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THINGS THAT CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE DELIVERED FROM

Galatians 1:1-4

by John M. Alber, Pastor
Introduction.

"PAUL, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our father." (Gal. 1:1-4).

Beloved, before one can be delivered, they first must know the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour. Therefore, on that one account, a honest genuine look at what we becomes most necessary. The Old Testament prophet, Isaiah wrote, "All we like sheep have gone

astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all"



John M. Alber

(Isa. 53:6). The Apostle Paul tells us that we were lost sinners and that without strength, ungodly, the enemy of God - "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous

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WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE CHURCH? - RUN BY A WOMAN

Chapter 4

by John R. Gilpin, Sr.

I am sure that every one will agree that there is something wrong with the churches of today. Even in Jesus' day there was wrong in the church He established, for Judas Iscariot, it's treasurer was a thief. From that day till this, we have never had a perfect church, for all churches are made up of imperfect human beings; and even today regardless of the claims of some who say that

they live absolutely sinlessly and perfectly, there isn't a church in all the world but what there is something wrong in it.

Human judgment would give varied answers as to the wrong. However, only heaven's judgment is to be trusted. It is because of this that we turn to the Scriptures for our answer to the question, "What's wrong with the church?"

Ephesus, the largest of these seven churches, had left her first

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John R. Gilpin, Sr.

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

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STUDIES IN ACTS

by Willard Willis

"And all the people saw him walking and praising God" (Acts 3:9). Has anyone ever seen you walking and praising God? Did he have more cause to do so than we?

"And they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement



Willard Willis

at that which had happened unto him" (Acts 3:10). Here, then, was another Goliath which had been slain. Here was another lions' den from which God's child had been delivered. Here was another mountain which had been cast into the sea, the result being that all who observed were filled with wonder and amazement. This man was born for the very purpose for which he is now praising God. He, in fact, had been laid at the Beautiful gate day after day so that there could be no doubt as to who he was and what had happened to him. There was absolutely no reason for anyone not to ascribe this miracle to Jesus Christ of Nazareth. The only unbelievers would be those whose hearts were set on rebellion.

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MORMONISM: ITS ORIGIN, CHARACTERISTICS AND DOCTRINES - Part 2

by R. G. McNiece
The Doctrines of the Mormon System

All that has been said under the preceding division about the characteristics of Mormonism, has been a setting forth of its false and anti-scriptural teachings on the four important subjects of prophecy, revelation, Divine authority of the bogus priesthood, and the bogus apostles. The Mormon church does not publish its peculiar teachings and beliefs. If it did, it would gain no more converts; it waits until its con-

verts are thoroughly entrapped before its peculiar doctrines are disclosed. Its whole system is carried on, so far as new converts are concerned, by means of the most systematic deception. Its missionaries wear black frock coats and white cravats so that the people are deceived into supposing that they are Christian ministers.

In the spring of 1844, when the Mormon church was being severely condemned all over the country, John Wentworth, who was publishing a paper in Chicago, asked Joseph Smith to

state what the Mormons believe. Smith and some of his associates put their heads together, and sent out thirteen articles as a summary of Mormon belief. It is simply another piece of deception for these articles do not contain one doctrine peculiar to Mormonism, but are rather a summary of doctrines held by the Christian denominations. And yet they stand today as representing Mormon belief. When we come to test these articles by the official books of

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 3)

INTERCOMMUNION: INCONSISTENT AND UNSCRIPTURAL

Chapter 7

False Pretensions Exposed

by J. R. Graves

Pedobaptists and Campbellites make a great boast of their superior Christian liberality, and appeal to their open communion principles and practice in proof of it; and the world, and most Baptists, even, believe their pretensions are really valid, and Baptists alone unscripturally rigid and "close," and, therefore, illiberal and "bigoted." Now, the real fact is, that all Pedobaptist denominations are, by their very principles and their statutes, their standards and their practice, more strict than even those Baptist churches who



J.R. Graves

observe the Supper as a strictly church ordinance, as set forth in this book--for they never give an open-communion invitation to Baptists and Campbellites, or to each other, except in open violation of those principles and laws which they have, by solemn oath or pledge before God, bound themselves to observe; and, more than this, in their practice, they do not, and dare not, commune with

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

"Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit" (Mk. 3:28-30)

Before I preached this sermon at my church, I preached a sermon on "Big Sins" showing that the man most guilty before God could be saved by the grace and power of God. I then preached a sermon on

"Little Sins" showing that no matter how little a man had sinned, he still needed the salvation of the Lord, without which he would go to eternal hell. I then preached this sermon in connection with the other two. My purpose in these sermons has been to encourage and exhort the unsaved to repent of sin and believe on Jesus Christ and thus obtain eternal salvation. I will bring this in again at the close of this message.

The sin mentioned in my text, and which I refer to as "The Unpardonable Sin" is mentioned also in Matthew 12:31-32 and in Luke 12:10. I do not believe this sin is

mentioned anywhere else in the Bible. I do not believe that Genesis 6:3 refers to this sin, but simply states that the Lord would not continue to strive with the men of that day, but that at the appointed time the flood would come and destroy them all except Noah and his family. Romans 1:24-28 does not refer to this sin, but simply refers to the fact of God's giving up the heathen world to the depths of sin and shame as they indulged in the lusts of depravity.

Hebrews 6:1-4 does not refer to this sin. That Scripture states the

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hypothetical position that if a saved person would lose his salvation, he could never be saved again; not that he could lose it, but stating security in a strong way. Hebrews 10:26-29 does not deal with this sin. These verses tell us that if one hears the gospel of Jesus Christ, willfully rejects it and continues in sin, there will never be another offering for sin; it is Christ or hell. I John 5:16 does not speak of the unpardonable sin. This verse tells of the sin or the continuing in a sin by a child of God that God, according to the exercise of His sovereignty, punishes by the chastisement of physical death. I do not believe that the Bible refers to this unpardonable sin anywhere except in the above mentioned three Scriptures.

These Scriptures, especially as worded in the Matthew passage, do not support the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory. The words there, "it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come" do not mean that there are sins that can be forgiven in the world to come, but only emphasize the unpardonable character of the mentioned sin. Purgatory is a doctrine that was invented by the Roman Catholic Church in order to steal money from her members. I say "steal" advisedly, for taking money under false pretenses is everywhere regarded as thievery. When the Roman Catholic priest takes money from people, pretending that such money will shorten the time a

loved one will spend in purgatory, this is surely taking money under false pretenses. There is no purgatory from which a priest may deliver one earlier than otherwise. And if there were such a place, the priest could not shorten one's time there. No, these words cannot be properly or honestly used to support such a wicked and false doctrine.

This doctrine, in a perverted form, has been used to browbeat



Joe Wilson

sinner and push them into a profession of faith. How many times has the evangelist, during the invitation, warned the unsaved that, "If you don't get saved tonight, the Holy Spirit may leave you, quit striving with you, and you can never be saved." Such browbeating is not proper to a messenger of God. Doubtless, many have been frightened thus into a false profession.

The devil has used a perverted

form of this doctrine to terrify sinners and discourage them from even thinking about trusting Christ for salvation. He uses the false message of the preacher and puts into the mind of the sinner that he has committed the unpardonable sin and cannot be saved. The sinner is driven to despair by this.

A good way to find out what something does mean is to find out some things that it does not mean. I want to point out three great truths that are not in anywise affected by the doctrine of the unpardonable sin, whatever that sin is. All of the elect will be saved. Whatever the unpardonable sin is, not one of those elected to eternal salvation from before the world began, will commit this sin. All of the saved are saved forever. Whatever the unpardonable sin is, none of the saved will ever commit it. It will not affect their eternal security in Christ.

Anyone who wants to be saved, can be saved. Whatever the unpardonable sin is, it cannot change this wonderful truth. No one who wants to be saved has committed the unpardonable sin, whatever it is. Oh, I delight to preach the free offer of the gospel. Some sovereign grace people do not like this terminology, but I preach it anyway. In the gospel of Jesus Christ, eternal life is offered to all who hear that gospel. Men may oppose that term "free offer" all they will, but I will preach until my preaching days are over down

here that anyone, anywhere, anytime, who will repent of sin and believe on Jesus Christ will be eternally saved. If the Bible does not repeatedly teach this, then I am unable to understand what it teaches on this matter.

Now, let us look at some false explanations of what constitutes the unpardonable sin. I heard one preacher say that it was to deny the virgin birth. He said that Christ was conceived in the womb of the virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit, and for anyone to deny that would be to commit the unpardonable sin. I always wondered if he was really serious about this. I feel quite certain that there are many who have previously denied the virgin birth, who now gladly trust this virgin born one as their Saviour.

One favorite theory with many is that suicide is the unpardonable sin. They say that the one doing this would not have time to get forgiveness for this sin, and thus could not be saved. Now, I am sure that suicide is a sin. I do not think any of us will disagree on this. I suspect that the vast majority of those who commit suicide are unsaved sinners who go immediately into hell. But I feel very confident in saying that some Christians have committed suicide, that this does not at all affect their salvation, and they are now in heaven with the Lord. I do not desire to mitigate the sinfulness of this act, but I believe that some Christians have been so pressed

down by trial, persecution, and maybe sin, that they have, in a moment of despair, committed this act. We know that a person once saved is always saved; and this does happen, they do not lose salvation.

There are many who say that the unpardonable sin is to die without trusting Christ and thus go to hell. Of course, all who die without Christ go to hell, but to call this the unpardonable sin is a cop out. It is to refuse to really face the issue of the unpardonable sin. All who die without Christ go to hell, but all in hell did not commit this unpardonable sin.

There are those who say about the same thing by saying that unbelief is the unpardonable sin. The same remarks apply to this teaching. It is a cop out. Of course, one can die without ever believing in Christ is to go to hell, but this does not make this the unpardonable sin. Furthermore, all of us have been guilty of the sin of unbelief. We lived in much unbelief until that time we, by sovereign grace and effectual power, believed savingly in the Son of God.

Among those with whom I have been acquainted personally, or by hearing them preach, or by reading; the most prominent and popular opinion as to the unpardonable sin has been this: to resist the efforts of the Holy Spirit to save one until the Spirit quits trying and just lets that one go on.

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FROM THE EDITOR

I was at a conference recently. It was a great conference. The preaching was great. The fellowship was wonderful. The spirit of the conference (and this is so important) was sweet and precious. The following incident stands out to me as maybe the greatest personal blessing of the conference.

A preacher brother was at the conference. He stated to another preacher that he came to the conference prepared to not like Joe Wilson. I went to the conference already knowing that I did not like him. But we were both Christians. We both desired that the matter between us be straightened out. We were both submissive to the Holy Spirit as He led in the matter.

Well, we talked about the matter. We talked in a spirit of Christian love. Why, in only a matter of a few minutes the whole matter was resolved, we shook hands, and had good fellowship the rest of the conference. I hope that this will lead to a long fellowship between us, and maybe a working together somewhat in the service of the Lord; I believe this will be true.

I was so blessed by this. I am so happy about it. I have been thinking about it. I have been thinking about how this problem was settled between us. I have studied this. Maybe I have come up with some thoughts that would help in similar cases. I believe they would. I think we might apply these things to many similar situations; problems in the home, problems in a church, problems between churches, and problems between individuals. Many of these thoughts could apply to everyone, but I am thinking mainly of Christians. Let me give you some of the things that have come to mind as I have pondered this blessed experience.

There must be a desire to have the problem settled (I will not mention it each time, but I mean both parties must do the things I suggest). If one is satisfied and content with a problem between him and another, if one does not desire to have the problem peaceably settled; then nothing can be done. There are some who have such hard feelings that they just do not desire to have matters reconciled with another. God forbid, but there may be some who are happy that the problem exists and do not want it resolved. If this be the case, the party who does desire reconciliation must just let the matter go for the present - except to pray about it. Reconciliation cannot be forced; it must come from those who truly desire it.

There must be some humility. Pride is a great destroyer of peace and fellowship between men. I doubt that two opposing parties will ever be reconciled until and unless there is at least some humility on both parts. Might I just add that a failure to reconcile between believers always indicates that there is pride on the part of one or both. Oh, humility is a great inducement and help to reconciliation.

There must be an honest facing of the problem. Reconciliation will never come about when one or the other just will not honestly face the problem. I find this to be a great problem with many Christians - just to honestly face the dividing situation. In connection with this, let me say that there must be total honesty on the part of the parties involved. There can be no reconciliation without this totally honest dealing with the problem and with one another.

There must be a willingness on the part of both parties to listen to the other. I cannot reconcile a problem with my brother if I want to say all that I have to say, then am not willing to hear what he has to say. There should be a full, courteous, patient hearing of what each one has

to say.

There must be a real effort on the part of each party to believe what the other party says. Sometimes, when a brother has lied repeatedly about the matter, it is difficult to believe what he says. But the effort should be made. And sometimes one must act as if what his brother says is so, even if he does have serious doubts. I do not mean he is to be a hypocrite, but that he must be willing to deal with the problem as if what the brother said is true. In the above mentioned case, I brought up a point that had justifiably caused me to have some hard feelings. The brother said that he did not remember it being that way. I accepted his statement at face value. This had much to do with our reconciliation. Had I refused to do this, and insisted on calling the brother a liar on this point, we could have gone no further. I believe he told me the truth. In efforts at reconciliation, one should, not accuse the other of lying except upon absolutely conclusive evidence.

