the conversion of a Negro--the Ethiopian eunuch. In the ninth chapter of Acts we have the story of the conversion of a Jew. This chapter, as you will recall, tells the story of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. In the tenth chapter of Acts, we have the conversion of a Gentile. This chapter records the experiences connected with the conversion of Cornelius. Thus, these three consecutive chapters tell us of the conversion of a Negro, a Jew, and a Gentile. These were representatives of the three racial divisions of the human family growing out of the line of Noah. This, then, is to show us the extent of the gospel--that it is for the Negro, Jew, and Gentile alike.

In the Calvary Baptist Church of Washington, D.C., one morning years ago, three persons made professions of faith. The first was Hon. Charles Evans Hughes, the second was a washer-woman, and the third was a Chinaman. All were saved and made professions of faith in the same service. When Pastor Green observed these three on the front bench of the church, he remarked, "At the

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cross of Christ, the ground is level." Thus, beloved, you see that the gospel extends to all--from the highest heights to the lowest depths--this is the extent of the gospel.

III. Ere I become tedious to you relative to the extent of the gospel, let me tell you something of the intent of the gospel. In content, the gospel includes the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. In extent, the gospel is unto "the ends of the earth."

Now, as to its intent, first of all the gospel brings dead men to life. The Bible makes a distinct revelation that every unsaved person is spiritually dead. Every one who is outside Jesus is as dead spiritually as a corpse is dead physically. The gospel brings spiritually dead sinners to life. This is what Paul taught the church at Ephesus: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins"; (Eph. 2:1).

In the days of His flesh, the Lord Jesus raised three dead ones to life. There was Jarius' daughter who had been dead just a little while when Jesus came to her. Then there was the son of the widow of Nain who was being carried forth to his burial. Also there was Lazarus who was not only dead, but in whom putrefaction and decomposition had already set in. To each of these three, the Lord Jesus came and raised them from the grave.

Each of these is an illustration of the spiritual condition of sinners today. Though there was a difference as to their condition in death, each of them was dead. Some sinners might be illustrated by Jarius' daughter, while others like Lazarus, in their immorality smell to high heaven. In its intent the gospel first of all is to take sinners regardless of the fact that they are spiritually dead and irrespective as to the degree to which death has come upon them, and make them spiritually alive again.

Furthermore, as to its intent, the gospel makes lame men to walk. Every man is spiritually lame. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"; (Rom. 3:23).

In the Old Testament we read of an unusual character--Mephibosheth. When he was but a baby, his nurse dropped him, and as a result of the fall, he was never able to walk but was continually lame on both feet. David gave Mephibosheth all the inheritance which had belonged to his grandfather Saul, and showed to him great kindness. Mephibosheth is a splendid example of what the sinner is spiritually, for since Mephibosheth could not walk physically being lame on both feet, the sinner cannot walk spiritually, being entirely lame and totally depraved before God.

It is most interesting that the gospel in its intent is to make lame sinners walk. When Jesus came to the pool of Bethesda, with the eye of a practiced physician, He selected a man who had been lying there for thirty-eight years, and said to him, "Wilt thou be made whole?" (John 5:6). Though this man had never walked in thirty-eight years, through the power of God as manifested to him in Jesus, he took up his bed and walked away, being made completely whole. Just as Jesus healed this man, so

Jesus heals men spiritually. There isn't a spiritually lame sinner in all the world but what the gospel can make that lame one to walk.

Likewise as to its intent, the gospel makes the blind to see. Doubtlessly there is no disease nor malady more to be dreaded than blindness. It is God's own illustration as to the sinner in his spiritual condition, for every man outside of Jesus is spiritually blind to the extent that he cannot see the things of God. If a man must be told the sun is shining, he must in deed and in truth be blind. Yet, this is exactly true of each sinner, for Jesus stood in their midst, and the Scriptures tell us that the world did not recognize Him and that God had to send John the Baptist to tell the Jews that the light was shining. "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe" (John 1:5-7). Certainly they must have been spiritually blind to stand in the presence of the Light of God and yet not be able to detect it. How thankful we are that the gospel can take blind men and women--who are so blind that they cannot see God--and make them whole.

In the ninth chapter of John's gospel, we read of a man who was born blind. The disciples wanted to philosophize relative to his condition, thinking that perhaps his condition was caused by the sins of his parents, or perhaps even by this man's own sins. Instead of wasting time with their vagaries, Jesus healed him of his blindness and restored his eyesight. Later, we hear this same man saying, "...he hath opened mine eyes" (John 9:30). When he presented his testimony, Jesus' enemies made light of it by referring to Jesus as a sinner. Listen to his answer: "...whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25). Nothing but the gospel, beloved--no one but Jesus--can take blind sinners and make them see.

Oftentimes Christian people after a service will say, "Brother Gilpin, I can't understand why no one was saved. You made the message so plain, it just looks like any one ought to have been made to see the truth that Christ died for his sins." It does seem thus to those of us who are saved that the lost ought to be able to see this truth. Yet, beloved, I am personally persuaded to believe that the lost do not believe simply because they are so blinded that they cannot see the gospel. Listen to this Scripture: "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (II Cor. 4:4). There is a blind before every sinner, he is spiritually in the dark, and so blinded by sin that he cannot see the things of God as the Christian sees them. It is Jesus who removes Satan's blinds and enables the sinner to see.

