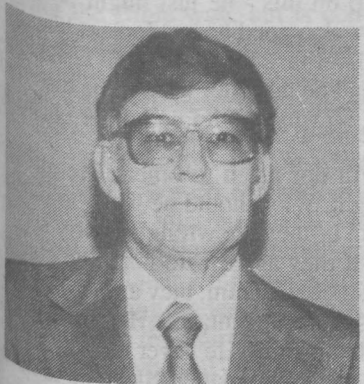


THE INTEREST OF ELECTION

by Ray Brown
P.O. Box 203

Cannelton, W. Va. 25036
Paul and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; ...Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope..." (I Thess. 1:1-3).

Notice what he is saying in verse 3. This is a working church. Look at the fruits in these believers. So, faith is a working faith. It is always busy and has its hands full. It is always busy doing something that it might glorify



Ray Brown

and honour the Lord Jesus Christ and God. Faith always works in the labour of love. These things are done in patience in the sight of

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 1)

AN ORGAN TRANSPLANT

by H.C. McSwain
Ezek. 36:26

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh" (Ezek. 36:26). A few days ago, the Linares family, which lives in Chicago, Ill., made the headlines of local and national newspapers. This tragic story began some 3 months ago with a birthday party. During this party, Mr. Linares' youngest son, Samuel, then 13 months old, swallowed a rubber balloon and choked. By the time medical help was obtained, the child had lost consciousness and suffered irreversible brain damage. He sank into a deep coma and has been on a life support system in a Chicago hospital ever since.

Last Thursday, April 27, 1989, Mr. Linares took a gun, went to the hospital, entered his son's room, ordered the attendants to stay clear of the baby, while he loosed the life support system from him. In the matter of a few minutes, while he held him in his arms, he was dead. Mr. Linares is now being charged with murder. As I heard the tragic story unfold on the evening news, I was obsessed with the thought, if only he could have had a brain transplant, all of this would not have happened.

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No human physician can deal with sin.

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The Baptist Examiner

Baptist Is Our Middle Name

Paid Circulation in All States and in Many Foreign Countries

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

VOL. 61, NO. 23

ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, NOV. 11, 1989

WHOLE NUMBER 2573

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE CHURCH? TOO BIG A NAME

CHAPTER 5

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

All will agree that there is something wrong with the churches of today. Even though we may differ widely as to that which we think may be wrong, yet all will agree that our churches lack spiritual power, and that there is something dreadfully wrong today. Human judgment would give a varied answer - just as varied as there might be individuals to discuss the question. Only Divine judgment is to be trusted.

Ephesus, the first of the seven churches which we studied, had left its first love. Jesus said: "thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. 2:4). Smyrna was being opposed by the devil on the outside. We read: "...behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days..." (Rev. 2:10).

Pergamos was composed of a mixed membership - the world and the church were sadly mixed up together.

Thyatira was run by a woman.



John R. Gilpin, Sr.

By her public teaching, she was violating the Scriptures.

Thus, in each of these four churches which we have studied, there was a definite wrong. Today, we have each of these wrongs in practically all of our churches. We have those who have left their first

love. We have those churches which have taken a doctrinal stand, and are being fought by the devil. Still again, we have churches like Pergamos, where the world and the church are mixed together. And then, to be sure, we have thousands of churches like Thyatira which are run by the women.

And now we are going to study the church at Sardis.

I. It is rather interesting to notice the location of the city of Sardis. The city was the capitol of Lydia. It was the residence of King Croesus, whose name was a synonym of enormous wealth. When Cyrus captured the city of Sardis in 548 B.C., he found riches amounting to over \$600,000,000. This city of Sardis through the years of its history, was always noted for its wealth.

Wherever you find wealth, you naturally find worldliness. That is true of any wealthy city today. It is true of any wealthy church. It is

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ACCEPTING CHRIST

by Arthur W. Pink

What we are about to write is designed chiefly for preachers, particularly the younger ones, though it should not be lacking in interest to any who are concerned about the proclamation of God's truth. To preach the Word faithfully and profitably is the most solemn, the most honourous, and the most difficult task which can fall to the present lot of anyone. After twenty years' experience the writer is conscious that he knows

nothing yet as he ought to know, and that his best performances need the anointing blood of Christ to cleanse them. May writer and reader heed, more and more, the Divine injunction, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (I Thess. 5:21).

Some evangelists are very fond of urging their unconverted hearers to "accept Christ" as their personal Saviour. With almost monotonous frequency this phrase is constantly on their lips. It is rare

that they employ any alternate one. Probably the majority of our readers have heard this expression so often that they have mechanically endorsed it without giving it a serious thought. Or, perhaps, they have heard it used by preachers who were so renowned for their orthodoxy that it never occurred to them to challenge it.

On the other hand, there exist companies of professing Christians today who take serious ex-

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

THE BIBLE WAY OR THE BOARD WAY

"NOW there were in the church that was at Antioch...And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost..." (Acts 13:1a,3,4a).

"And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them..." (Acts 14:27). "Unto him be glory in the church..." (Eph. 3:21).

Please note the word 'or' in the subject of this article. It is

important. I do not say the Bible way and the mission board way. I do not say the Bible way is the mission board way. I certainly specifically say the Bible way or the mission board way, because it is one or the other. It cannot be both. They do not mix. One can do mission work the mission board way. Most folk do it this way. It is an easy and attractive way of doing mission work. But if one does mission work the mission board way, they are not doing it the Bible way. The Bible way is different in many important respects from the mission board way. So we must choose between

one or the other. We cannot mix them or use them both.

Let us notice some things about the mission board way. The mission board is the final and determining authority in the mission work. The board decides whether or not one can be a missionary. A man might be called to be a missionary and some church may recognize that call and authorize that person as a missionary. Still, he cannot be a missionary the board way unless the board approves of him and is willing to send him out as a missionary. Now, here is a strange thing. A man may be

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STUDIES IN ACTS

Keep in mind as we proceed that Peter's sermon did not fall on deaf ears. We, in fact, learn from Acts 4:4 that about five thousand of the men present believed every word that Peter said. Moses, according to Peter, had advised their own fathers that the Lord God would raise up a prophet unto them of their brethren, the prophet being one who foretold future events and one who was a religious teacher in general.

The Lord Jesus, of course, as a prophet, was an infallible guide to the nation of Israel. He, for example, taught them that God looked on the heart and not the outward appearance. He taught them that



Willard Willis

one can break a commandment by thinking as well as by action. They, therefore, were to hear Him in all things. He, after all, knew all things and had complete authority. The Lord God, after all, had raised Him up -- commissioned Him -- for this very purpose.

The one that God had raised up, according to Moses, was to be "of

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SIN IV

by Marion Lawson

Turn with me to Matthew 12:31-32, "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, is shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Again, we read in Mark 3:28-30, "Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever 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"

There has, in times past, been much misunderstanding of these Scriptures. I will say this, that a child of God cannot sin the unforgivable sin, but can sin the sin unto death. The apostle Paul tells us in I Corinthians 11:29-30, "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep." And, listen to I John

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The Baptist Examiner

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Owned, authorized and published by Calvary

Baptist Church, Ashland, Ky.

Editorial Department, located in ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, where all subscriptions and communications should be sent. Address: P.O. Box 60, Zip Code 41105-0060.

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

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

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Second Class Postage paid at Ashland, Kentucky.

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

THE BIBLE

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called of God. He may be authorized by God's appointed authorizing institution--a true Baptist church--but he cannot be a missionary the board way without the approval of the board. Now this seems to me to be putting a mission board ahead of God and ahead of God's authorized and authorizing institution.

The mission board way gives the board authority over when, where, and how long the missionary can do mission work. The missionary must go where the board says. He must stay as long, and only as long, as the board says. He must leave the field when the board says. He is under the absolute authority of the board as long as he is a mission board missionary. Now, surely, brethren, this is human dictatorship in the extreme.

In the mission board way, the property purchased by mission money is the property of the mission board. This is surely not the proper way of doing mission work. Neither is it proper for such property to belong to the missionary. The only right way is for it to belong to the authorizing church.

In the mission board way, the glory goes to the mission board, and it should. If the mission board is in control, and is directing the work, and owns everything connected with the work, then it should get the glory; and it does. If you are well acquainted with any mission board men, you are aware of this fact.

Now let us study awhile the Bible way of doing mission work and see how it is contrasted with the mission board way. In the Bible way, God calls the missionary with a personal call which does not have to meet the approval of some man-made organization. Now the mission board would say that God must call the missionary, but they also practice that this one who says he is called must be approved by the mission board. So we see that in the Bible way, the man deals privately and personally with God as to this matter,



Joe Wilson

whereas the mission board way puts other men in the way.

The Bible way is through God's instituted, and authorized agency; a true church of Jesus Christ. Our Lord gave the commission to do mission work in the world to His church and thereby to all churches descending from that church and continuing as true churches. Mission boards were started by, and continue by the authority of men. Some mission board men are strongly opposed to false churches. For instance, I feel sure that most BFM men would oppose doing mission work through a Methodist, or Holiness, or Mormon, etc., so-called church. Yet, these false churches are no more man-made than the BFM mission board. These false churches have as much authority to exist and do the Lord's mission work as BFM or any other man-made mission board--and they are all man-made.

The Bible way of mission work is this: God calls a man to be a missionary. God leads His authorized and authorizing institution--a true Baptist church--to recognize that call, and to authorize this God-called man to be an authorized missionary of that church. Now, the mission board advocates might object that in our statement of the Bible way, we have an authority that the man who says God has called him to be a missionary must come before and meet its approval, and we do. Then the mission board advocate will know why we say this, and yet we object to their having an authority that a man must come before and meet its approval. Well, the difference is that a mission board is a man-made institution with no divine authority, whereas a true church has a divinely given authority. It is the difference between man's way and God's way.

In the Bible way, the God-called and church-authorized missionary is free to be led of the Lord as to where and how in his mission work. Read about Paul's mission work in Acts. You will see that the way he did mission work is not the way of the mission board, but is the way I have described as the Bible way.

Surely, it is very clear to any Bible reader that mission boards are not found in the Bible. Now, if there are no mission boards in the Bible, how can the mission board way be the Bible way of do-

ing mission work? And since the mission board way is not found in the Bible, and is clearly opposed to the Bible way; then how can one who professes to believe in the authority of the Bible advocate and support mission boards!

The Lord Jesus Christ started Baptist churches in His earthly ministry and guaranteed them perpetuity until His coming again. The Lord commissioned His churches to do His work in the world. The church was baptized with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth. God gets glory through the church. Now, if one will carefully study all that the Bible teaches about the church, one will understand the Bible way of doing missions and will not support mission boards.

Bible missionaries were authorized and sent forth by local Baptist churches. They then labored in mission work as the Spirit of God led them. They reported concerning their mission work to the church which sent them out. This is the Bible way and it is most surely not the mission board way of doing things.

The Bible way results in the glory for what is done in mission work going to God, and not to a mission board or to some man or men. And this is the way it should be. It is God who calls the missionary and gives him wisdom and power in doing mission work. It is God who directs His true churches to recognize this call and to send him forth. It is God who leads the missionary as to the field of labor and as to how long to stay there and when and where to move on, and how to carry out the work. It is God who blesses the work of the missionary, if and when souls are saved, and churches are organized. In the Bible way, it is all of God and by God, and is all to the glory of God. Oh, brethren, this is what it is all about - glory to God! God created all things and does all that He does for His own glory. We should realize that it is the chief end of man to glorify God. We should realize that the way to do things to the glory of God is to do them as taught in the Word of God. The Bible is my guide Book of how to properly glorify my God. The Bible reveals that God gets glory in the church. Therefore, if I am to glorify God as I should, I must be in a church and serve God in, and through, and under the authority of the church.

Away with mission boards. Away with associations and conventions. Away with so-called Christian schools and seminaries, and away with everything that professes to be doing the Lord's work that is not under the authority of a true church of Jesus Christ. Let us honor Christ and exalt Him by bowing to His authority and doing things the way He teaches us in His Word. Truly saved people should be in the army of the Lord. They should fall in, line up, and march forth--not at the commands of men--not according to the word of conventions, associations, and mission boards--but at the commands of their one and only King, Lord, and Master--even Jesus Christ.

Oh, my brother, this way of doing mission work the mission board way--why do I oppose it so? Why does TBE stand so against it--why? Because it dishonors our Lord by putting the wisdom and word of men ahead of the wisdom and Word of God. Because it robs Jesus Christ of the glory that is His due and gives it to men.

See the mission board strip the glorious crown from the head of Jesus Christ and put it on the mission board. Brethren, this is not a light and unimportant thing. We cannot, we must not, we dare not say that so long as we are doing mission work, it does not matter how we do it. Many mission board advocates--I think especially of BFM and other so-called Baptist boards--many of these will say that it matters how you baptize--and it does; that it matters how you observe the Lord's Supper, what elements you

use, and who is invited--and it does. But these same men will say it does not matter how you do mission work--but it does.

Let us sum the matter up. The mission board way exalts a man-made institution ahead of God's divinely instituted and authorized churches. It dishonors God by impugning His wisdom--as if God did not know how to best do mission work. Can you not see that mission boards think they have improved on God's way? (Pod

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FROM THE EDITOR

THE MAN WHO IS NEVER WRONG. I want to introduce you to the most remarkable man you will ever meet. I have not been to a Fair in many years, but if I remember correctly, they used to have a show exhibit featuring remarkable persons; the bearded lady, the strong man, the fat man, the rubber man, etc. I want to introduce you to a much more remarkable than any of these. There was a giant in Samuel 21:20 who had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, but the man I want you to meet is more remarkable than that. You have never seen his like before and will never see such again. He is **THE MAN WHO IS NEVER WRONG.**

The man who is never wrong is the man who has never really faced himself. He is about a mirror like I am about scales - I don't get on the things - and he never looks in a mirror. He is so convinced that he is always right that he never takes time to take an honest look at himself and see what he is really like. He has made up his mind what he is like and he does not intend to check up on this - he just might be disappointed in himself if he ever really took a good honest look at himself.

The man who is never wrong will not face the facts about a situation. He has already made up his mind and he does not want to be disturbed by the facts. He knows he is right, so why should he bother checking out the true facts of a situation?

The man who is never wrong will not listen to others. He already knows it all. He knows that he is right. Why should he listen to others? After all, others must agree with him or they are wrong; so why should he listen to what they have to say. If they agree with him - he already knew whatever they say. If they disagree with him, they are wrong.