There must be communication between the involved parties. Without this, reconciliation is an absolute impossibility. A man and wife have an argument. They will not communicate with one another over it. The matter will not be resolved; it will only get worse. This applies in such cases. Communication is absolutely essential to reconciliation. When one refuses to communicate with another about a problem between them, it just proves that he does not desire reconciliation. In the above example, the brother and I talked, and in a few minutes the problem was settled. Praise the Lord!

There must be love. Oh, this is the answer. It is, in fact, the answer to most of our problems. Can I truthfully say that I love a brother if I am not willing, even desirous, to be reconciled with him? Can I? Love for the Lord should cause us to do all in our power to resolve all our problems and have sweet and blessed fellowship with one another. How can I have close fellowship with my Lord when I just will not even try to do so with my brother? Love for the cause of Christ would move me to do anything reasonable and right to have reconciliation and restored fellowship. Oh, how the cause of Christ suffers over unreconciled differences between brothers and churches! Churches, totally innocent and not at all involved, suffer over the unreconciled differences of others. Such things ought not to be. Certainly, love for my brother will move me to do anything I can to be reconciled with him; I say again, there must be love.

Well, I praise God for the incident described at the beginning of this editorial. I look for much good to come from this. I know that I have been blessed by this. I feel that my brother has been blessed by it. I know that others at the conference are blessed thereby. I believe the work of the Lord and the cause of Christ will benefit from this reconciliation. I hate to have hard feelings. I love to get rid of them when I do have them. Oh, it is like the lifting of a heavy burden. Breaking up with a long time friend in Christ, or even one barely known, is hard to do. It greatly hurts the spiritually sensitive soul. No one enjoys it. But making up is so wonderful. It is almost like falling in love (I speak reverently) all over again. I still feel in my heart the joy of the reconciliation with which I began this. Many people benefit from a making up. The parties making up benefit. Many others also benefit. And above all, the Lord is pleased with such (How can He be pleased with all our disputes, breaking up, quarrels, and divisions?). Reconciliations. The work and cause of Christ benefits when divided brothers are reconciled. Yours for restored fellowships.

UNPARDONABLE

(Continued from Page 2)

hell. The sinner is told that the Holy Spirit is trying to save him, that if he does not let the Holy Spirit save him, the Spirit may quit trying, leave him alone, never bother him again, and let him go to hell. This is stated in many different ways. It is called the unpardonable sin. However it is not specified and detailed as to just what and when it might be. The sinner is warned of how dangerous it is to resist the Spirit, that this might be the last time the Spirit will try to save him, and he will then have committed this sin. It is left up to the Spirit (they do give Him a little bit) as to how many times He will try with each individual.

It is called, "Crossing God's deadline." The sinner is told that somewhere on his life's pathway, God had made a line. None but God knows where that line is. If the sinner crosses that line, he has committed the unpardonable sin and can never be saved. He may cross it without knowing that he is about to, or has crossed it. Some preachers have even come up with "God's Three Deadlines." I don't know what the three are, but I suspect that the other two are as false as the one.

The sinner is warned against sinning away his day of grace. God has given him so much time as a "day of grace", and if he is not saved within that period of time, he can never be saved. The sinner is told, "Jesus is knocking at your heart's door. You won't let Him in. If you don't let Him in, He may at any time quit knocking and walk away, and you can never be saved." The sinner is told, "The Holy Spirit is trying with all His might to save you. You won't let Him save you (poor little weak holy spirit). If don't let him save you. He might at any time quit trying, and then you can never be saved."

Noel Smith (He knows better now), told us that hell is a monument to the failure of the Triune God. He said that God did all He could to save those in hell, and that He failed. Oh, my friend, how different is the God of the Bible from the God these men preach. Who is this Holy Spirit who is trying to save all of mankind, but mean old man won't let Him have His Way? Who is this Holy Spirit?

As I said, this is the most popular doctrine of what constitutes the unpardonable sin. It is based upon and connected with many other false teachings. I have often said that heresy runs in packs, and this certainly illustrates my point. This false explanation of the unpardonable sin is based on the following: 1. God loves everyone and wants to see them saved. 2. Christ died and paid for the sins of everyone so that they could be saved. 3. The Holy Spirit is trying with all His might to save everyone.

Let me show you some of the absurdities of this teaching. The Holy Spirit can't do what He wants to do. My friend, the Holy Spirit is God. The Holy Spirit is all powerful. He can do anything He wants to do, and this includes saving sinners. According to this teaching, man is bigger and more powerful than God. God can't do anything except what man will let Him do. This is well nigh blasphemy as to its false teachings about God.

I give you two Scriptures to off set these false doctrines. "Thy

people shall be willing in the day of thy power..." (Psa.110:3). Does this sound like God can't save whom He wants to save? "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me..." (Jn.6:37). Now, put this Bible truth against the heresies of men as to God saving whom He desires to save.

Well, what is the unpardonable sin? Mark 3:30 explains it. It even tells us that it explains it. Note the word "Because." This tells us why Jesus had spoken of the unpardonable sin. It tells us what they did in the doing of which, they committed the unpardonable sin.

Let us notice the contextual background, here and in the parallel Scriptures in Matthew 12:31-32 and Luke 12:10. Jesus had cast out demons. He did this in the power of the Holy Spirit. He did this to authenticate His claims to be the Messiah. The Pharisees would not accept this absolute and undeniable proof that Jesus was what He claimed to be because they were determined to not accept Him as the promised Messiah, Lord, and Saviour. They invented a horrible theory to get around the evidence so plainly given. They said that Jesus had the devil and that He cast out devils by the power of and in league with the prince of the devils. They attributed the works of the Spirit in the ministry of Jesus Christ to the devil. In doing this, they committed the unpardonable sin. The unpardonable sin was the sin of those Pharisees in attributing the work of the Spirit in and through Christ to the devil, by saying, "He hath an unclean spirit." Once more, this is the unpardonable sin.

Can just anyone commit this sin? Are we willing to say that anyone who attributes any work of the Spirit to the devil has committed this sin? I think not. The Holy Spirit inspired the Bible. The Bible teaches once saved always saved. Holy Roller preachers and some others teach that this doctrine is of the devil; I have heard this said many a time. Does this mean that they have committed the unpardonable sin? I think not. John Wesley said that the God of election and predestination was his devil. Did he thus commit the unpardonable sin? I would not say so.

Let's go back to Mark 3:30, which I have said tells us what this sin is. Note the word "they" in that verse. It is not just anyone who says this. It is those people who knew somewhat of the Word of God, who had seen Christ's miracles, who knew that the evidence was all there that Jesus was the Messiah, who absolutely refused to receive Him as such, and who invented this explanation of His miracles. They were the ones who committed the unpardonable sin by saying, "He hath an unclean spirit." It is not just anyone who says this who commits this sin.

Now note the word "He" in this verse. The words "Because," "they," and "He" in this verse will explain to us what the unpardonable sin is. This sin was a sin against the work of the Spirit in and through Christ during His earthly ministry.

Can this sin be committed today? No, I don't think so; because Christ is not here today on earth doing miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit. This sin was limited to certain persons and to a certain time and to a specific situation. I do not believe that many people

have ever committed it. I do not believe anyone can commit it today.

There is not a man living on the face of this earth who has committed this sin, or who can commit this sin. Oh, I do not want to lessen any part of the Word of God. I do want to be true to that Word. I do not want to make sin look any less than the vile, black, horrible thing that it really is. I do not want to lessen the thrust of any warning in the Bible. I do not want to blunt the sharp edge of any portion of the Word of God. Sin is awful. Sin is terrible. Sin will send you to hell except you repent and believe the gospel.

I return to my beginning. I preached this as one of three connected sermons. I preached these sermons to exhort and encourage sinners to trust Jesus Christ as Saviour. I preached on "Big Sins" to show that any sinner, no matter how many or how terrible his sins, could be saved by the grace and power of God. I preached on "Little Sins" to show that no matter how little one had sinned, he still must be saved or go to hell. I preached on "The Unpardonable Sin" to show that there is no man living today who is guilty of this sin. I preached these three sermons to show that any sinner who wants to be saved, can be saved. I say this to any who read this message. If you want to be saved, you can be. Big sinners can be saved. Little sinners need to be saved. No one has committed an unpardonable sin and can't be saved. If you want to be saved, you can be. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

MORMONISM

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Mormonism, we find they are thoroughly deceiving. Let us take up the first six or seven of these pretended articles of belief, and see how misleading they are.

"Article I: We believe in God the eternal Father, and in His Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost."

1. By God the eternal Father, the Mormon officials mean Adam. (For convenience we will use the following abbreviations: B. of M. for Book of Mormon; D. & C. for Doctrine and Covenants; P.G.P. for Pearl of Great Price; Comp. for Compendium of Mormon Doctrine; Key. for Pratt's Key to Theology; J. of D. for Journal of Discourse--volumes of Mormon Sermons; and M.C. for Mormon Catechism). Brigham Young taught that Adam was promoted to be the god of this world: "He (Adam) is our Father and our God, and the only God"

2. This Adam-god is a polygamist. "When our Father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him" (Brigham Young, J. of D., 1,50).

3. The Mormon officials teach that those who build up large polygamous establishments on earth, will be promoted to be gods in the heavenly world, and will rule over kingdoms.

Take this heathen teaching of Joseph Smith: "God Himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted Man (in other words, simply a big Mormon)...And you have got to learn how to be gods yourselves, the same as all gods have done before you" (J. of D., VI.4; Comp. 283).

4. It will be seen that Mormonism believes in many gods. "Are there more gods than one? Yes, many" (Catechism).

5. These gods continue to have children forever. "Each god, through his wife or wives, raises up a numerous family of sons and daughters...for each father and mother will be in a condition to multiply forever and ever" (The Seer, 1,37). This is directly contrary to our Saviour's teaching in Mark 12:25: "For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven."

It seems incredible that such dishonoring heathenish views of God, the Almighty Creator and Governor of the world, should be held and propagated in Christian America, by an organization calling itself "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints."

6. They teach that the Holy Spirit is a kind of ethereal substance diffused through space. "The purest, most refined and subtle of all these substances (such as electricity, galvanism, magnetism)...is that substance called the Holy Spirit" (Key, p.39).

How refreshing to turn to the Divine Word and read its convincing and authoritative teachings about God. We read in Genesis 1:1: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"; in Deuteronomy 6:4: "Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD"; in Psalm 104:1: "...O LORD my God, thou art very great; Thou art clothed with honor and majesty"; in Isaiah 45:5: "I am the LORD, and there is none else..."; in John 14:26: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." The Holy Spirit, then, is a Divine person, and not an "ethereal substance."

Article II: "We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgressions."

But that is very different from holding that Adam did not transgress the law of God. Here is the teaching of the Mormon Catechism: "Was it necessary that Adam should partake of the forbidden fruit? Yes, unless he had done so, he would not have known good and evil here, neither could he have had moral posterity."

"Is it proper for us to consider the transgressions of Adam and Eve as a grievous calamity, and that all mankind would have been infinitely more happy if the fall had not occurred? No, but we ought to consider the fall of our first parents as one of the great steps to eternal exaltation and happiness" (Catechism, chapter 8).

What saith the Scriptures: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8). "Wherefore as by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12). "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). "Article III: We believe that

through the atonement of Jesus Christ all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel."

1. That is, the bogus Mormon gospel. According to the official teachings of Mormonism, who was Jesus Christ? The son of Adam-god and Mary. "The Father has begotten Him in His own likeness. He was not begotten of the Holy Ghost. And who is the Father? He is the first of the human family" (Brigham Young, J. of D., I, 50).

2. Christ is represented as having plural wives. "We say it was Jesus Christ who was married (at Cana to the Mary and Martha), whereby He could see His seed before He was crucified" (Apostle O. Hyde, Sermon).

"The atonement made by Jesus Christ brought about the resurrection from the dead, and restored life" (B of M., Alma, 42:23). "Redemption from personal sins can only be obtained through obedience to the requirements of the gospel (Mormon ceremonies) and a life of good works."

"Will all the people be damned who are not Latter-Day Saints? Yes, and a great many of them except they repent speedily" (Brigham Young, J. of D., I, 339). Our Saviour said: "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:17).

"Article IV: We believe that the first principle and ordinances of the Bible are: First, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; Second, Repentance; Third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; Fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost."

1. "The sectarian doctrine of justification by faith alone has exercised an influence for evil since the early days of Christianity" (Talmage's Articles of Faith, p.120).

Paul says: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26).

2. How to obtain the Holy Spirit: "There is a set mode by which this great gift (the Holy Spirit) is conferred upon mankind...the laying on of hands by men who have themselves received it, and have been called of God and ordained to administer it" (That means the Mormon priesthood). Our Saviour said: "...how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" The Holy Spirit, our Saviour teaches, is given in answer to prayer, and is not dependent on the priesthood of the Mormon church, or any other church.

"Article V: We believe that a man must be called of God by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority, to preach the gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof."

