

THE WILL OF MAN-IN BONDAGE

John 5:40
by John M. Alber
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"And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (John 5:40). Last week we considered the subject, "Unlocking The Truth About God's Will" in our Bible study. Today, we want to look into the subject of Man's Bondage as our text indicates.

We have already learned that absolute freedom of the will can



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only belong to the God of heaven! That is somewhat determined because He alone is sovereign, and no one can overcome His will. The God of heaven is omnipotent (all powerful)! He "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. 1:11). This omnipotent God that we serve has a fixed will, irresistible if you please. "For I am the LORD, I change not" (Mal. 3:6). Thus, as already noted, God's will is subject to no man; but, on the other hand, mans will

is definitely subject to God! It is the mind of God that this old world system is subjected to; and, you can be thankful that this is the case, for man's will would only bring total and complete chaos.

Now, our subject today is "The Slavery of Man's Will to His Own Sin" as our Lord pictured for us in the fifth chapter of the gospel of John. What most people do not understand is this: when Adam fell in the Garden of Eden, there was a very big radical change that took place in Adam. Just as Adam fell into sin, and by sin, death reigned in His family; so our God provided another radical change that could place a dead lost sinner into His family, that change being, born-again by the Holy Spirit of God. How many times have you heard preachers say, "man sought God"? But beloved, that is not what the Bible teaches; for it, the Word of God, tells us that it was the God of heaven that sought us, yes, even when we were enemies. Those that are enslaved by sin, and "All have sinned" (Rom. 3:23), the Word of God informs us, cannot by their own will and power come to God, much less love Him. We must conclude then, that those folk that love God Almighty with their heart, do so on the basis of God loving them first. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but

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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. 62, NO. 4

ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, FEB. 17, 1990

WHOLE NUMBER 2579

IN THE SPIRIT ON THE LORDS DAY

by Sam Wilson

Revelation 1:10: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet."

John writes to us from the Isle of Patmos where he had been exiled. God often uses what we would consider strange means to get the most out of His people. I do not mean to imply that Revelation is written by John apart from the Spirit of God. John tells us he is in the Spirit, and surely he had to be to write this marvelous account of things to come. Beloved, we are missing many blessings and opportunities to serve God because we are not "In the Spirit." I recognize that there are many who in our day have overemphasized the work of the Spirit; but God forbid that we minimize it. An over emphasis on the Spirit cannot be right because the Bible puts the emphasis on Christ and His work. Some believe that this is a fulfillment

of Christ's words that John might tarry until He came again. They believe that meant that Christ came to John in the power of the Holy Spirit. I do not agree with this theory.

The first thing we want to do in this article is mention a few



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thoughts about the Lord's Day. The Lord's Day somewhat corresponds with the Old Testament Sabbath. However, we are not under as strict a rule as Israel was. I believe that, with the res-

urrection of Christ, the Sabbath was changed to the Lord's Day, and changed from the seventh day to the first day of the week.

There are too many things that take place in Scripture on the first day of the week for it to just be coincidental. Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week. Christ met with the church after His resurrection on the first day of the week. The habit of the church was to meet on the first day of the week. Tithes and offerings were to be brought to the storehouse, or church, on the first day of the week.

History tells us that true churches have met mostly on the first day of the week. I believe this is now the Lord's day and is to be special to the child of God. I have heard Daddy say many times that he believes one of the major curses on America and religion is open Sunday. To most people Sunday is just another day

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GOD'S COMMAND OR MAN'S TRADITION?

by Rick Perdue
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"But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?...Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matt. 15:3,7-9).

Professing Christianity is in much the same condition today as the Jews' religion was when Jesus came the first time. There is much taught and observed that are the traditions of men. Things that the Lord never commanded, which are, in fact, contrary to His commands. When you question such traditions you get into about as much trouble as did Jesus and His disciples. No doubt there were then many of God's children who were caught up in the traditions of the times, yet when they heard the voice of Jesus they came out to follow Him. Traditions, then and now, are intertwined with truth; yet the truth is so covered and smothered by tradition as to be unrecognizable. Truth thus mixed with error be-

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WOMEN'S POSITION IN A N.T. CHURCH

by Wayne Cox

The woman was in the initial transgression. I Timothy 2:14, "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." Now let us notice the actual transgression as recorded in Genesis 3:6. The devil came to Eve and began to ridicule the Lord, and planted the seeds of doubt in the heart and mind of Eve, and the Lord says that she did eat of the forbidden fruit, and gave to her husband and he ate. Eve was deceived. She

believed the devil's lie instead of the plain Word of God.

The penalty imposed on the woman is found in Genesis 3:16, "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." Thus we see that man in supposed to have the authority over the woman, that is, he is to rule over her. God did not say that the woman would

not have had sorrow had she not transgressed against the law of God, but He said that because she did violate His law her sorrow would be multiplied, that is, she would have more sorrow as a result of her sin. Many people take the position that had the woman not sinned she would not have suffered in childbirth. What they mean is this, "that the reason that women go down into the valley of death in bringing children into the world is because

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BEHOLD I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK

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"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me," (Rev. 3:20).

Christ Jesus the Lord knocks at the door!

What condescension!

The King of glory after His suffering, after His reproach, after His death, after His resurrection and after His exaltation at the right hand of God the Father, knocks. knocks at a door.

John saw Him in His exalted status in that remarkable Lord's day appearance (Rev. 1:10). In that glorious appearance Christ Jesus manifested all the attributes of His deity. He is the First and the Last, the Way, the Truth and the Life. As the mighty Conqueror, He holds the keys of death and Hades.

Remember the days of His earthly sojourn. He manifested His glory by His works. He stilled the fierce waves of Galilee from their immense height to a mirror finish and the wind ceased also. He but said to them "Peace be still," and they bowed down to Him in obedience.

When they came to arrest Jesus in the garden, Peter jerks a short sword from under his tunic and

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

WHY I LOVE A BAPTIST CHURCH PART I

"Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (Eph. 5:26,27).

I do love a Baptist church. My heart sings with joy at the very thought. I love all of God's Word. I love to preach the great doctrines of the precious Word. Among those choice jewels of truth is that of church truth. I must ever and anon preach me a sermon on the Lord's church.

All of God's Word is true and should be preached. However, it

seems to me that at times there are certain truths that, because of long neglect, much ignorance, and great perversion, need a special emphasis. Church truth is one of, if not, the most neglected and perverted doctrine of our day. Of all the truths of the Bible, there is not one about which there is more ignorance, and more false notions than that of church truth. The average person could run into a church truth in the middle of the road, get out and ask, "What is it?" Those few of us who know church truth ought to preach long, loud and often, on

this precious subject.

When we do preach the truth about the Lord's church, and tell of our love for the church, we are accused by our enemies of putting the church ahead of the Lord-- of loving a Baptist church more than we love the Lord Jesus. Let me emphasize right at the beginning that love for Christ and love for the church are mutually consistent. Christ loves His church and is not jealous of love that we have for the church. We absolutely cannot love the church

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The worldly man chooses Heaven before Hell, but not before earth; therefore, he shall not have it upon such choice.

The Baptist Examiner
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Office Ph. 606-325-2012
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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.

PUBLICATION POLICIES: All matter for publication should be sent to the editor. All manuscripts sent should be typed and double spaced. All such material becomes the property of TBE and will not be returned unless requested by the writer. We reserve the right to edit and condense all materials sent to us for publication. Church news items must reach us one month prior to publication.

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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.

PLANNING TO MOVE? - Notify us three weeks in advance. The post office will only forward second class mail for 60 days at no charge to us unless the addressee guarantees the forwarding postage. After this time the paper is returned to us at a 30 cent charge for each paper returned. Please save us this expense and the post office time.

Second Class Postage paid at Ashland, Kentucky.

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

WHY I LOVE

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too much. The fact of the matter is, that where there is no love for the church, there is little love for the Lord. We show and act our love for the Lord through the church. Let me give you several reasons in this message as to why I love a Baptist church.

I. I love a Baptist church because Baptist churches are the true churches of Christ. Not all churches that call themselves Baptist are true churches of Christ. There are those who call themselves by this glorious name who were started without authority from another church. They do not go back by link chain succession to the church that Jesus started in His earthly ministry.

Consequently, they are not true churches of Christ. There are those who wear this honored name who have departed from the truth of which His churches are the pillar and ground, and so departed that they are no longer the true churches of Christ. I was asked recently by a friend whom I learned to love greatly in only a brief period of time, what I thought about his baptism. He was baptized upon the authority of a church(?) which later excluded him for teaching the doctrines of grace. Of course, such a church is not a true church of Christ. I am satisfied that this dear brother will soon be seeking proper baptism from a Scriptural church. So I say that not all so-called Baptist churches are true churches. And, oh, how I hate to

say it, but I sometimes feel that there are more that are not than there are that are. Be this as it may, surely only Baptist churches are the true churches of Christ. Some counterfeits among us, who wear a name to which they have no honest right, do not destroy the truth as to Baptist churches being Christ's true churches.

All other churches so-called are mere man-made organizations. They are all false churches. I do not preach that Baptist churches are merely - the best churches there are. I preach that Baptist churches are the true churches and all others are false churches.



Joe Wilson

This statement is proved to be true by the tests of history, doctrine and practice. Consider any church in existence today except Baptist churches. Trace these churches up the trail of their history, and you will come to a place other than Palestine, a person other than Jesus Christ, and a time this side of the earthly ministry of Christ where the said church had its origin. Trace Baptist churches up the blood-stained trail of their noble history and you will find no place except Palestine, no person other than Jesus Christ, and no time this side of Christ's earthly ministry where Baptists had their beginning. Why is it that all history agrees as to who authored other churches, and when they were started, but when the above position is denied, men cannot agree as to the origin of Baptist churches?

Then you can take the doctrines of the Word of God and test the professed churches of the day thereby. You will find that other churches teach a mixture of truth that they got from Baptists and much heresy that they got from Catholics. You will find that true Baptist churches preach the same doctrines as those taught in the Bible.

Then as to the test of practice. Baptists have congregational form of government as did the New Testament churches. Baptists have the same subjects, form, purpose and authority for baptism as the New Testament churches. Baptists have a communion limited to the local church and using the proper elements of unleavened bread and wine as did New Testament churches. So we see that when the tests are applied, the answer is that Baptist churches are the true churches of Christ, and that is one reason I love a Baptist church.

II. I love a Baptist church because it is loved with a special love by the Lord Jesus Christ. You will see this in the text that heads this article. This church in this verse has to be a local visible church because that is the only kind of church there is. The elders of this selfsame church are exhorted to feed the church of God over which the Holy Spirit had made them overseers and which had been purchased with His blood in Acts 20:28. This

church, loved by Jesus Christ had to be a Baptist church because that was the only kind there was at that time. It could not have been a Presbyterian, Methodist or Holy Roller, for they were not born until many years afterward.

Now of all the institutions known to man on the earth, Christ loves His Baptist churches above all else. The affections of our Lord pass over much that is dear to man, that is highly esteemed among men, and settles upon the true Baptist churches that are scattered here and there across the land. Oh, my brethren, most of our churches are small. They are ridiculed, persecuted, despised, and hated by the religious world. But they are the special objects of the love of Jesus Christ. Should we not delight to be a member of that institution on the earth which is, in a special way, loved by our Lord. Yes, I love a Baptist church because I love the Lord Jesus, and He loves His church.

III. I love a Baptist church because it was started by Jesus Christ. He said: "...upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). He started this church during His earthly ministry. All other churches were started by man. Would you rather be a member of a church started by some man, or one started by Jesus Christ?

IV. I love a Baptist church because it was guaranteed perpetuity by Jesus Christ. Jesus said of His church: "...the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). This promise of our Lord certainly means that the church He started would be continued in the world until His coming again. Now, beloved friends, when men go out and start churches of their own as Wesley, Calvin and others have done, they are implying that Jesus Christ has failed to keep His promise. If Christ started a church, and He did--if He promised to preserve it, and He did--if He has kept His promise and He has, then what need is there for some man to come along and start a church. I tell you that it is not only needless--it is a sin against the Lord Jesus Christ. These men are unbelievers in, and rebels against the Word of God. These churches they started are parasites upon and enemies of the true churches of Christ. I tell you Jesus has fulfilled His promise to perpetuate His church and will keep it. History has seen the rise and fall of many man-made churches. In the tribulation period, all false churches will unite with Roman Catholicism which will be the church and religion of the first half of the tribulation. In the middle of the tribulation period, this old whore and her harlot daughters will be destroyed, and thus will be fulfilled that word of Christ that: "...Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up" (Matt. 15:13). But Baptist churches will not cease to be upon the earth until that day when all true believers are caught up to be with the Lord in the air just previous to the tribulation period, and those who were loyal, faithful members of true Baptist churches will be rewarded by being in the Bride of Christ, which might be called the church of the millennial and eternal state. Yes, I love a Baptist church because it will be perpetuated by Jesus

Christ.

V. I love a Baptist church because Jesus Christ is the head of

such a church. He is said to be such in many Scriptures. Now (Continued on Page 3, Col. 1)

FROM THE EDITOR

I desire to continue the editorial of last week. The Baptist Examiner is a Baptist Mission and as such is worthy and deserving of Baptist support. We are dependent upon Baptist support for with our strong Biblical and Baptist stand, we do not expect and will not get the support of others.

I am writing about some ways you can help this paper. I mentioned last week the matter of regular support from churches. Many do support us thusly, and we deeply appreciate this. Remember that, when a church supports us regularly, and keeps us informed as to names and addresses of their members, we send each member the paper free of further charge. Such support would help us keep up the number on our mailing lists. We lose much here by people letting their subscriptions expire, many of whom like and desire the paper, but just neglect to renew. We keep the subscriptions of members of supporting churches up. I also mentioned the matter of individuals (churches can also do this) sending us subscriptions for others. How easily we could double our mailing list this year, but we have to have the help of our readers to do this.

Many individuals send us regular support. We appreciate this deeply. We need for this to continue, and hopefully increase. Maybe a few could increase their support. But moreso, others could begin such support. We would prefer that you could influence your church to support us, but if you cannot do this, why not consider this matter yourself? Many small amounts equal a large amount.