The man who is never wrong has some advantages. He never has to study a matter; he already knows what is right. He never has to listen to others. He never has to think much about any matter. Since he is never wrong, of course, he is always right.

The man who is never wrong can never learn anything. Since he is never wrong about anything, he is always right about everything; and he can never learn anything. After all, no one is smart enough to teach him anything.

The man who is never wrong will never make up with anyone who will not admit that he is wrong. If one man is never wrong, then any one who has any argument or difference with that man is automatically wrong. There is no use discussing the matter. This man is very easy to make up with - all you have to do is to admit that you are wrong. But unless you are willing to admit that you are wrong, you will never be reconciled with the man who is never wrong.

The man who is never wrong could never be saved, for one must see his sins before he will turn to the Saviour. So I suppose that some of these men who now are never wrong will admit that they were wrong before they got saved. But since being saved, they have never been wrong.

The man who is never wrong is a most obnoxious person. You see, most of us mere mortals are willing to admit that we have been wrong many times. We are willing to admit that we could be wrong at present. We are willing to listen to others, to study the facts, to examine the sides of the question, and to pray that God will give His light on the matter. Now this man who is never wrong just somewhat irritates the rest of us who cannot say, and do not even pretend that we have never been wrong. Maybe we are a little jealous of this person, but anyway he bothers us.

The man who is never wrong does not mind letting this be known. He does not keep his superior trait to himself. He wants the world to know what kind of infallible being he is. He is quick to let you know this remarkable characteristic of his. He reminds me of some of the humble men I know - I know they are humble because they tell me so. I have read many men who often told that they were humble. So the man who is never wrong will let you know this remarkable fact.

The man who is never wrong is not a peaceable man. Well, he is peaceable with those who agree with him. But those who even hint that maybe he is wrong, to them this man is upon them like a wild animal.

The man who is never wrong never changes. Some men, in the midst of change, boast that they have not changed, lest it could be imagined that they were wrong at one time or the other. You see, change makes it necessary that one be wrong at least once.

The man who is never wrong is so enchanted by this fact that he cannot even imagine the possibility that he could ever be wrong.

The man who is never wrong does not have many friends. Some people tolerate him. Some, seemingly, believe the same thing about him that he believes himself. Some are afraid to ever even hint that he could be wrong. But most just steer clear of the man who is never wrong.

The man who is never wrong will never know the happiness of getting right. It is a joy to most of us to learn that we are wrong, and then to get right on that matter. But the man who is never wrong will never know this great joy.

I sort of feel sorry for the man who is never wrong, don't you? I do not want much to do with him, but I do feel sorry for him. May the Lord deliver you and me from this kind of people, and especially deliver me from ever being such ourselves.

THE BIBLE

(Continued from Page 2)

God. How did He get along without men telling Him what to do and how to do it? The mission board way robs God of His glory. It belittles God's true churches. It binds the missionary to the whims, and wishes of the board, and robs him of God-given freedom in being Spirit led. One could go on and on. Many more indictments could be brought against the mission board and its advocates. I would remind every mission board missionary, advocate, and supporter that he or she will one day stand before the Lord and have to answer as to why they put the man-made mission board way ahead of God's Bible way.

The Bible way has a God-called missionary. This missionary recognized, approved and authorized to do mission work by God's authorized and authorizing institution. The missionary being free to follow the leading of the Spirit in doing mission work. Anyone can see that these are two different ways, and that it must be one or the other. The mission board way is not the Bible way, but is contrary to and opposed to the Bible way. Our church has adopted the Bible way. We intend to continue to do our mission work in this way. We oppose the mission board way. We do not and will not support a mission board, and we will not support a missionary who is out under a mission board. We desire and endeavor to give God glory in the church. God bless you all!

INTEREST

(Continued from Page 1)

God and our Father and in our hope of the coming of Christ. "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God" (I Thess. 1:4). Election simply means that God chose a certain number and people before the foundation of the world. The God-head made a covenant. God the Father is the author of eternal salvation. God the Son came and purchased this eternal salvation. The Holy Spirit placed Himself in this covenant so that He could enlighten sinners, enable sinners, and call sinners to the foot of the cross so they could receive the experience of it. They would receive Jesus Christ, and this would glorify the Son. "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance..." (I Thes. 1:5). So the Word comes in power with the Holy Spirit and gives much assurance. It gives much assurance in the heart and soul so that you know you are saved. You know that you are a child of God. You know that you have believed in Christ, received Him and acknowledged Him because of the Holy Spirit. His power enabled you to trust Christ and believe in Him. "...as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost" (I Thes. 1:5-6). These Christians were persecuted much. They suffered much in body and by the world. But they received the Lord and received the Word of God

with joy in the Holy Spirit even though they were afflicted and persecuted.

"So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing" (I Thes. 1:7-8). They were truly known. Their faith was known. Their dedication and stand for Christ was known. It was spread abroad throughout the whole known world at that time that they were a church and believers in Christ. It was known they were strong and preached the gospel. They were getting the work done that God had led them there to do.

"For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (I Thes. 1:9). Everyone has an idol. When a man repents of his sins and trusts in Jesus Christ he turns from the world and turns to God. This is repentance.

"And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come" (I Thes. 1:10). If election isn't true then why do we have this verse of Scripture? In II Peter 1:10 it says, "Wherefore the rather, brethren given diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." If you will read the chapter, he is talking about the graces that are in a believer which allow him to have these things.

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Peter 1:5-8). So the Christian graces were working in the heart and lives of God's people. He says give diligence to this thing. The word "diligence" means working hard. It means a careful effort. It means to study and to be industrious. It means to be diligent in your studies and in your exercise of your faith.

Paul mentions this again in II Cor. 13:5-6. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? But I trust that ye shall know that we are not reprobates." So, then, Paul says examine this. Prove yourself and examine yourself. If these Christian graces be in you, then you know that you are in the faith. Is it not worthy to examine these things? So that is what the apostle Paul is talking about. The only way to God is faith whereby we come to an apprehension of our interest in election by its fruits in our own souls. Peter was talking about the love, joy, peace, and all of those different virtues that a Christian believer will have. He will have

these things that work in his life. He will have faith, love, charity, and all of these things that the Bible talks about working in his heart and in his life so that he might have the fruits of this in his soul.

The obligation which the gospel puts upon us is to believe anything the gospel says, to respect the order of the things themselves, and the order of our obedience. Faith, obedience, believing, and repentance are things we are to examine. Paul said "don't you know your own self and know your own heart?" You can comprehend if you are a child of God. Man cannot comprehend election. Many people fight against election and don't want to believe in election. If it wasn't for election they could not be saved. Election is why they are saved. Election means that you were chosen. Election assures you salvation because God chose you before the foundation of the world. He chose you in Christ Jesus. So we are to believe the things of the gospel and respect them in the order of the things themselves.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief" (I Tim. 1:15). He came to save sinners. He didn't come to save the self righteous man. He didn't come to save those who think they have righteousness within themselves and don't need Christ. He is the great physician and only those who are sick come to the great physician. So a man must understand and realize first of all that he is a sinner before he can be saved. Many times you have to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and get him to realize he is a sinner, then God can save him. There are many self righteous people out there in the world. They believe in keeping the law. They believe in doing this and doing that, doing some little deed around the community; and they think that saves them. You can do all of this, and it's morally good. It is good to be a moral person and help people, but this doesn't merit salvation. It won't help you a bit to be saved. A man has to realize he is a sinner. Many people don't want to do that. You were shaped in iniquity and conceived in sin just like they were. You fell in Adam just like they did. You have a fallen nature just like they have. You live after that nature and you can't take one spiritual step toward God. You can't do anything that is pleasing in the sight of God, to merit your eternal salvation.

When God began to deal with me I realized I was a sinner. When God began to deal with me I realized, and I took my place among the sinners in the world of sinners.

The mass of unregenerated people are like the sea. Being bound by common nature, they all move together as the water of the sea follows the tide. The one nature is not elevated above the other. One is not better than the other. It all stinks in the sight of God. The Bible says we are made out of the same clay. Notice in Ephesians 2:1-4 what Paul said, "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 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."

All of those that are not saved are out of the same clay, mold, and have the same nature. We have to take our place in the world as a sinner. Many people say, "I know I'm a sinner but I'm not as bad as so and so. I don't do this and I don't do that." You are alienated from God because of this nature. Because you are a sinner and fell in Adam. Because you are depraved and your heart is black. Because you have no holiness or righteousness. Because you have nothing but fig leaves and that will not hide the wrath of God. You need to take your place as a sinner. You are going to be lost eternally if you don't recognize that you are a sinner and you need a Saviour. So we are all sinners. I am talking about our lost condition and how that we were lost. We fell in Adam. We lost our standing in Adam and we have to stand in Christ. Jesus came into the world to make the way of salvation for them who are lost. He died for the ungodly. He so perfectly satisfied the claims of the divine justice that God can righteously justify every sinner who truly believes in His Son Jesus Christ. So then He made a way if we truly believe. He died for the ungodly.

"THEREFORE being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1).

Justified by faith outside of works. We are sinners. We are ungodly persons. We are sinners and fell in sin, and are no better than any other sinner. Only through the grace of God and the satisfaction of Jesus Christ. His atonement on the cross of Calvary procured a way and met the demands of a thrice Holy God in His laws and justified us as if we had never sinned.

"By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:2). Justified means our standing is perfect before God and it never changes. Our justification never changes.

If I know I am a sinner and an ungodly lost person, then I have full warranty to believe the good news of the gospel. The gospel requires from me faith and obedience. Christ died for sinners. I must realize I am a sinner and need a Saviour. Then the gospel requires from me faith and obedience, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and obedience in repentance and faith toward God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Until I believe and obey the gospel, I am under no obligation to believe Christ died for me in particular. But having done so, I am required to believe the doctrine of election. Many people don't believe that. But when you see the fruits of election working in your own soul as Paul saw in these Christians, you will believe. He saw the fruits of their election working in their souls. That is what he was talking about.

"Remembering without ceasing your work of faith..." (I Thes. 1:3).

What he saw in them was a busy faith. An empty faith reached out and received a provision for salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. But after they came to Christ the hands of faith became full. They

were always busy, looking, praying, teaching, studying, and talking about the saving grace of Almighty God. They had a labour of love and patience of hope in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city" (Acts 18:10). Paul was saying that he had many people in the city that had not been saved, but they would be called out by the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The church would be established and he would have the church set in order. Paul stayed there eighteen months and he preached the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. A church was built and God began to save souls and add to the church and many souls were saved.

You need to hear the gospel. You need to believe that you are a sinner and you need a saviour. A man can't save himself. He must trust in Christ and in the finished work of Jesus Christ, which was the shedding of the blood of Christ on the cross of Calvary.

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ordinarily true of any wealthy Christian, though thank God, there are exceptions.

The city of Sardis was no exception, and the church of Sardis was no exception. In this wealthy city of Sardis, where wealth, heathenism, and idolatry flourished, it was natural that a church thus located, would be absorbed in the acquisition of wealth, and swallowed up in worldly mindedness. With such environment, it is no wonder that we find the church of the city of Sardis as we have read it in God's Word.

II. The revelation which Jesus gave of Himself to this church at Sardis, is interesting. In fact, to me, perhaps the most interesting thought of this series of sermons is the way in which Jesus revealed Himself to these churches. Listen to His revelation of Himself to this church at Sardis: "And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead" (Rev. 3:1).

You will notice that He reveals Himself as the one "that hath the seven Spirits of God." The number seven in the Scriptures is usually taken as the number of completion. This would seemingly indicate then that Jesus revealed Himself to this church as the one who was the possessor of spiritual perfection.

What a mighty revelation then of Jesus concerning Himself. This church at Sardis was very imperfect. Therefore, He revealed Himself as the possessor of spiritual perfection to show them how that they might become perfect, and to reveal to them how utterly imperfect they were.

Furthermore, He revealed Himself as the one who had the seven stars in His hand. Of course, the seven stars represent the pastors. Therefore, Jesus revealed Himself to this church as the one who was the pastor's protector through

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The Baptist Examiner Forum I

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

Will the new earth be a newly created one or only this one renovated?

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As I understand, there are two basic words used in the New Testament for the word "new." The first is NEOS meaning something recent as in time; something young; a reproduction of the old.

In Colossians 3:10 the "new man" is set alongside the old, while in Ephesians 2:15 it is said that Christ, through His suffering, abolished the old Adamic character and created a "new man." The word "new" in this verse, as in II Corinthians 5:17 and Ephesians 4:24 is the Greek word, KAINOS meaning that which is unused; new as in form or quality.

The new heaven and new earth are mentioned in several places in the Holy Scripture; Isaiah 65:17, Isaiah 66:22, 1 Peter 3:13, and Revelation 21:1. In each of these texts the latter definition fits. The Hebrew equivalent word is CHADASH. Had the word NEOS been used in 1 Peter 3:13 and Revelation 21:1, and it's Old Testament equivalent in Isaiah 65:17 and 66:22, we would have to say that the new earth is really the old earth made over: but since the word KIANOS is used and it's Old Testament equivalent, I feel that we can be safe in saying that the "new earth" will be a new earth and not this old earth renovated. Thank you for your question.

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Revelation 21:1; "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

We will begin with this verse and look at several others that speak of a new heaven and earth. I recognize that this is a question that many theologians disagree about. I also see it as a question of little importance, but surely of great curiosity. Before I begin answering this question let me give you several verses of Scripture dealing with this subject.

II. Peter 3:10,11: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the

works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."

Isaiah 66:22; "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me..." Isaiah 65:17: "For, behold, I create heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind."

These verses certainly teach us that there is going to be a change in this present earth.

The question is, will this be a completely new creation, or will it be a renovation of this present earth? I personally believe that it will be a renovation of this present earth. Let me give you the reasons I believe this. First of all, I am reminded of the perfection of God's original creation of this earth. God Himself declared it to be very good. That is sufficient to say it was perfect in every way. Man, through sin, has contaminated this original creation. The earth in its original form needed no improvement. I personally believe this earth will be restored to be much like the original creation. The new earth will be somewhat different because God's original creation was designed for man's probationary state, and the renovated earth will be for his perfected state.

I also believe the earth will be renovated because the words used in both Old Testament and the New Testament for "new" can properly be translated with respect to "freshness" rather than to existence. They could properly refer to a "fresh heaven and earth." Does it not make sense to think that God will use the events of II. Peter 3:10,11 to dissolve the evil of this earth and then for God to use His great powers to renovate and make perfect? I think this is what will happen. Won't it be a glorious day to behold God's new earth! What a sight that will be. Whether it will be newly created or renovated; it will be great to behold. May God bless you all.