According to Mormonism, the only persons who have any right to administer the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper are the representatives of the Mormon priesthood. It unchurches all the Christian denominations, and impudently claims that the Mormon church is the only true church; whereas it is not a church at all in the New Testament sense, and has

(Continued on Page 4, Col. 5)

The Baptist Examiner Forum I

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

Could it ever be proper to exclude a member from some church privileges, but not from membership?

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I Corinthians 5:6 says, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?"

Exclusion in most cases results from a public offence against the assembly. At times exclusion can result from a private offence between two, or more members, but not before the steps of Matthew 5:23,24 and Matthew 18:15-17 are followed in every detail and the results lead progressively only to exclusion. The reasons for exclusion are never to be taken lightly and one of the ultimate purposes in exclusion is the spiritual restoration and good of the excluded. An excluded brother, or sister is not an automatic enemy, although that seems the case oftentimes, but we are to pray for them and admonish them as we may have opportunity. A person who has come to the place of exclusion must be excluded from membership and its privileges. For whatever reason exclusion comes, the church must act in unity as to its treatment of the individual. Members cannot treat the individual with the same social familiarity that they did in the past, but never as an enemy. I Corinthians 5:11 tells us we are not to eat with (socialize) with a disorderly brother. Likewise, II Thessalonians 3:14,15 says, "And if any man obey not our word, by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." We are not to treat them as though nothing had happened, but our actions should lead them to be ashamed. In view of all of this, could we only partially exclude a member by just excluding him, or her from some church privileges? It is my conviction that it should not be done. Would we exclude them from public praying, or the Lord's table service, or voting in a business meeting? If they are worthy of exclusion from any one of these privileges, or others, they must be worthy of exclusion of membership. Membership includes all of these privileges, and to take away some takes away all. I see no Scriptural example of such exclusionary practise. An excluded person is to be shunned until restoration, if that comes about. Excluding a person from some church privileges, but not membership would make them a sub-standard member. Since there is no Scriptural example for such prac-

tise, I do not believe it should be done. It may be that some assemblies practise this: I do not know. As I have said before, a church has the right to set their own practise on subjects such as this not fully defined in Scripture as long as the practise does not go against Scripture, or violate Christian charity.

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Read I Corinthians; 12:14-31.

I believe that this passage from God's Word will refute such a theory as mentioned in our question. Let me answer this question with a most emphatic "NO!" It is never proper to exclude a member of the church from some church privileges but not from full membership. I also do not agree with the term; "a member in good standing." If they are not in good standing, then why are they still members? There is absolutely no Scripture to back up the practice as mentioned in this question. There is very little, if any history to back up this practice. I do not feel that we can do such and remain consistent with the Bible.

Let me ask a couple of questions about this practice. Which church privileges are you going to take away from these members? Is it the privilege of voting on church business? Who gives you the right? How can you have church authority if you practice this? Are you going to deny them the right to take the Lord's Supper? On what grounds? I know one privilege you will not deny them; that is the privilege of paying their tithes and offerings. You would welcome their money but deny them the right to vote. This is wrong. This is a practice that sounds good but is full of great and terrible inconsistencies. I would urge churches not to practice this. You are setting yourself up for future troubles. You must now make a new set of rules for this practice. Which practices do you exclude someone from church membership, and which from just some church privileges? Which church privileges will be taken away for which sins? There are far too many questions and far too few answers for this practice.

Let me conclude by saying this. If a person should be excluded from some church privileges, I that person should also be excluded from church membership. Let us not try to be too nice in this area. There is no compromise here. Let us not come up with practices that sound good but do not agree with Bible teaching and common sense. No, it is not proper to exclude a member from some church privileges and not

church membership. May God bless you all.
(Editor's Note: Very good, son!)

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I personally know of no Scriptural evidence for such conduct. I realize that many churches practice this. Neither can I say that it is improper to do such. Perhaps there would have to be some consideration given to the type of offence committed. Furthermore, I believe that God has given His churches certain liberties that allow them to set policies and rules which would enable them to maintain order in the assembly. Jesus said in Matthew 18:18, "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Literally, whatsoever things ye bind or loose have already been bound and loosed in heaven. I believe that their are times when a specific thing is not spelled out in the Scripture, but is determined by a principle taught in other words. In the by-laws of this church, it states that if one is absent from the assembly for a period of three months, they are to be placed on an inactive list and denied voting privileges and Lord's Supper privileges.

Is this improper? I think not. Some object to the "inactive" status, but if a member is not attending church with some kind of regularity, then it stands to reason that that person is in fact inactive. Certainly if a member has committed some sort of open sin that brings reproach on the name of Christ and His church, and fails or refuses to apologize, that person should be disciplined by exclusion. This action is of course justified in I Corinthians 5.

Now let's say that a deacon is not performing his duties as he should. After the man has been admonished to do better and fails to change, his deaconship could be suspended or revoked all together. Or, perhaps a Sunday School teacher is not performing according to the standards of the church. The church has the liberty to restrict that person from teaching. As touching the Lord's Supper, I personally do not believe that a person should be restricted from this ordinance unless fellowship has been withdrawn because of moral sin, doctrinal apostasy, or excessive absenteeism, which must be left to the discretion of the individual church. I do not say that judgment of moral sin or doctrinal apostasy should be left up to the discretion of the

individual church, but the judgment as to absenteeism. Perhaps I could borrow a phrase from a dear friend of mine and simply say, "to each his own." Thank you for your question.

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The Scripture is very plain as to the kind of discipline the church is to practice. Sad to say the churches of today seem to ignore God's way and either set up their own system or not practice it at all. Looking in Matthew 18:17 we find Christ telling His church that if there was trouble between two brethren and one refused to settle the problem, "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." That is the church was to withdraw fellowship from him.

Next, we find in Romans 16:17 the church is instructed, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Again we see the church is to withdraw from such ones. Also in I Corinthians 5:11, 13, we read, "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat, --- Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

In II Thessalonians 3:6 the church is commanded, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." Then in Titus 3:10 it is said, "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject."

In these passages the churches are instructed how to discipline those who fail to heed the commands of our Lord. In these passages all types of sins are included, sins between brethren, the sin of causing divisions in the churches, sins of the flesh, and those who deny the Word of God (heretics). In each passage it is made clear that the church is to discipline the offending member by withdrawing from him. In I Corinthians 5:5 we are told why this is to be done, "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." Verse 13 of the same chapter tells us that the church is to judge, discipline, those within the church, and God judges, disciplines those without.

The teaching is clear that one who is out of fellowship with the church and will not repent must be disciplined by the church withdrawing fellowship from him. There is no other method of disci-

pline given in the Word. The sad thing is there is very little of this being done today, and when a church does withdraw from one who walks disorderly; a sister church who is hungry for members will take in that one regardless of the offense. Oh, the problems this causes among the churches! Fellowship broken among brethren, among churches, all because the commands given by our Lord to His churches are not obeyed. Is it any wonder that the true churches of our Lord can have little fellowship with one another? How can we expect the blessings of God and the leadership of His Spirit if we fail to follow His commands by failing to practice discipline when needed or when we fail to recognize church authority of our sister churches?

MORMONISM

(Continued from Page 3)

no more authority than Dowie had, or Mrs. Eddy. Its priesthood is bogus in its origin and its authority. They are what our Saviour calls "thieves and robbers."

Paul says in Ephesians 4:11,12, "And he (Christ) gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

"Article VI: We believe in the same organization that existed in the primitive church: Namely, apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc."

We have shown that it is impossible for men to be true apostles now. Nor is there any warrant in the New Testament for such bogus officials as the "First Presidency of the Church," with its two Counsellors, or for the "High Council," with its despotic methods.

The Mormon church pronounces damnation upon Christian believers who receive baptism from the hands of Christian ministers. "Any person who shall be so wicked as to receive a holy ordinance of the gospel from the ministers of these apostate (Christian) churches, will be sent down to hell with them unless he repents of the unholy and impious acts" (The Seer, vols. 1 & 2, p.225). Our Saviour said to His disciples in Matthew 28:19, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

"Article VII: We believe in the gift of tongues, prophecy, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues."

Article VIII: We believe in the Bible to be the Word of God, so far as it is correctly translated; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the Word of God."

1. The priesthood can make additional Scriptures: "Wilford Woodruff is a prophet, and he can make Scripture as good as those in the Bible" (Apostle J. W. Taylor, Conference, Salt Lake, April 5, 1897). "The living oracles (pretended priestly revelations) are worth more to the Latter-Day Saints than all the Bibles" (Apostle M. W. Merrill, Conference, Salt Lake, Oct. 1897).

2. Paul tells us, on the other (Continued on Page 5, Col. 4)

The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Should a non-tithing church member be excluded for this? If not, why not? Would a church exclude one for robbing a bank?

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If a church member were to rob a bank and be convicted, it would probably be necessary for that one to be excluded until such time as it was possible for them to come before the church to ask forgiveness and to request that they be reinstated. To not do this, in my opinion, would impede the authority of the church. The church, in light of true and sincere repentance should restore such a one. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal 6:1).

In today's world, there are a lot more of God's people robbing Him than there are robbing banks. This is because they feel that no one will know when they rob God. God will know, and they know that He knows; only He will not reveal to everyone that He knows, just to the non-tither. The best news is that there is restoration for both offenses.

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Tithing is a physical indicator of just where a child of God is spiritually. If a church member trusts God for his eternal soul, should he not trust Him with such a small thing as his money. A church member that will not tithe is lacking in faith, or is ignorant of God's Word. I don't believe a member ought to be excluded for not tithing, but that they should be instructed in the blessings of giving God the firstfruits of their labor. Putting God first in all things, time, talents, finances, and their lives. They need to be taught they cannot serve two masters. If after much instruction and prayer, and the member understands the position of the church and disagrees with the teaching of the church and will make no effort to give to the church, exclusion may be the only solution, to keep from having division in the church.

Concerning the second question, I cannot answer whether or not a church should exclude a member for robbing a bank. Robbing a bank is a civil criminal act, and is a sin. I believe wilful sin, when not repented of warrants exclusion. Such action not only dishonors the Lord but also dishonors the church. If a member robbed a bank and would not repent to the Lord first and to the church for the reproach brought upon her, then exclusion would be in order.

God hath, in Himself, all power to defend you, all wisdom to direct you, all mercy to pardon you, all grace to enrich you, all righteousness to clothe you, all goodness to supply you, and all happiness to crown you.

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There are certain laws and ordinances laid down in the Bible. They are given for our instruction and our learning. We are to obey them. The laws of God are good. They are meant for our good and not for our hurt. When we obey these laws we will be better Christians. We will be blessed thereby. We will be rewarded even in this life for obeying the laws of God, and we will be rewarded in the life to come.

Tithing is an ordinance of God and ought to be obeyed. To obey this law we will be blessed more than we can imagine. "Bring ye all the tithe into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10).

There are laws in this land. We are to obey them so far as is possible. We are to obey the laws of this country unless they are in opposition to the teachings of the Bible. If the laws are right, then it is good and right to obey them. We are taught this by the Bible. "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good..." (Romans 13:3). If we are afraid not to obey the rulers of this country, how much more so should we fear not to obey God. If we do not obey the law, then we can expect punishment because of our disobeying the law. "For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God..." (Romans 13:4).

Where there is a law, there is a penalty. If there is no penalty for breaking the law or ordinance; then it is not a law, but merely a suggestion.

There is a law against stealing and robbing. There is a penalty attached to this law. If a person is convicted for robbing a bank that person will have to pay according to the penalty attached to the law. There is praise and blessings for obeying the law and there is punishment for disobeying.

How can it be right to be a penalty for robbing a bank and then not a penalty for robbing God?

A person will be locked up for robbing a bank, taking that which is not his. Is it not wrong to take God's money? Can there be a blessing for giving God that which is His and then there not be a penalty for robbing Him? Yes, there is penalty for robbing God. "...for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" (Hebrews 12:7). Chastisement is for disobedience. The more disobedience, the more chastisement. Is it not disobedience to God to rob Him of His tithe?

A non-tithing church member should be approached about his tithing and given proper instructions. If such who are not tithing will not tithe, then they should be rebuked about it by the pastor. Then they should be sighted to their error by the church. If they fail to pay heed to the teaching of the church and the rebuke of the church, then after sufficient time, if they do not begin to tithe; they should be excluded from the church.

Is it right for one not to tithe and remain a member of the church while others tithe? Is it right for one to enjoy the comforts of the church, to be out of the rain and the sunshine, the heat and the cold, to enjoy the cool and the warmth of the building, to be paid for by the other members while he is a non-tither? How did the missionary go on the field? By the money of the tithers or did he go on his own? The missionary could not go on the money of the non-tither, for there was none. If one can tithe, then others can. What one can do, then any could do or all could do.

MORMONISM

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hand, in II Timothy 3:16, that all genuine Scripture "... given by inspiration of God..."