Let me mention a matter that I only remember mentioning once, but likely should do it more often. Remember The Baptist Examiner in your will. Why not do this? Why not, if you are able, leave a substantial amount to T.B.E. in your will. In this way, while you are in glory rejoicing with the Lord and the saints; your money could still be doing the Lord's work down here on earth. So far as I know the only way you can do this is to leave some money to some true and proper work of the Lord such as the Baptist Examiner. Of course, your influence left behind can do this for awhile. But would it not be a wonderful thing if your money would help carry on this great work after you are gone. I urge all our readers to give much consideration to this.

I greatly desire to make The Baptist Examiner a better paper. No one knows better than I that there is much room for improvement in the paper. I want to do this. I promise you that I will try to do that this year. Pray for me as to this. But understand that I am limited as to what I can do in this area. I can endeavor to improve my articles and editorial in the paper. I can maybe work a little harder at finding, selecting, and using material from books and other publications. I do not really want to do any more of this than I have been, and really would like to decrease this. But I will try to improve this part of T.B.E.

Now, I am up against it. I have gone as far as I can. I need some help from others. I need men to write for The Baptist Examiner. I need those who do write, most of them, to write more frequently. I need others to write for the paper. I have about worn this theme out, but I will try it one more time. I would much prefer to use living men in the paper. I know that it is sometimes good to use articles and sermons from men now in glory. I know that they might do a better job than we who live today - they usually had much more time for study and writing than most do today. It is sometimes good to show in this way that our forefathers believed the same things we are teaching today. But, remember that being in T.B.E. can not help nor promote the ministry of these dead men. It can help and promote the ministry of living men. I would much prefer that the large majority of our writers be living and serving God today.

I urge those preachers who receive this paper and who, in the main, agree with it to consider writing now and then for the paper. You can extend your ministry. You can be a blessing to thousands. You can be a help to me. And this can be a great blessing to you in many ways. It has been such to me. It has been such to others. I earnestly and sincerely urge the preachers who receive this paper to consider writing now and then a message for our readers. I urge those who read this paper to help me in this. Mention to your pastor that you would like to see a sermon from him in The Baptist Examiner. Many of you mention this, mention it frequently; maybe we will see some results this year. I am sure that there are hundreds and hundreds of fine, able, sound preachers out there who could write sermons that would enhance the pages of The Baptist Examiner and be a great blessing to our thousands of readers.

I urge those preachers who do write to do the best you can. I do not mean to criticize, but I am sure that all of us would say that there is room for improvement. Do your best. Do the best you can as to grammar and spelling. Remember that thousands read these sermons. The truth is, I think we should always seek to do our best for God - even in little things like spelling and grammar. Do your best as to content. Write from your heart. I appreciate all who write for us, and urge them to continue this.

Come on brethren, help me out here. Let us work together to greatly improve TBE this year. Let's have some new names and pictures in TBE this year. I don't desire to get rid of the old, but I do desire to have some new ones. The old writers will not be offended if many new ones start writing for us. I want to make The Baptist Examiner a better paper this year, more glorifying to the Lord, and more of a blessing to the readers. I will, I promise you and the Lord, try to do this as best I can. But I need, in fact I must have the help of many others in order to do this. You would be surprised how many, many men have told me that they were going to write for the paper, that they were working even at that time on an article - yet, I have never seen those articles. You would be surprised how many have told me they were going to write regularly, who have written only a very few. Come on, brethren, help me out here. Let's all work together to make this paper better than ever. Yours for a better T.B.E. going into and blessing many more homes and lives.

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other churches have their human heads. Some have the old man in Rome as their "papa" and head. Some have a central board of bishops as head. One has the king or queen of England as its head. Some have a general assembly as head. Let the old whore and her harlot daughters have their human heads. Praise God, Baptists have a Divine Head and they are the only churches on earth that have such a head. Now, beloved, some so-called Baptists have forgotten this basic part of church truth. Some are in associations and conventions where to all practical purposes, and in spite of loud protests to the contrary, these are their head instead of Jesus Christ. It is utterly impossible for a church to be in an association or convention without doing dishonor to the headship of Jesus Christ. That man-made organization will in some way or other be heard, and that church will sooner or later be found to be listening to the voice of the human organization rather than to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Sometimes preachers in Baptist churches seem to forget this truth. Some preachers seem to think that the church was invented for them to have a little playhouse where they can show off their oratorical ability and exercise a little usurped power. Yes, the preacher is to have an authority limited by the higher authority of the church. Many preachers will answer to God for the way in which they have run rough shod over the feelings and desires of the dear sheep over which they have been placed.

Sometimes a woman or group of women think they were created by God for the sole purpose of running the church. Churches had better keep women in the place of silence and subjection or they will soon smart right dearly for their disobedience to God's Word, by having a woman dominated church.

Sometimes a man or a group of men will feel that they are God's special gift to a certain church to run that church. Here is one of the reasons I object to the term "board" when applied to deacons. The word "board" in present day language carries with it the conception of authority. Most deacon boards are not adding to carrying that concept of authority into their efforts to run the Lord's church, and often times the word "board" is unscriptural as can be, when applied to deacons. Terms are sometimes adopted where the concepts of those terms are not intentionally retained, but later that concept is found to express itself. Deacons are the servants of the church, and that is all they are. A church bossing deacon is a rebel against Divine authority.

Now, beloved Baptist friends, we have a Head. He is a wonderful and precious Head. He is a Divine Head. Let us rejoice in this. Let us ever bow in adoration of such a head. Let us not follow the old whore and her harlot daughters in allowing men to usurp the authority of our Head. Let us ever bow in unquestioning submission to the headship of Jesus Christ. Please pay close attention to the following statement. The only way we can stay free from the tyrannical and

dictatorial authority of human heads, is by absolute obedience to our Divine Head. I love the Head of a Baptist church. Forty-six years ago, the Holy Spirit enabled me to see the beauty of Jesus Christ and caused me to fall in love with Him. I love Him today better than ever before. He is my precious Redeemer. Since I love Him, having been enabled to do so by sovereign grace, I most assuredly love that church of which He is the Head. I tell you the man who does not love a Baptist church does not love the Head of the church as he should. Oh, that you and I might love the dear Lord Jesus more and more, and that we might express, and show that love, by and through our love for that church of which He is the Head---a Baptist church if you please.

WILL

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that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).

What then is the problem? You see, Beloved, those folk that are born of Adam are enslaved by and controlled by their own evil affections which the Word of God tells us are evil, earthly, and sensual at best. "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish" (James 3:15). What I am trying to say is this: the actions of sinful man are no different than that of Adam; for he, after the fall could only act according to his lost fallen nature. Does not the Word of God teach us that the carnal mind is at enmity against the God of heaven? Of course it does! (Romans 8:7). Then, someone asks, is there any hope for man? Oh yes, beloved, as already indicated earlier, the grace of our God alone is that which can and does change the will of man. God's Holy Spirit quickens (makes alive) the sinner that has been enslaved by his own sin nature and will to become enslaved to Jesus Christ, God's eternal Son. Please note what the apostle Paul said to the believers in Corinth: "For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant" (1 Cor. 7:22).

The world would like to see man exalted, lifted up, glorified, praised for his accomplishments; but, the truth of the matter is, man's sin has manifested itself in all; thus, because of that sin, guilt, rebellion, and alienation from the God of heaven is the order of the day. Instead of freedom, man's sin has literally enslaved him! Let me make a statement; a statement that the world hates, nevertheless it is true: no man since Adam has ever had a free will. Adam had enjoyed his freedom before his fall; then, because of sin, his will became enslaved to that way of life. Adam, in that one act of total disobedience, plunged his whole race into sin; thus, men born of Adam are free agents to do whatever they desire; that desire being governed by a will that is incapable of turning to God. We call that, the bondage of the will! It is not that man cannot come to God, but that he will not! Is that not what our text says, "And ye

will not come to me, that ye might have life" (John 5:40). Man is free to go in any direction he wants! That is right; but, keep in mind what the Word of God says, for like the waterfall, man is only free to continue going down hill. Man will not and can not act any differently than his depraved nature will permit! Again, let me make a statement: man has neither the will nor the ability to come to Christ Jesus for salvation. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John 6:44).

"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:7-8). The heart of man is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9). "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment" (Isa. 1:6).

"Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isa. 6:5).

"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" (Ez. 36:26).

There can be no question; the Bible teaches us that all unsaved men are very self-centered and that they hate anything that interferes with their concentration on self. Man desires his own self will, is unconcerned about the will of others; and he despises God's will. Man will remain in that lost condition until his will has been changed by the grace of our God. He is not looking nor does he care about his miserable plight; he only wants to be left alone! Just as the nation of Israel today is not looking for the Lord Jesus Christ to give them life; indeed, if they would turn to Him, they would live; but as the sinner will not come to Christ, Israel will not come to Christ until He gives her a new heart and takes out the old black stony heart of unbelief. Oh, that we might learn the truth about man's bondage! God help us to see this truth! May God bless you.

WOMAN'S

(Continued from Page 1)

that is the penalty imposed on her." Well, that is true in a sense, but God did not say that women would not have suffered physical pain in childbirth had she not violated the law of God. He only said that He would greatly multiply her sorrow and conception. You have to have sorrow before it can be multiplied.

In the above Scripture we notice that the man was to have the rule over the woman, but this is not always practiced, because in so many cases we see bossy wives who rule over their hus-

bands, completely reversing the scriptural order that this should not exist. I can think of nothing more unbecoming than a woman who always bosses her husband. This, my friend, is a direct violation of the Word of God. In Paul's letter to the Ephesians 5:22-23, we notice that Paul said this, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body." Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

A woman is forbidden to teach a mixed assembly or to preach. "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (1 Tim. 2:12). But this plain statement is being violated every day. The world is filled with women preachers. Any time a woman addresses a mixed audience she is transgressing against the Word of God, and any time that a woman stands before a mixed assembly and tries to expound the Word of God, regardless of the occasion, she is preaching, and the Word says that this is not to be. Our Baptist people of today are permitting this very erroneous practice. The only difference in what Baptists are doing and the Holy Rollers is that the Holy Rollers ordain their women preachers and the Baptists do not, for the Baptists deny that they have women preachers, but brother, when anyone undertakes to deny plain facts, they are faced with a dilemma, for you cannot deny facts. The reason I single out Baptists is because I am a Baptist, and would like to see this error corrected among our people.

I can think of nothing more unscriptural or more degrading than to see a woman get up before a mixed audience and try to teach, or better still, preach. A woman is commanded to be in silence, as we notice in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." Oh, I know that many will say that Paul only had reference to speaking in tongues in these verses, but that is not true; however, I will admit that the subject under consideration in the twelfth chapter, the thirteenth chapter, and the fourteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians is spiritual gifts. Now please notice, if he had reference only to the speaking in tongues, which incidentally was the least of all the spiritual gifts and was to soon pass away with a number of other gifts, as is recorded in 1 Corinthians 13:8, when the New Testament was completed, and we know that the only spiritual gifts we have today are faith, hope and love, as is seen in 1 Corinthians 13:13. But pray tell me why did he use this particular phrase in 1 Corinthians 14:34, "...to be under obedience, as also saith the law..." if he had only the speaking of tongues in mind, for there were no tongues under the

law. No, no. This text harmonizes with 1 Timothy 2:12-13, where he said for a woman to be in silence. A woman has no right to get up in the church and make a motion or to second a motion that has been made, or to even make an announcement in the church. The above text, 1 Corinthians 14:34, refers not only to the law of Moses, but particularly to the law that came as a result of the initial transgression in the Garden of Eden. Genesis 3:16, "...and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

But someone will ask, "What is a woman's place in the church?" Well, Paul tells us in Titus 2:3-5, "The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." Now, who were they to teach? A mixed assembly? No, they were to teach the young women. So women can teach women in the church, but not a mixed audience. Women do have a place, but it is a subordinate position. They are never to usurp authority over the man. But some will ask, "What about Priscilla?" Well, she was a perfect helpmate to her husband; she and her husband took Apollos into the privacy of their own home, and taught him the way of the Lord more perfectly, as is recorded in Acts 18, but she did not violate the Bible injunction, because this was done in the home and not in the church.

Women do have a place, but it is in a subordinate position that she must serve. Someone will ask, "Can a woman be a missionary?" Certainly she can, if she remembers her place, she can witness for the Lord.

But someone will ask, "How about Phebe?" Well, we read about her in the 16th chapter of Romans, the first verse. First, we must consider to whom Paul was addressing this particular epistle. We turn to the very first chapter and find out. "To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." Thus we see that Paul was writing to those who were in Rome, that is, the church in Rome, and when we come to the 16th chapter, we notice Paul commending Phebe to them. Paul commended her in his letter exactly as we would now in a letter of introduction with favor. Phebe was a member of the church of Cenchrea, and now she was going to Rome on some kind of business. What business we are not told. It may have been personal business and most probably was. Some have thought that Paul sent his letter to the saints in Rome by her. This is not an unlikely supposition. The form

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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 Battle of Armageddon take place at the end of the Tribulation or at the end of the Millennium? Please explain and give Scriptures.

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Please read Revelation 16:12-16 and Revelation 20:7-10.

Many Bible students believe that these two portions of Scripture speak of one and the same battle. That, however, is not the case; for Revelation 16:12-16 is speaking of the battle of Armageddon which takes place at the end of the tribulation period just before the millennial kingdom begins. Revelation 20:7-10 refers to a battle (it is not really a battle at all, for God destroys the foe before they can do much of anything) that takes place at the end of the millennial reign of Christ. This is clearly pointed out in Revelation 20:7. The one thousand years refers to the millennial (1000 years) reign of Christ. The context of both passages before us clearly shows that two different events are being spoken of. Revelation 16:12-16 tells us that God has not only prepared circumstances for Armageddon which is indeed "that great day of God Almighty", but that He has gathered the participants to the place of battle which is Mount Meggido; the Hebrew for Armageddon. The means of preparation that God uses are both physical (Euphrates drying up) and spiritual (the three lying demons depicted as frogs).