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"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea" (Rev. 21:1).

The apostle Peter tells us that the present heavens (that which surrounds the earth) and the present earth will be destroyed by fire. "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a

great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat: the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (II Peter 3:10).

The terms "burned up" and "melt with fervent heat" means they will undergo a change from what they are now, but does not necessarily mean that they will be destroyed entirely, that is annihilated. Fire does not annihilate anything that it burns, but changes it into its elements. The flood in Noah's day changed the face of the earth to such an extent that it is said to have perished, "Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (II Peter 3:6).

Fire is to completely break down the surface of the earth and the heavens surrounding it into the basic elements, but not annihilate them. Nowhere in the Scripture are we told that God will annihilate, destroy entirely, that which He has created. I believe that the earth that now is will be changed by fire into the elements from which the new earth will be formed. The fire will remove all the scars of sin. It will remove the curse placed upon the earth at the fall of Adam. God told Adam, "cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;" (Gen. 3:17, 18). The apostle Paul said the whole creation was waiting for this curse to be removed. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:22, 23). The day is coming when God will redeem the earth, not destroy it. All the works of man will also be done away. All traces of sin will be removed. Of the new Jerusalem it is said, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27).

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II Peter 3:10-13, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall

pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Revelation 21:1, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

Do I believe that the new earth spoken of here is the old one renovated? No, I do not. "the things which are seen are temporal..." (II Corinthians 4:18). The God who can and did create from nothing is capable of reversing the process. Science says: that matter cannot be made, or destroyed, but God is able to do that, and more than we can imagine. In the passage in II Peter just quoted, we see a melting and dissolving of the elements. We are told in Revelation 21 that the first heaven and earth were passed away (already gone, destroyed, uncreated). Everything has been burned up, melted, and changed. Changed to what? Changed to light, pure energy, or materials for the new heaven and earth, or to nothingness? I believe they are changed to nothingness. Every trace of this old earth, its sin, curse, and history lived out before God will disappear. All that transpired for the millennia that man inhabited the earth will disappear and will never be remembered any more. Isaiah 65:17 says, "For, behold I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." I am aware of the scientific view of cleansing and restoration held by many, but God is not bound by these laws or our understanding. Just as God created from nothing all things; just as He created the earth for its temporal, limited duration and purpose, so I believe it is fitting and proper that God create anew that which is suitable for His eternal purpose. The new heaven and new earth in Revelation 2:1 has no similarity to our present heaven and earth in the slight picture given us. Little is revealed to us about it except the fact that there is no need of sun, or moon, and the seas are gone. The water on this planet covers approximately 70% of the present earth. So just this glimpse shows us that there is difference as day and night, literally between the present heaven and earth and the all new heaven and earth which we, God's children, shall inhabit for all eternity. There will be a brand new heaven and earth created for brand new bodies to live and serve eternally Him Who has extended all love and grace to us who are redeemed. Praise God!

mons, no thought has blessed my soul quite as much as the thought concerning the way in which Jesus has revealed Himself to each of these churches; and in this particular revelation, I am indeed impressed thereby. To this imperfect church, He revealed Himself as the one who was perfect, and as the one who stood ready to protect the pastor through whom He would give the Holy Spirit unto the church.

III. In each of these churches, before we look for the condemnation, we always look for the commendation. We like to see that for which Jesus commended each of the churches. Of all four churches which we have studied thus far, Jesus has commended them, among other things, first of all for their works; for of each of these we have read in the very beginning of His commendation, "I know thy works." However, when we come to the church at Sardis, there is a departure from the usual form - there is no commendation for Sardis relative to her works. In fact, there is no commendation at all. There was simply nothing for which Jesus could commend them.

What pitiable plight! Here was a church for which Jesus did not have a single word of commendation. Yet, beloved, I am sure that there are many today similar to it. I am positive that if the Lord Jesus were to take a cross-section of our state, or of the United States, and were to carefully consider our churches, that concerning hundreds and thousands of them, there would be no commendation of them. Many of our church members are like the church members at Sardis, and therefore, would not deserve any commendation from the Lord Jesus.

IV. If it be shocking to you to learn that Jesus had no commendation for the church at Sardis, it will doubtless be just as shocking to learn that He had no condemnation for the church at Sardis. There was nothing for which to commend them, and there was nothing for which to condemn them.

Jesus said that this was a dead church, and therefore He did not censure it. There is no need in this world to censure a corpse. I visited a railroad man in Russell one afternoon, and censured him sharply for his misconduct. He went out on the road to work that night, and was killed instantly. The next morning as I stood beside his body, I did not censure him then for there was no need in doing so. He was past the realm of censure. The day before, while he was alive, he was a fit subject for censure; but when dead it was useless - there is no need to censure a corpse. Thus Jesus dealt with the church at Sardis. There was no commendation, and no condemnation. It was purely a dead church.

How like many of our churches and preachers, and church members today! Sardis ought to stand as a warning for every unscriptural preacher, worldly church member, and heterodoxical church organization, in view of the fact that it received no commendation.

V. By carefully viewing this church in the light of the balance of these seven churches, we have an interesting description given us concerning this one.

It is described first of all, as a church of no heresies. Ephesus and Pergamos had the heresy of church bosses - the Nicolaitanes, with which to contend. Thyatira, being run by a woman, and the heresy of

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whom He might give the Holy Spirit unto the church.

In preaching this series of ser-

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The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Is it unscriptural for a man to pastor two churches? What about the history of this practice? What about churches doing this being true churches?

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For a long time this country had churches that were sovereign Grace Baptist Churches that were at a great distance from each other. There were many times that some of these churches did not have a pastor, and for them to have some one to preach to them it had to be done on a part time basis, or else they would have none at all. The question is, "Would it be Scriptural for a man to pastor two churches?" Yes, I believe that it would. I do not believe that a man pastoring two churches would make a church be unscriptural or the man to have acted unscripturally. I would suspect that many of our sound churches could trace their history back through half-time churches.

In the early days of my life I knew many churches that were pastored by a preacher who pastored two churches. Many of these were independent churches. Elagrove was one of these. I pastored this church for a short while. Elagrove is a strong sound church. Her history predates the Civil War.

I was pastor of Flint Branch Baptist church for ten years. This church is an old, old church, believed to be set up in the early eighteen hundreds. This church was destroyed by fire many years ago, the records were lost in the fire. The folk of the church rebuilt in the same spot and continued to have church and to serve the Lord. Flint Branch Church taught the truth in her early days, but now has gone Arminian and has about died out.

There are many other churches that I could name that was pastored by a man who pastored two churches. Watermelon Creek is one of them. This church is far past a hundred years old and was a sound church in her early day but now has gone Arminian, like many others.

It was the belief of the churches of the Philadelphia Association that one church or churches without sufficient officers could be supplied by another church to carry on the work of administering baptism and the Lord's supper. Some may not be interested in what the Philadelphia Association did. But before anyone should be so quick to judge, let it be remembered that many of our churches succeeded from these churches.

For reference to the question at hand I quote in part from the Philadelphia Association minutes from 1707 to 1807 on pages sixty

and sixty-one, the paragraph beginning at the bottom of page sixty and at the top of page sixty one, "... or that they be supplied by officers of another sister church or churches, as baptism, and the Lord's supper, etc. ..."

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The pastor is the undershepherd to the flock. He is the spiritual leader of the church, and must answer to that body, and accept the God-given authority it has over him. There are qualifications given to the church when calling a pastor. The church has the right to call and to dismiss the pastor, and the church has rights only over her members.

I believe the pastor must be a member of the church he pastors in order to be under the authority of his church. I don't believe it is possible to be a member of two churches at the same time. The apostle Paul was a member of the church at Antioch, and was under her authority. They sent him out, and he reported back to them. Other churches were formed as he went about preaching and teaching. He preached at many churches, and many saints looked to him for leadership, but he did not pastor them. They ordained pastors and deacons in every individual church. A man may be called the pastor of more than one church, but that does not make it so. He may be pastor of neither depending upon where his Scriptural membership is.

If a true New Testament Baptist church calls a man that is a member of another church as their pastor, and he accepts the call; that does not make him their pastor. He may preach for them and baptize for them (and other churches) but he is still under authority of the church where he is a member. He is their pastor. To the other church, or churches he may technically be a missionary.

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Yes. I realize that this has been going on for many years due to churches being small and unable to pay a full time pastor, or to find a pastor who was willing to pastor a small church. However, this does not make it right. A pastor implies membership. How could a preacher pastor a

church without being a member? He can't be a member of two churches at the same time. Therefore he could not take the Lord's Supper in but one church, of which he was a member. The Lord's Supper is restricted to members only.

There were no outsiders present when our Blessed Saviour administered the supper. Therefore only members should partake of the supper when this ordinance is in action. A minister could be a member of one church and preach for a second church and administer the Lord's supper if there were no male members to do so. But he should not be permitted to partake of it.

If there were no male members to baptize one who wanted to be baptized, he, upon the authority of the church, could do these honors also and be Scriptural. However, if there was a male member, he would be responsible to do the honors. I prefer it this way. If a pastor was sick or crippled and no male member would do the honor of baptizing the candidate, the church could authorize an outside minister of like faith and order to do the honor. You might ask, how can a church with no male members give authority to an outsider to administer the ordinances since women cannot make motions or second them? I ask you, who said there must be a motion and second in the Lord's church to make it legal? Why not a show of hands as to yes or no?

Would two churches sharing one pastor cause them to not be true churches? No! They would be out of order, but this, in my opinion would not cause them to be cut off as to being true churches if they were started Scripturally.

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a feminist to confront it; but at Sardis, there were no heresies. The season of winter is usually looked upon as symbolic of death. May I remind you that neither weeds nor flowers grow in winter. Likewise, while the truth does not flourish in a dead church, at the same time, neither do heresies.

Searching for a description of this church, we find furthermore that there were no immoralities mentioned. At Pergamos there was much immorality. The world was mixed up with the church. Yet, Sardis' evil was deeper.

It wasn't flagrantly corrupt as Pergamos - it was merely dead.

Finally, this dead church is described as a deceived church, for they had a name that they were alive, and yet were dead. They were not only dead, but were actually deceived as to their condition.

Did you ever read Coleridge's, "Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner?" If so, then you recall that the ship was manned by a crew of corpses. Each of the sailors was a corpse.

In fact, the entire ship was thus manned. I never did visit the church at Sardis, but I have seen the same in many of our modern churches. I have seen a church come together for its worship services when a choir of spiritually dead church members stood up in mockery to sing, "I love thy kingdom, Lord."

I have seen a church pastored by a spiritually dead preacher. I have seen spiritually dead ushers, and spiritually dead deacons, and spiritually dead church members - yes, I have seen first century Sardis often in these twentieth century times.

This church is described - no heresies, no immoralities, no persecution, deceived, and dead. Does it describe your church? Does it describe your preacher. Does it describe you as a Christian? I feel that the description of Sardis is a description of many of our modern churches today.

VI. The question logically arises: "What's wrong with this church?" We have already said that it was dead. And what is it that makes a dead church? One thing that made them dead was that their works were imperfect. Listen: "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God" (Rev. 3:2).

When I say that this was a dead church, I do not want you to think that they closed their doors, nailed up the windows, and left the building for bats, and owls, and birds. It was not thus, for services still went on at Sardis; but the services were not satisfactory to God. They had a reputation that they were alive, and they lived on this reputation. God said that their works were imperfect, which would indicate that their praying did not please Him. Their giving was not as He commanded. Their preaching was not satisfactory. Their singing was not for the glory of God, and their works were not those which God wanted.

This church was dead, then, first of all, because of its imperfect works. Another thing that they were was forgetful hearers. "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard..." (vs. 3). It isn't enough for a person to just hear the truth - he must act upon it. Listen: "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only..." (James 1:22).

There is a Greek phrase which means that a Christian is not just to be a doer - he is to be a word-doer. James declares that many hear but are not doers. Listen again: "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:25).

This was true of the church at Sardis. They listened to the preacher's words, and then forgot them. They knew far more than they were willing to do. This, beloved, is characteristic of the great percentage of modern Christians; for the biggest part of them know far more than they are willing to do.

This church at Sardis was not only dead because it was imperfect, and because the members were forgetful hearers; but it was also dead because of their defiled lives. "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments..." (v. 4). This statement

which declares that there were some in Sardis that were not defiled, would also indicate that there were many that were defiled. Many of these folk had failed to live above the world. They engaged in the worldly pleasures of sin, and practiced the world's tricks of trade; and in this town that was given over to wealth and heathenism, they were defiled in their living.

Many a church member, sad to say, is an exact duplicate today. Yet, God's ideal is far different. Listen: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this. To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (II Cor. 6:14). "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I Cor. 10:31).

This church was also dead because there was a lack of the Word of God. "Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent..." (vs. 3). The fact that they were forgetful hearers indicates a definite lack of the Word of God. I am personally convinced that in most of our churches, our greatest need today is more of the Scripture. I often remember that Mr. Spurgeon said that he once saw a Bible that had been eaten through from cover to cover by a worm, and that his impression on seeing it, was that he wanted to be from then on, a Bible worm. I, too, beloved, want to devour the Word of God from Genesis to Revelation. But these folk at Sardis were dead simply because of their lack of God's Word.

I say then, beloved, concerning this church that which was wrong is, it had too big a name - a name for life, and yet it was dead, and that it was dead due to the fact that their works were imperfect, they were forgetful hearers, they were defiled as to their living, and there was a lack of the Word of God. These things make dead churches today. Many a church, and many a Christian, and many a preacher is dead today for the same reasons.

VII. While this chapter does not reveal it, the Bible elsewhere makes the revelation that there is a terrible curse for the dead church, or church member. Jesus made such a revelation when He was dealing with the religious professors of His day. Here it is: "But woe unto you, scribes, and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Matt. 23:13).

What a terrible pronouncement upon a dead preacher, or a dead church member, or a dead church! Jesus says that such a one does not go to heaven himself, and worse than that, he is standing in the way of others to keep them from entering.

This, then, is the curse on

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WHAT'S WRONG

(Continued from Page 5)

Sardis. It is the curse on any dead church, or church member, or preacher today.