The disgusting doctrine of plural marriage is omitted from these Articles of Faith. But it still stands in the Book of Doctrine and Covenants as a revelation from God to be observed under pain of eternal damnation. Yet as Mrs. Orson Pratt said: "This pretended revelation was simply a dishonest trick on the part of Joseph Smith to cloak over his own wicked and immoral life, and to keep the peace in his household." It will be seen that the Mormon people are required to accept the pretended revelation sanctioning plural marriage, on pain of eternal damnation, from the following quotation from this bogus revelation which still stands in their official book:

"For behold I reveal unto you a new and an everlasting covenant; and if you abide not that covenant then are you damned: for no one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into My glory...And again, as pertaining to the law of the priesthood, if any man espouse a virgin and desire to espouse another, and the first give her consent; and if he espouse the second and they are virgins and have vowed to no other man, then he is justified; for he cannot commit adultery with that that belongeth unto him and to none else; and if he have ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery for they belong unto him; and they are given unto him; therefore is he justified" (Doctrine and Covenants, chap. 132).

Now, what is this but a depraved and cunning bribe to every kind of social immorality? And that has been its direct result for two generations, with the iniquity

still going on.

It is difficult for anyone to study this Mormon system as a whole, without coming to the conclusion that there is something in it beyond the power of man, something positively Satanic. And does it not seem to be a reproach on the Christian churches of this country that, after eighty years, such a system of downright heathenism should still hold the people of one of the great states of the west in absolute bondage, and through its hierarchical power, by means of colonization, be able to influence the election of senators and representatives in Congress from five other states? This latter fact makes it a national and not a local problem. The one important thing to be done is to double the Christian missionary forces in Utah, in order to bring deliverance to those who are in bondage. (The Fundamentals, vol. VIII, pp. 110-127). (copied from TBE issue March 8, 1980)

INTERCOMMUNION

(Continued from Page 1)

half the members of their own societies--their baptized infants and children--while Baptist churches do commune with all of their own members.

Presbyterians, by their decisions and the practice of their judicatures, are close communionists.

The most eminent expounders of their ecclesiastical statutes tell us that only those who hold the self-same faith can unite in "sealing ordinances," without doing violence to the teachings of God's Word and the Presbyterian standards. Since this will be established in examining the discussions of their Assemblies and Synods, to be submitted, I shall devote no space to its proof here.

According to the Pan-Presbyterian Assembly, that met in Edinburgh in 1877, there are, in the world, forty-nine different sects of Presbyterians. [The First General Council convened in Edinburgh, July, 1877, at which twenty-two Presbyterian denominations were represented. Twenty-seven other Presbyterian "branches" expressed a desire to be represented.--Ex. Proceedings Second Pan council.]

Now, it is a fact, that only two or three of these will commune with each other. Their divergence from the old Presbyterian faith consistently separates them from each other's tables, since the Lord's Supper is, faith held by all the participants.

In that Assembly a resolution was offered to unite in an open communion service, as they all belonged to the same great Presbyterian family. A grave and reverent doctor of divinity is reported to have used these sentiments in opposing it: "Mr. President: Why are we today divided into different and distinct churches? Because we could not scripturally or consistently commune together. And why could we not commune together? Because, having embraced diverse faiths, separating from a common faith, we were compelled to separate from a common communion table. If we can scripturally or consistently commune together on the morrow, we can always do so; and all come together, and live henceforth in one church, and dissolve forty-eight of our organiza-

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INTERCOMMUNION

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tions as schisms."

"Mr. President: What would we proclaim by uniting in a common communion of this body? That we the many are all one church, and all hold and teach one faith, one doctrine; and would we not act a great untruth before the whole world--for the eyes of the whole world are upon us--when we know, and the whole world knows, that we are forty-nine distinct churches, holding and teaching forty-nine different faiths?"

The resolution was voted down with great emphasis. When the second session of this assembly was held, in New York, in 1880, a similar motion was rejected, and for the same reasons. Thus, by the highest Presbyterian authority in the world, is open communion pronounced unscriptural and fraudulent--a solemn acting of a palpable untruth before the world!

It is worthy of special note that this last Pan-Presbyterian Council would not admit the Cumberland Presbyterians to a seat, even so unorthodox did it consider them; and how much less could they consistently commune with them!

But this is not all the proof.

In 1845, the two Presbyterian General Assemblies, the old school and the new school, met, the same week, in Philadelphia. The latter resolved to celebrate the Lord's Supper on the coming Sunday, and adopted a resolution inviting the old school to unite with them in a joint celebration. A most courteous and fraternal invitation was drawn up and sent to the old school assembly by the hands of venerable ministers. How was that invitation received? A leading member of the old school assembly took the floor, and, with flushed cheek, and closed teeth, asked: "Had we a right to expect this public insult from the body meeting in another part of this city, calling itself a 'Presbyterian Assembly?' What is it, Mr. President, but an insult, openly cast into our teeth before the eyes of the whole world? What does it ask us to do? To unite with them in celebrating the Lord's Supper--a sealing ordinance--and thereby, in the presence of God and men, proclaim our fellowship for them in respect to their faith and practice. Have they not manifestly departed from our standard of faith--the Confession? and was it not for this that this body felt in duty bound to excommunicate them for heresy? What, then, do they ask us to do by this invitation? They ask us to stultify ourselves and act a lie in the face of Christendom! Why did we separate? Because we hold different faiths, and, therefore, could not commune together. And now they ask us to say to the world, by our act, that we are one body, and hold one and the self-same faith, which we know, and they know, is not true."

The invitation was unanimously and indignantly rejected as an insult. Is not this practical close communion? If two Presbyterian churches, constructively adopting the same Confession of faith, cannot consistently commune together, how can Presbyterians commune with Methodists and Campbellites! If it is accounted an insult for one sister Presbyterian church to invite

another sister Presbyterian church to commune, how much more an insult must it be considered for Baptists to invite Presbyterians to commune with them? That grave doctor was right, though his language sounds severe. What insult more stinging could be offered a man, than to ask him to forswear himself for your benefit? And this very thing Presbyterians and Methodists do when they ask Baptists to say to the world, by the most solemn acts, that they cordially endorse the faith and the practice of Presbyterians or Methodists, and that they are all one and the self-same church of Christ--one body! And this great untruth the various denominations, when they intercommune, do constantly act before the world and before God; and thereby eat and drink unworthily, profaning the sacred ordinance, and making themselves guilty of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus.

I will further prove my statement from the Synodical Enactments of a Synod in a neighboring state: "The committee on bills and overtures, to whom was referred the question: 'Is it proper that there should be intercommunion between Presbyterians and those denominations (Methodists and Campbellites) who hold Arminian sentiments?' presented the following report, which was adopted:

"That, after giving it all the attention which the importance of the subject demands, they are of opinion, that, for Presbyterians to hold communion, in sealing ordinances, with those who deny the doctrines of grace through the blood of Christ, etc., is highly prejudicial to the truth as it is in Jesus. Nor can such intercommunion answer any valuable purpose to those who practice it, as two cannot walk together except they be agreed."

Now, not to incur the odium of "close communion," "bigotry," etc., this committee inserted the provision, that, if any should greatly desire to commune with them, "after having conversed with them, and received satisfaction as to their soundness in the faith"--Presbyterian, of course, on the points of doctrine, etc.--"on which their church and ours differ," with evidence of their piety, as an act of charity, such can be admitted to occasional communion!! This means that a Methodist or Campbellite, or Cumberland Presbyterian, can occasionally--and then only as an act of charity--come to the table of the Presbyterians, provided they will submit to an examination as to their personal piety, and will satisfy the session that they fully endorse the doctrine of eternal personal election and reprobation; and that Baptists, even, may occasionally come, if, in addition to the above doctrines, they avow their cordial delight with the doctrine of federal holiness of the seed of believers, sacramental grace, infant baptism, and effusion. Can Methodists and Campbellites, and, much less, Baptists, do this even once? If once, can they not one thousand times? Can they not unite, and be Presbyterians forever?

I quote one more Enactment from the same source: "The committee on a former resolution of synod on the subject of intercommunion, reported. The report was adopted, viz.:

The committee are of opinion that for Presbyterians to hold communion in sealing ordinances with those who belong to churches holding doctrines con-

trary to our standards [thus sweep out every other denomination under the whole heavens, together with forty-eight of the forty-nine Presbyterians churches that hold contrary to the old school Presbyterians!] is incompatible with the purity and peace of the church [i.e., the old school Presbyterian], and highly prejudicial to the truth as it is in Jesus. Nor can such communions answer any valuable purpose [unless to prejudice the world against the Baptists], etc., in accordance with these views, your committee are of the opinion that the practice of inviting to the communion all who are in good standing in their own churches, is calculated to do much evil and should not be continued! While every church session is, however, left at liberty to admit to occasional communion members of other denominations, after having conversed with them, and received satisfaction of their soundness in the faith and Christian practice" (Synodical Records, 1832, vol.3, p.240--Howell).

Rev. J. N. McLeod, R. Presbyterian, says: "On the subject of sacramental communion the principles of the church are that such communion is the most solemn, intimate and perfect fellowship that Christians can enjoy with God and with one another; that when Christians are associated together in a church state, under a definite creed, communion in the sacraments involves an approbation of that creed; and that as the church is invested with authority which she is bound to exercise to keep the ordinances pure and entire, sacramental communion is not extended to those who do not approve the principle, of the particular church, or submit themselves to her authority...She does not feel at liberty to allow every man to be judge of his own qualifications for sealing ordinances, or to dispense those ordinances to such as do not assent to her religious principles, or whom she could not submit to her discipline were they found violating their Christian obligations."

D. Monfort, D.D., a distinguished Presbyterian, in his letters to Dr. Rice on intercommunion, after suggesting that the members of one denomination, if thrown into a community in which there was no church of their preference, should unite with one there, and so in an orderly manner come to the communion, says: "And it does seem to me that this would be a much purer and vastly more consistent charity in all denominations, than that of throwing open the doors (to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper) to some half dozen different sects hostile to each other's peculiarities, and irresponsible to each other; some making a profession of piety and baptism a condition, and others not; some enforcing infant baptism by discipline, as other Christian duties, others not; or really denying the duty [as do the Baptists]. Against this, I do protest with heart and voice, and uplifted hands. I deny it to be Christian fellowship at all. It is handling in the sight of God, angels, and men, the sacraments as emblems of what does not exist. It was never contemplated by the Westminster divines, and it has nothing, in my opinion, to support it but the false charity of the age...On a question so plain, I cannot suppress my astonishment that there should be a difference of opinion and practice in any denomination."

We take the hand of Dr. Mon-

fort in both of ours in heartiest endorsement of these plain truths. This absurd and hypocritical practice is not only opposed to the plainest teachings of God's Word, and subversive of the very design of the ordinance, but in flagrant violation of the fundamental principles and standard authorities of the very denominations that practice it!

Another distinguished Pedobaptist writer (in Prot. and Herald) thus expresses himself: "For the last twenty years or more, I do not recollect having entertained a doubt that the opening of the doors of our communion to all, of what are denominated 'evangelical' churches is erroneous, that it will either be changed, or lead to errors of a still more serious nature, containing in itself essentially an indifference to sound religious principle and practice, though slow in its development."

The reader can see from the above facts and statements of representative Presbyterian doctors--

1. That the Presbyterians, so far from being able to offer their fellowship through the Lord's Supper to members of other denominations, cannot even offer it to the different branches of their own family or "church," without a flagrant violation of their Confession, and the decisions of their Pan and General Assemblies and Synods.

2. That when they do practice open communion with other denominations in token of fellowship and unity, the profession is a heartless sham, for the fellowship and the unity do not exist.

3. That Presbyterians cannot, except in violation of their confession, which they are solemnly pledged to hold, commune with those whose doctrines they consider unscriptural or with the unbaptized; and yet they commune with Methodists whose Arminianism they regard as subversive of the whole plan of salvation, and who invite all unbaptized and unregenerate sinners, as such, to their tables as a means of pardon and regeneration!

4. The reader also notices that their most distinguished writers commend the closer communion of the Baptists to the absurd practice of today that passes under the name of "open communion."

5. The reader can also see that according to the ruling of the General Presbyterian Assembly itself, it is a most bitter insult for Presbyterians to invite Baptists to commune with them; for it is asking us to fellowship their doctrines and practices including federal holiness, infant baptism and sacramental grace; which no honest Baptist can do without the renunciation of his own faith and principles. This is so. A grosser insult could not be offered to a man than to ask him to act a flagrant untruth, and this open communionists do.

The Episcopalians Consistently Close

Here is the decision of the Rt. Rev. Dr. Williams, Bishop of Connecticut, which must satisfy all:

"No member of any religious society outside of the church can receive her holy communion without a violation of a fundamental law of the liturgy; and no clergyman can administer it to such a person without a violation of his ordination vows. The Rabric commands that no person shall be admitted to the holy communion until they have been, or are ready to be, confirmed."

What is true of Episcopal min-

isters is equally true of Presbyterian and Methodist preachers.

The Methodists are close communionists. Anyone the least familiar with the Methodist Discipline and Bishop Hedding's work on the administration of it, knows that by the laws laid down there for the observance of the Supper, no Methodist preacher, elder, or bishop, can invite Baptists, Presbyterians, or Campbellites to the Methodist communion table without openly violating the laws of his society, which, in his ordination, he vowed before God and man to strictly observe. I will give the teachings of the Discipline and the rulings of the Methodist bishop in the same connection, that no one can cavil.