Still again, as to its intent, the gospel removes all of our sins. In the third chapter of John, we have the story of a moral man.

In the fourth chapter of John, we have the story of an immoral woman. The same gospel which was required for the salvation of one is likewise required for the salvation of the other. Nothing but the gospel can remove these sins of ours.

The Scriptures often declare this truth: "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" (I Peter 2:24). "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (I Peter 3:18).

How we thank God that the gospel in its intent actually does remove our sins. In fact, removes them far from us. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us" (Psalms 103:12). It actually casts them into the depths of the sea. "...And thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19). It even casts them behind God's back. "...For thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back" (Isa. 38:17). What a safe place this is for our sins, for God never looks back. Yet, the gospel not only removes our sins--it blots out our sins. "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins..." (Isa. 44:22). The gospel even cleanses us from our sins. "...and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7).

How we thank God that the gospel in its intent not only removes our sins--it removes all of our sins. I do not tell you that Christ saves you today and that you have to keep yourself saved tomorrow, but rather, I say that Christ saves--He keeps saved--He saves eternally. He removes the sins of tomorrow the same as the sins of yesterday. All of our sins are removed by the gospel. Listen: "Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14). "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses" (Col. 2:13).

A man said sometime ago that he could believe the gospel removed our past sins, but he could not conceive for a moment of the gospel removing our future sins. I asked him that which I ask you, "How many of your sins were future sins when Christ died?" Why of course all of them were. Then, beloved, as far as you and I are concerned, Christ's death was for our future sins.

IV. If the content, the extent, and the intent of the gospel interests you, then briefly let us look at it in its portent--that is, what does the gospel look forward to? How we rejoice that it looks forward to death. That individual who has fully believed the gospel of Jesus Christ, can confidently face death, knowing in advance that the Scripture is true which says, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Psa.

116:15) The child of God comes to the end of the way to say, "The Lord is my shepherd..." "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil: for thou art with me..." (Psa. 23:1,4).

This past week it was my joy to assist in the funeral service of Brother Denver Stewart, one of the members of the Pollard Baptist Church. We have known Brother Stewart for a long time, and it was always a joy each time we visited him to note his desire to live in order that he might serve the Lord, and yet at the same time to observe his readiness to meet his Lord should it be his Lord's will to call him. With a smile upon his face and the joy of Jesus in his heart, his soul went out to meet the Lord.

Isn't it marvelous that the gospel enables us to look forward with confidence that we shall triumph over death? Yet remarkable as this is, the portent of the gospel is even more wonderful in that it enables us to look forward with assurance to the judgment. Listen to the words of Jesus: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

As far as the judgment of my sins is concerned, this is past, for they were judged in Christ at the cross. I will never have to face those sins again. What a contrast between the saved of God and those who are lost, in view of the fact that those that are lost will have to meet their sins at the judgment and then go into eternity unsaved.

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:22,23). This Scripture does not describe the judgment of the saved, for the gospel enables each of the saved to look forward to the judgment knowing that his sins are already judged, and realizing that all the judgment he shall receive will be on the basis that he might receive his rewards.

In view of the content, the extent, the intent, and the portent of the gospel, I beg you to receive the gospel now, and ere you close your eyes tonight, may you be able to say with me, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation." God's part is that He will do the saving; your part is that you are to furnish the sinner for Him to save. I beg you now to receive Him as your personal Saviour.

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GAP

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it, "And the earth became without form and void." In this way the scholarly theory of evolution could be made to fit between verse one and verse two.

The Hebrew word "tohu" is translated "without form" and means the face of the earth was not sculptured. The Hebrew word "bohu" is properly rendered

"empty" or "void."

The Septuagint translated the words "unsightly," "unfinished," because the creation was not yet perfect, since it was not complete.

Fifty years before the authorized or King James Version of 1611, the Geneva Bible of 1560 translated the verse, "The earth was without form and void."

Calvin translated it "shapeless and empty."

In order to lend credence to their altering the sense of the text, so-called "theistic evolutionists" have pointed out verse 28: "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth..." This means, they affirm, that the creation of chapter one was intended to "refill" the former creation that had gone awry.

Let the reader pick up any reputable dictionary and he or she will find the meaning of "replenish" is "to supply what is lacking." There were no creatures in the earth except for Adam and Eve, and the animals God had created. An alternate definition is "to finish" or "to complete."

The Hebrew word is therefore translated "fill," as is the Greek word. The Geneva Bible translated the phrase "fill the earth," as does the New American Standard Version.

But does the Bible teach the face of the earth was not as yet sculptured? Yes, it does. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psalm 90:2). (the waters) "...go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them" (Psalm 104:8). The meaning here is that the mountains rose, the valleys sank.

Take the case of Peleg who was so-named because "...in his days was the earth divided..." (Gen. 10:25). The animals and birds of the earth were thus divided when the earth separated into continents.

Several doctrines were profoundly affected by the manner in which we exegete Genesis 1:2.

1. The "Gap" theory undeniably nullifies the fourth commandment which says, "For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is..." (Exodus 20:11).