VIII. Our blessed Master offered this church some counsel - in fact, some rich advice. This advice centers around four words. In verse three, he said, "remember." That is, don't forget the better days of your Christian experience. Let memory recall to you the fact that there have been better days for you in your Christian experience.

The second word of His counsel was "repent." This was the same word He used relative to the church at Ephesus, Pergamos, and Thyatira. God not only demands that sinners repent in order that they might go to heaven, but He also demands that Christians repent of their sins that they might live in fellowship with Him.

The third word of His counsel is "retain," for He counselled them to "hold fast," or retain what little good there was about them.

The fourth word was "watch." He said "be watchful" (vs. 2). That is, watch against the devil, your past failures, and your future temptations.

With these four words of counsel, Jesus advised this church of Sardis. They were to remember the better days of their early Christian experience. They were to repent of their sins. They were to retain what little there was that was worthwhile, and they were to be watchful relative to the future.

What splendid advice for every church today. Wonderful would it be if all of our churches, and preachers would but heed these words of Jesus, and would make His counsel to become words of wisdom and advice which they might heed in their own experience.

IX. To this church, the same as to all the balance, Jesus gave His promise to those who were overcomers. His first promise was that they were to be clothed in white. "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy" (Rev. 3:4).

Sardis is, as I have said, a dead church, and as you know, black is symbolic of death. To those who might overcome, Jesus gave them a promise that they would be clothed in white.

His second promise was that their name was secure in the Lambs book, for He reminded them that they would never be blotted out. "...I will not blot out his name out of the book of life..." (Rev. 3:5).

A final promise to those who overcome at Sardis was that they were to have their name confessed before God and the angels. "...I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" (Rev. 3:5).

What an honor this is just to have one's name confessed before God and the angels. It reminds us as we look backward to the time when Ruth came from the land of Moab, and was married to Boaz, the richest man in all the land, took this beggar girl, and said, "I have purchased her to be my wife." What an honor this was to Ruth to be thus confessed before the entire city. This promise to

the overcomers at Sardis looks forward, just like the promise of Boaz to Ruth looks forward in type to that day when the Lord Jesus Christ shall confess each of us as being His child in the presence of God the Father, and the holy angels. Listen to Jesus' own words: "...Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Luke 12:8).

I tell you, beloved, this is an honor worth working for. What difference does it make if men do speak reproachfully of us now? Why should we worry though the truth we preach is often trampled beneath the feet of swine? Why should we worry though men do not honor us for the things for which we stand? Some day we shall be honored by Christ in the presence of both God the Father, and the angels.

And in conclusion: May God grant that the church of which I am pastor shall never become a successor to the church at Sardis, and may the church of which you are a member never become a successor to the church at Sardis.

Those of you who are unsaved are spiritually dead too. But I thank God that you can be made alive through Christ. Listen to this Scripture: "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:14).

You remember Lazarus who was dead, and had been buried four days, came forth from the tomb when Jesus commanded him to do so. It was Jesus who brought dead Lazarus back to life, and today lost friend, I thank God that Jesus can bring you to life, and can make you a child of God this very hour.

May God bless you, and may you receive Him as your Saviour.

STUDIES

(Continued from Page 1)

your brethren," or from among yourselves or of your own countrymen. He was a native-born Jew and not from another nation. Peter said that He was "like unto me." He was not a sinner, as was true of Peter, but He was made like unto sinful flesh.

"And it shall come to pass, that every soul which shall not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3:23). We read in John 3:16, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We, on the other hand, read in John 3:36 that "...he that believeth not the son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." The word "abideth" here is in the perfect tense and means to abide and continue on and on to abide on him. Peter, then, is contrasting eternal life with eternal death when he speaks of those who will not hear Him as being destroyed. The Lord Jesus, after all, was the only hope for those in that day and the only hope for us today. There, in fact, as the Word states, "is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved." He, as He said, is "the way, the truth, and the life." Those who hear Him will have built their house upon the solid rock, and all others will have built

their house upon the sand (see Matthew 7:24-29).

"Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days" (Acts 3:24). One will find, by a close study of each book of the Bible, that Jesus Christ is the theme of each book. Someone, in fact, as pointed out by the following, shows how Jesus is revealed in each book of the Bible. In Genesis, He is the Seed of the Woman. In Exodus, He is the Passover Lamb. In Leviticus, He is the High Priest. In Numbers, He is the Star out of Jacob. In Deuteronomy, He is the Prophet Like unto Moses. In Joshua, He is the Captain of the Lord's Hosts. In Judges, He is the Messenger of Jehovah. In Ruth, He is the Kinsman. In Samuel, He is the Lord and Seed of David. In Kings and Chronicles, He is the Lord of lords and King of kings. In Ezra and Nehemiah, He is the Lord of Heaven and Earth. In Esther, He is the Mighty God Who Cares for His People. In Job, He is Our Risen Redeemer. In Psalms, He is the Perfect All-in-All. In Proverbs, He is the Wisdom of God. In Ecclesiastes, He is the Preacher. In the Song of Solomon, He is the Fairest Among Ten Thousand. In Isaiah, He is the Suffering Servant. In Jeremiah, He is the Lord Our Righteousness. In Lamentations, He is the Man of Sorrows. In Ezekiel, He is the High Priest of God on Earth. In Daniel, He is the Ancient of Days. In Hosea, He is the Risen Son of God. In Haggai (and other minor prophets), He is the Desire of the Nations. In Malachi, He is the Sun, our righteousness.

We are to see, then, as the passage before us says, "all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days." Peter, by referring first to Samuel, did not mean to leave out Moses. He, in fact, had already referred to Moses in verse twenty-two.

"Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed" (Acts 3:25).

The meaning here is not that they were the children of the prophets, as far as the flesh was concerned, but in the sense of being disciples, pupils, and followers of the prophets. It was in this sense that Timothy was Paul's son. They, therefore, should listen and hear well what the prophets had to say to them. They, in addition to being "children of the prophets," were children "of the covenant." They, in other words, were of the posterity of Abraham, with whom the covenant was made. The covenant relates to the agreement or firm promise which God had made to Abraham and his seed. The promise or covenant is as follows: "And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice" (Genesis 22:18).

The main reference to "thy seed," of course, related to Jesus Christ. The expression "be blessed" means that they would be made happy. Simeon, perhaps, said it best when he said, "Lord, now lettest thy servant depart in peace, according to

thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation" (Luke 2:29, 30).

"Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities" (Acts 3:26). God sent His Son, first of all, to bless Israel. We read the same from the following Scripture: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47).

The purpose for God sending His Son Jesus was to "bless" them, or to keep His promise to Abraham which said, "and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed," the word "blessed" meaning to be made happy. It is as the angels said to the shepherds. "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10, 11). "...in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." The main inquiry which the Jews needed to be turned away from was their rebellion against Jesus Christ of Nazareth. They needed to be turned from hearing the Pharisees to hearing Jesus -- from hearing the chief priests to hearing God's High Priest -- Jesus Christ. The world today needs to be turned from the doctrines of men to the doctrines of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Every man, woman, boy, and girl needs to repent or turn from every thing opposed to Jesus, to hearing Him and doing that which He says. "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46).

As they spoke unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead (Acts 4:1-2). This was a small price for the apostles to pay for such a great harvest. The Holy Spirit had used them in the healing of the poor lame man and in the conversion of about five thousand men. We may say then, that it was quite an honor to be arrested for such an accomplishment. Those who sought gold in California in 1848 expected many hardships. Those who plant corn expect a long, hot summer of labor and sweat. Those who pick blackberries expect to be bitten by insects. Those who gather honey from the bee hive will, more than likely, be stung now and then. Those who harvest precious souls will not escape persecution. They will be stung now and then, but the harvest is more than worth the obstacles that one may encounter.

The "priests", the "captain of the temple," and the "Sadducees," were the insects which stung the apostles as they gathered honey from the hive or as they picked berries from the vine. The "priests," it is believed, were a part, or an arm, of the Sanhedrin -- the great council of the nation. It has been estimated that twelve thousand of the priests lived in Jericho which was fifteen miles from Jerusalem. They commuted back and forth from Jericho to the temple in Jerusalem. The Lord's parable regarding the "good

Samaritan" had this road as setting. The song says, "On the Jericho road, there is room for just two."

The "captain of the temple" was the commander of the guard. It was his duty to preserve order. He had a lot of responsibility since great crowds came to the temple. The extent of the crowd is seen in the message preached by Peter (Acts 4:4). The third group who came upon the apostles were the Sadducees. These men were particularly upset since they did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. All of these three classes it is said, "came upon them." These words seem to say that they came upon them suddenly and violently. We should remind ourselves, at this point, that the warfare of which these men were soldiers was one which was being waged by Satan himself. We, in fact, know the Scripture that we war not against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers in high places.

Our text informs us that they "came upon them, being grieved." The word "grieved," according to Barnes, means that they were filled with indignation and anger. They could not bear the attention which the apostles were being given; and neither could they bear the fact that many of their own were turning away from them to the doctrine which the apostles were advocating. It is, that Jesus of Nazareth was alive -- that He had risen from the dead. They wanted to hear no more of such preaching which, to them, was foolishness; so they proceeded to arrest the apostles.

It is said that they were "grieved that they taught the people." The apostles, all, were not members of the priestly family and, as far as the law was concerned, had no right to be teaching anyone. The captain, the priests, and the Sadducees considered the apostles to be no more than unlearned Galileans. They considered themselves to be the only authorized persons to instruct the nation in religious matters. The apostles, then, needed proof that they did have authority from God. They, of course, did give such proof when they healed the lame man (Acts 3:1-11).

What was it the apostles were teaching? They, as our text states, "preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead." The Sadducees, in particular, were opposed to this teaching since they did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. The Sadducees felt that the solid ice on which they had been standing was beginning to melt. Many, in fact, were now believing that Jesus Christ of Nazareth had actually risen from the dead. This teaching therefore hardened the Sadducees against the apostles. They felt that they were in danger of losing their flock to the apostles. Such reminds one of the gradual washing away of one's river bank adjoining one's yard. The immediate response is to stop the washing away.

It was only a short time before that which is before us that the apostles had fled from the enemy. Peter, in fact, had denied his Lord. This was all changed now that they were empowered by God's Spirit. They did not shrink back at all but held their ground without fear. "And they laid hands on

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INTERCOMMUNION:

by J. R. Graves

Objections to church communion reviewed:

1. "Paul and his eight companions, belonging to different churches, communed with the church at Troas." 2. A local church has the right to invite members of other churches to her table. 3. It tends to destroy fellowship between the churches, and creates an extreme independency.

The only Scripture adduced to justify the intercommunion of the members of different churches is the claimed example of Paul and his eight attendants communing with the church at Troas (Acts 20:7) This is a most serviceable passage, being used by theorists to sustain diverse and opposite practices.

1. It was first forced into service against the Sabbatharians, or Seven-Day Christians, as a proof that the apostles and the churches they planted observed the first day of the week as the Christian sabbath, which day they spent in preaching, and hearing the Word, and observing the Supper.

But this coming together at Troas was at the close of the day, and not in the morning. (1) It is the main reliance of the advocates of weekly communion. The church at Troas communed weekly, and, therefore, all churches should now.

(2) It is the chief and only authority of the advocates of intercommunion. They argue: Paul and his eight companions, belonging to different churches, communed with the church at Troas, and, therefore, it is right, and the duty of the members of different churches, to intercommune now.

(3) It is the only passage quoted in support of social communion. They argue that, since there was no church at Troas in the first century--which they prove--Paul and his brethren celebrated the Supper socially, without the presence of a church, and so may Christians now.

It is evident that these opposite theories cannot be sustained by this one passage; and I confidently affirm that they are all equally unsupported by this passage, since they rest upon one or both of these two bald assumptions, viz.:

1. That there was a church at Troas.
2. That the Lord's Supper was celebrated by Paul and his travelling companions.

I am satisfied, after a patient examination, that--there was no church at Troas in the lifetime of Paul--because:

1. There is no intimation in the New Testament that Paul, or any apostle, or missionary, ever preached a sermon in Troas before Paul's last visit. If they did visit and preach there--

2. There is no evidence a church was ever organized or existed there: nor--

3. Mention of any brother residing there, or belonging to it; while the proof, both from the New Testament and the earliest ecclesiastical writers, seems conclusive that there was no church there in the first century, at least. Those who contend for a church believe that it was gathered by Paul in one of his missionary tours, which the Holy Spirit did not prompt Luke to record; and a tour of which Luke either never

heard, or regarded too unimportant to describe! I have no theory or exegetical difficulty that requires what the Holy Spirit has not revealed. Luke nowhere intimates that Paul ever visited Troas but twice.

1. In his first missionary journey (Acts 13 and 14) he did not go west so far as Troas.

2. In his second, he visited Troas with the intent to preach, but the Holy Spirit forbade him to preach in "Asia," of which Mysia was a province, and Troas its chief city. Here, in his perplexity, being straitly shut up, the Lord opened a door for him into Macedonia; and, leaving Troas, and the friends he had made there, he entered that door immediately, and departed to Philippi, and there planted a church. For this



account, see Acts 16:6-12.

3. The next intimation we have of Paul's visit to Troas is in Acts 20:3-6, at which visit no one claims that he, or his fellow ministers, organized a church.

4. But it is confidently asserted and contended that Paul made a missionary journey intermediate between these two, during which he visited Troas, and remained some time, and planted a prosperous church. This is purely inferential. If the Acts of the Apostles is the Word of God, I do not presume to add to it; nor am I prepared to charge Luke--who, if the Acts are Holy Scriptures, wrote under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit--with gross unfaithfulness. All that is important and useful for us to know, we must believe that the Spirit intimated. The discussion of this question, and the important questions connected with it, show that it is more important for us to know that there was, or was not, a church at Troas, than at any other place, or all other places, in proconsular Asia.

It is mainly upon Paul's reference to a door being once opened to him, when he was in Troas (II Cor. 2:12), that this whole theory of an intermediate unrecorded missionary visit is based, and the intimation contained in Acts 20:2. But this passage is quite fatal to a missionary tour in Asia, since it expressly states that he departed to go into Macedonia, and spent his time going over "those parts." My space does not allow me a further suggestion concerning that opened door, and into what place it opened, than the one above. It is enough for me that the Scriptures are silent as the grave touching a church, or a disciple, being at Troas, and I leave speculations to speculators. Some thirty-years after this, Christ commanded John, then on Patmos, to write letters to the seven churches that were in Asia, which clearly implies that there were seven

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there, and only seven in Asia at that time. From the earliest ecclesiastical writers we learn that, though there had been others, as the one at Colosse and at Hierapolis, they had been destroyed by earthquakes--fourteen cities having been destroyed in fourteen successive years in the reign of Nero (see App.B); and that there was not a church at Troas in the first century. I have no theory that requires me to infer a church in that place against the teachings of both the Word of God and ecclesiastical history.