Bishop Hedding, Methodist, in his work on the administration of the Discipline, asks: "Is it proper for a preacher to give out a general invitation in the congregation to members in good standing in other churches to come to the Lord's Supper? No, for the most unworthy persons are apt to think themselves in good standing, etc."

And again: "There are some communities, called churches, which, from heretical doctrines or immoral practices, have no claim to the privileges of Christians, and ought not to be admitted to the communion of any Christian people" (pp. 72,73).

He instructs the preachers to do what the Discipline enjoins, and enjoins thus: "But no person shall be admitted to the Lord's Supper among us who is guilty of any practice for which we would exclude a member of our church."

"Inveighing against our doctrines or discipline" are the capital charges mentioned in section 5; and what Presbyterian, or Baptist, or Campbellite does not oppose both the doctrine and discipline of Methodists as unscriptural and evil? Therefore, how can a Methodist preacher in palpable violation of his Discipline, the explicit instructions of his bishop, his vows to his God and his church, invite Baptists, Presbyterians, or Campbellites to his table? It is, on his part, a most daring act, and, on those members of these bodies who accept, the acting of a great untruth, as well as a profanation of the ordinance.

Then there is another fact that should make Baptist stand aghast when invited to a Methodist communion table. It is by their made and administered as one of the sacraments of salvation; to the vilest sinners on the earth--without baptism, of course--and deemed qualified to come to it and partake for the purpose of securing the pardon of their sins and the regeneration of their hearts. and the overwhelming majority of their own members are exhorted to the Supper in order to obtain pardon and regeneration! I quote the language of Wesley himself:

"To come to the Supper of the Lord, no fitness is required at the time of communicating, but a sense of our state of utter sinfulness and helplessness. Every one who knows he is fit for hell being just fit to come to Christ in his as well as all other ways of appointment..In latter times many [i.e., Baptists] have affirmed that the Lord's Supper is not a converting ordinance..the falsehood of this objection appears both from Scripture precept and example"--(Wesleyanna, p. 283,284).

Adam Clark, in his notes on Corinthians 11 says: "Every minister of Christ is bound to do" (Continued on Page 7, Col. 1)

INTERCOMMUNION

(Continued from Page 6)

minister it to every man who is seeking the salvation of his soul, as well as to believers."

Who can doubt that all those who eat with this intent, "eat and drink unworthily," failing to discern the Lord's body, mistaking altogether as they do the true design of the ordinance? But what is truly amazing is the fact that most Campbellite ministers, though holding and teaching that no one can be a Christian unless immersed for the remission of sins, and that none can be church members or scripturally entitled to partake of the Lord's Supper unless immersed, do constantly invite Pedobaptists as well as Baptists, whom they declare unbaptized and unsaved, to come to their tables, and commune with them in token of church and Christian fellowship!

This was Mr. A. Campbell's opinion of their course--the man who originated the religious system justly called Campbellism--and we think it should be respected, unless they are willing to be regarded as supremely hypocritical, believing and teaching one thing and practicing the opposite!

"But I object to making it a rule in any case, to receive unimmersed persons to church ordinances; 1. Because it is nowhere commanded; 2. Because it is nowhere predated in the New Testament; 3. Because it necessarily corrupts the simplicity and uniformity of the whole genius of the New Testament; 4. Because it not only degrades the order of the kingdom, but makes void one of the most important institutions given to man. It necessarily makes immersion of non-effect; 5. Because in making a canon to dispense with a divine institution of momentary import, they, who do so assume the very same dispensing power which issued in that tremendous apostasy which we, and all Christians, are laboring to destroy" (Ch. Bapt., vol. 6).

I have not space to continue this exposure of the unscripturalness and supreme absurdity of open communion. If Baptists, and all friends of truth and consistency, will but take these facts and arguments, and boldly and vigorously impress them upon the people, the days of open communion would speedily be numbered. The most effective arms, the most powerful and destructive cannon, can effect nothing without brave and skilled men to use them, and this is what the Baptist cause now so greatly needs--more brave and faithful men to use the weapons drawn from the divine armory upon bold, arrogant error, that is rampant all around us, and only a few daring to strike a blow!

The humblest member, even a sister whom love of Christ and His truth makes bold, could reply when reproached, because her church does not invite all denominations to its table.

We believe, in common with your own denomination, that the Lord's Supper is a church ordinance, and, therefore, none but its own members have a right to partake together, as they alone have the right to vote in the same church.

But were this not the case, we Baptists do not wish to insult you by inviting you to our table, thus asking you to endorse, before God and man, our faith and order as scriptural, and thereby repudiating your own.

Nor can I understand, if your feelings are as kind towards us as you profess, why you should wish to insult us by inviting us to your tables to renounce our own doctrine and principles as false, and openly proclaim our endorsement of yours.

I have too much respect for you to make you such an insulting proposition, and too much sincerity and respect for truth to act the hypocrite to gain your favor.

THINGS

(Continued from Page 1)

man will one die: yet per-adventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life," (Rom. 5:6-8, 10). Furthermore, the apostle tells us that we were dead in our trespasses and sin following after the god of this world, Satan - "AND you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." "Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others," (Eph. 2:1, 3). The Apostle John tells us that we were already condemned with the wrath of God upon us - "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." 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 3:18, 36). Paul further states that because we were without Christ we were alienated from God - "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." (Eph. 2:12). You see, beloved, a look backwards becomes very necessary before one can begin to look forward.

Now that we have briefly considered what man is, without the Lord Jesus Christ, we need to know what we have in the person of the Lord. John tells us that we are the sons of God - "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," (John 1:12-13). Dr. Luke tells us that the early believers were called Christians - "...And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." (Acts 11:26). Thus, the believer is said to be a new creation in the person of Jesus Christ - "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (II Cor. 5:17). But the most impor-

tant thing of all is this: we have been accepted by God because of the work of Christ in our behalf - "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:6, 7).

I. THE FIRST THING THAT WE SHOULD BE DELIVERED FROM IS OUR EVIL CONSCIENCE.

"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water," (Heb. 10:22). Why? Because the Christian, the believer, has had his sin totally removed because of the work of Jesus Christ. The Old Testament tells us that God has removed our sins as far as the east is from the west and that He will never remember them again. You see, the Bible tells us that when Christ died for us (the elect) He took care of all our sins: past, present and future. We are dead in Christ and hid in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ - "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Col. 3:3. "God forbid, How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" "For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him." (Rom. 6:2, 7). That is a fact that every child of God should realize. Furthermore, the Apostle John tells us that God has promised to forgive us and cleanse us from all our sins "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:9).

II. WE SHOULD BE DELIVERED FROM AN EVIL HEART OF UNBELIEF - Hebrews 3:12, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Our text is speaking to fellow brethren, and therefore, we must conclude that the child of God can find himself in unbelief from time to time. How can this be? Look into your Old Testament and you can see many examples of this: none more striking than the Children of Israel at Kadesh-Barnah. They just would not take God at His word and enter into the Promised Land. Again, note the words of Jeremiah when he told the Children of Israel not to fight the King of Babylon. Unbelief is a tragic thing in the life of God's dear children. As a pastor, that becomes so obvious from time to time. The child of God is given some choices in his life, but for most of them, they just do not follow the directions of God and are therefore, out of the will of God. What a shame that is! Many of God's dear children will be found wanting at the Judgment Seat of Christ. That should never be! Furthermore, unbelief in the heart of one of God's dear children will only stop the victory that is possible for them.

III. HOW CAN THE BELIEVER BE DELIVERED FROM AN EVIL HEART?

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice" (Eph. 4:31). "Be

not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame," (I Cor. 15:33, 34).

In my thinking, these verses have reference to: (1). blasphemy; (2). irreverence; (3). slanderous reports, (4). false reports; (5). speech that is injurious to others; and, (6). the acts of men that may damage or hurt others. Thus, we have the idea of putting away these things from our lives and that because we are children of the King. As God's dear children, we should be delivered and can be when our lives are affected by the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In order for that to take place, several things need to be done in the life of God's children: (1). attendance in the house of God is very important; (2). Bible reading and prayer time is a must if we are to grow in the Lord; (3). meditation on the things that are good and proper; (4). family devotions and a time of seeking God's direction as a family unit; and, (5). a study of Bible doctrine and truth. How will we know that we have been delivered? That is somewhat simple and yet complex. Our communication (speech) and behavior (walk) will inform others that something has happened to the child of God that is totally yielded to Him. You do not need to go around with a sign placed on your back saying, "I am a spiritual Christian," for your speech and conduct will only confirm or deny the statement.

The Christian should be delivered from evil works - 2 Timothy 4:18 and the appearance of evil in general - I Thessalonians 5:22. Someday, God will take and deliver the child of God from this present evil world - Galatians 1:4. That has not yet happened but it will some day. We should live as though that day was today! However, it is impossible to be delivered without first knowing the Lord as your Saviour. That can not be done apart from the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit of God that draws the elect unto God. Once that has been done, the child of God has been placed into the family and is thereby known as one of God's dear ones. To have victory in this new life the believer must yield himself to God daily. Study Romans six and get the tenor of what the apostle was saying and apply it to your life. The believer will never have victory until he recognizes that he is (1). dead to sin; (2). dead to self; and, (3). dead to the system of this evil world. But that is not enough in itself, for the Christian must also reckon himself alive unto (1). Almighty God; (2). the Lord's church; and (3). the Word of God. Without these things, the child of God is certain to find himself in deep trouble.

WRONG

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love. "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. 2:4).

Smyrna was living rightly and preaching rightly, and consequently they were having a hard time - the devil was fighting them from without.

Pergamos had a mixed membership - some were Godly and others were ungodly. In this case, it was

another instance of the world mixed up with the church.

Today, we have churches just like each of these three. There are those who once loved the Lord supremely, but have departed from their first love. There are others like Smyrna that are being fought from without because of the doctrinal stand which the church has taken. Then there are others just like Pergamos that are worldly, and which have a mixed membership with some desirous of serving the Lord and others living for the world.

Today, we consider the church at Thyatira. I have always had an idea that possibly this church was established through the efforts of Lydia. You remember that she was Paul's first convert in Europe. Listen to the story of her conversion: "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us" (Acts 16:14, 15).

Regardless of who started the church, the Lord Jesus had a message for it. To read His message, we see that the church was a busy, bustling, successful, wide awake organization. At first reading, we are compelled to say that Thyatira was an unusually active church. Yet, on closer observation, we shall see that this church was perhaps more successful than Scriptural, and more active than obedient.

I. Jesus' revelation of Himself to this church is far different to that of the revelation of Himself to the rest of the churches. Listen: "And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass" (Rev. 2:18).

In this connection, He reminds them that He is Divine. He tells them that it is "the Son of God" with whom they are dealing. On the day of His transfiguration, the Father acknowledged that Jesus was His Son.

"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased..." (Matt. 17:5).

Even the devils of hell acknowledged the same in the days of His flesh. "...Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24).

Now the One who is acknowledged by both God and the devil to be Divine, reveals Himself to this church at Thyatira as "the Son of God."

This church needed to see Him as the Son of God. They didn't need to see Him as a man, but as God Himself. Incidentally, (Continued on Page 8, Col. 1)

WRONG

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beloved, this is true of every church in the world today. Our churches the world around need to remember that the founder and the One with whom we have to deal, is not man, but God.

Further, Jesus revealed Himself as omniscient, for the Scriptures, declare that His eyes were "like unto a flame of fire." Yes, Jesus is omniscient. He sees all of us all the time. Let me remind you that the God of the Old Testament, and concerning Him, it is said - "The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. 15:3).

In the New Testament, we read the same truth: "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things" (I John 3:20).

This church at Thyatira needed to know that the Christ with whom they were dealing, and who was dealing with them, had fiery eyes that brought to light the hidden things of darkness. He thus revealed Himself to this church as one who had eyes to pierce them through like an x-ray, and thus search out the hurtful things of sin.

He further revealed Himself to this church as omnipotent, for the Scriptures declare that "his feet are like fine brass." I rejoice that the Christ we love today is omnipotent - He is all powerful. Listen to these Scriptures: "I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job. 42:2). "But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Matt. 19:26).

What mighty words are these. Surely the Christ we serve is omnipotent - is all powerful.

These folk at Thyatira needed to know that Jesus was all powerful - they needed to know that He had feet of power wherewith to trample and stomp out their sins.

Here was a church that had gone to the very depths of sin. Jesus, therefore, revealed Himself to this church not as a man, but as God. With His eyes of fire He could see through their evil, and with His feet of brass, He had power to stomp it out.

What a challenging revelation of Jesus this gives us today. The one with whom we are dealing and who is dealing with us, is not man, but God. He is the God who sees all sin, and He has power to blot it out. What a challenging revelation to worldly Christians, unorthodox churches, and heterodox preachers. Surely this revelation is just what we need today - we need to know that our Christ is God, and that He sees through our evil and that He has the power to stomp it out.

II. Following Jesus' treatment of the other churches, He first commended Thyatira. Before looking for their failures, He sought first to look at the virtues of each of these churches. Most folk prefer and find first the good.

Here is a fine little poem:

"Don't look for the flaws as you go through life;

And even when you find them,

It is wise and kind to be somewhat blind

And look for the virtues behind them.