2. The so-called "Gap" theory repudiates the doctrines of the Federal Headship of Adam, and of the origin of death. It is the testimony of Scripture, "...by man came death" (I Cor. 15:21; Rom. 8:20-22; 5:12), and Paul declares, "...the first man Adam..." (I. Cor. 15:45). Death is the result of his sin.

3. There is not one verse in God's Word that teaches Satan was associated with the earth before the creation of man.

People who espouse the "Gap" theory do so because they have not considered how greatly it contradicts the Bible.

Reader, beware of the awesome price of attempting to harmonize

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STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF ELIJAH - 13

THE LIFTING UP OF A FALLEN GIANT

"But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And as he lay and slept under the juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God" (I Ki.19:4-8).

Elijah is in flight from the death threat of Jezebel. He has fled from Samaria, through Judah, to Beer-sheba. Leaving his servant there, he goes a day's journey further into the desert to the south. Wilderness in the Bible is not a jungle-like land, but a desert land. South of Beer-sheba, it is desert land all the way to Horeb and mount Sinai. Elijah is fleeing for his life.

I spoke last time on "The Fall of a Giant." We will agree that Elijah was truly a giant for God. On mount Carmel Elijah looked ten feet tall and three hundred pounds in weight. He was surely a spiritual giant. He stood tall, brave, strong, and true against weak idolatrous Israel, Ahab, and the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal. James 5:17 tells us that Elijah, "was a man subject to like passions as we are." From what we see of Elijah to mount Carmel, it does not look like that. It looks like he was a spiritual superman. We had not then seen any evidence that he was like we are. We had not yet seen any evidences of weakness and failure in the man. Now, in this chapter we see that Elijah, left to himself without the upholding power of God, is weak like other men. We see this bold lion of a man fleeing from Jezebel like a craven coward. He was now walking by sight and not by faith. He looked at Jezebel, her threat and her power, and not at God who had wrought marvelously on mount Carmel. He allowed fear to get the upper hand and fled for his life.

Until this point, the Word of God had directed Elijah's life. We read that the Word of the Lord coming to Elijah in I Kings 17:2; 17:8; and 18:1. Now, in 19:3, without a Word from the Lord, he acted on human wisdom, he leaned upon his own understanding, and fled. He was then where he was by the Word of the Lord. Now, he moves without that Word, really in disobedience to that Word; for when the Word of God leads us to a place, there we are to stay until a further

Word leads us away. He deserted his post. Yes, a mighty giant had fallen.

Now I speak to you about the lifting up of this fallen giant. Look at his condition now. He is weak, weary, and discouraged. He sits under a juniper tree and requests that he might die. Friends, when we walk by sight, when we walk contrary to the Word of God; we cannot have the uplifting, courage giving blessings of the Lord upon us. It is when our eyes are on the Lord, and we are walking in obedience to His word that we are cheerful, bold, and enabled to stand before the enemy. Elijah is in a dejected and sad condition. He prays for death. I wonder if he was really sincere in that prayer. If he were, he could have saved himself much trouble, stayed in Samaria, and Jezebel would have been glad to give him what he asked for. He, doubtless, did not fully realize what he was doing. Note that he did not attempt to take his own life, and that is good.

Doubtless, many of God's children have longed for death. It is not necessarily wrong to long for death unless one does so for a wrong reason and without submission to the will of God in the matter. To be weary of life, to long to be with the Lord; that is one thing; but to desire contrary to God's will, to just desire to get away from the burdens of life, to seek to get away from the task God has given us; that is something else and is wrong. We should leave the time of death in the hands of the Lord. We should bow in loving submissiveness to the sovereignty of God over the number of the days of our lives. Sometimes life becomes so sad and burdensome that one says with the Psalmist, "Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest" (Psa.55:6). But, even so, let us sweetly submit to God's sovereignty in this.

Elijah prayed for death, but he went to heaven without dying. Isn't that strange? But I believe he is going to die some day. I believe he is going to be one of the two witnesses of Revelation 11. After his witness during the first three and one half years of the Tribulation, he will die, lie dead in the streets for three and one half days, and then be resurrected and raptured to heaven.

Here is one of many examples of unanswered prayer. The Lord did not give Elijah the thing that he prayed for. God did, a little later, give him something better than he prayed for - to go to heaven without dying. We must pray in submission to the will of God. We must leave the answer in God's hands. I have a sermon on, "Does Prayer Change Things?" Of course not. Prayer cannot change the eternal purposes of a sovereign God. Sometimes unanswered prayer is a blessing in disguise. God knows what is best for His children, and God will do that which is best. We sometimes ask for things that are contrary to the eternally predestinated will of God, that are not good for us, though we might think them to be. But God knows best. God loves us too much to give us the things we want that would not be for our good.

We see here a fallen giant. Let us think awhile on the Lord's attitude towards fallen giants, or

even fallen ones who have not been giants. When God's people fall, when God's people are not what and where they should be; what is God's attitude towards them? That is a very important question. We can imagine what God's attitude was towards Elijah when he stood true to God and challenged the four hundred and fifty false prophets. We can imagine that God might well say to Satan, "Seest thou my servant Elijah, how brave and true he is?" We might think that God was proud of Elijah and really loved him at that moment. But what about when Elijah has fallen? What about when we are not like we ought to be? What about when we are ugly and disobedient? What is God's attitude towards His disobedient sinning, and fallen children?