The second assumption of a communion service held at Paul's last visit (Acts 20) is equally destitute of support from the narrative, and in violation of Paul's own teachings, as set forth in this book (see p.III, Chap. 3).

Let us, without prejudice, examine Luke's narrative--using the Bible Union version: "And there accompanied him unto Asia, Sopater, son of Pyrrhus, a Berean; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. These, having gone forward, were waiting for us [Paul and Luke] at Troas. But we [Paul and Luke] sailed forth from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came to them [the above named brethren] to Troas in five days; where we [Paul and his company] abode seven days. And on the first day of the week, we [Paul and all his companions], having come together to break bread, Paul discoursed to them [the self-same persons--the last "them" refers to Paul's companions], being about to depart on the morrow, and continued his discourse until midnight...And he [Paul] having come up, and had broken the bread, and eaten, he talked a long while, even till break of day, and so he departed" (Acts 20:4-12).

There is not the slightest intimation that Paul's disciples at Troas met Paul on his arrival, or brethren received him into their houses; not the slightest, that on that Saturday or Sunday night, when Paul and his companions gathered for their last meal and discourse from Paul, that any person, save that company of fellow travelers, came together. The "we" of the seventh verse relates to the same persons that the "we" of the sixth verse does; and the "them" of the seventh verse refers to the self-same persons that the "them" of the sixth verse does. It was with these fellow-travelers that Paul and Luke assembled, and it was specifically for the instruction of these young ministers, as they were, that he discoursed, expounded the Scriptures and reasoned with them through that long night. There is not the least intimation that a single soul was present in that third story--the most unlikely place for a public meeting--save Paul and his fellow-travelers, for the "we" of the eighth verse logically embraces no more than Paul and his companions. "But a young man, Eutychus, was in the window." Certainly; and it is singular that he is not claimed as one of the members of the church at Troas, as Carpus is for its pastor. It is far more probable that Carpus was the innkeeper, with whom these travelers lodged; and Eutychus the

servant appointed to wait upon them. Heinrichs and Rosenmiller hold that it was a common name, belonging to servants and slaves. Paul, it seems did not seek an introduction to him after his resurrection.

Another item that supports the above, is the verb translated, in the seventh and ninth verses, "to preach," which is nowhere else, in the New Testament, so translated, but "to reason with" (Acts 17:2; 18:4,19; 24:12). and "to dispute" (Mark 9:34; Acts 17:17; 19:8,9; 24:12; Jude 9); and it is significant that, later on, Luke says, "he talked on, even until daybreak."

It is my conviction if the Holy Spirit designed to use an expression that would not have misled, He would have employed the same one used in every other place where artion, bread, is the direct object of klan--to break; in every such case we find (in the Greek), the definite article before artion, "ton artion"--the loaf--a particular kind of bread, not simply artion, a loaf, or bread, the bread of a common meal. It seems reasonable that a distinction should be made between a common supper or meal and the Lord's Supper, else there will be uncertainty in the minds of even scholars, as there is touching Acts 2:42 and 46. With those who recognize no distinguishing phrase, I think the distinction is marked in those passages. In verse 42 we read, "and in the breaking of the loaf," as artos should be rendered with the definite article--"tee klasei ton artion." Here we have "the" before bread--where the Lord's Supper is undoubtedly meant. In verse 46, "And they continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness,..." etc. Here where a common meal is referred to, artion, bread, is without the definite article.

In Acts 20:11, where Paul undoubtedly took a common meal, we have "klasas artion," without the definite article.

In I Corinthians 10:16 we have "ton artion hon kloomen," "the loaf which we break," the definite article before bread. In the next verse we find "ex tou henos artou," we all partake of the one loaf--the definite article before bread, and the supper is undoubtedly referred to.

In the next chapter, verse 26, Paul, referring to the bread of the Lord's Supper, says: "As often as ye eat this bread" (in the Greek) "ton artion toutou," this the loaf, etc. In verse 27: "whosoever shall eat this bread." "ton artion--the loaf. In the next verse, "And so let a man eat of that bread," "ex tou artou," "of the loaf." This, to my mind, means something, i.e., the designation of a particular kind of bread used for a special purpose--the Lord's Supper. Had the inditing Spirit used the phrase, klasai ton artion, in verse 7 and klasas artion, as He did in verse 11, every mind would have been satisfied, but He used the self-same phrase, klasai artion, that He uses in Acts 2:4 and 20:11, where a common meal is designated. I feel justified in believing that a common meal--Alford suggests a love feast, which was a full meal--is intended to be designated in verse 7 as well as in 11. Can anyone conceive why the same phrase should be used in these two

verses of the same chapter, if one is the Lord's Supper and the other a common meal? From the above induction of facts, I conclude that klan (infinitive) artion is never used to designate the Lord's Supper, but klan ton artion is always used when artion is the direct object of klan, where the Supper is undoubtedly alluded to.

There is no proof that there was a church at Troas. There is no proof that Paul and his companions observed the Lord's Supper at Troas.

2. It is objected that should the Supper be observed as a church ordinance, a majority of our preachers could not commune with the churches they preach to, since they serve three, four and sometimes five.

But this comes of our departure from apostolic appointment and practice. In their day there was then a pastor to every church, and elders in them all, and these belonged to the churches they served, and it should be so now, and then this objection would fall. But shall we bend the Scriptures to our bad practice, or conform our practice to the Scriptures? Is there a minister pastor of four churches who claims that he has a right to participate in any other church privilege, in churches of which he is not a member, save this? He, as their official servant, administers their baptisms, but does he claim the right to vote on the reception of candidates for baptism? He, as pastor, is the moderator of their business meetings, and can preside and put motions, but can he vacate his chair and vote with these churches, or as moderator, in case of a tie? Certainly he cannot. He knows, if he knows enough to be a pastor, that he cannot enjoy church rights and privileges save in the church of which he is a member, and no church has the authority to give him the right to do it.

3. Another objection--and I expect lies at the bottom of all the objections and opposition to church communion--"It is a new thing, and contrary to our denominational usage."

This is singular language on the lips of Baptists who oppose infant baptism and effusion. Tens of thousands of Pedobaptists would renounce effusion and infant baptism today were it not for the argument from "usage of the church." All teachers who mislead and cause them to err, reason thus with them: "Can you believe that infant baptism is unscriptural and injurious, when the church (this means Catholic as well as Protestant) for so many ages has practiced it, and so many thousands of their most learned and pious ministers have taught and administered it? Will you say that the church has, all these ages, been in deadly hostility to God's Word, and these, the most learned ministers of earth, all ignorant of God's Word, and the few illiterate Baptists alone right?" It is a powerful argument with the multitude. And then their ministers, in renouncing either error, would have to humiliate themselves before the people and confess that, for years, they had taught and practiced contrary to the teachings of God's Word. The cross is fearful. Yet there are

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Baptist ministers who are using this self-same argument (?) with their own brethren to prejudice them against examining the Scriptures to see if these things are so!

But I have shown that church communion is not a new, but an old, practice from which our churches have been turned aside in these later days.

No true man can feel that it is a shame to him to confess and turn from an error, when he is satisfied it is an error, though he may have advocated it for years, but it is the mark of a conscientious, Christian man who loves the truth.

The objection implies that our churches have been and are infallible, which is not the exact truth. Paul was compelled to correct the erroneous faith and practices of the churches in his day. John, in addressing all the churches in Asia, found something to correct in the practice of the very best of them, and of these were symbols of the churches of Christ in seven different ages of this dispensation. Then it is unscriptural to believe that the churches of Christ have ever been infallible. But it is well known that within this century our fathers were wont to close their district associations with the observance of the Lord's Supper; the Association appointing the ministers and deacons to administer it. Nor was this practice discontinued without sharp discussion and powerful opposition. The present practice of denominational communion retained by some associations and conventions is a relic of associational communion. Convinced that it is a church ordinance, it is virtually contravened by indirection. The church appoints a communion to be observed at the close of the session, and then invites all the members of the association or convention, with all the visiting Baptists present, to commune with her! The West Tennessee Convention, a quarter of a century ago, consented to this, and the Alabama State Convention still is wont to observe such communions, or was until recently, and how many associations we know not. There are several other unscriptural practices that our churches were generally guilty of thirty years ago, as sending their licentiates to the Association to be ordained by a council appointed by the Association, or a standing presbytery, on the reception of alien immersions as valid baptism, and several other quite as unscriptural, and evil practices. We have lived to see many of these abandoned, and many who read this book years hence will wonder what could have influenced our churches to practice intercommunion.

I conclude by defense with the latest expression received from Dr. Gardner on this subject:

"Russellville, Ky., Feb. 18, 1881. My Dear Brother:

In compliance with your request, I would state that I have long regarded intercommunion among Baptists at the Lord's table as unscriptural, and of evil

tendency. It does no good, but much harm, and ought to be abandoned in all our churches. There is neither precept nor example for it in the New Testament; it is a modified form of loose communion wholly at war with church discipline. The limits of church discipline are the scriptural limits of communion at the Lord's table.

I take this ground in my book on 'Church Communion,' and in the new and revised edition it will be more clearly and fully presented.

Yours, fraternally,
W. W. Gardner."

A late editorial expression of the "Central Baptist," St. Louis, Missouri, gives me additional encouragement to expect that the force of habit and prejudice touching this question will, ere long, give way. The editor, Dr. Ferguson, says:

"A local, ceremonial institution must of necessity be in the hands of a definite class. Jesus committed the Supper either to local churches or to the ministry. If to the latter, the priest is right in carrying the bread and wine from house to house, and in giving to, or withholding from, whom he pleases. If to the former, then communion is by the nature of the law restricted to the local church, and cannot be carried beyond unless there is positive warrant. If any kind of communion is to have a title to denote that it is exceptional or peculiar, that kind is 'loose' communion. Church communion, we repeat, is the indisputable law of the New Testament on the subject. Any invitation must be upon the wholly gratuitous supposition of an implied, not expressed, liberty; and it does not then follow that the minister has any more right to invite than the humblest member."

Closing Words To My Brethren

Some of you have, and ere long many will cordially embrace the views herein set forth before possibly your pastor, or a majority of the church of which you are members; and, in your zeal, you may be tempted to force your church to change its long standing practice. I wish to caution you against rashness, and to advise patience and forbearance. All permanent reformations move slowly but surely. If you faithfully, but kindly, bear your testimony against intercommunion at home and abroad as a good witness for Christ, you will not be partakers of her fault. Do you not commune with your church, although she retains in her fellowship, contrary to the explicit teachings of God's Word, the hard drinker and the drunkard, the covetous and the dancer, with whom Paul commands it "not to eat" (I Cor. 5)? Labor, my brethren, in all kindness to convert your brethren, by presenting the truth to their understanding, and praying for them. In this way you will soon see, and rejoice in its triumph over deep-rooted habit and prejudice. It was in this way you secured the abandonment of pulpit affiliations and "union meetings," and the rejection of "alien immersions," without the division of one church. Remain with your church, and thus labor and pray for another triumph. Very soon your brethren of sister churches will become so well informed that they will not offend you by accepting the invitation of your church, should it have so little regard for

your feelings as to continue to invite them.

To the pastors and deacons of our churches who generally control these invitations without consulting the church, as such, let me in all kindness say: Granting that you believe it is not wrong to give intercommunion invitations; if intelligent in our church polity, you know that you withhold no right from brethren of other churches by declining to invite them to the Supper of your church; because the Scriptures give them no right, and you also know it is wrong and sinful for you to knowingly do anything that you may omit without blame, that will offend the least one of your brethren for whom Christ died. To do this because you have the power to do it, and when you know it will offend, you should remember Christ's Words. Dear brethren, be considerate and kindly affectionate toward your brethren, and decide if you should not have more regard for the rights and feelings of the brethren and sisters, and the peace and fellowship of your own church, than even for the feelings and questionable rights of strangers or members of other churches? Ought not brotherly kindness and respect for the rights and feelings of our brethren to begin at home? It certainly is not the spirit of the meek and loving Christ; because you can influence a majority in the church to sustain you to be willing to trample upon and wound the feelings of a minority of your brethren, and destroy their peace of mind and enjoyment of this sacred feast, by doing what you can leave undone without the least blame or sin.

May the all-loving Jesus, to whom the least of His flock is more precious than His own blood, influence us all to do those things most pleasing in His sight, and thus to dwell and to work together in unity.

"TILL HE COMES."

STUDIES

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them, and put them in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide" (Acts 4:3). God the Spirit held back the enemy until the day's work was about done. They, in fact, were not stopped until eventide. They had accomplished that which God, by His Spirit, had purposed for the day. The lame man had been healed and about five thousand men had been converted before the door was shut. This was truly a full day's work before the evil hands were laid on them. I am sure most of us would be more than glad to spend a night in jail if such could be for the same charges which were made against the apostles.

The apostles were in jail, but the lame man who had been bound was probably out walking among the stars. I doubt that he who had sat for about forty years was doing much sitting on that particular night. The apostles were now bound, but the approximately five thousand men who had been bound by darkness were enjoying their new-found freedom.

"Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand" (Acts 4:4). The word "howbeit" says it all. Let the world do what they will against God's purpose on earth; "howbeit," He will not be defeated. Every one of the elect will

be called and gathered into His kingdom. There were about fifty million Baptists killed during the Dark Ages; "howbeit," the gates of death have not prevailed against our Lord's Church. We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. If God be for us, who can be against us? "And it came to pass on the morrow that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem" (Acts 4: 5, 6). These big names turned their big guns on the apostles, but little did they know that their fight was with God Himself. They, therefore, were like ants trying to trip an elephant. Those who came against the apostles included "their rulers" which probably refers to the Sanhedrin -- the great council of the nation. The "elders" were those who were chosen from among the people to sit in the Sanhedrin. It is likely that the rulers held some other office but were authorized to sit in the great council of the nation.