The battle of Armageddon is referred to and described in other Bible passages and shown to be indeed a fearful and terrible day that culminates a series of wars and such during the tribulation period. The battle described in Revelation 20:7-10 comes at the end of the millennial reign of Christ, and it is clearly not Armageddon. Satan is at the forefront of this battle having been released from his prison at the ending of the 1000 year reign of Christ. Satan encompasses with his army the center of the saints (Jerusalem), but God destroys the army by fire instantaneously. At Armageddon, however, the bodies of the dead lie some 7 months before burial, having been destroyed by the Lord Jesus and His army. Armageddon takes place at Mount Meggido and the valley of Esdraelon, while Satan's final attempt takes place around the holy city from every side. The hooks of God are in readiness. The preparations are about to begin. The vast and almost instantaneous changes going on around us today attest to the nearness of the Lord's coming for His saints

and the beginning of the dreaded tribulation period which shall end in the battle of Armageddon. Let us heed what manner of saints we ought to be in this present time and seek to warn many of the wrath to come.

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This is one of those questions that cannot be properly answered with a short, one column statement. Many books have been written on the subject, and there are almost as many different views as there are books. It is also very possible that my colleagues may have a different view than mine.

In Revelation 16:14 this period of time is called "the battle of that great day of God Almighty." The so-called battle of Armageddon is really the climax of a great world war that will be taking place some time after the middle of the Tribulation period. This war will involve most of the countries to the north, south, and east of Palestine. They will be fighting against one another and against the Beast for control of what Daniel calls "the glorious land", (Dan. 11:41), or the promised land. Then, as the Lord Jesus is about to make His grand appearance to take His kingdom by force, there is a sign given from heaven. Read Matthew 24:29-35. Just what that sign is, I do not know, but when the Beast and those kings against whom he is fighting see this sign, they turn from fighting against one another and concentrate all their forces against the Lord of lords and His army. It seems that old Satan's crowd is not so smart after all. In Revelation 19:19 John says, "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army." The one sitting upon the horse is, of course, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.

Read Revelation 19:11-19. You will find that the winner of that battle is that King of kings, and Lord of lords.

From this evidence it is my conclusion that the Battle of Armageddon will take place at the end of the great Tribulation period and before the Millennial reign of Christ.

You may wish to study Daniel 9-11, Zachariah 12, Ezekiel 38, and Revelation 16, 17, and 19. I would encourage you to give as much attention to the Tribulation period as you can. The Tribulation period is literal; the

Anti-Christ is literal, the Beast is literal, the land of Palestine is literal, the kings of the north, south, and east are literal, the war is literal, and the Lord's second coming is literal. Read the Word of God as a literal Book, giving due consideration to Biblical symbolism, and you will remain on the right track, whether you study Bible prophecy, or any other doctrine. Thank you for your question.

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"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon" (Rev. 16:13, 14, 16).

What is said in these verses will take place near the end of the great tribulation period. The Beast of Revelation 13:11 and the false prophet will cause the armies of the whole world to gather against Jerusalem. These armies will over run Jerusalem and two-thirds of the Jews in the land will be killed (Zech. 13:8, 9). There will be no Jews left in the city of Jerusalem (Zech. 14:2). It is then the Lord will come to deliver His people, "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of the battle" (Zech. 14:3). In Revelation 16:16 we are told this battle is to take place at a place called Armageddon.

In Revelation 19:17-21 we are told what is to take place in this battle. If you note, in verse 20 it is said, "And the Beast was taken, and with him the false prophet... These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." It was after this we find in Revelation 20:1-3 Satan being bound and cast into the bottomless pit, there to remain for a thousand years. Also, in verse 6 we find that those who have a part in the first resurrection shall reign with Christ a thousand years. Verse 5 tells us that the rest of the dead, the unsaved, shall not live again until the thousand years were finished."

A study of these passages as well as many other passages show that this battle is to take place at the close of the great tribulation period, the Beast and the false prophet are taken in this battle and cast into the lake of fire. This will take place just before the beginning of the Millennium, the thousand year reign of Christ.

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Revelation 16:16: "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."

I would urge you to also read Revelation 19:11-21. This tells much about the events of the battle of Armageddon. Surely we can see that it will be a time when God's judgment will be poured out upon this earth. What a terrible day that will be for the enemies of God.

I believe without a doubt that this battle will take place at the end of the tribulation period and not at the end of the millennium. I know there will be a great battle at the end of the millennium, but it is not the battle of Armageddon. We find in our text that the armies are being gathered together for the battle of Armageddon. Surely they are not being gathered a thousand years ahead of time. If you read the book of Revelation as it describes the on moving tribulation, I believe it becomes evident that the battle of Armageddon is the end of the tribulation period. In Revelation chapter twenty we begin to read about Satan being bound for a period of 1,000 years. In fact, in Revelation 20:1-7 we see the phrase 1,000 years mentioned 6 times. We know from this that the millennium is just now beginning to take place. I am convinced that the Battle of Armageddon has already taken place in Revelation chapter 19. The flow of things certainly teaches that this is the Battle of Armageddon. Right after this battle we see the beginning of the millennium. At the end of the millennium there will be another battle, however, this is not the battle of Armageddon. I believe the Bible teaches the Battle of Armageddon will be at the end of the Tribulation period, not at the end of the millennium. May God bless you all.

WOMAN'S

(Continued from Page 3)

of his introduction of her to the saints strangely suggests the idea. The word "commend" demands our attention, that is the word that Paul uses. Said he, "I commend unto you Phebe." That word in the Greek is "sushistein," meaning "to make to stand, set, place." It simply means to place together, to recommend to favorable attention. But Paul did not recommend her in the sense of the word used in Acts 14:26 and 15:27 where the word in the Greek is "paradidomi," meaning "given

over, delivered up, committed," as when the church of Antioch committed Paul and Barnabas to the grace of God. So Paul, in the 16th chapter of Romans simply introduces Phebe to the saints in Rome with favor as a trustworthy servant, having shown her faith by her works. To say that Phebe was elected by her church and sent to Rome on official church business is gratuitous and far-fetched. Now, in what capacity had she served? I believe we can arrive at a reasonable and logical answer. She no doubt worked among the widows who were widows indeed, as is brought out in I Timothy 5. Now, in conclusion, let me add that woman must always occupy a subordinate position to that of a man.

GOD'S COMMAND

(Continued from Page 1)

comes a deadly snare.

We are entering into one of the two most tradition laden times of the year. Are you willing to examine traditions by the Word of God and lay aside that which is not found in the Word? Are you willing to examine the Christmas celebration as to its origin and ingredients by the truth of God's Word and the facts of history and give up all that is not based on God's Word? Are you more concerned with tradition, family and society than with the Word of God? Get all the reference material you can find. The local library is full of it. See if the celebration of Christmas is based on the traditions of men or on the commandments of God. Are you a follower of Christ, or a follower of men's traditions? Let us consider.

What does God say of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ? He was born of a virgin. This was prophesied of old: "...Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). This was literally fulfilled as recorded in Matthew 1:18-25. That Jesus be born of a virgin is an absolute necessity for our redemption. The Bible plainly declares that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). This being true, every one born in the human family by natural means is condemned because of sin. There could not be a suitable saviour among the children of men. But Jesus, the virgin born, sinless Son of God (I Peter 2:22) provides the forgiveness of sins through His shed blood.

Jesus is God in the flesh (I Timothy 3:16) This too is prophesied in the Old Testament: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). The name "The mighty God," (El Gibor), is only used when speaking of Jehovah. Jesus is the great "I Am" of Israel. The Jews knew exactly what Jesus meant when He said, "...Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). They took up stones to kill Him for blasphemy because He was claiming to be God.

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The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Explain Isa. 52:15, especially "sprinkle." Could this be used to justify sprinkling for baptism?

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here to prove that.

There is no doubt that Isaiah is talking of Christ. Speaking of His suffering and exaltation. One is equally as great as the other. Many were astonished with His suffering and humiliation, many also shall be astonished at His exaltation and glory, not Jews only, but from all nations. Millions will be startled as they bow the knee and confess to the glory and greatness of Jesus Christ. The realization that Jesus is truly King of kings and Lord of lords will splash upon them like icy cold water, awakening them to the tragedy of a wasted life and the reality of an eternity of destruction! He will truly "sprinkle" many nations with this truth. The mouths of their kings shall be shut in amazement.

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I have read the Bible for near forty years, not only reading it, but studying it and to the best of my ability trying to rightly divide it to get the full truth of its teaching. I have read many books on baptism both pro and con, but having a clear teaching on baptism from the Word of God, they didn't change my mind or convictions. I read the text offered me to answer over and again, but this in no way justifies sprinkling for baptism.

Baptism is a symbolic act showing the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ being acted out by the believer. I Peter 3:21 says, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Right now I'm looking at a picture of my wife; it looks just like her, but it is not her; she is at home and I'm in my study at church. Even though it is not her, it is a like figure of her.

Now beloved, baptism does not save you, but the like figure, the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ saves you who believe. Sprinkling could by no means do this. Romans 6:3 says, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death." Verse 4 says, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of

life." Verse 5 says, "For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." A baptism of this sort, Bible baptism, is of value; sprinkling has no value. It does not tell the world what you believe when you receive it, but Bible baptism says, I believe that Jesus died, was buried, and arose again; and conquered both death, hell, and the grave for His elect people, those who will believe. Sprinkling says nothing but rather mocks Bible baptism. Have you been Scripturally baptized into a Scriptural New Testament Baptist church following our Lord in true Baptism?

GOD'S COMMAND

(Continued from Page 4)

self with God (John 8:59,10:31).

Jesus is the only Saviour (I Tim. 2:5; Acts 4:12). As the virgin born Son of God, He gave His life a ransom to save His people from their sins. He demonstrated that by rising from the dead. This is something we celebrate every first day of the week.

Where is the divine injunction to celebrate mass for the birth of Christ? Or to celebrate mass at all? Where is the date of December 25th given in the Word? Search the Scriptures, tell me if you can. If not from God's Word, then from where? Funk & Wagnall's Standard Reference Encyclopedia, Volume 6, pages 2117 and 2118 read in part as follows: "The origin of the festival is unknown. Scholars believe that it is derived in part from the pre-Christian rites of Germanic and Celtic tribesmen held in celebration of the winter solstice; Christmas festivals, ...include heathen customs such as holly, mistletoe, Yule logs, and wassail bowls." This is just one reference. There is ample proof available to all who want to know the truth as to the origin of the Christmas celebration. It does not originate in God's Word.

What of the ingredients of Christmas? Its name comes from Christ's Mass, to which we have already alluded. Santa Claus is a conglomeration of characters from different customs. Two of those characters are the Celtic King of Mischief and Saint Nicholas, a Catholic saint of children. He is given many of the attributes of God, such as omniscience and omnipresence. In fact, he probably is a pretty good description of most people's view of God, who dispenses His favors based on whether we're good or bad: Salvation by works, not by grace.

Even the giving and receiving of gifts comes from pagan practices, and the self-interest extravagance of our day is far from

Christ-like. Giving should be an every day part of the Christian life, but to many the once-a-year extravagance is a salve for a guilty conscience that hasn't given all year.

As in the inn in Bethlehem, there is no room for Christ in the celebration of Xmas. X is an unknown quantity and Christ is unknown to most who celebrate Xmas. Christ never was in Christmas, so how can we put Him back. The proper admonition to you who would follow Jesus is, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate..." (II Cor. 6:17).

Consider what I say, and the Lord give you understanding in all things (II Tim. 2:7).

SPIRIT

(Continued from Page 1)

of the week. A day to relax, play golf, go boating, or visit some relatives. Many like to sound self righteous and say Sunday is for the family. This is true only in that the family should all be in church together. The very least we should do on Sunday is be in attendance at a true church of Christ. If you are not in the services of a true Baptist church every Sunday, then you are violating a very important part of God's Word. I do not care what your excuse is. More important than that, God does not care what your excuse is. Things such as "I live too far away", or "I have to work", will not be accepted by God, I guarantee you that.

I honestly believe there are few, if any, of us who give as much of ourselves on the Lord's Day as we should. It would not hurt us to give this whole day to God. In fact, it would be one of the best things we could do for our spiritual condition. I guess that is enough on that subject, since that is not what this article is about. In this article I want to deal with the way in which people come to church. We want to examine the "spirit" many come to church in, and then examine the "spirit" that all of us should come to church in.

Let us first notice the spirit in which many people come to church. First, many come to church in the spirit of fatigue. Nothing is more disheartening to the preacher than to be preaching his heart out and look back to see someone sleeping. I don't buy the excuse that you can't help it. Many people stay out or stay up to all hours of the night on Saturday. They get very little sleep and have trouble getting up for church on Sunday. When they get to church they are so tired that they get very little out of the services. They are too tired to participate in the singing, praying and fellowship, much less the preaching. They are thinking only of that nap that awaits them in the afternoon. What a shame! We make our children go to bed early for school so they will be alert and attentive and get the most out of it. Then we do not properly prepare ourselves for services on Sunday. Get your rest, Saturday night so you can give your best to God on Sunday.

Secondly, many come to church in the spirit of gossip. We seem to have a lot of Athenians in our churches. Their goal is to "hear or tell some new thing." It often times makes no

difference if this thing is true or not. Churches can be a major place of gossip and talebearing. If that is what you come to church for, then you should probably stay home until you get right with God. There is much trouble in the church due to gossip at church services. What a terrible thought to know that you brought trouble to one of the Lord's churches by gossiping. I know this, you cannot serve God and gossip at the same time. Leave your talk about others at home unless it is something good. If you have nothing good to say, then say nothing.

Thirdly, many come to church in the spirit of fault-finding. It is amazing how hard it is to find fault with ourselves or our loved ones, and yet how easy it is to find fault with others. The fault may be with the way someone dresses. It may be with the Sunday School teachers. It may be with the songleader. It may be with the piano player. It may be with the way some children are behaving. It may be criticizing the way a parent is taking care of his or her children. It may be that someone did not speak to you. It does not matter that you did not speak to them either. It is all their fault. Often fault is found with the preacher. If you look hard enough, you can find fault with your preacher. He might not use proper English, or his subjects and predicates may not match. Go to enjoy God's Word and God's people, don't go to find fault with others.