Let me emphasize here that God could have very easily gotten along without Elijah. He could have granted Elijah's request, let him die, and carry on His work through someone else, or all by Himself. God was not up a creek. God was not between a rock and a hard place. God's work would not cease, His purpose would not fail, if Elijah never did another thing therein. We need to understand that God's work is not dependent upon us. We need to verily know that God can carry on without us. He did very well before we came along, and when we are gone, God's work will go on. Can I say it? Yes, I will. God's work can and will go on as well without us as it does with us. Great preachers have come and gone. Many of the great ones are now dead, but God's work goes on. God's purpose has not even been slowed down.

Arminian preachers will tell us that there will be people in hell who would have been saved if Bible believers had done as they should. Friend, the eternal purposes of God will be fulfilled whether you and I do as we should or not. God could have gotten along without Elijah, and He can get along without any of us. God has never been defeated because of the failure of man, and He never will be. God does not need us, but we do need to be used by Him. Why? For the blessings that will come into our lives when God uses us, and for the rewards God gives us for having part in His work.

I will never forget how the Lord whipped me one night in Greensboro, N.C. I visited the home of a lady who was a member of our church. She and her two daughters sang beautifully. We enjoyed hearing them the once in a while when they attended church. Oh, I bowed and scraped. I begged them to come to church. I told them how badly we needed them; that we could hardly get along without them. As I drove home from that visit, the Lord really dealt with me. He pointed out to me what a disgraceful spectacle I had made of myself, and how I had belittled the Lord in my trying to build that woman up and get her to come to church. From that day to this, I have tried to make it clear that God's work will go on no matter what any man or woman might do. I try to make it clear that the Lord needs no one, but that we all need the Lord.

Elijah was not just forgiven here, then put on the shelf and never used again. One of the

commentators I am reading on Elijah takes this position. He says that God forgave Elijah for this failure, but never used him greatly thereafter. I realize that Mount Carmel was a one time event in the life of Elijah. But God did use Elijah further. God still loved Elijah. God forgave Elijah. God stood by His despairing, dejected servant who was running from the post where God had placed him. God still had compassion on Elijah.

What did God do in this situation? How did God lift up this fallen giant? First of all, God gave Elijah sleep and rest. Remember that sleep is a gift from God (Psa.127:2). What a good medicine for a jaded, tired, worn-out body and soul is precious sleep. Sleep is good for the body and soul. There are times in the Bible when God put people into a deep sleep. There are times when He withheld sleep from men. God is sovereign over sleep, as over all things. God saved Israel from destruction once by keeping a king awake all night (Study Esther). In fact, in this way God preserved the channel of the coming Messiah. So God, in kindness and mercy touched the body of Elijah and gave him a good night's sleep.

Next, we find that an angel touched Elijah, and told him to arise and eat of a cake and water that had been placed there for him. So far as I know, this was the first time Elijah had ever seen an angel. I am not saying that an angel was not with him, but that he had not seen such before. In this hour of running from the Lord, running from Jezebel, deserting the post God had given him; in this hour, God graciously, kindly, compassionately opened his eyes that he might see an angel; and the angel touched him. It was a special blessing for a special time of need.

Let us think a while about angels and the children of God. One of the greatest sermons I ever heard Brother Gilpin preach was on the angels. Oh, that sermon was a blessing to me. I have never forgotten it, or gotten over the blessing thereof. Angels have meant more to me ever since. "The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" (Psa.34:7). Hebrews 1:14 says of the angels, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt.18:10). I believe in the "Guardian Angel" theory. I believe that God assigns an angel to each one of the elect, and that angel is with that one from the moment of birth through all of life. I believe that this angel watches over and ministers to the elect even before they are saved. I believe that even in the days of sin and rebellion, this angel watches over the elect one to which he is assigned. Who knows what it may be that this angel does for the elect, maybe even saving the physical life many times? This guardian angel stays with the elect one to whom he is assigned after salvation, all through life, performing many ministries on his behalf; and when that one comes to die, that angel will be standing by, and

other angels will come, and they will conduct that elect one to the third heaven, even into the presence of the Lord. One of the joys of heaven will be to meet and know this guardian angel, and to learn of the many things he did for us through our life time. I take this position about the angels of God.

I believe the angel was with Elijah as he grew up in Gilead, with him when he appeared before Ahab the first time, with him by the brook, with him at the widow's house, and with him on mount Carmel. That angel was always with Elijah. He watched over Elijah twenty-four hours a day all the days of his life. The fact that Elijah had not seen this angel until this time does not mean that the angel was not there, watching over Elijah and performing many things in his behalf. You and I may never see an angel this side of glory, but I verily believe that how ever many of God's elect are present in this service tonight - that many angels (maybe more) are present also. God's elect are never, never alone. There is this guardian angel (and maybe many more) always present.