Reference is also made to Annas the high priest. He, however, held this title because he had been the high priest. Such is like calling Mr. Nixon or Mr. Carter "President." Annas was the father-in-law to Caiaphas, the high priest. He, however, is mentioned before Caiaphas because of his former dignity. We do not know who John and Alexander were. They, no doubt, were members of the great council -- members with great authority. We are to see, then, that there was a complete uniting of forces against the apostles. All agreed that their healing and preaching had to be stopped, or many more than the five thousand were going to believe. They all agreed, in a sense of speaking, to build the "Berlin Wall." They all agreed to halt the freedom of speech. "And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?" (Acts 4:7). This same question was presented to our Lord as recorded in Matthew 21:23, "And when He was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto Him as He was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?"

"By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?" Who, in other words, gave you license to heal and preach in our town? We are the only ones who have the authority here to teach the people regarding matters of religion.

The great miracle which they had just performed should have made it obvious that God Himself had authorized their mission. Only fools could consider them to be imposters. "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel" (Acts 4:8). They had witnessed to the common folk and now it was time to witness to the rulers. The Spirit, in fact, had arranged it so that they were all seated and had asked the right question. It was now time for another great sermon from the lips of the apostle Peter. He would not fail, yea, he could not fail because he was empowered by God the Holy Spirit. Later on, about 30 years later, Peter would admonish us to be ready always to

give an answer to every man that asketh for a reason for our hope. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15).

SIN

(Continued from Page 1)

5:16b, "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that He shall pray for it" There is unpardoned sin, and an unpardonable sin. All sins of the unrepentant are unpardoned. Murder may be an unpardoned sin, but is not unpardonable. All sins can be forgiven on the terms of repentance and faith.

What the Unpardonable Sin is not:

(1) It is not any sin against men. Men commit sin against one another; such as, murder, rape, false-witness, and many other sins too numerous to mention. But none of these sins are unpardonable. (2) It is not any sin against Jesus Christ. Many are the sins against Him, such as denial of His Deity and virgin birth, and denial of His blood atonement; even to His being killed is a forgivable sin. If rejecting the Lord Jesus as Saviour and Lord is the unpardonable sin, then well nigh everybody has committed it. The man who rejects Christ until his time runs out will be unforgiven -- all his sins are unpardoned, but this does not mean that he committed the unpardonable sin. The Lord makes it plain when He said, "And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven..." (3) It is not any sin against God the Father. "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." (4) It is not every sin against the Holy Spirit. There are several sins committed directly and specifically against the Holy Spirit. He (not "it") is grieved, resisted, quenched, and ignored. Believers may and do grieve, quench, and ignore the Spirit. Unbelievers resist the Spirit in the objective ministry of God's Word.

I might say in passing, that the Holy Spirit is the author of the Bible. The unbeliever resists Him by rejecting the call of the gospel and by opposing and persecuting His people which has been done throughout several hundred years. Stephen, in the Book of Acts, tells of resisting the Holy Spirit. Listen to Acts 7:51, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." Men, today, behave towards the Holy Spirit as the Jews did in that day. Unbelievers resist the Holy Spirit's outward ministry until their resistance is overcome by the in-working of the same Holy Spirit in His effectual call.

What the Unpardonable Sin is:

(1) It is expressly said to be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Let us look to Webster's Dictionary and find the meaning of "blasphemy" -- profane or contemptuous speech, writing, or action concerning God or anything held divine.

To blaspheme is to speak injuriously against somebody. Every blasphemy is not unpardonable, only the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The Bible speaks

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SIN

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how that the name of God is blasphemed. See Romans 2:24. Many of God's ministers have been blasphemed over the years.

(2) One of our text verses gives to us plainly what blasphemy is against the Holy Spirit. "He hath an unclean spirit" The Jews accused Jesus of having the Spirit of Satan.

Conditions under which the Spirit is blasphemed: (1) There must be an unmistakable work of the Spirit. Dr. Broadus thought the sin was committed in connection with public miracles, and therefore not committed in our day. He says, in commenting on Matthew 12:31-32, "There is here no allusion to the peculiar gracious office and work of the Spirit in calling, renewing, and sanctifying the soul; it is the Spirit of God as giving power to work miracles."

(2) There must be knowledge that it is the work of the Spirit. The apostle Paul had blasphemed Jesus, and, yes, obtained forgiveness, because he did it ignorantly in unbelief. I Timothy 1:13. He didn't believe that Jesus was the Messiah. He thought Him evil and worked to destroy the church of the living God. He was dead in sin and could not and did not recognize Christ.

But, the Pharisees knew better. They knew the miracles which had been performed by the power of the Spirit of God, and blasphemed against the Spirit by calling Him Beelzebub.

Anxiety or fear of having been guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is, in itself, evidence that one is not guilty of it.

(1) It is not because the sin is too great for the grace of God to deal with. This is obvious, when we consider some of the souls that the Great and Almighty God has saved by His marvellous grace. Take for example, King Manasseh, in II Chronicles 33:2-7, 9, 10. He started his reign at the age of 12 years, and did that which was evil in the sight of God. Verse 6 reads, "And he caused his children to pass through the fire in the Valley of the son of Himmon..." Verse 7, "And he set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name forever." Verse 12, "And when he was in affliction, he besought the LORD his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers." The Lord saved this very wicked king by His Grace. Consider the case of Saul of Tarsus, called the chief of sinners, who persecuted the Lord's church. Paul said in Romans 5:20, "...But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

(2) The unpardonableness of sin must be attributed to the sovereign will of God. And He has sovereignly determined that there is one sin He will not forgive. He could, if it pleased Him to do so. We believe the words of Job, when he writes in his Book, Job 23:13, "...and what His soul desireth, even that He doeth."

There is one kind of sin for

which there is no provision of pardon. Therefore, there is one kind of sin for which Christ made no atonement. There is one sin of which the Holy Spirit will not convict, and from which He will not convert. There is one sin that God will not pardon. The Bible calls it "Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit," and we dare not call it by any other name.

The Holy Spirit is thus highly honoured in the divine economy. His personality and Deity may be denied by men, and He may be contemptuously referred in the neuter gender as "it", but He is in truth a person equal to God the Father and God the Son. My friends, I believe we should honour the Spirit as He should be honoured. I believe the Holy Spirit is the one who does the making alive of the sinner that he may see and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

ORGAN

(Continued from Page 1)

Organ transplants are a relatively new medical procedure. Up to this point, doctors have transplanted hearts, livers, and different kinds of body tissues. These procedures are not as yet perfected by any means. However, it is possible they will eventually become more successful than at present. The medical profession is in the midst of an intense campaign to encourage people to donate organs, as the demand far exceeds the supply.

All of this serves to introduce our subject: An Organ Transplant. Although this is a relatively new phenomena, God has been practicing it since time immemorial. Our text says He will perform just such a surgical procedure on the nation of Israel at some time in the future. He says He is going to take (remove) their stony (hard) heart away and give them a new heart of (soft) flesh.

I. Heart: Symbolic

1. Although the word heart occurs more than 900 times in Scripture, it is almost never used in a literal sense. Our text is no exception. God says there is something wrong with Israel's heart and only a new one, of God's making, will correct the situation. "Commonly the 'heart' is regarded as being the seat of the intellect, the feelings and the will" (Pictorial Bible Dictionary). Jesus said "...for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Matt. 12:34). Now, we know this cannot be a literal heart, as man does not speak from his heart but his mind. So here, the heart represents the mind or intellect. In Exodus 8:15, Pharaoh is said to have hardened his heart. This again is a figure of speech. This indicates he became very willful and defiant.

2. When Samuel was to anoint David, the teenager, as the future king of Israel, we are told he did so on the basis of the appearance of his heart (I Sam. 16:7). This tells us we are more than just a physical being. It also tells us we have an inner image as well as an outer image. With these thoughts in mind, we can conclude the heart is symbolic of, or related to, several different things. As a symbol, it represents the mind, the will, the emotions; as an extension of this symbolism, it has to do with what we see, what we hear, what we do, where we go, and even with our likes and dislikes.

II. The Depraved Heart

1. Some of the terms used to describe the condition of the heart are: iniquitous (Gen. 6:5); evil (Jer. 17:5); a fountain of evil (Matt. 12:34); loves evil (Deut. 29:18); wayward (Psa. 101:4); blind (Rom. 1:21); hard (Ps. 76:5); deceitful (Jer. 17:9); proud (Ps. 101:5); subtle (Prov. 7:10); sensual (Rom. 8:7); malicious (Ps. 28:3); impenitent (Rom. 2:5); diabolical (John 13:2); and foolish (Prov. 12:23).

2. As we can see, most of these terms are not very positive. According to Jeremiah, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9). This puts it in a class by itself. Paul, adding to this concept, says "...there is none that understandeth..." (Rom. 3:11). This leads us to the conclusion the human heart is completely depraved.

3. Does our observation and experience coincide with the teachings of the Scriptures? To answer that question, one only need to look at our daily newspapers. Last year alone in Washington D.C., there was over a murder a day. Some of the captions on the front page of the *Houston Chronicle* for Sat., April 29, 1989, read like this: "workers accused of trading computer chips for drugs"; "Convicted killer beats TDC employee, escapes"; "Guns cache seized in D.C. raid." Other captions sighted at random had to do with the soccer riots, breaking the cease fires in Beirut, the distribution of cocaine in Europe, 77 rebels killed in Peru, etc. There is no end to the things in the newspaper that certainly tell us the human heart is totally depraved.

And what about our own experience? I don't propose to divulge my own sordid experience with my own heart. I am sure if you were to look into yours, you would agree with my observation. The truth is, we were all poor lost depraved beings, and some still are.

III. The Solution: a New Heart

1. Does it not seem logical to simply clean up, and reform the old heart? That is exactly what the majority of the religious groups in the world teach us today. We have to admit it sounds good. I read an illustration once that told how this man went to his well early every morning to get water. How cool and clear the water was! One day, he went around noon. The sun was shining brightly in the well shaft. When he approached the well, he saw all kinds of things in the water! He could not understand what had happened to his well. Finally, he realized the bacteria had always been in there but not visible to the eye until the sun revealed them. Our hearts are like that. The heart may seem good until the light of the gospel shines in our hearts and reveals how sinful it really is. Jesus said "...neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit" (Matt. 7:18). Job 14:4 says, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." So, the consensus is clear: the old depraved heart cannot clean itself up, cannot reform itself or, in short, do anything to please God. The only remedy is a new heart, a transplant.

2. The Psalmist said "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10). David had looked at his own heart and saw the same things we have seen.

The only answer is for God to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves: give us a new one.

3. But just as a physical heart will affect other parts of the body, so will a new spiritual heart affect the whole life of a man. Before we had the transplant, we were blinded by the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4). But now, by means of the gospel, God hath shined in our hearts and given us the light of heaven. Our eye sight has changed. We no longer see the things of this world as vividly as before. Before Paul received his new heart and eyes, he saw Christ as an imposter. After the Damascus Road experience, he saw Him as Lord and said, "Lord what will thou have me do?"

He was even able to count better after his heart transplant. Does this sound far out? He said in Philippians 3:8: "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ."

4. The Lord also does a mind transplant on us. Paul says in I Corinthians 2:16: "...But we have the mind of Christ." This is a mind that is not easily shaken (II Thess. 2:2). And if that is not enough, He writes his laws in our hearts! Hebrews 10:16 says: "This the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." Though this passage primarily pertains to Israel, I see no reason it cannot be applied to any born-again individual.

Conclusion: No more fitting words can be cited as a finale for this message than those spoken by some of Christ's admirers. They said "...He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak" (Mark 7:37). The preacher, as if he were writing a fitting finale for our message, says: "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it..." (Eccl. 3:14).

ACCEPTING

(Continued from Page 1)

ception to this expression. To them it savors of "freewill," implies creature ability, and shuts out the work of the Holy Spirit. Should they hear a preacher making use of this phrase they would at once question his orthodoxy and look upon him as an Arminian, which is a synonym for a heretic. They imagine that to speak to unconverted souls of "accepting Christ" is to employ language which is foreign to Holy Writ and grossly dishonoring to God.

Without a desire to provoke any controversy on the matter, but rather with the hope of making a helpful though brief contribution to the subject, we feel led to write a few lines thereon. First of all, we would press the fact that the gospel is to be preached to "every creature:" not only to those who give evidence of being among God's elect, not simply to those who show signs that they have been quickened by the Spirit, but to all men everywhere. And "the gospel" is both the proclamation and presentation of a Saviour who is mighty to save. The gospel is

that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

Second, we would point out that there is no real rest for any soul until the gospel is heartily believed. To the sinful woman of Luke 7, Christ said, "...thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (verse 50); hers was a personal, present, perfect salvation. Just so long as an anxious sinner is occupied with himself, concerned about his frames and feelings, looking at his sins or his repentance of them, he will remain a stranger to that peace which "passeth all understanding." As it is written, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). And again, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing..." (Rom. 15:13)

Third, if a preacher is aware of an anxious soul in his congregation who is earnestly longing for peace, he should spare no pains in seeking to be God's instrument for pointing that sinner to the Prince of Peace. He should preach, pray, and labor to that end. He should diligently seek from his Master a special message for that soul, that he may be enabled to speak "a word in due season" (Prov. 15:23). Spurgeon used to say, "Some preachers aim at nothing, and they are very good at hitting it." Let us aim directly at the conscience and then at the heart, counting on the Holy Spirit to direct our shafts.

Now the question which is before us for consideration and (attempted) elucidation, really concerns the preacher's efforts to "win souls" (Prov. 11:30), and as to how far the Word warrants him going toward the realization of his longings to see sinners converted under his ministry. And here, it seems to the writer, there are two extremes to be guarded against. On the one hand, we believe those preachers come short of discharging their duties who rest content with simply setting forth in an abstract and impersonal way what are termed "the doctrines of grace." To say, "I have faithfully declared all the counsel of God, and now I must leave the results with Him," sounds very pious, but it leaves the way open for several serious questions. It is perfectly true that "results" rest entirely with God, for He alone, "giveth the increase" (I Cor. 3:7). But, have we declared all the counsel of God when we have fully expounded the five points of Calvinism? We throw not. The preacher is something more than a human gramophone, mechanically repeating a Scripture formula.

Of the forerunner of Christ it is said that he was "A burning and a shining light" (John 1:23). He was "...the voice of one crying in the wilderness..." No correct but cold formalist was he. Of our Saviour it is recorded that, He wept over Jerusalem because her children would not come to Him. No heartless fatalist was He. The great apostle to the Gentiles wrote, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men..." (II Cor. 5:11). Do you do this, brother preacher? Query: Were Paul on earth today saying, "We persuade men" would his orthodoxy be suspected? Again; he an-

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The man that had not on a wedding garment could not say, "Lord, I was not able to get one." But he was speechless.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF ELIJAH - 20 THE RAPTURE OF ELIJAH

"And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou has asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so. And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (II Ki.2:8-11).