Fourthly, many go to church in the spirit of hurry. They don't seem to want to hurry and get there, but they are sure in a hurry to get out. They are the last ones to get there and the first ones to leave. All they can think about while the preacher is preaching is, when is he going to quit. Beloved, you cannot rush church and get anything out of it. I sometimes see this in the songleaders and the song services. We might cut down on the number of songs we sing or else we might sing short songs and not many verses. Don't set this type of tempo for the services. I believe the less we rush church the more we will get out of it. Don't go in the spirit of hurry.

Fifthly, many go to church in the spirit of physical hunger. I wish they would come to church hungry for God's Word. Rather than trying to get something out of the message being preached, they are wondering about what's for dinner. I know a lot of people go to church Sunday morning without eating. I am not sure that this is a good idea. I know it isn't if hunger keeps you from paying proper attention. We are told to feed our children breakfast before sending them to school because it makes them more attentive, and they become better students. I believe the same thing applies to us going to church. If hunger distracts you, then eat before going to church.

Sixthly, many go to church in the spirit of boredom. How dare we sit in God's house bored! This boredom is the result of a week in which God has been left out of our lives. You cannot expect to ignore God all week and then be filled with enthusiasm on Sun-

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SPIRIT

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day. There is nothing much more discouraging to the preacher than to look back and see a bunch of bored faces. There are many ways in which this boredom shines through. People who will not look at the preacher are showing signs of boredom. People who fall asleep, people who play with their children or other peoples children, people who spend a lot of time looking around, people who read their Bibles or song books, people who write notes, people who stare off into the distance; are all examples of people coming to church in the spirit of boredom. I guarantee you this: if you come to church bored, you will probably leave bored, and it won't be the preacher's fault. I may be a bit biased, but I am convinced that most poor sermons are more the fault of the hearers than of the preachers. No preacher can preach to a bunch of bored listeners. Help your preacher out with your enthusiasm.

Seventhly, many people go to church in the spirit of anger. You cannot get anything out of church if you go there angry. You should be careful in the home that there is harmony and love shown before you go to church. Husbands and wives should not fight on Sunday mornings. (or any other time). Parents and children should not fight on Sunday mornings or any time there is to be a church service. Sometimes you go to church mad at someone in the church. God will not reward this anger. This anger will not hurt those you are mad at, but it will rob you of a blessing. If you cannot put anger aside in God's House then you are not much of a Christian; or at least you are not showing a Christian attitude. Prayer for those you are angry at will help relieve this anger. Don't go to church angry.

Eightly, many people go to church in the spirit of worldliness. All of us have been in church and not been able to get the things of the world off our minds. This is often evidence of being too involved in the world. Maybe it is our job. Many people bring their work to church with them. Leave your work at work. Don't worry about work when you are in God's house. Sometimes it might be athletics or sports. Maybe it is just a game you want to see on TV. Maybe it is hunting and the big Buck you are going to kill. Leave these thoughts out of God's house. Sometimes it may be company that we have coming, and the women are thinking of all the work they need to get done. Beloved, our souls are more important than anything this world has to offer. We are not doing our souls any good if we come to church in the spirit of worldliness.

Ninthly, many people go to church in the spirit of contentment. They are like the church at Laodicea; they think they have need of nothing. They are content with their present spiritual condition and do not go to church looking to be helped or blessed. They rather go to judge and condemn others. Let us always real-

ize that we need church far more than church needs us. Let us not go satisfied, but always looking for that which will help us spiritually.

Tenthly, many people go to church in the spirit of obligation. How dare we insult the grace and goodness of God by only going to church from a feeling of obligation. There is no way you can get the benefit from church you could by going simply because you feel obligated. This attitude has your body in church, but not your soul. We ought to be thrilled when it comes time to go to church. We should be able to say with the Psalmist; "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD." This should always be our attitude towards coming to church. You are obligated to be in church, but God forbid you come in the spirit of obligation.

Eleventhly and lastly, many people go to church in the spirit of conceit and pride. They do not go to church to help themselves but to put on a show. They want others to see their nice clothes and their fancy cars. They want to go to a big church because it is beneath their dignity to be in a small church. They are big shots and they must have a big shot church. Their goal at church is to look better than other people there. They go with the attitude that others need them rather than them needing others. When will we mortals learn that we are all worthless? When will we put away our foolish pride and have the humility which the Bible demands? Please don't go to church feeling proud and trying to show off. You will only offend others and God.

The second thing we want to look at in this article is "the spirit people should go to church in." I want you to understand that I am speaking of Landmark, Sovereign Grace, Missionary Baptist Churches. I personally don't care about the spirit at the other "synagogues of Satan." I am concerned with the attitude of the Grace Baptist Church of Gladwin Michigan, and churches of like faith. Our services need some things. I believe these things can be accomplished by going to church in the proper spirit. Let us notice what this proper spirit is.

The first thing I mention is that we should go to church in the spirit of friendliness. The Bible tells us that if we are going to have friends we must first show ourselves friendly. The Bible also tells us to "Be ye kind one to another." If you cannot do this, then you are not much of a Christian. Not everybody can preach, teach, or sing; but everybody can be kind and friendly. Let us be sure that our churches are known as friendly churches. We must not just be friendly to visitors, but we should also be friendly to each other. Most of our churches are small and I believe we should make an effort to shake hands or speak to every member. We need to let each other know that we care for each other. May our churches be known as the friendliest churches around.

The second thing I mention is that we should go to church in the spirit of humility. How we ought to realize that we are going into God's house. We are not just entering a building, but when we assemble together it becomes the house of God. Re-

House of God. Realize that God loves His church. How dare we come into the church filled with pride? It should humble us to approach God through His church. We should come realizing we do not deserve to be there. How gracious God has been to us in making us members of a true church of Christ! How we should come to church thanking Him for this privilege! No one, from the preacher to the youngest member, should ever come to church with any pride at all.

The third thing I mention is that we should all go to church in the spirit of anticipation. We should be looking forward to the services. No one should have to remind us that it is church day or time. We should go to church anticipating a blessing from God. We know that our God is able to bless. We know that our God is willing and anxious to bless; therefore, if we are not blessed then we can blame no one but ourselves. We should go to church with the same anticipation we go to a ball game that our children are playing in. We go with enthusiasm and anticipation that they might do something good. I hate seeing people come into church in a down spirit. It is doubtful that they will get much from the services. Let us always go to church in the spirit of anticipation of the good things that God may do for us while we are there.

The fourth thing I mention is that we should go to church in the spirit of participation. I believe it is a sin not to participate in church service activities. Does not the Bible teach us that if we know to do good and do it not it is sin unto us. We all know we ought to participate in church services. I first mention singing. It is the obligation of every member to join in the congregational singing. I believe you rob yourself of a blessing if you do not sing in the services! Songleaders do not like to look out and see people not participating in this part of the services. The Bible instructs us to make both a joyful and loud noise unto the Lord. The Bible nowhere says it has to be a pretty noise. The main reason people do not sing is pride. We have already mentioned that we should not come to church except in the spirit of humility. Don't let your pride get in the way of your responsibility. Don't worry about how you sound to others, worry about how God hears you. If you felt the songs as you should your pride would vanish and you would sing to the glory of God. The only other reason I can think of why people do not sing is pure laziness. It must take too much energy for them to sing. There are other areas in which we should be sure and participate. The area of fellowship is important. Don't be a wall flower, but be a participant and join in the pre- and post-service fellowship. We should also participate in the prayer service. As one is leading in prayer, may we lift our hearts up to God also. I mention one of the most important avenues of participation, that is the avenue of listening. Preachers and churches need some good listeners. These people are an inspiration to the preacher. How encouraging to see people in the congregation who you know are enjoying the services. Your listening will have the most to do with what you get out of church. Do not allow yourself to be distracted.

Concentrate on participating in the form of paying attention to what is being preached.

The fifth thing I mention is that we should go to church in the spirit of prayer. This spirit should be seen in three areas. First, we should pray before coming to church. There should be a period of time set aside for prayer every Sunday and Wednesday before services. We should not waste our time reading the paper or watching TV. We should be praying for the preacher, that God will give him the message and the spirit in which to preach the message. Pray for any lost people who might be there that God might save them. Pray for any visitors that might attend. Pray for ourselves that God will bless and use us in the services. Pray that we will have the proper spirit for God's house. Secondly, there should be a spirit of prayer during the services. Again the same thoughts should be in our prayers as before mentioned. During the services there are times when we can be more specific with God. Thirdly, there should be prayer after the services. We should pray that God will take the message that has been preached and use it to the good of all present, and in particular to the glory of God. Pray that the message will be applied and used by the hearers.

The sixth thing I mention is that we should go to church in the spirit of hope. I am afraid that we have lost our faith. Without faith there is little if any hope left. It seems to me like we go to church expecting nothing to happen. We should go in the spirit of hope, hoping to see souls saved, heretics coming to a knowledge of the truth, saved people revived and uplifted, and especially seeing God's name glorified. Too many times as preachers, we go to church just hoping everyone or certain ones are there, rather than hoping to see great things from God.

The seventh thing I mention is that we should go to church in the spirit of learning. Too many of us seem to think we already know it all. It seems to me that the more I study and learn about the Bible, the less I know. Forum questions have a way of keeping you humble when it comes to knowledge. We need to go seeking to learn more about ourselves. Preaching can often work like a mirror that reflects one's own ignorance and depravity. We need to go seeking to learn more about the truths we believe. We can never learn it all. We need to go seeking to learn more about Christ. The more we learn about Christ, the more we will love and respect Him and His law.

The eighth thing I mention is that we should go to church in the spirit of worship. I am afraid that in many of our church services we are failing to truly worship God. We are there for that main purpose. We need to enter the building with the thought in mind that we are here to worship God. We need to make concerted efforts to honor His name in all parts of our services. To worship means to honor and revere. Surely Christ deserves this in His own house. May we go in the spirit of worship.

The ninth thing I mention is that we should go to church in the spirit of joy, appreciation, and giving. I put all three of these points together because I

think they are inseparably related. We should come to church with joy because it is indeed a great honor to enter into the door of a true church of Christ. We certainly should come appreciating the opportunity God has given us to serve Him in and through a true church. This joy and appreciation should flow over into the offering box. "God loveth a cheerful giver." The people who talk about how much they love and appreciate the church and yet do not tithe to the church are just deceiving themselves. We should count it a great honor to give to the support of the Lord's work. If you come to church angry because you have to give an offering, I assure you, you will not receive a blessing.

The tenth thing I mention is that we should go to church in the spirit of love. This would solve all the problems in our churches. It would rid us of all the backbiting and jealousy. There seems to be so little love amongst God's people even in true churches. What a great common bond there should be in our churches! How our love for one another should overflow! We need a love for Christ that burns in our bosoms. Why has our loved waxed cold? What has God done that would cause our love to diminish? We should love Christ more every day as we get closer and closer to eternity. We know that this is the greatest commandment. We know that our obedience to other commands depends much on the degree of our love for Christ. May God help us in that, when we come to church we come in the spirit of love, love for Christ, love for the church as His church, love for the truths we have been taught, and love for each and every member. Oh, how this will improve our services.

Well I have mentioned the type of spirit many go to church in, and the type that we should go to church in. I know that all of them will not fit us at one time. I know that this is a very important subject. The very existence of our churches somewhat depend on the spirit in which we go to church. May the Holy Spirit and our relationship with Him aid in improving the spirit in which we attend church services. May this begin with the very next service. May God add His blessings, and He will, as our spirit improves on "The Lord's Day." May God bless you all.

BEHOLD

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slices off a man's ear. Our Lord reaches out and touches the severed ear and restores it without stitch, scab or scar.

Yet, this same Jesus knocks! Now all of this must be kept before us when we read this text. We cannot lose sight of who this One is. He is the mighty God. Before Him all men must stand for judgment. "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen;..." (Rev. 1:18).

But He is standing at the door as He knocks. Consider the difference between sitting and

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STUDIES IN SECOND PETER 1:12-21

by C.T. Everman

Verse 12. "Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth."

In the first part of this chapter we are told how God has made provision for the Christian's spiritual growth. As His children, we have His nature, therefore we should grow to be like Him. In the remainder of the chapter we are shown the importance of knowing the Word of God and depending solely upon it. If a church is to remain true to God and be able to detect false teachers who have "crept in unawares" (Jude 4) they must know the Word and stand firm upon it. The Christian who knows what he believes and why he believes it will seldom, if ever, be led astray by false teachers. Peter, as well as the other writers of the New Testament have left the written Word as inspired by the Holy Spirit for us in this age to study and heed. If the true churches of our day are to stand they must stand upon the true foundation, the Lord Jesus Christ. False teachers are attempting to destroy that foundation by denying the atonement, the deity of Christ, His second coming and all that relate to Him. Yes, we have men in Baptist pulpits and Baptist schools who deny that Christ is the eternal Son of God. It is these whom Peter is warning us against. He states in 2:1 that they shall come among us, and we can look around and see that they have come in ever-increasing numbers. A lack of knowledge of the Word of God leads to a lack of spiritual growth and as a result many Christians, even whole churches have been led astray. "And many shall follow their pernicious ways..." (II Pet. 2:2).

"Wherefore I will not be negligent..." that is in view of the importance of these things, "I will not fail to continue to remind you of these things, your need for spiritual growth." Although they had learned "these things" yet in order to "be established in the present truth" they need to be reminded. How true this is. We may learn a truth, but unless we are constantly reminded of the truth we are apt to let it slip. This is the reason pastors and teachers in the churches should, instead of trying to come up with something new, keep telling the "Old, old story of Jesus and His love."

Verse 13, "Yes, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance;"

Peter had no thought of retirement from the Lord's service, "As long as I live in this tabernacle (tent)". He was referring to his body as the tabernacle or tent, a temporary dwelling, while here on earth. Peter is saying, "as long as I live I will continue to stir you up, to keep reminding you of these things."