For the cloudiest night has a tint of light

Somewhere in its shadows hiding;

It is better by far to look for a star,

Than the spots on the sun abiding."

This was Jesus' way of dealing with each of these churches, and so when we come to the church in Thyatira, we notice that there were several things for which He commended them. First of all, He commended them for their works. It is rather interesting to notice that He had commended all three of the churches we have studied thus far, in the same manner. This church at Thyatira was no exception. It wasn't an idle church - they were bustling about with their activities. They were busy; they were wide awake; they were doing things, and these works pleased the Lord.

I heard some time ago concerning three tramps lying by the roadside. A man came by and offered to give a quarter to the laziest one of the three. One man jumped up and said he was the laziest. The second turned over and claimed the honor. The third said, without moving, "Just put the quarter in my pocket." Lots of church members are like this latter individual, but not so with the church at Thyatira, for they were busy at work for the Lord, and thus they earned His commendation.

Then, He also commended them for their love. We read: "I know thy works, and charity..." (Rev. 2:19).

The word "charity" is the word for love, and indicates their love for one another. In this respect, Jesus commended them.

Every church ought to earn Jesus' commendation in this manner, for church members should show their love one toward the other. Yet, in lots of churches, this is not true. There are many churches today who could not receive Jesus' commendation in this manner, for countless hundreds and thousands of them are torn with strife and divisions, and the members spend their time backbiting, gossiping, and defaming the character of one another. They need to stand still and listen to what God says in His Word concerning this matter of love.

Will you listen: "For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another." "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (I John 3:11, 14). "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12). "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and loveth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love" (I John 4:7, 8).

These verses would indicate what the proper attitude of every believer should be that of love one toward the other. At Thyatira there was love manifested by the individual church members, and accordingly, Jesus commended them.

Then, also, Jesus commended them for their service. "I know thy works, and charity, and service..." (Rev. 2:19). Theirs was a service of love. With love

pervading their hearts, they were working and serving God.

He also commended them for their faith. "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith..." (Rev. 2:19). Of course, this was the foundation for their love and service and their works. You see their works grew out of their faith. This is what the Word of God teaches us.

"But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" (James 2:20). No man is saved by works, but, beloved, if he has been saved by grace through faith, there will be works in his life that are pleasing to God.

It means something to me today to find a church that really tries to walk by faith. Most churches are depending upon their organizations and worldly plans, and their schemes and as far as faith is concerned, that is an unknown quality. Yet, here was a church that though they were busy and working, their works were the direct outgrowth of their faith in God.

In like measure, He commended them for their patience. He reminded them that He knew about their patience. Their work did not lag - they kept at the task. Patiently they continued working and serving God. Too many of us get impatient when things don't go our way. Too many of us are good starters but mighty poor at finishing.

A lot of church members remind me of the hound dog who started early in the morning on a deer track. He became tired, and the trail became faint, and a fox crossed his path. He started off on this trail as though he would catch the fox in sixty seconds. Then later on, he became tired, and when a rabbit crossed his path, he started out after the rabbit. This dog just kept switching from one trail to another throughout the day, and when night came, he was sitting down on his tail barking up a gum tree at a contemptible little ground squirrel. That's the way a lot of Christians are serving God today. They haven't got enough patience to keep at the big task God gives them, but they switch from one to another until their work becomes less and less all the time. Too many of us just don't have patience enough to wait until God can do the thing He desires to do through us, but not so with this church at Thyatira - they were patient in all that they did.

And then, Jesus commended them for their last works, which He declared to be "more than the first." The first thing for which He commended them was their works, and then after commending them for four other characteristics, He came back to commend them again for their last works. Well, beloved, Jesus' commendation of this church could not be the commendation of many churches today, for there are mighty few churches today who would have any first works to say nothing of last works. In our Southern Baptist Convention one year fifty percent of our churches did not contribute anything to missions. I don't have the statistics available, but I am sure that it is equally as bad in the Northern Baptist Convention.

I have seen an individual saved, and have seen him work like a trooper for a while, and then I have seen him drop by the wayside. It reminds me of a letter which was sent in by a church to the annual meeting of its district association. The letter said, "This

year's letter reports to you that we are at peace. Baptized none, received by letter none, excluded none, restored to fellowship none, gave to missions nothing - pray for us that we may hold our own." Yet, this church at Thyatira was very much unlike that, for this church not only began to serve the Lord, but continued, and Jesus commended them for their last works as well as their first works.

III. After commending this church in these particulars, then Jesus proceeded to condemn them. May I remind you that the Lord Jesus Christ is never blind to men's vices. In Genesis 16:13 we read, "...Thou God seest me..." One of the Old Testament prophets also reveals the fact that God sees our sins. "Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down: And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them" (Amos 9:2, 3).

I read sometime ago of a beautiful girl who had a photograph made, and when the photographer looked at the proof, it appeared mottled. Knowing that her complexion was clear, the photographer went to her home and found her in bed breaking out with the measles. What had escaped the human eyes, the keen eyes of the camera had caught. I say then, beloved, He is never blind to the vices of men, nor the faults of churches. Hence, He condemned this church because it was run by a woman. "Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols" (Rev. 2:20).

The Bible has quite a good deal to say relative to a woman's place in the church. We are plainly assured in the Scriptures that her position is one of silence. Listen: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church. What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only? If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant let him be ignorant" (I Cor. 14:34-38).

I know that there are those who say that this was just a local injunction to the church at Corinth. I do not agree therewith. Yet even if that were true, you have the same teaching given when the aged Paul wrote to Timothy: "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (I Tim. 2:11, 12).

I realize that today there are many who believe that a woman has just as much right to preach as a man. Yet, beloved, one of the first qualifications that God gave for a preacher is, "A bishop then must be blameless; the husband of one wife..." (I Tim. 3:2). Now I would like to see any woman that could qualify. She might be the wife of one husband, but she'd have an exceedingly hard time being the husband of one wife.

I know that today we are living in this modern twentieth century, and that things are much different from what they used to be.

"One hundred years ago today, Wilderness was here; The man with powder in his gun,

Went out to hunt the deer. But now the thing has changed somewhat,

And on a different plan -- The dear with powder on her face,

Goes out to hunt the man."

However, beloved, instead of changing the Bible to suit the demands of the twentieth century, we'd better change the twentieth century to meet the demands of God's Word.

The Baptist Training Union held a convention in Ashland in which these Scriptures relative to women keeping silent in the church, were rudely trampled beneath feminine feet. One lady delivered an address on the subject of "Church Manners." Some one ought to have taken her off in the corner and taught her "how to behave" in the house of God. The feminist crowd who believe in unbridling the women and allowing them to conduct public worship services, are just as great modernists as the individual who denies the inspiration of the Bible, and the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, I have as much respect for them as I have the higher critics who deny the Genesis account of creation. I believe in the inerrancy of Paul just as I do in the inerrancy of Moses.

These Scriptures from I Corinthians and I Timothy, demand that a woman keep silent in the church - going so far as to say that she is not to teach men, nor pray when men are present, nor ever ask questions in public. In other words, hers is to be a position of silence. They say you can't run a Baptist Training Union in that manner. Well then, beloved, I would say, "Let them die, and the sooner the better, for if they have to be run in violation to the Word of God, we would be better off to have them dead." I know that the feminists say that this is a mighty small thing, but, beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ had something to say about small matters. Listen: "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven..." (Matthew 5:19).

The Keys quadruplets appeared before two of churches. They told how hard it was to buy clothes identically alike for four people. They told how their mother sewed, and how hard it was for a father to pay the bills. Of course, beloved, this was very edifying to say nothing of the fact that they were completely out of their place by so doing.

Well, long, long ago, there was a church at Thyatira who did the

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ELIJAH - 19

God's Vindication of His Servant

by Joseph M. Wilson

"But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron? Now therefore thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not come down from that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed" (II Kings 1:3,4).

You will remember that we studied Elijah back in the cave where he ran for his life from Jezebel. We find that God met him there, spoke to him and taught him and then said, "Get out of here and get back to work."

On his way back to Israel, he met Elisha and called Elisha to be a prophet. Elisha began to company with Elijah. Probably for the last ten years or so of Elijah's life and ministry, Elisha accompanied with Elijah.

From that time, until the event we studied relative to Naboth's vineyard, was probably six or seven years, but do not judge Elijah and say, "Well, he was not doing anything during that time," because we do not know. God has given us only a portion of the ministry of Elijah. Therefore I am assuming that during those years between the call of Elisha and the story of Naboth's vineyard, Elijah was training Elisha, preaching the Word of God in different places and working with these schools of the prophets training other men to be preachers of the Word of God.

A few more years passed between the story of Naboth's vineyard and the story of this event in Elijah's life. Ahab has died in the meantime and his son Ahaziah has become king of Israel. This story is relative to Elijah's ministry to Ahaziah.

Elijah was a thorn in the side of the evil kings of Israel. Would it not be a wonderful thing, if God's people would become thorns in the sides of evil people, and that they would straighten up and get right with God, or that you and I could at least have some influence upon the wicked and ungodly as Elijah did.

We read of Ahaziah's brief but evil reign. I Kings 22:51,52 tells us, "Ahaziah the son of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned two years over Israel. And he did evil in the sight of the LORD...". What else could you expect, with Ahab for his dad and Jezebel for his mother? Yet God's grace sometimes intervenes and saves the children of very wicked parents. Apart from the intervention of the grace of God, the influence of such wicked parents usually will tell adversely upon the lives of the children. Here is Ahaziah with probably the meanest woman who ever lived for his mother and Ahab for his dad, and he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the way of his father and mother.

Beloved friends, it is of tremendous importance that we, as parents, endeavor to live a Godly life before our children, for often times they are going to walk in the way

of their parents, be that good or evil. Here is quite a lesson for us, ...And in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin: For he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel, according to all that his father had done" (I Kings 22:53). "Then Moab rebelled against Israel..." (II Kings 1:1).

In the Hebrew Bible, I and II Kings are one book. In the original writing of the Bible there were no chapter and verse divisions. Always, when you read the close of one chapter, you need to look at the beginning of the next chapter and vice versa; for there is often an enlightening connection between the two. And since this, in the Bible as it was originally written, was one book with no chapters, we see the connection between Ahaziah's wickedness, his sin against God and the rebellion of Moab. Moab was a little country to the southeast of Israel that had been subject to Israel for many years. God in His sovereignty had allowed Israel to have dominion over Moab, and to benefit financially from this dominion.

Now because of the sin of Ahaziah, God moves upon Moab and enables them to successfully rebel against Israel. We learn from this the sovereignty of God over the affairs of nations. If one nation is over another nation, or one nation rebels successfully against another nation, that is in the hands of the sovereign God and He often exercises His sovereignty in judgment against sin. In judgment against Israel's sin, God allowed, and gave success to, the rebellion of Moab.

Well, we find Ahaziah in the upper chamber, instead of in the house of God praying about the sad reverses that has come to his kingdom. Instead of exercising his kingship and trying to regain for his people that which had rebelled against them, he is at home taking it easy. Of course, in that, Ahaziah reminds us of Ahab.

Ahab was a man who was interested in the luxurious and material things of life. He was not interested in doing his duty as a king or in serving God. He was interested in his own material welfare and it seems as though Ahaziah had learned that well. I think that maybe Ahaziah was afraid to lead Israel in battle against Moab; after all, how did his dad die? His dad died in a battle against Syria and he did not want to die like his dad did on the battlefield. So he stayed in the safety of his home. But no place on earth is a hiding place from God and no place on earth can deliver us from the hour of death when that time comes in the purpose of God. Although he was not out on the battlefield, battling with Moab, and thought he was safe in his own home, God's judgment found him there and he was the subject of an event that brought about his death. We find him falling through a lattice in his upper chamber and he was sick (II Kings 1:2). I wrote in my notes, "God can and will get a man, wherever that man might be."

When God wants you, you cannot hide from Him. When the time comes, God has a way of bringing about that judgment. Ahaziah falls and is injured and wants to

know if he is going to get well. So he sends messengers to Baalzebub, the god of Ekron (vs. 2). That showed that he was concerned about his sickness and wanted to know about the future, but it also shows that he had no concern for the knowledge that was given by God.

Ahaziah was not interested in learning and obeying the Word of God or leading Israel in the ways of God, but he was concerned about this knowledge that he thought he could get from Baalzebub. He did not trust in the God of Israel and he mis-trusted the god of Ekron, Baalzebub. Baalzebub means, "the lord of the fly." (I added--it also means "chief of evil spirits" and a Philistine idol). That is a mighty pitiful god for a man to trust in, is it not? He sends messengers on their way and God sees what is going on. God has brought judgment upon Ahaziah and is going to take Ahaziah's life in just a few more days. He is displeased with Ahaziah's turning from the God of Israel and sending to the idol god of the Philistines.