From mount Carmel, the great event where the fire of God fell from heaven, until the rapture of Elijah was probably about ten years. During this time we have Elijah's flight to the cave, his leaving that cave, the call of Elisha, the rebuke to Ahab over Naboth's vineyard, and the announcement to Ahaziah of his coming death. These are the recorded events. Likely there are many unrecorded events; such as his training of Elisha, his preaching God's Word in different places, and his work in the schools of the prophets; likely at Gilgal, Bethel, and Jericho.

The ministry of Elijah had been a supernatural ministry. Oh, how the power of God was manifested in and through the ministry of Elijah. The heavens were closed for three and one half years, with neither rain or dew: the fire fell from heaven, the rains came in answer to Elijah's prayer, a widow's son had been raised from the dead; this widow, her son, and Elijah had been supplied miraculously for a period of time. Elijah's ministry had been one of supernatural power. How fitting then, that he should have a supernatural exit from this world.

Now, I call your attention to the spasmodic character of Elijah's public ministry. It seems that Elijah comes out of nowhere, appears on the scene briefly, and then retires from sight for a while. This happens several times during his earthly ministry. For some years, Elijah is at Gilead. We do not know what he is doing during this time. Then all of a sudden, as if out of nowhere, he appears in the palace of Ahab. He tells Ahab that it is not going to rain again until Elijah says so and then disappears for a while. We know that Elijah is at Cherith, and then at Zarephath; but he is hidden from public view for three years. Then Elijah appears suddenly and dramatically before Ahab and requests that the prophets of Baal and the people of Israel be gathered to mount Carmel, and we have seen the remarkable scene enacted there. Next, Elijah flees for his life and disappears from public view for a good while. Then, all of a sudden, while Ahab is inspecting the

property of Naboth which he had received through the murder of Naboth, Elijah appears and rebukes Ahab severely, announcing God's coming judgment on Ahab and Jezebel. He then disappears from public view for a season. After the death of Ahab, Ahaziah was king for two years. Ahaziah is wounded by a fall and sends to the god of the Philistines to learn if he will recover. Suddenly, Elijah appears to the king's messengers and tells them of the soon coming death of Ahaziah. He then again disappears from public view. Now, we see him here in the closing scenes of his earthly life; we see his rapture. So, you see that Elijah appears and disappears, appears and disappears again and again. He has now disappeared from public view for hundreds and hundreds of years. However, I think that there will be one more dramatic appearance of Elijah and a spectacular and supernatural ministry. I believe he will be one of the two witnesses of Revelation, chapter 11. He will have three and half years of supernatural ministry. Then he will be killed. Then he will be raised from the dead, raptured to heaven again, and disappear from public view one more time.

Elijah's life on earth and his ministry for now was just about over. He was soon to leave this earth and go to heaven. This had been revealed to him, and I am almost sure that it was revealed to him how he would go to heaven. Elijah's leaving this life was revealed, to the sons of the prophets, for in Bethel and in Jericho, they said to Elisha, "Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head today?" (II Ki.2:3,5). So they knew that this was Elijah's last day on the earth. I do not think they knew how Elijah would leave earth. Elisha answered them "Yea, I know it." So God had revealed to the sons of the prophets, to Elisha, and surely to Elijah, himself, that this was the great prophet's last day on earth.

Notice how Elijah spent his last hours on this earth. He spent them in the service of God, going from one place to another, meeting with and ministering to these sons of the prophets. These young men were gathered together, and Elijah taught them the Word of God and trained them for the ministry thereof. Likely, Samuel had established these schools. Elijah had revived them, or at least worked in them. Elijah goes quietly about this great work during his last hours. Seemingly, he has no fears and no regrets as to this being his last day on earth, and desires to spend these last hours for the spiritual good of others and the glory of God. What a testimony is this to Elijah!

Beloved friends, why should Elijah have any regrets as to leaving this world and going to heaven? What a great day this was for Elijah! What rejoicing would soon be his! Elijah had been opposed. His life had been threatened. He had even wanted to die. He had not been enabled to do the work that he wanted to do for the Lord. He had not seen the success he wanted to. Israel had not been wholly turned to the Lord. He had been faithful in obeying God. He had done what he could. God had blessed him in many ways. God had used him. But he had not seen

the results he would like to have see. So now, with no regret at what he was leaving behind, he marches toward his date with eternity calmly and without fear, just quietly going about the service of the Lord.

Ten years ago Elijah had passed by the farm where Elisha was plowing. He had cast his mantle upon Elisha. Elisha understood that this was a call to follow Elijah in the service of the Lord. Elisha had gone to tell his family good-by. He killed the oxen with which he was plowing, used the plowing utensils to cook them with, left the farm to follow Elijah and become a prophet of the Lord. Elisha ministered as a servant boy to Elijah for some time, doing menial jobs around the camp of Elijah.

For ten years Elisha had followed Elijah, had fellowshiped with him, had learned from him; and now Elijah is going to leave him. In II Kings 2:2 Elijah said to Elisha, "Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Bethel." Elisha answered, "As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." Did Elijah really want Elisha to remain behind? Some think he did; that he wanted to be alone in his last moment on earth and wanted to go to heaven without being seen by any human eye. But I think that he was testing Elisha as to whether or not Elisha would persevere in following the earthly master all the way.

I compare this with Naomi's statement to Ruth in Ruth 1:15, "thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister in law." I do not think that Naomi really meant that she wanted Ruth to go back. How could a worshipper of the true God of Israel encourage one to go back to serving idol gods? I think that Naomi, under God's leadership, was putting Ruth to the test as to whether or not she meant business with God. You will remember that marvellous statement of Ruth, one of the finest portions of Holy Writ, "Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me" (Ruth 1:16-17). Does not Elisha's statement to Elijah resemble this most noble one? Elisha's sincerity and perseverance is put to the test. They go to Bethel and to Jericho, and the same thing happens again.

Here we see the stick-to-it-iveness of Elisha. Brothers and Sisters, we need this in the service of the Lord. I am sixty-two years old and have been preaching over forty years. I have seen many people during my ministry who would get on fire, and one would think they were going to set the world on fire for the Lord; and then, after a few days or weeks or months, they sort of fizzled out, and were not heard of for a long time, if ever again. I have a man in mind who was a member of a church I pastored. Now and then, he would come in like a house on fire, he

would criticize everyone; "Why are we just sitting here? Why don't we get busy?" In a little while he would be gone again. This happened several times.

Beloved friends, I have learned one thing: the way to get the job done is to stick with it. Get started and stay with it, and the work will be done. I worked in Tulsa with stone masons. We had an older man who worked with us. He was slow, but he stayed at it. We had some younger men; not Sam, Sam was a good stone mason; but we had some young men who could lay stone much faster than this older man. But they would stop smoke and talk, and play; and when the day was over, they had not layed as much stone as the older man who had just stayed with the job. What we need is people who will stick with it, who will be faithful, whom you can count on. Elisha determined to stay with Elijah until the very end.

We have here the last journey of Elijah on this earth. He was in Gilead, he appeared before Ahab with a message of judgment, at Cherith, at Zarephath, on mount Carmel, in the cave, other journeys; now his last one. The Lord had sent Elijah on many journeys, but I am sure that none of them were as blessed to Elijah as this last one. I think that the Lord said something to him like this, "go down to Jericho and across the Jordan river; I will send an escort to meet you there and bring you home". Can you imagine that this man, who had put his life on the line for God, faced many enemies many times - how glad he would be that it was now time to go home to heaven.

Elijah and Elisha came to the Jordan river after leaving Jericho. Elijah took his mantle, smote the river, and the waters parted so that the two could go across on dry ground. Three times in the Bible, God parted the waters of this river so His people could go over; oh, the marvellous power of God! Elijah asks Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee." I believe that Elijah was led of the Lord in asking this. He knew that he, of himself, could do nothing for Elisha. He knew that God could, and I believe the Lord moved him in asking this.

What a test this question was for Elisha. Elijah is leaving. The work will be left for Elisha. Elisha is given a blank check. He can ask for whatever he desires. This is much like the test that God put to Solomon when he told him, "Ask what I shall give thee" (I Ki. 3:5). Beloved friends, I ask you; if God Almighty should come here and stand before you and tell you to ask Him for whatever you desired; what would you ask for? Whatever you did ask for would be a very discerning test of your real character before God. Would you ask God to help you be a better Christian? To do more in the service of God? To be used in winning others to the Lord? What would you ask for? Tell me that, and I will tell you what kind of person you are. Can you imagine Elisha here? What will he ask for? Will he ask for a long life? For great wealth? For a high position on the earth? Well, Elisha reveals the working of the Holy Spirit in him, molding him into a right character. He says, "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." I believe that "spirit" here should begin with a capital letter. I believe that Elisha knew that

Elijah's ministry had been in the power of the Holy Spirit, and was asking for a double portion of the Holy Spirit. Oh, he knew the job before him, he knew his own weakness, and he knew he could not do the job God had given him to do without the power of the Holy Spirit. We see here Elisha's humility. We see his desire to do a good work for the glory of God in the work God had given him. Dear friends, we all need to feel like this and to pray like this. Let us all ask that a special portion of the Holy Spirit might be given to each one of us, to our church, and especially to this pastor, for we cannot succeed on our own in the work of the Lord.

I wrote a letter today, and somewhere in it I said something like this; "Sometimes I feel that this work is too much for me, it overwhelms me, I'll not be able to do it; but most of the time, thanks be to God, I know that God is able to enable me to do what I cannot do." Let us pray sincerely, earnestly, and repeatedly this great prayer of Elisha for a double portion of the Holy Spirit. Let me put together two verses of Scripture here. "...Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts" (Zech. 4:6). "...How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Lk.11:13).

Elijah answered Elisha thusly, "Thou has asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so" (II Ki.2:10). Can you imagine the rest of that short journey? I assure you that Elisha kept his eyes right on Elijah. He would not turn them away for even a moment. He would allow nothing to distract him. He was determined to make the rest of this journey with his eyes on the master, that he might receive the fulness of the Spirit. I wrote in my Bible here, "Keep your eyes on the master." Oh, if we will just keep our eyes on the master, the Lord Jesus Christ, He will surely give us a double portion of the Holy Spirit. Remember Peter on the stormy sea? When he kept his eyes on Jesus, he could live a miracle life and could walk on water, but when he took his eyes off of Jesus he began to sink. Brother, Sister, let us keep our eyes on Jesus.

"And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (II Ki.2:11). Good-by, Elijah. The second man in history, in the flesh, without leaving his body behind, goes to glory to be with the Lord. Enoch, of course, was the first one.

The rapture of Elijah! Can you imagine the thrill, the glory, the joy, and the delight that must have been in the soul of Elijah as he moves out of this world into glory? Away from this world and its sin. Away from Jezebel and her persecuting hatred. Away, even from Israel and her great failure. Away from his own sin and failure. On his way to glory. Good-by, Israel. Good-by, Elisha. Good-by, hard times and hello, glory. He moves into the presence of the Lord. The rapture of Elijah.

And this is a picture and a (Continued on Page 11, Col. 1)

ELIJAH

(Continued from Page 10)

prophecy of what will happen to the living believers when Jesus comes in the rapture of the saints. What Elijah knew and felt then, we will know and feel. The rapture is coming for the children of God. And I am a Pre-tribulationist. I believe that, so far as we know or can know, the rapture could occur this very day. Praise the Lord! Are you looking for His coming? Do you watch for Him? Do you love His appearing? Are you ready for the rapture? After this we read, "And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father (and he is referring to Elijah as a spiritual father who had taught him in the ministry) the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof" (II Ki.2:12). What is meant by this statement? For many years I thought that Elisha was referring to the chariot and horsemen that had come to take Elijah to glory. Then, one day I read attentively II Kings 13:14, "Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." Now, Joash did not see any chariot or horsemen, and Elisha was not taken thence to heaven. By comparing these two Scriptures, I take the position that "the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof" refers to Elijah himself, and later to Elisha. Not physical armies and material resources, but the people of God are the true defense of a nation. The might of a nation is not in its military power, but in its godly men and women. Believe this, brother, for it is true. Oh, that the world would learn this lesson!

The mantle of Elijah fell to the ground, Elisha took it up, and he was on his way to great service for God. Can you imagine his thrill when he saw Elijah go up? Doubtless, he remembered the words of Elijah as to this, and felt assured that a double portion of the Holy Spirit now rested on him. I believe that, that mantle floating down to the ground to the feet of Elisha was a symbol that God was going to give Elisha a double portion of the Spirit. As you read on in II Kings you will learn that Elisha was very greatly used in the service of the Lord. Elisha performed many miracles, even several more than Elijah did. I think that as Elisha took up that mantle, he realized the solemnity of his call to take over the work Elijah had left, realized that he was to be the chief prophet in Israel for a while, and a deep humility and consciousness of personal inability came over him. But there was also the joy that God was with him. He goes back to the Jordan River. He remembered how he and Elijah had crossed over on dry ground shortly before. Elisha, to prove that God was with him for sure; to prove that, though Elijah was gone, God was still there; Elisha smote the river with the mantle that had passed from Elijah to him. Elisha asked, "Where is the God of Elijah?" Well, Elijah was gone, but his God was still present. The waters parted, just as they had previously, and Elisha walked over. Oh, what joy must have filled his soul at this token that God was with him as

He had been with Elijah.

Elisha now knew that God was with him, but it is important also that others know this. We read in II Kings 2:15, "when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him." When the Spirit of God is upon us and when we walk in the power of the Spirit, others will know it. And when and if God will help me to preach in the power of the Spirit, somebody will know, somebody will see, somebody will be able to tell that the Spirit of Elijah is upon me. God grant that it be so. Oh, beloved friends, would it not be a marvellous thing if people in this city and this area could testify that the Spirit of God rests upon Calvary Baptist Church, upon its pastor, and upon its members? I was a great admirer of John R. Gilpin, Sr. I do not say that to make points with those who remain of his family. I said that when I did not know them very well. I said that when I never dreamed of being pastor here. I have said that in many places and at many times. I feel that he was one of God's great men. I wish I could have a double portion of his Spirit to carry on this great work. Pray with me a prayer like that, if you will.