Verse 14, 15. "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease

to have these things always in remembrance." Peter was one person who knew he would live to be an old man and he knew how he would die, for the Lord had told him. "...when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not" (John 21:18). Someone has suggested that this could have been the reason that Peter could sleep so soundly in prison the night before he was to be put to death, knowing they could not kill him at that time (Acts 12:7). Peter, at the time of this writing was an old man and he knew his time on earth was now coming to a close. "I must put off this my tabernacle." Christ had told Peter, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:23). Peter had a special commission from the Lord and he was faithfully carrying it out.

"Moreover... after my decease." Even after his departure from this life, Christians have had this letter to help them keep in mind "these things." Note the phrase "after my decease," the Greek word for decease means "a departure," "an exodus". It means "after my journey out, my exit from this life." Peter knew that he would not cease to be, neither did he expect his soul to be in the grave as those who claim to believe in "soul sleep." He is speaking of going on a journey out of this world. He is departing this world going to another abode. This idea runs through his discourse as he looks forward to his death. He has spoken of taking down the tabernacle or tent, the temporary abode of his soul, that he, the soul might depart to another place. He speaks of an exit from this life as a journey to another place. As the children of Israel made their exodus from Egypt, Peter speaks of his death as an exodus. Paul spoke of his departure in the same way, "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (II Cor. 5:8). No, there is no such thing as "soul-sleep" taught in the Scripture.

Verses 16, 17, 18. "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount."

Peter now takes us back to one of the most important events in his life, an event that confirmed his faith in Christ and made clear many things of which he had been confused. This event had taken place on the Mount of Transfiguration as recorded in Matthew 17, Mark 9:2-8, and Luke 9:28-36. Peter is telling what he saw and heard at this time. This is not a fable, not

something made up by man. This was something Peter, James, and John knew to be true, they were eyewitnesses of the event. There on the mount they saw Jesus Christ, "...transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light" (Matt. 17:2). Peter tells us that this event was a demonstration of the "power and coming" or the "powerful coming" of our Lord Jesus Christ. They not only saw Christ's glory, but also heard the Father's voice from heaven saying, "...this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him" (Matt. 17:5).

By telling what he saw and heard, Peter is giving testimony as an eyewitness (1) that Christ is the Son of God, (2) that He will return in great power. As a witness he knew this to be true both by what he saw as well as hearing the voice of God the Father from heaven. The false teachers of whom Peter is warning us deny both of these truths. As these are foundation truths of Christianity, it is very important that we keep them in mind. The test for any man: "What do you believe concerning Jesus Christ, is He God or Man?" If he denies the deity of Christ he is a false teacher even though he may be the pastor of a large Baptist church. The event on the mount also covers the mission of Christ here on earth. What did He come to do? Luke 9:31 tells us that Christ, with Moses and Elijah, "...appeared in glory, and spake of his decease (exodus) which he would accomplish at Jerusalem." His death was not a martyr's death, but it accomplished something. That something was the redemption of His people. The angel told Joseph, "...thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). This is what He did on the cross.

Verse 19. "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:"

"We have also a more sure word" does not mean that the Word is more certain than what Peter, James and John saw and heard on the mount. What they saw and heard was real and true and the record given in the Scripture is dependable. What they saw was a demonstration of that which was prophesied by the prophets in the Old Testament and this prophecy only adds to or confirms Peter's testimony. The events on the mountain confirms the promises made by the prophets. The false teachers will deny and make light of the promise of Christ's coming, but the Word of God is sure. In the event of the transfiguration the promise of the coming kingdom was reaffirmed by Moses, Elijah, the Son of God, and the Father. We also have the Holy Spirit testifying to this truth in that He inspired the writers to record the event.

We need to note the "sure word" meaning God's Word can be depended upon to mean exactly what it says. There are several passages of Scripture which tell us of the "sure word." "...the testimony of the Lord is

sure..." (Psa. 19:7). "Thy testimonies are very sure" (Psa. 93:5). "All his commands are sure" (Psa. 111:7). "Therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way" (Psa. 119:128). His sure Word is "light that shineth in a dark place." The word used for "dark" means murky, or dismal. From this we get the picture of a dark cellar or a dark and dismal swamp. This is the picture of the present world. Some one has said, "Human history began in a beautiful garden but that garden today is a murky swamp." This is also a picture of the condition of the heart. But the "sure Word" is a light shining in that "dark place" that dismal swamp. It is that light shining into the world that reveals all the evil and corruption in the world. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa. 119:105). As children of God, we need to study the Word, we need to heed the Word. We need to live by its instructions. It is only by a knowledge of the Word that we can detect false doctrine when presented by false teachers.

In the phrase "until the day dawn", refers to the coming of the Son of God. The "day star" is Jesus Christ. To the Christian He is "...the bright and morning star" (Rev. 22:16). No matter how dismal things may appear, the promise of His coming shines bright in the hearts of the children of God. He is the "Son of righteousness" (Mal. 4:1, 2).

Verses 20, 21. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

These verses tell us that the Word is given by the Spirit of God. This passage is very important in that it states definitely that the Bible came to us by divine inspiration. It is not the work of men, not thought, and ideas of men, "but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The word "moved" means to be "carried along", as a sailing ship is carried by the wind. The Scripture is the Word of God, which means it was spoken by God; It is "God-breathed." The word "private" means "one's own" or "its own." The meaning is since all Scripture is inspired by the Spirit it must all fit together. There is no passage that contradicts another passage. There are no contradictions in the Word of God. Much false teaching is based on certain passages of Scripture that have been interpreted to mean something that flatly contradicts other passages. Peter is warning his readers that this is what these false teachers are doing. I also want to point out that the Scripture Peter refers to is the Old Testament, as most of the New Testament had not been written at this time. In chapter three he gave Paul's writings credit for being Scripture. There are many references and quotes from the Old Testament by the writers of the New Testament. It is very important for the Christian to read and study the Old Testament. I knew of one church that voted to not permit anyone to preach or teach from

the Old Testament. This was a sad mistake.

To review this chapter, Peter is writing to Christians, to those who "have obtained like precious faith" (v. 1), to those who are the "called" (v. 3). In this chapter we are told that at the new birth all that is needed for spiritual growth is given to the child of God. Then the characteristics are given that show spiritual growth. Proof of the deity of Christ and of His return are given, both by the events on the Mount of Transfiguration as well as the prophesy made by the prophets of the Old Testament. Also we are given assurance that the Scripture is the Word of God and not that of men. The Scripture is like a light shining in the world to reveal sin and error. It is by the Word that we can detect error when it comes our way. This chapter was written to prepare us for what we are told concerning false teachers in chapters two and three. That we must be on guard against those who creep in our churches and teach that which is contrary to the Word. It is only by a knowledge of the Word that we can escape the trap set by the apostate teachers. The most important thing we need to keep in mind is that the Word of God is the test for the teaching of any man regardless of who he is or what he claims to know. Does he teach the Word or is his teaching only "cunningly devised fables"?

Peter's messages in chapter one is "Be on guard." "Wake up, remember." How the Lord's churches need this warning today! It seems we have gone to sleep and while we have slept the false teachers have "...crept in unawares..." (Jude 4). Now that they are in, what are we to do about it? Jude tells us "...ye should earnestly contend for the faith..." (Jude 3). The apostle Paul wrote, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17).

To be continued...

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(Continued from Page 6)

standing. Standing signifies activity and movement. To sit is to rest. To stand indicates work is being done. There is an urgency in this posture. This will not go on for a long time. If there is not a quick response from within, He will pass on. And while He is standing there before the door about to turn and go away, He is doing two things -- knocking and speaking.

To knock means to strike something with a sharp blow. This is usually done with the knuckles of the fingers on a solid part of the door or house, when we wish to signal someone of our presence at their door. The people inside are busy or asleep or whatever. The knock is to awaken or to attract their attention.

He is also calling. "If any man hear my voice, and open the door..." There is in His voice authority and power and blessing. When John describes His voice in chapter one, he says "His voice was" (Continued on Page 8, Col. 1)

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as the sound of many waters." Yet, Christ said to John, "Fear not." Christ is both speaking and knocking at the door.

What is meant by the door?

The world is top-heavy with sermons preached upon a misunderstanding of the door of this text. Thousands of messages are preached upon this text every year. In most of these the text is not expounded but confounded. There is no exegesis, only dogma. Man follows man. Every generation builds upon the false foundation of those who have gone before. Ingrained false teaching is as hard to drive out of sermons, books, or minds as flies from the kitchen.

The most common meaning given to this text declares the door is the door to the heart of the unsaved sinner. This meaning is pressed upon the text, for it cannot be derived from it. In this view of the text, Christ is standing at the heart of the sinner. He wants to go into the sinner's heart to save and indwell him. So the Lord stands knocking very gently at the heart of the sinner, asking the sinner's permission to enter.

This is then expanded. It is not to be thought to be a specific sinner's heart. That would be too narrow. It is not any sinner's heart but it is rather every sinner who hears the gospel. Thus the sound of the gospel falling on the ears of sinners is transposed into the voice of Christ and transposed into His knocking at the door.

But wait!

Even this is too small. It is not just the heart of all the sinners who hear the gospel. No! It is the heart of all the sinners of all time. From one end of creation to the other. This heart is so big as to include all the men of all ages -- the total mass of humanity! In this view of things the zoom - in is out of the question. The wide-angle is insufficient. Only the all-encompassing fisheye is acceptable. Here enter Lenski, Barnes, Mathew Henry, Pulpit Commentary and hordes of other with nauseous repetition.

Think of that!

This all comprehensive door. Sinful, depraved, dead! One huge door to the mausoleum of the race. And marvel of all, Christ the Prince of Life knocks at this door! Such is considered to be great evangelistic preaching by the religious masses. It especially thrills the Arminian. He swims in this perverted idea like an amoeba in a drop of pond water.

And what is wrong with this?

Everything!

It is a horribly grotesque theology, rotting from the core out. Shall the Lord of Glory who owns the keys of death and Hades knock at the door of the house of death? Shall He who shall call the dead, small and great, to stand before Him, knock? Shall He who gives eternal life to whomsoever He will, merely invite sinners to open to Him? Shall He who alone can open the heart (Acts 16:14) only knock? I ask, shall He stand outside the door of this massive necropolis and expect the death-bound inmates (bound with a death a thousand times more fast than the bond of

physical death) to bestir themselves, flip open their coffins, and fumble with the rusty vault lock so as to let in the Prince of Life? Surely no one can fail to see how deformed is such a doctrine which tries to place Christ at the death-door of the lost race seeking a response where none can be given.

No matter what the meaning of the text, we reject instantly this June bug exegesis.

What then is the proper interpretation?

The first thing to be considered is the context. The Lord addresses these seven churches (ch. 1:11). He is depicted as walking among the lampstands. This indicates His headship over all of His churches. Note He does not speak of the church! He does not tell John to write to the church of Asia, or England, or America. This is both unbiblical and anti-biblical. To use such terms is but to bow to Catholicism, visible or invisible! So the context demands that we understand this passage in the light of the glory of Christ who is the light-giver of every true church or assembly.

Here are seven letters to as many churches (chs. 1-3). Each letter is a unit within itself. The Lord closes each letter with "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches..." (cf. 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). This means you cannot take verse twenty out of the middle of the letter to Laodicea and make it a little epistle all its own. This

verse pertains to Laodicea and not to Philadelphia, or Pergamos, although we readily admit it may be applicable to any church which has the same problems as Laodicea had. Nor should anyone get the notion that this warning was thrown in as a little evangelistic salt to prevent this epistle from becoming doctrinally rancid. This is a church message sent to a church about the condition of that church, and therefore it does not refer to the salvation of lost sinners. He is not calling and knocking at the door of the sinner's heart, but He is knocking on the door of the assembly.

Of the commentaries which I have consulted on this text, Trapp is best. He puts his finger on the pulse of it. While B.H. Carroll, Stevenson, and Seiss are worlds better than those mentioned above, they do not attain unto Trapp who says succinctly: "And open the door... By teachableness and obedience. This is not spoken of the first act of conversion... but of the consequences of it."

But why is the promise in the singular if this verse pertains to the whole assembly? Because there are always situations where the whole church is guilty of some departure from the truth, but the repentance is only partial (Rev. 2:16). This insures that those who do repent will be restored to full fellowship, even if the majority of the assembly does not.

In this text, the Lord of the churches is on the outside of this

assembly (never to be confused with church buildings which are churches only by metonymy) because of their spiritual lukewarmness. Other things have crept in, things which will snuff out the light of the Holy Spirit and write Ichabod upon the door. His knocking, speaking, and standing before the church warns them of the impending danger. A church cannot long remain a church with Christ on the outside!

BABIES FOR BUCKS

Syria's strangle hold siege soon reduced Samaria to cannibalism (II Kings 6). They were eating their own babies to survive! A gaunt, quivering, hollow-eyed wretch accosted the king, explaining how she and her companion had agreed to eat their babies and had cooked and eaten her baby the day before. Now the companion was reneging on the deal and refused to cook her baby for their dinner that day. The king could only turn away and retch.

People who live off their own offspring have sunk lower than animals and become sub-human. Yet some in our super-scientific society earn their bread by shedding the innocent blood of these little ones. In fact, we have made a veritable industry of exploiting the unborn.

Pregnancy is hardly a disease to be cured and Hippocrates must

wince every time one who has taken his oath to heal and not harm, picks up medical instruments to kill. Yet, there are slime-ball surgeons who crush and suck these babies, piece by bloody piece, from their mother's body for a buck -- and will answer to the God who gave these little ones the life they snuff out. In some areas, more babies are slaughtered in abortion mills than are allowed to be born!

Now, innovative greed has discovered a profitable use for these baby parts that were formerly burned in hospital incinerators. They are bought and sold like any other commodity -- as medical specimens, for baby brain tissue to use in treating Alzheimer's Disease, for the placenta used in making perfumes and lotions, etc. The calloused Nazi carrion mongers of Auschwitz -- who supposedly collected the gold teeth of their crematory victims made soap from their fat, mats from their hair, and lampshades from their skin -- had little on these modern money-hungry medicos who slither on their belly for a dirty dollar.