What did this angel do? He baked a cake of bread and got some water for Elijah. My, what a lowly task for a mighty angel! We read in II Kings 19:35 how an angel went and killed one hundred and eighty-five thousand of God's enemies in one night. Do you suppose that Elijah's angel said, "I would like to be that angel. I would like to kill that many of God's enemies in one night. I would like to do some large and glorious thing. I don't want to make Elijah a cake of bread and get him some water. What kind of task is that for a powerful angel to be doing? Some old lady can do that?" Do you suppose the angel said something like this? I don't. I believe that the angels of God delight to do whatever task God assigns them. I do not believe they grumble or complain. The big and wonderful things that angels do and the humble, insignificant things they do; I believe are all the same to them. I believe they delight to do the will of God, whatever that will might be. Would it not be a great thing if you and I were always willing to do whatever God would have us do?

Would you not like to preach a sermon and have three thousand souls saved as the result of that one sermon? Oh, how wonderful that would be. But how about sitting by a well and telling one woman about the water of life and winning her to Jesus Christ? Would you be willing to do that? How about preaching one sermon, having no converts, and being put to a violent death following that sermon. How about that? Friend, you and I need to imitate the angels of God in being willing to do whatever the Lord would have us do.

Now I ask you a question. I do not know that angels receive rewards - I suppose they do. If they do, which angel will receive the greatest reward - the one who fixed bread and water for Elijah, the one who told Mary of her soon bearing the Saviour, or the one who slew the Assyrian army in one night? Tell me now. I will tell you that each one would receive the same reward. Each one was doing what God told him to

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ELIJAH

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do. Each one was being obedient to the Lord, and this is what rewards are based on - not the size of the task given you, but your faithfulness in obeying God in whatever He tells you to do. Remember that the angel did not grumble when commanded to get Elijah some water and fix him a cake of bread. Remember when you are performing some little deed of kindness for one of God's children, that you are in the company of angels. Just be kind. Do a kindly deed for one of God's children, and you will in no wise lose your reward (Matt. 10:42).

What else did God do for this fallen giant? Food and water was provided, further sleep was granted, and then food and water was again provided. Here we see God's love, tenderness, and compassion for one of His fallen children. Oh, the mercy of our heavenly Father! I want you to think a little about the Lord's dealing here and His chastisement. When we disobey the Lord, we are always in danger of His chastisement. In God's punishment of the unsaved, He is always very strict and punishes exactly according to the sins committed.

In chastisement, God does not always act in strict justice, for this is an act of His Fatherly grace. I think that each one of us will admit that God has never given us as many and as severe whippings as we have deserved. If a sinner goes to hell he will suffer eternally and exactly according to the sins of his life. God's chastisement of His children is a different matter. He may chastise one more than another when the offense is the same. He may whip one, and not whip another. God is absolutely sovereign in the chastisement of His children.

I have had this experience, and likely you have also. I have done something wrong. I was expecting chastisement. I thought, "Boy, I am going to really get it now." Yet, He did not. He spoke kindly to me. He dealt lovingly, sweetly, and patiently with me. He did something specially nice for me. He blessed me in some special way. And this just broke my heart, and I hurried to Him in repentance and confession. I think that this is how God dealt with Elijah at this time.

Do you remember Peter's terrible three-time denial of the Lord? Oh, Peter is going to really get it for this! What did the Lord do? He turned and looked on Peter. Oh, what love must have been in that look. What did Peter do? That look of love just broke his heart and he went out and wept bitterly. Then, consider the Lord's compassionate dealing with Peter on the sea of Galilee in John 21. How kindly, graciously, lovingly, did the Lord deal with Peter. Do you see what I am trying to say. There is the doctrine of chastisement. God can be very severe with chastisement, even to sickness and death. We should always keep this doctrine in mind. There is also the kindness and compassion of our Lord that often moves Him to forego the chastisement we deserve and to deal with us in tender mercy and loving kindness. That is how the Lord dealt with Elijah at this time.

The last thing that God does for Elijah at this time is to give him strength for the journey.

The angel says to him, "Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee" (I Ki. 19:7). So far as I know, that journey was in self will. So far as I know, God never commanded Elijah to go to mount Horeb. Yet God graciously gave him strength for the journey. My friend, it is only in the strength that God graciously gives us that we can go on the path of backsliding. It was strength from God that enabled Jonah to flee from the Lord as he did. All that we do must be done in the strength given by God. How sad it is when we use God's gift of life and strength in going our own way instead of walking in the way He has told us.

Oh, what a sermon could be preached on "The Journey is Too Great for Thee." The journey through life is too much. The journey through one day is too much. The journey through trials, tribulations, and troubles is too much. The journey through sorrow and suffering is too much. Even and especially, the journey of obedience and service for God is too great for our strength alone. We need to look to God for strength for the journey.

What wonderful, strength-giving food that must have been. The Bible says that Elijah went forty days and forty nights in the strength of that food. You will say to me, "Preacher a man cannot go forty days and nights on the strength of one meal." He can if God is in it. He can if God gives to the meal that kind of strength. Friend, when you get strength from one meal to the next, it is God who gives it to you. It is God who causes that meal to strengthen and nourish you. It was God who put that nourishment in the food to start with. It was God who adapted your body so that it could gain strength and nourishment from food. If God does not want you to have another meal for forty days and nights, He is well able to make one meal last you that long. Oh, the compassion and power of our God.