There is Elijah, and the angel of the Lord appeared to Elijah and sent, Elijah, out in public against the enemy again to give a message from the Lord" (see verse 3). Notice that II Kings 1:3 says, "...the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite...". Now, I do not know that it is certain, that every time (I'd have to check this out, maybe some of you have checked on it) the Bible says in the Old Testament, "the angel of the Lord," that it refers to Jesus Christ. But I do know that many, many, many times, "the angel of the Lord" in the Old Testament is a divine Person. I believe that this Divine Person is a pre-incarnate appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ. It would be interesting to study as to whether that applies to every case where the Bible says, "the angel of the Lord," or whether it applies in only some cases, and I do not know. I should have found out more about that, but I believe that most likely this was a preincarnate appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ. Many times in the Old Testament, Jesus Christ appeared on this earth in the form of a man. He appeared, I say, as a man, although He is called, "the angel of the Lord." When angels appeared visibly, they appeared in the forms of men. For many times in the Old Testament, Jesus Christ walked on this earth in the form of a man. Sometimes He is mentioned as man, such as "the man" that Joshua met who wanted to know if he was for us or for the enemy (see Joshua 5:13-15). That was the Lord. Jesus Christ had come down to be the Captain of Israel and give them the victory over Jericho. Now at the incarnation, Jesus Christ took human form permanently. He will always, from now on, be the God-man, but He appeared as man. Then, I assume, He took on a human body and then He laid it aside, but He did that many times in the Old Testament. At Bethlehem He took into union with His Deity, a human nature in which Deity and humanity would be united eternally. So, I believe this messenger in II Kings 1:3, that the angel of the Lord here, is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, notice Elijah's obedience. Notice his trust in God. Elijah is going to Ahaziah, who hates him and would like to see him dead, and yet, he has faith that God will take care of him. Elijah believes

that it is his duty to obey the Lord, and that it is the Lord's business to take care of him. This is the man who one time prayed to die, whom Jezebel tried her best to kill, who faced death many times, yet God showed His sovereignty over all things by taking him to heaven without his dying. This man, who so frequently was in danger of death in his service for the Lord, the Lord rewarded by taking him to heaven without his dying at all. What a glorious, gracious God we do have! Here we have the trust of Elijah, we have the obedience of Elijah, we have the courage of Elijah and we have his faithfulness in delivering the message the Lord told him to deliver. When Elijah met them, he gave the message exactly, without holding back anything. He knew that his message was unpleasant, that they would not appreciate it, that most likely they would not even believe it. He also knew that his message was going to get him in trouble unless God intervened, but he delivered the message just as God told him to. My, what an example of a preacher of the Word of God in being faithful in delivering the message even though it is undesirable, men hate it, reject the truths of the Word of God because the truths of the Word of God are not pleasing to the natural man. We need to be faithful in delivering that message that is the Word of God, whether or not men like it. You will remember the Lord said to Ezekiel, "...whether they will hear..." (Ezek. 2:5,7; 3:11), that would be good. Oh, wouldn't it be wonderful if everyone would listen? If you could go down the street and knock on a door and tell a man about Jesus Christ and have him repent and trust Christ Jesus, would that not be wonderful? If you could rebuke men for their sins and have them repent and turn from their sins, that would be wonderful. But the message and responsibility of preaching and the witnessing of Christians is to deliver the truths of God's Word. He said to Ezekiel, "...whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear (not hear)..." (Ezek. 2:5,7; 3:11). You are to only give them My Word. Beloved friends, I have known a multitude of preachers who would not preach what they knew the Bible taught because they knew it would get them in trouble. I preached one time in Winston-Salem to a group of preachers, a strong sovereign grace message about election, limited atonement and the irresistible power of the Spirit of God. One man said, "Brother Wilson, that was a great message. I believe it but you should not have preached it because you knew these other preachers do not believe it." I have known a lot of preachers who, if they are in a sovereign grace Bible conference, will preach sovereign grace, but in their home churches their congregations do not have any idea of what sovereign grace is all about and they have no idea that their pastor believed those things. Well, Elijah was not like that, God gave him a message and said you go and tell Ahaziah this, Ahaziah is not going to like it and might try to kill you for it, but you tell it. Old Elijah went down and he did not leave anything out of the message, nor add anything to the message, he gave the message as God told him to give it. What a wonderful example this is!

He gave the message to the messengers and they returned to Ahaziah. When they got back to

Ahaziah, he realized that they had not had time to get down to Ekron and wanted to know why they came back so early (II Kings 1:5). They said, "King, we met a fellow out there and he told us to come back and tell you that you are not going to get well, you are going to die" (II Kings 1:6). "And he said unto them, What manner of man was he which came up to meet you, and told you these words?" (II Kings 1:7). In other words,

"What kind of man was he?" "And they answered him, He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins..." (II Kings 1:8). Ahaziah said, "...It is Elijah the Tishbite" (II Kings 1:8).

Boy, Elijah had hounded Ahaziah's daddy and now he is after him. I tell you, the house of Ahab dreaded to see Elijah coming down the road, didn't they? Ahaziah said, "That's Elijah." Now, I want you to notice the foolishness of this man and the absurdity of sin. I thought about preaching a sermon from that in the story of Ahaziah. He sent a captain (v.9) with fifty soldiers after Elijah, and do you know where Elijah is? He is up on a mountain, having fellowship with the Lord. He is at peace, he is not afraid, he is not running, he is not hiding, his confidence is in the Lord. I believe that on the mountain he was praying to and trusting in God.

The captain came to the foot of the mountain and said, "...And he spake unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down" (v.9). Oh, that was a reproach against and a dishonor to God. Elijah said, "...If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty...there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him (the captain) and his fifty" (v. 10). Ahaziah found out about that, and sent fifty more soldiers and another captain (v. 11) after Elijah, and God sent fire from heaven and consumed them also (v.12). I want you to get the lesson here of the absurdity of sin. Men will never learn that God will put a judgment upon them unless God works by sovereign grace within their hearts. No outward circumstances will bring the unsaved to their senses about the things of God. Can you imagine Ahaziah sending again, fifty more? Ahaziah did it again. He sent fifty more a third time (v.13), with their captain. Ahaziah just would not learn, his heart was hardened in his rebellion against God. God and the works of God had no effect upon him. Ahaziah knew that God, through Elijah, had shut the windows of heaven for three and one half years, that the fire had come from heaven on Mount Carmel, that the rains had come and that God had sent judgment, that Moab had rebelled and that a hundred soldiers were already dead, but, he sends fifty more and a captain (v.13) after Elijah. Well, this captain was of a different medal. I believe he was one of the seven thousand elect of God. "...the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and

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the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight. Behold, there came fire down from heaven, and burnt up the two captains of the former fifties with their fifties: therefore let my life now be precious in thy sight. The angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go down with him: be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king" (II King 1:13,14,15).

We could preach a sermon on how to stay out of the fire. Humble yourself down before God Almighty, and seek the mercy of the Lord, and say unto God, "Have mercy on me! When men humble themselves before God, and earnestly desire the mercy of the Lord, He always delights to show mercy. The fire did not fall on that third captain (I did not expect it to, did you?) because here was one who desired the mercy of the Lord and humbled himself before the Lord and before the man of God, showing that he believed in the power of the God of Elijah. When men believe in God, humble themselves before God, and desire mercy from God--they will stay out of the fire, but all others will be in the fire sooner or later. I am sure he did not do it, but I have often thought that when God said to Elijah "...be not afraid..." and "...Go down with him..." Elijah might have answered, "Who is afraid?" I guess he did not do that, but he sure did not act as though he was afraid, did he? When God left him to himself he was like other men, but here the Lord strengthened, and blessed and with confidence in the Lord, he goes down with those fifty soldiers to the palace of Ahaziah. And, oh, methinks it must have been like a triumphal march. I think no victorious general ever returned from the battle and entered into the city with anymore of a victory than Elijah. He comes in, not as a captive of those fifty soldiers, but as one whom God has vindicated. God has testified and shown His power in behalf of Elijah, and Elijah goes in and comes before Ahaziah, and I'll tell you now, a lot of folks could preach a message to servants that they would not preach to a king. You know, it would be easy to get a servant off somewhere and preach a strong, bold message to him, but ole Elijah said the same thing to the king that he said to the servants of the king. He came in and said, "King, you are going to die." "And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron, is it not because there is no God in Israel to inquire of his word? therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die" (II Kings 1:16). He said, "Why did you send to Baalzebub? Is it not because there is no God in Israel, because God has forsaken Israel? Israel turned their backs on God and you have sent down to another god but it is not going to do you any good, you are going to die." Then Elijah departed, and the Bible

says, "So he (Ahaziah) died according to the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken..." (II Kings 1:17).

God vindicates His servants. Here was a man serving God, and the captain said, "...Thou man of God..." (v.9), probably making fun of Elijah. Elijah said, "...If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty." A lot of people criticize Elijah over that, but Elijah did not send the fire. Don't jump on Elijah and say, "Oh, what a mean, cruel, person Elijah was." He could not bring fire down from heaven if he wanted to. Elijah was concerned about the glory of God, and I believe that God told Elijah, or moved upon his soul to ask for that fire. Elijah did not bring the fire down. If you want to blame anyone, you have to blame God.

People say, "Well, that is in the Old Testament, it is not like that in the New Testament. Well, there are some differences in the New Testament, but I want you to understand that there is a New Testament 'fire' just as well, and those who go on in rebellion against God are going to feel the eternal fires of the wrath of God. I want you to see that God vindicated Elijah and backed His man, by sending the fire down and destroying two captains and a hundred soldiers. By the death of Ahaziah, God again backed Elijah. And, beloved friends, God is going to stand behind His man. Now we might not stand true to God as we should, but when we do stand true to God, He will back us to the hilt and stand behind us all the way.

Dear friends, if we will be true to God, if we will stand true to the Word of God, if we will obey the Lord, here or yonder, sooner or later, God will manifest His power in our behalf, God will back us. It is up to us to be true to God and to His Word and we can depend upon the Lord being behind us all the way. May God bless you!!

WRONG

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same thing. They had a church that was run by a woman, and Jesus condemned them and so far as I am concerned, any church which is run by a woman today, or which unbridles it's women to conduct it's public worship service, to teach men, to pray in public, or even speak out in public worship - such a church has the condemnation of the Lord Jesus Christ today.

IV. After commending and condemning this church, Jesus also gave a promise to the overcomers. "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father" (Rev. 2:26, 27).

The overcomers - that is, those who did not succumb to the evil sway of this woman who was running the church - these overcomers were to share in Messiah's rule. It reminds us of the time when King George III was crowned, all his peers were crowned at the same time, each to be under the king. This is an honor worth suffering for, and will only come to those who oppose the modern feminist movement. In this early day, it was for the indi-

vidual who dared oppose the woman at the head of the church at Thyatira. To us today, it means that everyone who stands solidly against the feminist movement, and against women preachers, will share in Messiah's rule.

In conclusion, let me read verse 21 again: "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not."

You will notice the expression, "space to repent". This church at Thyatira had an opportunity to repent. If you are a feminist, God gives you the same opportunity. If you are member of a church or if you are a pastor of a church which is run by a woman, then God gives you "space to repent" today.

I thank God also that He is giving to many sinners today "space to repent." It may be that this is God's day for you, and if so, may you repent now and believe the gospel that Christ died for your sins, and may you accept Jesus Christ as your Saviour, for to reject the Son of God means, your "space to repent," to come to an end; and for you to die unsaved, means a devil's hell; therefore, "...believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved..."

STUDIES

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We learn from Acts 4:22 that this man was above forty years old. The people knew that he was not an imposter for he could never have pretended to be lame for such a long period of time. "And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering" (Acts 3:11).

Peter and John had been and would be hated by the Jewish people. They, however, for a moment in time, were held or embraced by this Jew who had been healed. This one embrace and the sight of this man's joy-filled face was worth it all. They would now be equipped to go many more miles in the strength they had received on that day. That night, as they lay in prison for their action, they must have thanked God over and over again because of what He had done through them.

The people who observed this mountain that was cast into the sea were filled with wonder and amazement. They, in fact, "ran together," or as a group, to the "porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering." This fact means that they were in the right frame of mind for a gospel message. The stage had been set and the audience had gathered. The Spirit would now inspire Peter to speak to them. "And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?" (Acts 3:12). Peter was very grateful to have been God's instrument in this mighty work, but he had learned and learned well that he was totally helpless when left to himself. He knew, as Jesus had said in John 15:5, "without me ye can do nothing." They, on the other hand, could do all things through Christ who strengthened them.

Peter asked the people why they marvelled at the miracle which had

been done. They, after all, had they accepted Jesus as the Messiah, could expect Him to do all sorts of marvelous things -- things which He had already done when living among them. They, after observing the resurrected Lazarus, should not marvel or wonder at the healing of this lame man.

"The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied Him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go" (Acts 3:13). The people had all come to the temple at 3 a.m. to pray to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, yea, the God of their fathers. They, however, had not recognized Jesus Christ as God's Son -- the Son, of course, having far greater than God's servants; Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Peter, at this time, was speaking to over five thousand people since we know from Acts 4:4 that there were "about five thousand men" whom the Spirit converted on this occasion. Peter referred first to the God of Abraham since it was through his seed that God had promised to bless all the families of the earth. He was also the God of Abraham because Abraham had acknowledged Him as such.