"But, these children are unwanted and would be a burden to society!" we are told. Not so. Millions seeking to adopt babies in Canada, the United States and Europe cannot find babies to adopt. This is especially true of white infants. The diminishing number has been blamed on the accessibility of legalized abor-

(Continued on Page 10, Col. 1)

SOMEONE TO AVOID - THE JESUITS

The Jesuit order sprang up shortly after the reformation began in Europe in the 16th century. It was founded by Ignatius Loyola, who became its general. Jesuit priests actually belong to the Pope's army, whose stated purpose is to overturn the Protestant reformation. The following is the oath given to a Jesuit of a minor rank when he is to be elevated to a position of command.

Superior speaks: My son, heretofore you have been taught to act the dissembler among the Roman Catholics, to be a Roman Catholic, and to be a spy even among your own brethren; to believe no man, to trust no man. Among the Reformers to be a reformer; among the Huguenots (French Protestants) to be a Huguenot; among the Calvinists, to be a Calvinist; among the Protestants (those who protest and disagree with the Roman Catholic institution) generally to be a Protestant; and obtaining their confidence to seek even to preach from their pulpits and to denounce with all the vehemence in your nature our holy religion and the Pope; and even to descend so low as to become a Jew among the Jews, that you might be enabled to gather together all information for the benefit of your order as a faithful soldier of the Pope. You have been taught to insidiously plant the seeds of jealousy and hatred between States that were at peace, and incite them to deeds of blood, revolutions and civil wars in communities, provinces, and countries that were independent and prosperous, cultivating the arts and the sciences and enjoying the blessings of peace. To take sides with the combatants and to act secretly in concert with your

brother Jesuit who might be engaged on the other side but openly opposed to that which you might be connected; only that the church might be the gainer in the end in the conditions fixed in the treaties for peace, and the end justifies the means. You have been taught your duty as a spy, to gather all statistics, facts and information in your power from every source; to ingratiate yourself into the confidence of the family circle of Protestants and heretics of every class and character, as well as that of the merchant, the banker, the lawyer, among the schools and universities, in Parliaments and legislatures and the judiciaries and councils of State and to 'be all things to all men' for the Pope's sake whose servants we are unto death. You have received all your instructions heretofore as a novice, a neophyte, and have served as a coadjutor, confessor and priest, but you have not been invested with all that is necessary to command in the army of Loyola in the service of the Pope. You must serve the proper time as the instrument and executioner as directed by your superiors; for none can command here who has not consecrated his labors with the blood of the heretic; for 'without the shedding of blood no man can be saved.'

Therefore, to fit yourself for your work and make your own salvation sure, you will in addition to your former oath of obedience, to your order, and allegiance to the Pope, repeat after me. I, _____, now in the presence of Almighty God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Blessed Michael the Archangel, the Blessed John the Baptist, the Holy Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, and all the Saints and Sa-

cred hosts of heaven, promise and declare that I will when opportunity presents, make and wage relentless war, secretly or openly, against all heretics, Protestants and liberals as I am directed to do. To extirpate and exterminate them from the face of the earth; and that I will neither spare age nor sex and that I will hang, burn, waste, boil, flay, strangle and bury alive these infamous heretics, rip up the stomach and wombs of their women and crush their infants' heads against the walls, in order to annihilate forever their extricable race. That when the same cannot be done openly, I will secretly use the poisonous cup, the strangulating cord, the steel of the poniard or the leaden bullet, regardless of the honor, rank, dignity, or authority of the person or persons, whatever may be their condition in life, either public or private, as I at any time may be directed so to do by any agent of the Pope or Superior of the Brotherhood of the holy faith of the Society of Jesus.

This oath is taken in the name of Almighty God by Roman Catholics who are so deceived they believe they are performing their 'Christian duty' by killing 'heretics.' The Jesuit order is so corrupt and ungodly that any member who faithfully carries out his orders from the Pope quickly assures his own doom in hell rather than making his salvation sure.

In 1877 the Pope by special letter constituted the "Moral Theology of Liguori" to be the textbook of all the theological schools of Catholicism. The book is described as advocating or defending every possible crime. A short article in the 1877 Sower states that at that time the civilized world was lying at the feet

of the Jesuits. "England and America, in the fatal security of constitutional institutions, are heedless of the growing pest; Italy and France are paralyzed by its poison... Meanwhile the order of Loyola, like a football, has been kicked, cuffed, stamped upon by all known people, from Europe to the New World, from the New World to China and Japan, but it only springs and bounds, and takes no harm."

Indeed, strong evidence supports the claim that President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated by order of the Jesuits. We will soon release a book by Brig-General Thomas M. Harris, who was on the Military Commission for the trial of Lincoln's assassination conspirators, published in 1897 and suppressed. The book is titled, "Rome's Responsibility for the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln."

On the same Military Commission was Major General Lewis Wallace, who later wrote the immortal "Ben Hur." These are listed in the Thursday, May 11, 1865, New York Times.

Our intent in publishing this is not to incite young people to hate Roman Catholics but rather to make them aware of the deceptiveness of this part of the Roman Catholic institution, which is not really a church at all. The devil has his counterfeit for Christianity. Young people need to be aware that not everything with the name "Christian" or "church" is of Christ. The Word of God warns us that many will come as wolves in sheep's clothing, and the devil walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Know your enemy! Be prepared! (II Peter 2).

(copied from Fall 1989 issue of Pilgrim Pathway)

STUDIES IN ACTS

"Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen" (Acts 6:9). The apostles, up to this point, had thrown back every force Satan had thrown against them. They had continued to move forward on every front. The force thrown at Stephen now is in the form of a debate. Stephen, in fact, had taken on an entire synagogue -- a synagogue made up of a variety of persons.

The Jews were scattered into all parts of the world, and in every part there was usually a synagogue. There, in fact, were many synagogues in Jerusalem. Lightfoot thinks that there were 480 synagogues in Jerusalem. We cannot be positive, but it appears that the Libertines who debated with Stephen were from a country called Libertia -- a country in Africa. The Alexandrians were from Alexandria in Egypt. This city was founded by Alexander the Great. It was peopled by colonies of Greeks and Jews. It was in this city that the famous version of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint, was made. It was also called the Alexandrian version of the Old Testament. Cilicia was a province of Asia Minor. The capitol of Cilicia was Tarsus, the native home of the apostle Paul. Paul, in fact, probably belonged to the Synagogue there and was one of those who debated with Stephen.

The Scripture before us also speaks of those of Asia as disputing with Stephen. This debate, no doubt, related to whether or not Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. Stephen, because of God the Spirit's speaking through him, won the debate with no problem. They, in fact, "were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake." Stephen made them look like fools, which, of course, caused them to use physical force against him. They, because they could not overcome him with words, would know that they were greater than he physically. This was why they felt they had won the fight.

"Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God" (Acts 6:11). The word "suborn" in law means to procure a person to take such false oath as constitutes perjury. It means that they induced them to declare that which was false. These false accusers, in fact, simply twisted what Stephen said so that he appeared to say something which he did not say. This is the manner in which all heretics operate.

The false accusers charged Stephen with falsely attacking both Moses and God, the two personalities that ranked the highest in the Jews' thoughts and respect. They considered the laws of Moses to be unchangeable because God gave them to him. They refused to even consider that there was a greater lawgiver than Moses, the Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

The Jews were in the dark relative to the fact that the temple, and its pieces of furniture were only types of things to come.

They were but shadows of a later substance -- that substance which cast the shadows was none other than Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Jesus Christ, in fact, was the brazen altar and the golden altar. He was the table and the shewbread. He was the Old Testament lamb.

"And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council."



WILLARD WILLIS

cil." Acts 6:12. Gamaliel, in Acts 5:38, had asked that the disciples be left alone, which had been done up until the time before us. Now they are back with their lies and efforts to close the mouth of God's saint. The devil is a liar and the father of lies, and he proves such to be true in the passages before us.

Our God works in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform. This fact is most certainly true in the Scripture before us. It appears, in fact, that the Lord's people were being pushed back, or defeated. Stephen after all, had been caught and taken before the council. It appears he had been caught like a fish in a net or a rabbit in a trap. It is true that he had been caught, but God had ordained his arrest for His own purpose. God, in fact, through Stephen, is about to preach a great and stirring message to the elders, scribes, and the entire council of the Sanhedrin. God, by His preachers, keeps preaching to the Sanhedrin; and they, except for Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, keep rejecting God's message to them.

"And set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law:" Acts 6:13. Jesus had already informed the apostles that the world would hate them. They, therefore, should not have been surprised, that is, if they were hiding His Word in their hearts. He, in fact, had said: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." John 15:18. The Word also states in I John 3:13: "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you."

Stephen spoke so plainly that a three year old could have understood him. The natural man, however, no matter how plain the message, will not receive it. It is as Paul stated in I Corinthians 2:14, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

It is then that any of us must receive the Word? The answer is found in the following Scripture: "But God hath re-

vealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." -- I Corinthians 2:10.

"For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered us." -- Acts 6:14. We are to see that the name of Jesus is still surfacing. It is for His name's sake that the battle was still raging. They thought that they had gotten rid of Jesus of Nazareth, but His servants are keeping His name alive. They still must accept or reject Jesus even though, to them, He was dead. It is as stated in the following Scripture: "But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me." -- John 15:21.

Stephen, of course, had not spoken blasphemous words against the holy place and the law. He had only informed them, as they all should have known from their knowledge of Scripture, that the holy place and the law were fulfilled in and through Jesus of Nazareth. The ten commandment law, in fact, is now the law of Christ Jesus. He said regarding the law relative to killing that one can be guilty of murder by simply desiring to kill someone. It is true that Jesus had said that the temple and Jerusalem would be destroyed, but He affirmed that such would be done by the Gentiles. The customs to which the false witnesses referred were the observances of sacrifices, festivals, etc.

"And all they that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." Acts 6:15. Stephen had certainly gotten their attention. They, in fact, all or every one of them, looked steadfastly on him. No one else or nothing else was on their minds but Stephen and his message.

It is said that they "saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." Angels, on many occasions, have been dispatched to the earth by the Almighty. God, in fact, in the case before us, could have sent His angel or angels. He, however, chose to use one of earth's citizens for a heavenly purpose. This citizen, whose name was Stephen, was a deacon in the Lord's church. He was a deacon who had prepared himself well by reading and prayer. God the Spirit saw that his knowledge was blessed with wisdom, or the ability to rightly divide the Word. The entire Sanhedrin, no doubt, had as much knowledge as Stephen relative to the Old Testament teaching; but they were not wise in that they did not tie it in with Jesus of Nazareth. They did not know, for example, that the brazen altar and the sacrifice offered there upon pointed to Jesus of Nazareth. Stephen, on the other hand, knew this and was trying to tell them so.

Stephen, because of his being so in tune with heaven through God the Spirit had a heavenly look. His face had the appearance of an angel's face. The faces of angels declare that they are dedicated entirely to God. Their faces say that they have the utmost confidence in God, and that they will not take a step or one hair of a step. The faces of angels declare that they know

their mission, that they know the will of God, and that nothing can or will deter them.

"Then said the high priest, Are these things so?" -- Acts 7:1. The disciples had been admonished by the Lord to go into all the world and preach the gospel. That part of the world which was now before Stephen was the national council, or that which was called the Sanhedrin -- the great council of the nation.

God arranged it, according to Acts 6:12, so that Stephen was caught and brought to the council. All the council, in fact, were seated before him. It was at this point that "all that sat in the council" looked steadfastly on him. They, in fact, observed his "face as it had been the face of an angel."

It was at this point that the high priest gave him the greatest opportunity of his life by asking him, "Are these things so?" This question was like opening a floodgate so that the water could rush forth. Stephen was full of the Spirit, wisdom, and faith; and it would soon be found that they, as was true of those in Acts 6:10, would not be able to "resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spake." He, by speaking with great wisdom and in the power of God the Spirit, would retrace the steps of them and their fathers; and he would do so at one sitting. He took them by the hand, in a sense of speaking, and lead them step by step from Abraham down to the Messiah.

They had charged him with blasphemy in speaking against the Jewish institutions of Moses and the temple. Stephen, in answering their charge, gives a statement, at length, regarding his belief in the Mosaic religion. He brought out the great points in history regarding the Mosaic system. He proceeds to show how God had defended the Mosaic system from all dangers. He proceeded to show how much he believed in the divine origin of the Jewish religion.

Stephen, by giving the history of their nation, prevented the high priest from stopping him from speaking further. It, in fact, would have been a reflection on the high priest if he had stopped him while he was speaking of the Jewish history. Such would have been like asking a man to stop saluting our flag or to stop him from a "Pledge of Allegiance."

It became obvious that they had not caught Stephen, but that he had caught them. He had them where he wanted them, or better, where God wanted them. No one, in fact, could say a word or walk out while Stephen was expounding on Jewish history or, in a sense of speaking, while the national anthem was being sung.

"And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee." Acts 7:2, 3.

The words we are now reading, as set forth in this seventh chapter of Acts, are the last words that Stephen spoke before his death. His speech probably lasted about one half hour. He was stoned to death. He, however, certainly left this earth with

flying colors. He, in fact, during his last few moments, witnessed to the council of his nation and to the millions of us who have read his words since his departure. It would have been terrible if he had missed this last great opportunity.

Stephen addressed those before him as "Men, brethren and fathers." He, in other words, was very respectful to all concerned. He proceeded to show his respect to the God whom they said he had blasphemed by saying, "The God of glory," or the glorious God. This term denotes His majesty, or splendor, or magnificence.

We, here in America, take pride in the fact that Columbus discovered our land. We refer to his discovery when we speak of our beginning as Americans. The Jews dated their history back to Abraham, and Stephen refers to them as beginning with Abraham. Stephen, in fact, relates to the fact that God "appeared unto our father Abraham." This appearance, said Stephen, occurred when Abraham was in Mesopotamia. This word "Mesopotamia" properly denotes the region between the two rivers -- the Euphrates and the Tigris. This region was also called "Ur of the Chaldees." We, when we relate to American history, think of Plymouth Rock. The Jews, on the other hand, think of Mesopotamia or "Ur of the Chaldees."