We have studied how God lifted a fallen giant. Are you not glad that God does not leave His fallen children to themselves? When they are going the wrong way, when they are doing what they should not, when they are not where they should be: God does not leave them to themselves and just forget about them. He does not wash His hands of them. Oh, no, He has compassion on them and treats them kindly. He restores them and sets them on their way again. There came other days when God blessed Elijah and used him further in His service. Isn't that wonderful? What if God did not forgive us when we failed? What if God did not restore the fallen? What if God did not use us after and in spite of failures. He would not use us at all, would He? One could preach a great sermon on how God has used fallen giants after restoring them. God has done mighty things through backsliders who got straightened out. God has done mighty things through those who had previously failed. Thank God for this lesson about "The Lifting Up of a Fallen Giant"! God bless you.

It is comparatively easy to trust God while the sun is shining; the test comes when all is dark. But a faith that does not rest on God in adversity as well as in prosperity is not the faith of God's elect. We must have faith to live by, true faith, if we would have faith to die by. --Arthur Pink

GAP

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the Word of God with the thoughts of men. Such accommodations can only be made with the greatest of danger to the text of Scripture and therefore to the souls of men. (copied from "The Angelus" April, 1989 issue).

SIN II

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this, "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee". As for man, read Ecclesiastes 7:29, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright. (3) Sin is not the necessary result of finiteness. Infinity belongs only to God. (4) Sin had its origin in a principle of negation, which means that it is not a result of any positive force.

Both angels and men were created good, but not immutable and independently good. This would have made them equal with God. God alone is immutable and independent. Moral beings were and are dependent upon the grace of God. Men and angels are not sufficient unto themselves. A sustaining power must continually go out from God, if moral creatures continue as created.

In Acts 17:28 we read, "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being".

My friends, without Him, all living things could not exist. It is His sustaining power that keeps us. This sustaining power is of grace and not of debt. God could exercise this grace or not, as it pleased Him. He could have prevented sin from entering into His creation, if He so desired. He kept the elect angels from sinning by His power. The Apostle Paul, in I Timothy 5:21, speaks of elect angels.

In no way can we say that because God made Adam a free moral agent that He could not have prevented him from sinning. God kept Abimelech, King of Gerar in Abraham's day, from sinning against Him on one occasion. Listen to Genesis 20:6, "And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me. Therefore suffered I thee not to touch her".

So sin had its origin in the withholding of that grace necessary to sustain moral beings in a state of holiness. Certainly, if God had not permitted sin, there could not have been a display of some of His most glorious attributes. There could not have been any display of mercy, for mercy must have an object of misery.

We would not know of His holy anger, wrath, and hatred, for these are the exercises of justice and holiness against sin.

There would have not been the display of the most beloved love story of any time, the giving of His Son to die for His enemies. Christ was punished instead of sinners, that He might redeem those whom He chose from the beginning. We read in II Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace,

which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began".

Thanks be to God for loving and choosing, for none would escape eternal damnation. Surely, it is not too much to say that God permitted sin that He might use it for His Glory. Read Ephesians 1:6, "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved".

Let us look at the first sinner. Sin started in the beautiful place of Heaven. Of Lucifer, son of the morning, it is said in Isaiah 14:12-14, "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".

This is the record of the first sinner, a created being, saying to himself, "I will be greater than my Creator."

Today, most of the civilized world see Lucifer as a red-dressed comic character, with a tail. This is not the truth, for Lucifer was created most beautiful, and he is still that way.

Ezekiel, by the inspiration of God, tells us in his Book, Ezekiel 28:17, "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground".

God hates sin, because it is an abominable thing before a thrice-Holy Deity. Most people have a woefully inadequate conception of sin. Men who are not covered by the righteous blood of Christ, along with the sinning angels, will be cast from the presence of God, to eternal damnation in the lake of fire.

Sin, in the human race, came through the first man. Listen to Romans 5:12, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned". Adam disobeyed God's Law and plunged mankind into sin.

We today, by nature, partake of the nature of Adam. Hear Romans 5:19, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous".

Adam was the head of the human race. This headship was both natural and federal---natural by the principle of generation---federal by divine appointment.

(1) Adam was the natural father, or head of the race. We read in I Corinthians 15:45, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made of living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit". Like begets like. The child inherits from the parent. They inherited his moral depravity and physical weakness. Adam's nature was imparted to his posterity.

(2) Adam was the federal head of the race. He represents the race in the covenant of works. The federal headship explains why Adam's sin was imputed to his posterity, "For by one man's disobedience many were made

sinners". Adam was acting for the whole race and what he did was charged to all of his descendants. Infants die because of Adam's sin, or they die for no reason at all, since they have not sinned personally. Listen to Romans 5:14, "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that have not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come".

If Adam did not represent infants in respect to sin, then Christ did not represent them in respect to salvation. If they were not guilty with Adam's guilt, they could not be righteous with Christ's righteousness. Babies go to heaven, not on the grounds of being innocent, but on the ground of the blood of Christ. If Christ had not died, the whole human race, infants and all, would be doomed forever. There will be none of Adam's progeny in heaven, except those redeemed by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The first and last Adam: Jesus is called in I Corinthians 15:45, "the last Adam". "...the last Adam was made a quickening spirit". In verse 47 we read, "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven".