There is going to be another rapture, and it may be in our very life time. It may be, so far as we know, in the next little bit of time. It may be that, as we journey through life just a little further, as we seek to serve the Lord, as we grow weary with the journey; it may be that, all of a sudden, we will feel the mighty power of God upon our bodies, we will be changed in a moment like unto His own glorious body; and we will be caught up into the air to meet and forever be with the Lord. We may hear a voice saying, "Come up hither", and we may be on our way to glory.

May God bless you and make this message a blessing to you. And, oh, that this message would do something for me. As I think of Elisha praying for, desiring, and receiving the power of God upon him; and as I read his life and see the evidences therein of the results of what happened here; may I be humbled and be encouraged, and may I cry out mightily for the Spirit of God on my life and on my ministry. May God help me, and help you, and help our church to know something like this in these days.

ACCEPTING

(Continued from Page 9)

nounced, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (II Cor. 5:20). Do these methods characterize our evangelical ministrations? Surely we all have need to pray earnestly for more devotion to Christ, more love for souls, more fervour and power in preaching the gospel.

On the other hand, we must not allow our fervour to run away with us. There is a zeal which is not according to knowledge. There is a concern for souls which is not regulated by the Word. And this is to be deplored just as much as a cold and stilted preaching which repels rather than attracts.

After a preacher has delivered his message-warned his hearers to flee from the wrath to come, called upon them to forsake their evil ways, presented an all-sufficient Saviour who is ready and able to save all that come to Him; what more can he do? He should press upon his hearers such words as, "...repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15). He should remind them that God has said, "...To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts..." (Heb. 3:7,9). He should warn them, "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven" (Heb. 12:25).

Perhaps some will say, "All this is very good, but is not the preacher to press for a decision, there and then?" Much depends upon what is meant by this expression. If what is intended be, calling upon the sinner to perform some outward act in order to make it evident that he is desirous of being saved--inviting him to come forward and take the preacher's hand, kneel at a penitent form, sign some card, raise his hand to be prayed for, etc.; we at once ask, "Where is the Scripture which authorizes the preacher to make such a demand or request? Where do we find that our Lord or any of His apostles so acted? And the answer is, nowhere. "But many godly preachers have employed these methods, and with much success." Answer: The day to come will show whether or not this is true; in the meantime, we insist most emphatically that the methods of no preacher are any guide or criterion for us. The Word of God is our only court of appeal.

But waiving now the matter of any outward demonstration on the part of a seeking sinner, it is, or is it not, the responsibility of the preacher to aim at his immediate conversion? Though fully assured that a sovereign God has appointed, from all eternity, the very moment when each of His elect shall be brought out of darkness into His marvelous light, yet we also believe that each time a servant of Christ stands up in His name, he should "Preach as a dying man to dying men, as one who never may preach again." It is his bounden duty to cry out, "Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. 27:1). It is part of his God-given commission to say to his hearers, The Feast is spread, "...Come; for all things are now ready" (Luke 14:17). It is his privilege to say, at anytime, to any awakened and anxious soul, "... Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..." (Acts 16:31).

"But ought he not bid the sinner to accept Christ?" This particular expression is not found upon the pages of Holy Writ, but in I Timothy 1:15 we do have that which virtually, amounts to the same thing: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." So also in II Corinthians 11:4 we read, "For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have

not accepted, ye might well bear with him." Personally we prefer to employ the language of John 1:12, "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." To bid sinners, "receive" Christ is, we believe, the preacher's solemn obligation, pointing out that, "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" (John 3:18). Further than this we do not see that the Scriptures warrant us in going.

The two chief aims of the preacher should be, under God, by means of the Scriptures: first, to show the sinner his ruined and lost condition, the awfulness of his state, the reality of eternal punishment, and thus set before him his need of the Saviour.

Second, to expose the vanity of every creature confidence, to declare the impossibility of salvation by self efforts, to announce that all his righteousnesses are as filthy rags, to bring before him Christ as the sinner's only hope. His happy task is to set before him One who is "mighty to save," and to leave him face to face with

Him. It is his duty to discourage and dispel the sinner's dream that the preacher can help him. Seek to be like John the Baptist. A "voice" heard, but not seen!

The preacher, as much as any other Christian, is to "...walk by faith, not by sight)" (II Cor. 5:7). He has the Divine assurance that, "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9) On this he should confidently rest. After he has delivered his message he should retire as quietly and quickly as possible, leaving the Holy Spirit to apply the Word to His own sovereign way. He should get alone with God, and, in the name of the Lord Jesus, plead His promise: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55:11); saying, "...do as thou hast said" (II Sam. 7:25).

May the Lord stir up all His sent servants to a more faithful, hearty, and Christ honoring proclamation of the gospel of His grace.

(Studies in the Scriptures, June 1929)

A BLESSED BIBLE CONFERENCE NEAR KING, N.C.

The Landmark Missionary Baptist Church, about eight miles south and west of King, N.C., a little further north and west of Winston Salem, was organized a little over a year ago. The Lord has blessed them in many ways during the last year. They have accomplished a remarkably great deal in such a short time. They have worked hard, and God has blessed their efforts. They have had some saved and baptized into the church, and have had some to join by letter.

They had some difficulty obtaining a pastor. They spoke to several possible candidates, but it was a little while before they obtained a pastor. I will tell you a secret if you will promise to not tell it to a living soul. I know some men who have thought to themselves and even said to others, "Maybe I should have taken that church." Well, it is too late now, for God has given them a pastor, and in a most remarkable way. While they were about to become discouraged, God was working out the situation. Elder Danny Davis had been asked to resign as pastor in Hobbs, New Mexico because he had married a divorced woman. He did not know what to do. He had left his native land, West Virginia, and moved to New Mexico. He called me to ask what I knew about available churches. I told him about the Landmark Baptist Church. He contacted the church, came and preached for them, and was shortly called as their pastor. Another example of our sovereign God at work. The Lord brought about a good buy for a house trailer for the church to use as a home for Brother Davis and his wife, Carol. The people had already rented a building, and by hard work, had it in good condition for meetings. The Lord provided employment for Brother Davis and his wife speedily after their arrival in North Carolina. They had come on this far journey trusting in the Lord; and the Lord did not fail them.

This church had a Bible Conference September 1-3. It was my

privilege to be one of the speakers at this conference. Katie and I left home a little after 9 AM on Friday and had a safe and pleasant trip to Winston Salem. We stayed with our son there. We did not get to see much of him and his family, but enjoyed the time we did have together. We appreciated their putting us up and thus relieving the church of some expense.

There were eleven preachers at the conference, many of them well known to many of our readers. Three of them preached once, the pastor and two who could only be there a short time. The rest preached twice. We had two deacons, Herbert Cole of the host church and Clyde Everman of our church, who spoke to us. My, what a great job they did. I know many preachers who can not do as well. We heard some mighty good preaching. It would be hard to pick out the best preacher or the best sermon, and I don't guess any good would come of trying to do so, nor that there is any reason for the attempt. Let us just say that we heard some mighty fine, sound, Spirit-anointed preaching. We heard sermons on doctrines, on missions, on church truth and practice, and many of a practical nature. The total of the preaching was well rounded. The pastor did not assign subjects. Consequently we had three sermons on the death of Christ. Well, I suppose that if we are going to have sermons on the same subject, this is about as good a subject as can be to have them on. I prefer assigned subjects at a conference. I have been somewhat surprised to learn that nearly every preacher I have discussed this with prefers to be assigned a subject; but, as I often say, "to each his own." The preaching was very, very good at this conference.

The incident to which I refer in my editorial in this issue took place at this conference. I am still

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CAN YOU IMAGINE THIS?

Moses believing in evolution?

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen.1:1). "after his kind" (Gen.1:21,24,25).

BLESSED

(Continued from Page 11)

rejoicing over this.

I was privileged to meet and hear two new preachers at this conference; Brother Jack Grimes of New Haven, W.Va., a pastor of the Baptist church there, and Brother Gary Phillips who plans to go to Australia as a missionary. It was an added blessing to meet these brothers. I delight to see old friends again. I also delight to meet new preachers; always hoping that such will become great friends.

The spirit of the conference was very, very good. This is so important in a conference. I think it may be the most important single matter. Even great preaching cannot, to me, make up for a bad spirit in a conference. When there is a bad spirit between some in the conference, it just will come out in some way, and will hurt the conference. The fellowship was very good at this conference. I sometimes think the fellowship in a conference means almost as much to me as the preaching. Well, the fellowship at this conference could not have been any better.

The food, well, I know these women well; and I already knew that the food would be very good - and it was. There was plenty of it, and it was all good. How could we have a conference without our church women? Maybe we could, but I don't know if I would even want to attend one like that. I believe in the woman's place in the church; but I also believe that they do have a place - and a very important place. Some men have taken from their women some of that which God gives to them. Not me, I believe in giving them every thing I can in harmony with God's Word. I believe in giving them praise for all that they do to help the church. These women are a great blessing to the church there - and not only in preparing the food. They stay in their place, but they fill that place well.

We had several, individual and groups, who sang specials during the conference. This was appreciated and was an added blessing to the conference. The conference closed about 5:PM. We fellowshiped (and ate) for about an hour (did not eat the whole hour). then Katie and I were on our way home. We had a safe trip home. We talked much on the trip, and since coming home, about the blessings of the conference and how much we enjoyed it.

I believe this church has a fine pastor who is going to lead them well. Pray for Danny Davis and for this church that God will continue, and even increase, His blessings upon them. If you live in the area, or if you are ever passing through, visit this fine church. You will receive a blessing, I am sure. This church means much to me. I pray that God will richly bless them in every way and use them to His glory. Join me in that prayer.



Is Eldon Joslin singing or preaching?



John Lenegar and Doyal Thomas in the book store.



At the eating place.

BOOK ANNOUNCEMENTS

I certainly rejoice to tell you of this book. We have "Commentary on the Psalms" by J.J. Stewart Perowne. I do not know how many times I have read quotes from, commendations of, and statements about this great book on the Psalms. I have often seen it mentioned as one of the best. Now it is available. This book has long been a classic on Psalms. There is a good general introduction to the Psalms which is very helpful. There are introductions to (I believe) each of the Psalms giving much help toward interpretation. There are notes on the Psalms which give scholarly, clear, expository and practical help on the Psalms. I have long desired this book for my library. I urge every preacher especially to speedily add, this to his library. The book is two volumes in one. It is a paper back of over 1050 pages. It sells for \$26.95. Order from our book store. Remember that the profit goes into the book ministry of our church.

G. Campbell Morgan is a well known and highly respected author. Many people believe that the following book is his greatest single volume. We have "The Crises of the Christ." by him. Mr. Morgan picks what he believes are the seven greatest events of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ, and gives a very full, clear, detailed, rich, and practical exposition thereof. The events dealt with are Christ's birth, baptism, temptation, transfiguration, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. I doubt one can find a more complete treatment of these events. I do not mean that Morgan is the best on the doctrine of the atonement. He is not. But he is excellent on these things as historical events in the life of Christ. You need to add this book to the portion of your library about the person and life of Christ. I read the book many years ago, and it was a blessing to me. It is a paper back of nearly 350 pages and sells for \$9.95. Order from our book store.

We have "The Christian View of God and the World" by James Orr. I am glad that this book is again available. It has long been a classic in the area of Apologetics. It may well be the best single volume on this subject. The book is very scholarly and somewhat technical. However, it surely will not hurt the preacher to read some books of this character. The book will certainly help to establish one in the faith of the Word of God, and furnish much ammunition to be used against those who deny the Christian Faith. I urge the preacher especially to buy this book and give it a careful reading. It is a paper-back of close to 500 pages and sells for \$13.95. Order from our book store where the profit goes back into the book ministry of our church.



Wendell Furlong preaching.



Let's hurry and get brother Joe's lunch to him.

IMPRESSIONS

It was such a blessing to me. May God bless. Bless the church. Wanda Sheppard, Tampa, Fla.

We enjoyed all the good spiritual sermons, the fine fellowship and all the good food.

George & Evelyn Scott, Olivet, Mi.

Thank you Calvary Baptist Church for another wonderful conference. We appreciate so much your kindness and hospitality. As usual, the food was delicious. The preaching was exceptional and the Lord greatly blessed. We are looking forward to next year.

Myrtis Caudill, Goshen, Ind.

There's a sweet, sweet spirit in this place and thus we found at Calvary what a friend we have in Jesus. It was good to renew old friendships and make new ones. It was sad to leave but we must go back home to serve our great Saviour. How helpful this time has been. To God be the glory, how great Thou art!!

Elder Eldon Joslin, Birmingham, Ala.

Oh what sweet fellowship to sit together with God's people listening, learning and worshipping by hearing these great ministers of God. Thank you Calvary Baptist Church.

L.P.

You've saved the best for last! We enjoyed the preaching and fellowship. Now let's go forth with the Baptist message and boldness in our own realm of ministry--on the job, among friends and all others. Thanks.

Tim Parrish, Courtland, Va.

A trip to the Calvary Bible Conference will make you realize how rich the blessings of God can be. It just keeps getting better and better. I have never left a Calvary conference that my cup was not full and running over - this one is no exception.

Elder John Pruitt Griffin, Ga.

Many of us don't know God well enough to trust Him. Are you persuaded that God has complete control in reference to the things which excite our anxiety? Are you persuaded that He will use this control in the best way, as far as we are concerned? If I am to cast my cares on Him, I must know Him to be my Father; I must know Him to be my friend; I must know Him to be my protector, my shepherd, my guide, my righteousness, and my salvation. I must believe His testimony that He loves me for Christ's sake. He careth for you. It's a small thing for God to care for us. He provides for the cattle on a thousand hills, all the wild beasts, and an army of birds, fish, and insects. Your needs and mine are scarcely a crumb from God's table. If He says, "I will care for you," then don't give it another thought except to sing, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."

ANNOUNCEMENT

Elder John M. Alber is available for preaching appointments, especially for a pastorate. He has had many articles in The Baptist Examiner. He is in agreement with the position of this paper as to doctrine and practice so far as I know. He is an able preacher. Any interested church can contact him at 6981 Dexter St., Commerce City, Colorado 80022, Or call at (303) 287 4408.

The Sovereign Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Coal Grove, Ohio has authorized the establishing of a church in Brandon, Florida. Elder Dan Allen has been called as pastor of the new church. The new church is the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church. The address is 526 Corner St. & Oakfield Dr., Giordano Square, Brandon, Florida 33510. You are invited to attend services at this new church.