Stephen emphasizes to his captivated audience that God's appearance to their father Abraham occurred before he dwelt in Charran. The name "Charran" is the same place as that of "Haran." "Charran," in fact, is the Greek form of the Hebrew word "Haran." It was in this place that Abraham's father, Terah, died. It was also in this place that Jacob fled when escaping from his brother Esau. It is said that the water in this place is delicious.

Stephen proceeds with his speech by confirming that God spoke to Abraham ("and said unto him"). That which God spoke to him was that he was to leave his country and kindred and go to a specific place which God would show him. You and I can relate somewhat to this by considering Columbus when he was preparing to leave for America. Abraham's leaving, however, was a faith expedition, since he left home without knowing where he was going. He was simply trusting His God's Word on the matter (Hebrews 11:8, 9).

Keep in mind, as we proceed, that every word Stephen says brings him a few seconds closer to his pending death. The face that appeared as though it were the face of an angel will soon be covered with blood.

"Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell." Acts 7:4. Stephen skillfully traces the steps of his and their ancestors. All must agree with what he had said thus far. They would have to say that he was right on target -- that he had done his homework well.

"And he gave him none

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STUDIES

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inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." Acts 7:5. Stephen points out that Abraham led a wandering life. Jean and I, during our marriage, have moved eleven times. Abraham, on the other hand, kept on the move. He, in fact, did not own enough land in Israel to set his foot on. The promise, however, still remained that he would own all of the promised land. It appeared, however, that God's promise was sure to fail, since Abraham and Sarah were very old and they had no seed.

The only land which Abraham owned was a plot for his burial. This fact further confirms that God had given him no inheritance. He, in other words, had to trust God completely. The following passage of scripture says it all: "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be." Romans 4:18.

God's promise to Abraham was equal to planting corn in the ground and then covering it with dirt. The dirt, in essence, said that the corn was gone -- that it would never come forth. God's promise to Abraham, in like manner, was covered so that it could not be seen by physical sight. It could not be seen in that he had no son to inherit that which God had promised. "And God spake on this wise, That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years." Acts 7:6.

BABIES

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tion, contraceptive use among teen-agers, and the social acceptability of unwed pregnancy. According to the United States National Committee for Adoption, more children are now being adopted through independent, extra-legal sources than through licensed agencies and a considerable black market has sprung up to meet the howling demand. In other words, it seems babies have a price on their heads -- dead or alive!

As heartless as some of His creatures become, our God is still the defender of the innocent and the helpless. He views darkly the slaughter of His lambs. Not long ago, an ecology group made a federal case out of a dam construction out west that would endanger the survival of a species of small fish. Who will save the babies? Those who try expose themselves to harsh treatment, heavy fines and even imprisonment.

How the pulpit needs to thunder against this cold-blooded infanticide and those who perpetrate it, at all levels-- guilty sinners

who would hide their immorality by killing the only innocent party in their sin; the selfish, carnal sinners that spurn parenthood because it might interfere with their pleasure; the spineless sinners who participate in such medical butchery for fear of losing their job or status; and the greedy, flesh-eating sub-human

slime who hide behind a white coat and a medical degree to commit murder and make a buck by shedding babies' blood. God may have to install a basement in the lowest Hell for these mad-doctor monsters! Pimps, dope-pushers, sodomites, whores and other purveyors of flesh for pay will fare better in Hell than they.

A PARABLE ON FISHLESS FISHERMEN

IS A PERSON A FISHERMAN IF YEAR AFTER YEAR HE NEVER CATCHES ANY FISH?

Now it came to pass that a group existed who called themselves fisherman. And lo, there were many fish in the waters all around. In fact, the whole area was surrounded by streams and lakes filled with fish. And the fish were hungry.

Week after week, month after month, and year after year, these, who called themselves fishermen, met in meetings and talked about their call to fish, the abundance of fish, and how they might go about fishing. Year after year, they carefully defined what fishing means, defended fishing as an occupation, and declared that fishing is always to be a primary task of fishermen.

Continually, they searched for new and better methods of fishing and for new and better definitions of fishing. Further they said, "The fishing industry exists by fishing as fire exists by burning." They loved slogans such as "Fishing is the task of every fisherman." "Every fisherman is a fisher," and "A fisherman's outpost for every fisherman's club." They sponsored special meetings called "Fishermen's Campaigns" and "The Month for Fishermen to Fish." They sponsored costly nationwide and worldwide congresses to discuss fishing and to promote fishing and hear about all the ways of fishing such as the new fishing equipment, fish calls, and whether any new bait was discovered.

These fishermen built large, beautiful buildings called "Fishing Headquarters." The plea was that everyone should be a fisherman, and every fisherman should fish. One thing they did not do, however; they did not fish.

In addition to meeting regularly, they organized a board to send out fishermen to other places where there were many fish. All the fishermen seemed to agree that what is needed is a board that could challenge fishermen to be faithful in fishing. The board was formed by those who had the great vision and courage to speak about fishing, to define fishing, and to promote the idea of fishing in far away streams and lakes where many other fish of different colors lived.

Also, the board hired staffs and appointed committees and held many meetings to define fishing, to defend fishing, and to decide about what new streams should be in their thinking. But the staff and committee members did not fish.

Large, elaborate, and expensive training centers were built whose original and primary purpose was to teach fishermen how to fish. Over the years, courses were offered on the needs of the fish, the nature of the fish, where to find fish, the psychological reactions of fish, and how to approach and

feed fish. Those who taught had doctorates in fishology. But the teachers did not fish. They only taught fishing. Year after year, after tedious training, many were graduated and were given fishing licenses. They were sent to do full-time fishing, some to distant waters that were filled with fish.

Some spent much study and travel to learn the history of fishing and to see faraway places where the founding fathers did great fishing in the centuries past. They lauded the faithful fishermen of years before who handed down the idea of fishing.

Further, the fishermen built large printing houses to publish fishing guides. Presses were kept busy day and night to produce materials solely devoted to fishing methods, equipment, and programs to arrange and to encourage meetings to talk about fishing. A speakers' bureau was also provided to schedule special speakers on the subject of fishing.

Many who felt the call to be fishermen responded. They were commissioned and sent to fish. But like the fishermen back home, they never fished. Like the fisherman back home, they engaged in all kinds of other occupations. They built power plants to pump water for fish and tractors to plow new waterways. They made all kinds of equipment to travel here and there to look at fish hatcheries. Some also said that they wanted to be part of the fishing party, but they felt called to furnish fishing equipment. Others felt their job was to relate to the fish in a good way so the fish would know the difference between good and bad fishermen. Others felt that simply letting the fish know they were nice, and loving neighbors and how loving and kind they were was enough.

After one stirring meeting on "The Necessity for Fishing," one young fellow left the meeting and went fishing. The next day he reported he had caught two outstanding fish. He was honored for his excellent catch and scheduled to visit all the big meetings possible to tell how he did it. So, he quit his fishing in order to have time to tell about the experience to the other fishermen. He was also placed on the Fishermen's General Board as a person having considerable experience.

Now, it is true that many of the fishermen sacrificed and put up with all kinds of difficulties. Some lived near the water and bore the smell of dead fish every day. They received the ridicule of some who made fun of their fishermen's clubs and the fact that they claimed to be fishermen yet never fished. They wondered about those who felt it was of little use to attend the weekly meetings to talk about fishing. After all, were they not following the Master Who said, "Follow

me, and I will make you fishers of men?"

Imagine how hurt some were when one day a person suggested that those who do not catch fish were really not fishermen, no

matter how much they claimed to be. Yet, it did sound correct. Is a person a fisherman, if year after year, he never catches a fish? Is one following, if he is not fishing?

--Pastor John M. Drescher

TEN COMMON QUESTIONS ON THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION SIMPLY AND CLEARLY ANSWERED

1. What is the meaning of the word "election"?

It means choice. In fact, the words "chose" and "chosen" are used interchangeably with the words "elect" and "election" in the Scriptures, when referring to this doctrine. The word "election" is used in the Scriptures six times, "elected" once, and "elect" twenty times. Roughly looking through a concordance, we find that the word "chosen" is used at least twenty-one times in reference to the doctrine of election. So the word "election" simply means choice.

2. I would like for you to list the Scriptures which teach that God elected individuals to salvation before the world began.

Romans 8:29, 30; Ephesians 1:4; II Thessalonians 2:13; II Timothy 1:9; and Revelation 17:8. These are the basic Scriptures.

3. How can you reconcile election with "whosoever will"?

It is very simple. If God had not elected individuals to salvation, no one would have ever responded to "whosoever will." Only the elect, by God-given grace, respond to this call. Jesus said that none would come, except those to whom God gave the will to come. (John 6:44, 64). Men do not come to God of the natural will. But the elect come to God since God works in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure. (John 1:13; Romans 9:16; Philippians 2:13).

4. I think that election is too mysterious to be understood. Do you not agree with me? If so, why do you preach election?

That election is mysterious we do not deny. And we hasten to add that so is the rest of the Word of God and the doctrines therein to the natural man.

But that election cannot be understood so far as the Scriptures teach, we deny. If we have the Spirit of God, we can understand the doctrine because it is revealed throughout the Bible. The thing about election that cannot be understood is why God elected such ungodly, wretched sinners to salvation when they deserved Hell. The only thing we can say to this is that it pleased God to do so. We preach election because it is taught in the Bible and because from it we draw the blessings of God.

5. What about II Peter 3:9 which says that God is not willing that any

should perish?

II Peter 3:9 does not say that. Let us read it in full:

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Peter is not writing her to everybody. And what he says about the Lord's not being willing that any should perish, does not refer to everybody. He plainly says that God's long-suffering is to "US-WARD." Who are the "us-ward," you ask. Well, read I Peter 1:2 and II Peter 3:1, and you will find that Peter wrote both of his epistles to the elect of God. Peter is answering here the scornors who were mocking the Christian's hope of the second coming of Christ. The scornors were saying, "Where is the promise of His coming?" etc. (Y. 4). The reason Peter gives that the Lord has not come yet is that He is long-suffering to His elect and is not willing that any of them should perish, but that all of them should come to repentance. To say that God is not willing that anyone in the world should perish reveals total ignorance as to the attributes of God on the part of the individual who says so. For if God does not perform His will, then it proves that He is not sovereign and omnipotent and it makes His will subject to man's will. God's will, and not man's will, is sovereign. And since there are people who die and go to Hell, it is evident that it is not God's will that they be saved.

"And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" -- Daniel 4:35.

6. If election is true, then isn't God unjust?

No. The same Bible that teaches election also states that God is just (Isaiah 45:21). When God chooses some unworthy sinners to salvation, He does no injustice to the rest of unworthy sinners. They have merited Hell by their sins, and they deserve to go there. God's election does not send them there, but their sins send them there. God's election simply blesses with salvation a great number which no man can

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The Providence Baptist Church of New Port Richey, Florida is seeking a pastor. This church believes and practices the truths presented in The Baptist Examiner. Any interested person may call Dean Babb at (813) 996-2682 or Claude Creech at (813) 848-3557.

QUESTIONS

(Continued from Page 10)

number (Rev. 7:9, 10).

7. Does not everyone have an opportunity to be saved?

It is foolish to talk of an unsaved man's having an "opportunity" to be saved, for the only opportunity which he wants is the opportunity to live his life as he so desires. Apart from God's grace given by God's own choice we have never known a single person who wanted to be saved. Jesus said that men love

darkness rather than light (John 3:19).

8. What do you mean by UNCONDITIONAL election?

By unconditional election is meant that God made His choice without being influenced by anything foreseen in those whom He elected. God's choice was made according to His own good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself (Eph. 1:9). Man did not, in the least, influence God to elect or not to elect.

9. Why preach the gospel if some are elected to go

to Heaven anyway?

God's elect are not chosen simply to go to Heaven, but they are chosen to be saved in this life, and thereby go to Heaven. We preach the gospel to all men because the Spirit uses it in calling out the elect from among the nations of the world. The elect are called unto salvation by the gospel of Jesus Christ. All the elect will hear the gospel and will be saved during their lifetime, for this is what God has ordained.

"And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." -- Acts 13:48.

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." -- John 6:37.

10. Does election mean that God foresaw who would repent and believe, and thus knew beforehand who would be saved, and so chose them to be saved?

Absolutely not. There would have been no need for God's choosing them to be saved if He saw beforehand that they would be saved. There is no election whatsoever about such doctrine. It is no less foolish than would be a doctrine. It is no less foolish

than would be a decree on the part of the President of the United States that there may be daylight tomorrow. There will be daylight tomorrow regardless of the President's decree. God did not foresee repentance and faith in anyone, but He predestinated that those whom He elected would receive the gifts of repentance and faith from the Holy Spirit of God, these gifts being purchased for the elect by Christ in His atonement. Repentance is given by God. (Acts 5:31; II Tim. 2:25; Jer. 31:18, 19). And faith is given of God. (John 10:6, 26, 27; John 6:67-70; Matt. 16:17; I Cor. 3:5-8; Eph. 2:8; Phil. 1:29). The idea that God elected on the basis of something foreseen in an individual is Arminianism.

We have this as a tract order from Calvary Baptist Church Book Store, Box 60, Ashland, Kentucky 41105-0060.

APPRECIATED LETTERS

Greetings brethren in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I hope this letter finds you enjoying the many blessings of God. My prayers are with you that the Lord may continue to bless the work. May you be strengthened and encouraged to keep on keeping on. Enclosed is a check to renew my subscription for another year. Thanks and keep up the great job. Your brother in Christ,

Keith Webster, Louisville, Ky.

I received The Baptist Examiner this past year as a gift from my sister-in-law and sister in Christ. I enjoyed reading it very much and would like to renew it at this time. Thank you.

Sheila Peacock Lindsey,
Mansfield, La.

Dear Brother Wilson:

I would like to renew my subscription to The Baptist Examiner. It has been nine months and that is too long to be without your paper. I am looking forward to receiving it once again. I know you are still printing God's truths. Thank you.