Christ is called the last Adam, because there are two representative men, the first Adam, and the Christ of God and of Calvary. God deals with all men through these two men and our destiny depends on which of these two we have our standing in before God.

Believers are accepted in the Beloved, as stated in Ephesians 1:6, "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved". Praise God for this acceptance in Christ Jesus, for we would be lost and damned forever but for Him.

There are two aspects or branches of sin. I know this does not agree with some teaching that is now present. (1) That which consists of the guilt of some deed committed. (2) Inherent corruption (or inherited), or depravity of nature contracted by that guilt.

The sinner's standing is that of guilt before the law of God; his state of depravity or corruption of nature. There are teachings that mankind is getting better and better as he is educated. That is simply not so.

God destroyed everybody, with the exception of eight souls, with the flood. He destroyed the large and wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. He did this because of their gross sins.

Today, sodomites and other pervers have respectability in our society. There is, according to them, nothing sinful in their perversion. My friends, God destroyed in the past, and He will destroy again, because of the awful abominations before Him.

There are two things which resulted from Adam's first sin: (1) He was charged with guilt and tried to cover it with an apron of fig leaves, and also was cast from the garden by a thrice-Holy God. (2) He lost the likeness of God in holiness and became corrupt.

Now, which of these branches of sin, or did both of them come from Adam? Some say the guilt of sin is imputed, hence their baptism of infants, lest they should

CAN YOU IMAGINE? MARY HAVING AN ABORTION?

"...that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:20-21).

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go to hell. Others say the corruption of nature was imparted. I believe both branches of sin were derived from Adam and are imparted and inherited. Sinner friends, the only way to stand justified before God, is to be saved by God's good Grace. May God bless

these words is my prayer.

Editor's note: I do not agree with the gap theory concerning Genesis 1:1-2 as implied in the first two paragraphs of this article. I do admit that many of our brethren accept this theory. I do not consider this a test of fellowship. Still, I am strongly opposed to this theory. See article on this theory elsewhere in this issue.

STUDIES IN I PETER 3:1-17

by Clyde Everman

Note from the editorial mistake department: This article should have been printed prior to the last three articles on I Peter by Clyde Everman. Somehow it got misplaced and overlooked for a while. My apology to the very able writer of this series and to our readers. Please forgive me.

"LIKEWISE, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear" (3:1,2).

"Likewise" or in the same manner as the example given of Christ as He was submissive to God the Father, Christian wives are to be submissive to their own husbands. The word "subjection" is a military term, "to place under rank". God has ordained that the husband is to be the head of the home, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church..." (Eph. 5:23). This does not mean he is to be a dictator, but in love and kindness, under the authority of Christ, he is to be the head of the wife.

The wife is to be in subjection because God has commanded it. This does not mean that she is inferior to her husband. They both were made of the same basic material by God. He gave both Adam and Eve dominion over all things (Gen. 1:28). In Christ Jesus they are one (Gal. 3:28). Even though the husband may be unsaved, the Christian wife is still commanded to be under subjection to him. In being in subjection to the husband who is unsaved, the wife may be a means of winning him to Christ. The phrase, "conversation of the wives" means much more than talk. It means their whole conduct, their way of life, being in subjection would be included in their conduct. The thought is that even though the husband will not listen to the words of the wife, instead of "preaching" to him "without the word", it may be that he will be won by observing her "chaste conversation". The word "chaste" means the wife's conduct is to be pure in all respects. The husband may not listen to what she says but he will "behold", which means to

observe closely that which she does. Coupled with fear may mean fear of God or it may mean a proper respect and reverence for the husband, "...and the wife see that she reverence her husband" (Eph. 5:33).

"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price" (Verses 3, 4).

The apostle Peter is describing what the well-dressed Christian wife is to wear. First, he says it is not what the wife wears on her body, how she fixes her hair, or the gold rings, bracelets, chains, etc., that she may wear, that he is talking about. In other words, what a person wears is not positive proof that he or she loves the Lord and is obedient to Him. We are told that what is in the heart is what counts with God. "Whose adorning---let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price". Peter is not saying that God is against the wives adorning themselves so as to appear attractive to others by the clothes she wears, the way she fixes her hair, or the jewelry she wears. We need to only look at things of nature to see that God is not opposed to the things of beauty. Look at the things around you which God has made, the many colored flowers in the spring and summer, the leaves in the fall, the birds, the animals, and we see that God made this old world a beautiful place before man corrupted it. The Garden of Eden must have been a thing of beauty before Adam's fall. As to the wives dress, I quote from "Wuest's Word Studies of First Peter", "While the Christian woman must not depend upon adornment put on from the outside to make herself pleasing to the eyes of others, that does not mean that she is not to dress with neatness and good taste, or that she should be austere and drab in her appearance or so plain in her apparel that she is conspicuous. True Christianity is something joyful, and expresses itself in color and neatness and good taste. It does not mean that a Christian woman should not pay careful attention to the details of

her apparel. That should be one of her chief concerns. It does mean that in selecting the manner in which she shall wear her hair, in choosing the jewelry and the clothing she may wish to put on, she should be guided by the principle that her chief and basic adornment must be the Lord Jesus, and that whatever she may choose of wearing apparel, of jewelry, and hair adornment should be in keeping with the sweetness, simplicity, and purity of the Lord Jesus".