Peter informs the people that the healing of this lame man was God's way of glorifying His Son. The healing of the lame man, in fact, was a secondary thing or a by-product of God glorifying His Son. Peter, in a sense of speaking, pointed his finger at this large audience and said, "You denied Him, but God has glorified Him and the proof is right before your eyes."

"You denied Him in the presence of Pilate, but the God of your fathers has not denied Him. Pilate was determined to let Him go, but you said, no. This fact makes you, rather than Pilate, the ones who killed Him. You thought you had gotten rid of Him, but this man who was lame is full proof that He is very much alive."

"But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses" (Acts 3:14, 15). Peter had a captivated audience. They could not walk away from what had happened, and Peter lays it on the line as to what it was. Peter charges the Jews with denying the Holy One and the Just, desiring a murderer in His place, or one who was the complete opposite of holy and just. This fact showed that they had taken leave of their senses. It showed that their hearts were deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. It showed that all they like sheep had gone astray and turned to their own way.

They had killed the Prince of Life -- the one on whom all life depends. God, however, had raised Him from the dead, which Peter knew to be a fact since he had seen him and talked with Him. He and many others were witnesses of His resurrection.

We must add that God was extremely merciful to them in that He gave them the opportunity to repent and have all their sins remitted. He gave them the privilege of eternal life even after they had slain the Prince of Life. "And His name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by Him hath given him this perfect soundness

in the presence of you all" (Acts 3:16). It appears that the faith spoken of here was not the faith of the lame man, but the faith of Peter and John. The Lord, after all, had made the following promise to the disciples:

"...If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matthew 17:20).

The people, according to verses ten and eleven, were filled with amazement and wonder regarding the perfect soundness of body which this lame man now possessed. Peter proceeds to fill in the blank spaces or to put the puzzle together for them. The part of this puzzle which was missing, as far as they were concerned, was Jesus -- the very one they had crucified. They had killed the Prince of Life, but that same Prince was the very one who had made this man whole. The Prince, then had risen from the dead. He had broken the chains of death, or as Acts 2:24 states, "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that He should be holden of it."

The words "perfect soundness" mean that he was free of any defect. God had overhauled his entire body so that he was like new. He was better than when he was born, since he had been born with this condition. "In the presence of you all" -- Acts 3:16. The proof was before the people. The apostles were willing for the people to examine the subject so as to be sure that no trick had been played on them.

"And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it as did also your rulers" (Acts 3:17). Some have said that ignorance excuses a person from the wrong committed. God the Spirit, however, through Peter, charges these ignorant people with the death of Jesus Christ -- the Prince of Life. Peter, however, in a most tender manner, calls these ignorant murderers "brethren." He, in other words, regards himself as belonging to the same nation as they. Peter, by calling them brethren, also said that he was not by nature any holier than they were. He, in fact, had already called them murderers. His approach now was to lead them gently to repentance and faith. He was not out for their blood but was seeking repentance and faith from them. Peter was following his master's example. Jesus Christ, in fact, had not come here to condemn us poor sinners; but He came that we might be saved. We were already condemned when Jesus came and so were those whom Peter was addressing.

Peter said, "I wot," or I know I am very much aware as to why you did what you did. Even Jesus Himself, when hanging on the tree, had said, "They know not what they do." The dastardly deed, even though done through ignorance, had been done. God could have cast them all into hell. He, however, through Peter, gives them the opportunity to repent and embrace Jesus Christ of Nazareth as their personal Saviour. We know from Acts 4:4 that about five thousand men accepted God's gift. They repented of their sins and accepted the Lord Jesus as their very own personal Saviour and Lord.

We all consider it to be a terrible miscarriage of justice when the

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Every person in sin is going contrary to the Light, and is therefore walking in darkness.

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

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STUDIES

(Continued from Page 11)

wrong person is put to death for a particular crime. The same applies to the death of our Saviour. He had done no wrong. He, in fact, was the only perfect human being who ever lived. "...as did also your rulers." The gross ignorance, which the people and their leaders manifested, was without excuse. The Lord Jesus -- their Messiah -- had performed numerous miracles in their presence. He had informed them over and over again as to who He was. The raising of Lazarus from the dead, or any of His other miracles, should have convinced any right-thinking person as to who He was. He, of course, did not reveal Himself to them. They, however, were still responsible to hear and believe. Ignorance was no excuse.

All their hopes and expectations regarding the Messiah were different than what Jesus appeared to be. They, in fact, had expected a prince and a conqueror rather than a lowly Nazarene. The Lord Jesus was the only hope for their nation. They, had they really known this fact, would never have put Him to death. **"But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, He hath so fulfilled"** (Acts 3:18). God, by way of His ordained prophets, has revealed His plan to mankind. This fact also shows that Israel should have known who Jesus Christ was. They, after all, had been informed over and over again regarding the fact that He was to suffer and die. God had not been silent. It was only that their ears were dull of hearing. It was one thing for Israel not to hear God's message to them by way of their prophets. It was quite another thing for them to actually hate God's Son -- to spit on Him -- to hit on Him with the palms of their hands and then to crucify Him. They, in other words, treated Him as badly as they knew how to treat Him.

"Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19). The word "repent" signifies a complete change of mind regarding Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Repentance would mean that they must completely agree with Peter regarding the past, present, and future relative to Jesus Christ of Nazareth. **"And be converted"** means to return to the beginning of the path on which they had gone astray. That which Peter is saying is, "Repent and turn." God has so arranged His forgiveness that He does not forgive people who will not repent. Repentance, of course, is of the Lord. We are made sorry for our sins by way of God the Spirit. He produces both repentance and faith in us. No man, in fact, will come to God in repentance and faith unless God draws that person to Himself (John 6:44).

The result of God's action in the sinner is that one's sins are blotted out. The expression, **"to blot out sins,"** is taken from the practice of creditors charging their debtors; and when the debt is paid, they blot out the recorded debt. **"When the times of**

refreshing shall come..." The word which is here rendered "when" should be rendered "that," since the word "that" is the word which is most commonly used. The idea being advanced here related to the "final cause," or the reason why a thing is done. The meaning, then, is "repent... in order that the times of refreshing may come" -- the times of refreshing relating to peace and joy. Jesus, after all, had said to His disciples, **"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you..."** (John 14:27).

There appears to be a joining together of "the times of refreshing," as recorded here in verse nineteen, and the "restitution of all things," as noted in verse twenty-one. The connection of these two statements, as far as I can determine, relates to their repenting and believing and the result of such action. They, after all, were great sinners -- sinners who needed to repent and enjoy the refreshing benefit of the joy and peace which would follow. Furthermore, their action would put them in that family who was going to participate in the restitution of all things. The Jews had been expecting the Messiah to come and restore all things. Peter informs them that He had come and would restore all things. They, however, needed to repent of their thoughts and actions against Him so that they could participate in His glorious future for them. The fact that Peter used the future tense of "shall come" when referring to "refreshing" does not necessarily mean that all the refreshment was future. The refreshment began when they repented and believed. It will be consummated when our Lord puts all things under His feet. You may recall that Jesus used "shall come" when saying, "Elias truly shall first come." He, however, proceeded to say that this event had already taken place.

The fact that the refreshing came "from the presence of the Lord" signifies that the Lord is the author. **"And He shall send Jesus Christ, which was before preached unto you"** (Acts 3:20). The period of refreshing was to come when God sent Jesus Christ, or the Messiah, to this planet. Now that He had come, they should repent of their rebellion against Him and accept Him as the Messiah, yea, as their Savior and Lord. The expression, **"which was before preached unto you,"** relates to the preaching done by God's prophets of old. Isaiah, the fifty-third chapter, is an excellent example of Jesus Christ having been preached to them.

"Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). Here is where the Jews had stumbled. They had thought that the Messiah would reign on the earth forever once He was here. They did not think that He would ascend, after a period of time, back to heaven (see John 12:34).

Peter states, "whom the heaven must receive." Jesus Christ, after all, is God, the ruler of the world. It is from heaven that He directs the affairs of the universe. He completed His mission on earth and then ascended back to His throne -- the place of His exaltation -- the springboard of His power.

"Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right

hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him" (I Peter 3:22). Peter states that His ascension into heaven will be "until the times of restitution of all things." The word "restitution" relates to the restoration of things to their former condition, the things here being all that the prophets, as God's mouth, have prophesied. Ezekiel, for example, informs us how Russia will come against Israel etc. The prophets have informed us of all the future events and the consummation of all things.

Peter, by his statements to the Jews, was saying that what he was preaching was in perfect harmony with all that the prophets had spoken. He had added nothing nor taken away anything. **"For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; Him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever He shall say unto you"** (Acts 3:22).

Peter, here, appeals to Moses -- Moses, the complete authority to all Jews. Peter points out that he was in perfect agreement with Moses.

APPRECIATED LETTERS

Hi there you all in the Holy Land:

That's what we here in south Florida call Kentucky! Especially since some of our church members are transplanted Kentuckians. Sorry I waited so long to renew my subscription, but us old folks put aside the worthier matters. Why just today I realized that I had to put on my glasses before I could look for them. Thanks for the paper-I really didn't think I needed my own personal copy, as all my kids are on your mailing list, as well as some friends, but I never saw a discarded copy and was seldom offered a used one. Just keep it coming!

Miami, Fla.

A SINFUL PRESBYTERIAN BAPTISMAL SERVICE

The accompanying picture was in a paper that came across my desk. It was labeled as the baptism of the lady in the picture. I suppose that one man is holding a saucer of water in his hand, and that the preacher has dipped his fingers in that and touched them to the candidate's head. I suppose that the preacher, in doing this, said something like, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Compare this picture with the following Scripture, **"And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there..."** (Jn. 3:23). Now look at this picture again. How much water do you see? It takes much water to have a Biblical and Baptistic Baptismal service, but Presbyterians can have such "so-called" with very little water.

Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch went down into the water and came up out of the water (see Acts 8:38-39), but I think this Presbyterian preacher and the woman candidate in the picture would have a hard time doing that in a saucer. The word "baptize" means "dip," but I suspect that the Presbyterian preacher would have a hard time dipping this woman in a saucer of

water.

The truth of the matter is that this Presbyterian baptism (?) is contrary to the Biblical accounts of Baptism, the Biblical picture of baptism (death, burial, and resurrection), and the word inspired by the Holy Spirit to apply to this ordinance. It seems to me that the Presbyterian baptism (?) is totally contrary to what the Bible teaches about this subject.

The Bible sets forth four essentials to Scriptural Baptism: 1. A Scriptural subject, a believer. I



suppose this candidate meets that requirement, but when Presbyterians baptize (?) infants, they are unBiblical on this point. 2. A Scriptural mode, immersion. The Presbyterian service fails to meet this requirement. 3. A Scriptural purpose, to show forth the gospel in an act of obedience. They fail here for their act is one of disobedience and is a travesty, not a picture, of the gospel. 4. A Scriptural authority, a true church. Presbyterians were started by John Calvin in the 1500's, and cannot be a true church of Jesus Christ. Only true Baptist churches can meet all the tests of being a true church, and they only have the authority to Baptize. So, the Presbyterian Baptismal (?) service in the picture fails to meet three of the Biblical requirements for baptism. Therefore, this is not a Baptismal service, and the paper lied when it labeled it as such.

And how awful to realize that when the Presbyterian preacher said, "I baptize you..." he lied, and he probably told this lie in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. How awful! You may say that he thought he was telling the truth and did not mean to lie. That does not change the fact that he did lie. No wonder I titled this article as I did.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The West Griffin Baptist Church, 1614 Piedmont Road, will have special revival services November 6 - 12. Services will be at 7:30 nightly, and the regular time on Sunday. Elder T.B. Freeman of Mims, Florida will be the speaker for these services. John Pruitt is the church pastor. Pray for this meeting. You will be blessed if you are able to attend the meeting. For further information call John Pruitt at 404 229 4485



"The Hopkins Family."

The Hopkins family mean much to this pastor and editor. They have had to move from Winston Salem, N.C. to Guthrie, Oklahoma due to Charles' work. They were in two services of a meeting I preached in Tulsa this summer. It was such a joy to see them again. They came into the Grace Baptist Church in Winston Salem while I was pastor there, and were a great blessing. Charles; His wife, Cheryl and elder son, Michael have joined our church. We are very happy to have them as members. They will be meeting in their home. They will listen to tapes. Charles, who is very knowledgeable in the truths of God's Word, will bring a lesson. They will invite others to these services. They will be looking for a church of like faith and practice in the area (likely, they will not find one), but will have these services in the home until they find a good, true, sound church. They will maybe visit with our mission

work in Tulsa once in a while. We are glad to have them, but we can truthfully say that we hope they can find a true and sound church near them, or be used in starting one. There are many people scattered across this land who cannot find a sound, strong, true church close enough to attend. When this is the case, they should join and support such a church even if they cannot attend. They should not attend, support or be members of a false church preaching false doctrine. Again, we are very happy to have these in our church. We pray that God will save the other children and add them to our church. Pray for this family, and if you are ever near Guthrie, Oklahoma, they would enjoy your visiting with them; and you would enjoy it also. Seated in the back left to right; are Michael, Charles, Cheryl, and James. In the front are Norman and Brandy. Charles, God bless you and your family and use you to His glory.