Bill Snyder, Clarksburg, WV

Dear Editor:

Enclosed find an offering for The Baptist Examiner. May the good Lord richly bless you and all others that have a part in printing the paper. Please print sermons by Brother Gilpin often. May God bless you.

Mrs. J. E. Moxley,
Boonville, NC

Dear Sir:

Enclosed you will find my check for renewal of TBE for another year. I really do like and enjoy the paper so much. I rejoice to know that there are a lot of other preachers who preach what I believe the Bible teaches. Keep up the good work and may our Lord bless you.

Ruth Parker, Reform, Alabama

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PICTURES OF CHRIST

by J. Marcellus Kik
"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments" (Exodus 20:4-6).

In this second commandment we are forbidden to make any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. We are forbidden to bow down to them or to serve them. Now, the question has been asked whether or not this commandment forbids the use of pictures of Christ. Naturally the commandment forbids the bowing down before such pictures and worshipping them. There can be no question of that.

But in many Protestant churches and in many evangelical churches pictures of Christ are used in teaching and in the homes of Christians pictures of Christ are hung up to remind them, I suppose, of Christ. Is that Scriptural? Does it meet with the approval of God? Is it sinful? Is it another way of breaking the second commandment?

No doubt, if I state that the use of pictures of Christ is unscriptural, that it does not meet with the approval of God, that it is sinful, and that it is a breaking of the second commandment, I will be considered a fanatic, a reactionary, and perhaps not quite normal. But before you have such unkind thoughts, please hear me out. If we are Christians, our service and worship will be regulated by the Word of God. The Bible is our infallible guide in faith and worship.

Now here is the surprising thing. Nowhere in the Bible, either in the Old Testament or New Testament, is there a physical description of Christ. Isn't that strange if God wanted to use the picture of Christ in spreading the Gospel or in worship, that we are not told whether Christ was tall or short, fair or dark, light or dark hair, blue eyes or brown eyes?

With all their love for the Lord you would think that Peter or John would have given a description of Him unless, of course, they were forbidden. They wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Surely it is significant

that neither they nor any other of the Scriptures gave a physical description of the Lord. Surely if God desired the use of pictures of Christ to further the cause of Christ, He would have had a physical description of His Son in His Word. Why should we consider ourselves wiser than God and provide what He has deliberately left out?

The second amazing fact is that in the first four centuries of the history of the church, no picture of Christ was used. These were the years when the church made her most astonishing growth. These were the years in which the Christians conquered pagan Rome. It is so frequently stated that we need pictures of Christ in order to teach the gospel. The apostle Peter did not need pictures of Christ to instruct the young or bring the gospel to adults. The apostle John did not need pictures of Christ to convert pagans and instruct the church. The apostle John did not need pictures of Christ to convert Barbarians and Greeks. The early church did not need pictures of Christ to conquer paganism. They accomplished it by preaching the Word in the power of the Holy Spirit.

When pictures of Christ were first introduced they were opposed. The church historian Eusebius who lived in the fourth century declared himself in the strongest manner against images of Christ in a letter to the Empress Constantia who asked him for such an image. Amongst other things, Eusebius wrote: "Who can therefore, counterfeit by dead and insensible colors, by vain shadowing of painter's art, the bright and shining glistening of such His glory. Whereas His holy disciples were not able to behold the same in the mountain; who, therefore, falling on their faces, acknowledged they were not able to behold such a sight."

Here Eusebius touches on one of the reasons why it is impossible to have a true picture of Christ. If you want a picture of Christ do you want it as He was upon earth or as He is now in heaven? If you want a picture of Him as He was upon earth, you have quite a problem. There was no picture of Him painted. The so-called pictures of Christ which are present today are from the imaginations of the artists. That is why there are so many different pictures. Not one of them is a picture of Christ, you are uttering a lie. You cannot teach truth by a lie. Christ is the Truth and surely He would not want the use of a false means to point to Him. Christ abhors lies and falsehoods.

How would you like it if someone who never saw you painted a picture and told everyone that it was a picture of you?

Certainly, you would resent it. And certainly Christ must resent all those counterfeit pictures of Him.

But supposing you wanted a picture of Christ as He is now. The disciples had such a vision of Him on the Mount of Transfiguration. We read in Matthew 17:2, "...and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." This was the glorified Christ. No artist could give us a picture of Christ which would show the glowing of Christ's face as the sun and His raiment as white as the light. They would only rob Christ of His glory by miserably falling short of a true painting of Christ in His present glory.

But someone will state that at least we can depict the humanity of Christ as He appeared upon earth. But who are we to separate His humanity from His divinity? The apostle John states in his gospel, chapter 1:14, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." Notice that the apostle states that even while Christ was in the flesh they beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father. In other words, they beheld His divinity as well as His humanity. This, one cannot paint. So, one must not behold His humanity as separate from His divinity. Then one falls into the ancient error of Nestorius. He stated that Christ consisted of two persons: one human and the other divine. There was, according to Nestorius, a separation between the human and the divine persons.

That was the ground on which the Council called by Constantine V condemned paintings of Christ. You see, this question of pictures of Christ was the subject of controversy throughout the eighth century. So Constantine called a council in 753 of three hundred and thirty bishops. Their conclusion was this: "If any person shall divide human nature, united to the Person of God the Word; and, having it only in the imagination of his mind, shall therefore, attempt to paint the same in an image; let him be holden as accursed. If any person shall divide Christ, being but one, into two persons; placing on the one side the Son of God, and on the other side the son of Mary; neither doth confess the continual union that is made; and by that reason doth paint in an image the son of Mary, as subsisting by himself; let him be accursed. If any person shall paint in an image the human nature, being deified by the uniting thereof to God the Word; separat-

ing the same as it were from the Godhead assumed and deified; let him be holden as accursed."

This council points out the difficulty and indeed the impossibility of painting a portrait of Christ. Christ is more than man. He is God-man. It is impossible to depict by a painter's brush the almighty power of Christ; the glorious majesty of Christ; the infinite knowledge of Christ. You cannot localize by a painter's brush the everywhere presence of Christ. One can only succeed in degrading Christ. When one considers the deity of Christ it is no wonder that the apostles did not attempt a physical description of their Lord and Saviour.

There is always, also, the danger of worshipping the picture of Christ and attaching power to it. Even a Protestant publishing firm stated that there is power in a picture of Christ. It is stated: "When one plants deeply and firmly in his mind the picture of Christ, it has a strong and powerful influence in his life." Thus instead of attributing this influence to Christ and the Holy Spirit they attribute it to the picture they are trying to sell. That is a breaking of the second commandment.

But can it not help in the saving of souls, it is asked. But how? Looking at a picture of Christ hanging upon the cross tells me nothing. It does not tell me that He hung there for my sin. It does not tell me that He is the Son of God. Only the Word of God does that. And it is the Word of God that has been given us to tell the story of salvation through the blood of Christ. It is through the foolishness of preaching.

It is amazing how slowly unscriptural practices enter the Christian church. We must at all times go back to the Scriptures. The Bible is our infallible guide. And if our practices and doctrines do not conform with the teachings of the Scriptures, then we must eliminate them. The Bible instructs the church not to make any likeness of Christ. The present-day pictures of Christ are false and no one would make a serious claim that they resemble Christ upon earth. They separate His humanity from His deity. They do not at all give us a glimpse of His present glory. They are not condoned by the inspired apostles.

God has ordained the foolishness of preaching to evangelize the world. He has promised to attend the preaching of the Word with the power of the Holy Spirit. The so-called pictures of Christ are a hindrance and a temptation to idolatry. Let us cleanse the Temple from them.

(copied from Pilgrim Pathway, vol. 6, number 3, fall, 1989 issue)

When a man is justified, his sin is mortified.

CAN YOU IMAGINE THIS?

Missionaries being sent by a Mission Board instead of by a local church?

"And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away" (Acts 13:3).



Arvel and Juanita Waddell; Bernie and Rozella Foor; four very dear friends.

IMPRESSIONS OF OUR BIBLE CONFERENCE

I have enjoyed all the good sermons, fine singers and sweet fellowship at this wonderful Bible conference. Each year I think this is the best conference yet.

Ruth Hall, Ironton, Ohio

I go to many Bible conferences every year since I have retired, but this conference is the one that I have been attending for many years. Some who I met in the 50's and 60's are still coming. Why do they look old?? God blessed in this meeting and I rejoice in the blessing of God manifested to us. Brother Wilson, continue preaching the words of God and visiting the lost. Bless you all.

DeWayne W. Austin,
Hamilton, Ohio

The Memorial Day Bible Conference at Calvary Baptist Church is always a special time of blessing and fellowship. I thank the Lord for blessing me to be a part of this conference. Thanks to Calvary Baptist Church and to Brother Joe and Sister Katie for a wonderful time of spiritual food and blessings.

Herbert Cole, King, N.C.

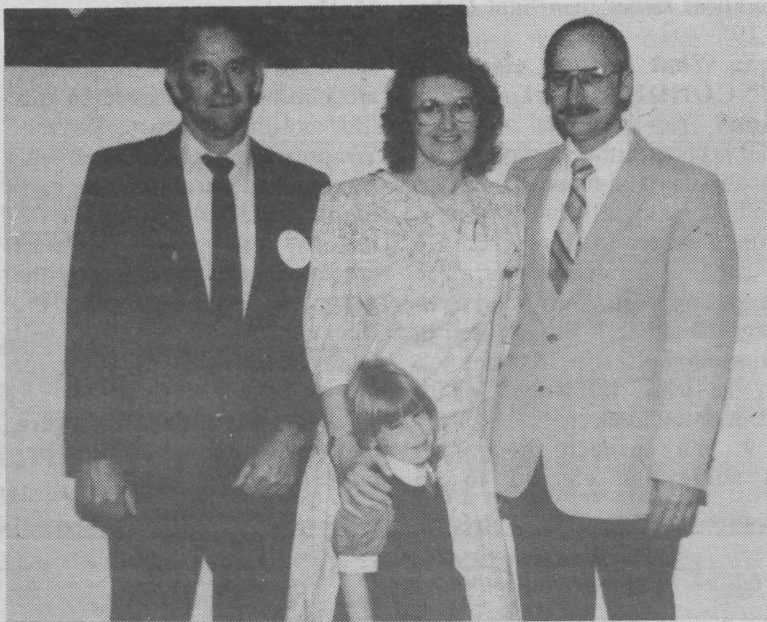
Another good conference. People don't know what they miss. God willing until next year.

Ralph & Rosa Lee Wells,
Norton, Va.

I am thankful that I was able to attend the conference. The preaching of God's Word and fellowship has once again been a blessing from God. I'm truly thankful for Calvary Baptist Church and Brother Joe for having this meeting each year. My prayer is that God will work out the problems of some churches and pastors that used to attend this conference and that they all will be back next May.

Don Banks, Griffin, Ga.

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Elder John Pruitt and others from Griffin, Georgia.

"Herein is my father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (John 15:8).

When believers walk in truth and love, when they adorn the doctrine of God, our Saviour, with generous, gracious, and exemplary lives and behavior, they glorify God. The fruit of righteousness, by the indwelling Spirit of Christ, displayed by a believer, not only glorifies the power, grace, and mercy of God in them, but causes others to glorify God. "So shall ye be my disciples." Our obedience and fruitfulness do not make us disciples of Christ but are proof and evidence that we are His disciples. Good fruit does not make a tree good; the tree is first good and the fruit is evidence that the tree is good.

Elder Kenneth Long and family.



Elder James Crace and some from his church.



WEST GRIFFIN BAPTIST CHURCH BIBLE CONFERENCE MARCH 4-6, 1990

FRIDAY, 7:00 P.M.

Sam Wilson - Gladwin, MI
SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Ralph Lambert - Griffin/Spalding Anti-Drug Com.
PRESENTATION - DRUG AND ALCOHOL ADDICTION

Greg McDaniel - Addyston, OH
SPECIAL YOUTH MESSAGE

SATURDAY 9:00 A.M.
Don Pennington - Courtland, VA
ARE ANGELS REAL?

Eldon Joslin - Birmingham, AL
HEAVEN, WHO IS THERE, WHO IS GOING?

Reggie Moore - Appalachia, VA
"CAN THESE BONES LIVE AGAIN?"

Lewis McGarity - Nashville, TN
HELL, A REAL DANGER!

SATURDAY 2:00 P.M.
Joe Wilson - Ashland, KY
ARE WE HARDSHELL BAPTIST?

Doyal Thomas - Sugin, TX
A DEFINITION AND HISTORY OF MODERN
REFORMED BAPTIST

Gordon Buchanan - Perry, GA
ISAIAH 55:6

SATURDAY, 7:00 P.M.
Paul Jackson - Glenwood, GA
WHAT IS SCRIPTURAL CHURCH DISCIPLINE?

Walter Herin - Orange, TX

LORDSHIP SALVATION DEFINED AND DEFENDED

David West - Moncks Corner, SC
IS PARTICULAR REDEMPTION TAUGHT IN THE BIBLE?

SUNDAY 9:15 A.M.
Sam West - Moncks Corner, SC
WHAT IS THE REAL PURPOSE OF THE TRIBULATION?

Oscar Mink - Wake Village, TX
IS THERE ANY HARM IN THE MYSTICAL BODY THEORY?

Kenneth Long - LaPlace, LA
SCHISMS IN THE BODY
Homer Lawrence - Denham Springs, LA
GRACE ALONE

SUNDAY, 2:00 P.M.
Danny Davis - Walnut Cove, NC
THE KING JAMES VERSION OF THE BIBLE

Dan Phillips - Bluff City, TN
CAN SCRIPTURAL BAPTISM EVER BE NULIFIED?

Andy Proctor - New Pork Richey, FL
SELF DISCIPLINE RELATIVE TO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Meals will be provided for everyone in attendance on Saturday, lunch 12:15-1:30, supper, 5:15-6:30, and lunch on Sunday, 12:15-1:30. This church is located at 1614 Piedmont Road Griffin, Georgia. For further information call John Pruitt at (404) 229-4485. The church phone is (404) 228-7545.