"For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement" (Verses 5, 6).

"For after this manner", in the same way the wives are to now adorn themselves, being in subjection unto their husbands, is the same way the "holy women" of old time adorned themselves. These women, whose faith was in God, lived holy lives, lives that were in the sight of God of great price. It was a habit of life with them to adorn themselves with a meek and quiet spirit, being in subjection to their husbands. "Even as Sara obeyed Abraham", gives us an example of a wife who recognized the authority of her husband and acknowledged the same by calling him lord. The term, "whose daughters ye are" means that the wives who adorn themselves as Sarah did, would become her daughters. Someone has said that as Abraham is the father of the faithful (Rom. 4:16), Sarah must be the mother of the obedient. The words, "as long as ye do well", carries the meaning, "if the whole course of your life is in doing good". The word "amazement" can be translated "terror" or "alarm". The meaning seems to be as long as the wives live lives doing good they need have no fear of being disobedient unto God.

"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" (Verse 7).

"Likewise". There are some things for the husbands to heed and obey. While they are to be the head of the family, yet they have a great responsibility in the fact that they are the head of the family. They must provide, protect, and love their wives. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;" (Eph. 5:25). The Husbands are to realize that the wives are of a weaker nature physically and should take that into consideration in caring for them. They must be aware that they are "heirs together of the grace of life". If both have faith in Christ, both have eternal life. Instead of lording it over the wife, fighting and quarreling with her, if the husband treats her with love, honor, and respect, his prayers will not be hindered, that is he can pray with the assurance that God will hear his prayers.

"Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for

railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing" (Verses 8, 9).

"Finally", to sum up all that has been said concerning the subject of Christian conduct, "be ye all of one mind", or minding the same things. We are to mind the things of God. "Let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). Like as Christ had compassion upon us, we are to "have compassion one of another". As Christ loved us and gave His life for us we are to "love as brethren". Christ said, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12). As Christ was pitiful (tender hearted) toward us, we are to be the same toward our brethren. To be courteous is to be humble as Christ humbled Himself. In verse 9 we are told things, we, as Christians, are not to do. There are three ways men can respond to others. One is to return evil for good, which is Satan's way. Another way is return good for good and evil for evil which is men's way. The other way is to return good for evil which is God's way and is the way His children are to respond to evil against them. Christ said, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father--" (Matt. 5:44, 45).

"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it" (Verses 10, 11).

What we are told here is that if we expect to enjoy life and have a happy time here on earth, good days of peace and fellowship with God, we must guard our tongue and refrain from saying things of evil and speak only the truth. "No guile" means no deceit, nothing that would lead others astray. The word "eschew evil" means to shun, to avoid evil. It means more than just to avoid, it means, "to avoid something because you despise and loathe it." We are not only to seek peace but we are to ensue, follow after it, that is, practice it. The thought is if we expect to live a long peaceful life, we must watch our tongue and have a peaceful spirit, seeking peace with others.

"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (verse 12).

This is a quote by Peter from Psalm 34:15, 16. The Lord is Jehovah, the God Who has made a covenant with His people. This is the One Who watches over His own to protect and shield from all evil. He is ever ready to hear our prayers. While His eyes are on all men, it is with a loving protective eye He watches over His children. While He has a watchful eye over those who are righteous, His face is "against them that do evil". Those who do evil can

expect chastisement from God. If we live lives of obedience to our Lord, the One whose eye is ever on us, the question is, "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" (Verse 13). The apostle Paul states, "...If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31). No one, not even the devil, can do to us anything except that which God will permit. And even that will work for our good (Rom. 8:28). Verse 14 tells us, "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled:" If we suffer for righteousness sake we should be happy. It is said in Acts 5:41 that after Peter and the other apostles had been beaten, they were "...rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name". Instead of being afraid and troubled we are to, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:" (Verse 15). To sanctify the Lord God means to set Him apart so as to worship Him as Lord of your heart, as Lord of our lives. Doing this we should be ready to give an answer to any one who asks for a reason for our hope. What is the basis for our hope? We may have lived a good moral life, we may be members of a Baptist church, we may have done the best we could, yet none of this is a basis for our hope of heaven. The only basis for our hope is that Christ died for our sins on the cross and that He rose from the tomb the third day. "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). Christ and He alone is our hope.

"Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing" (Verses 16, 17).

"Having a good conscience: is to have made Christ the Lord and Master of one's life. If one has done this even those who speak evil falsely against you shall be put to shame by your good conversation, your manner of life or behaviour as you live it in Christ. We are told that it is better to suffer for that which we are not guilty than to suffer for that which we are guilty. The "if the will of God be so" tells us that it is only by the permissive will of God that we suffer. No one can do harm to the child of God except God permit that one to do so. Satan could do to Job only that which God permitted him to do. This is true of all the children of God. Remember, God is in complete control of all things. What the three Hebrew youths told king Nebuchadnezzar, every Christian can say. "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king" (Dan. 3:17).

Two friends met, and after a chat one said to the other: "Come and have a round of golf on Sunday morning."

"Oh, no; I have to attend service at church."

"Well," replied his friend, "I do not know what your religion is, but you keep it to yourself. I have asked you to play golf half a dozen times, but you have never invited me to your church."