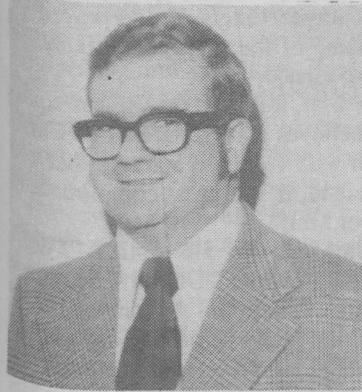


THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH

by Don Pennington
Rt. 1, Box 359
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Discipline is an essential factor, or element, in any phase of life. Homes, schools, states, nations, counties, cities; all need discipline or law. Discipline may be defined as treatment suited to a learner or disciple, or the training of one to act in accordance with established rules. Discipline is not only necessary in the aggregations of individuals, but also necessary in the life and work of a single individual. Each individual must discipline himself; each one of us must have some sys-



DON PENNINGTON

tem of discipline, or rule for our life. Some may have a very poor system, but each of us has some sort of system of discipline.

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THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST

by H.C. McSwain
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"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

August 4, 1989, on station KEEL, Shreveport, La., Rick Roe, a local news reporter, told about a much loved and respected educator of Lindy, Texas, who had AIDS. This man contracted this dreadful disease from a blood transfusion received in 1983, as a result of an operation performed on him. The thing that grabbed my attention, was a remark the educator's wife made. She said, "The thing that was supposed to have saved his life really is the

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BLESSINGS AWAIT YOU AT OUR BIBLE CONFERENCE

MAY 25-27

BE THERE!

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD AND THE CHURCH'S EVANGELISTIC MISSION

by Kirk Wellum

If there is one truth that the Bible teaches about God, it is that He is sovereign. When the Bible describes God as sovereign it is telling us that He is the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, that from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever! Amen.

To say God is sovereign is to say that He is absolutely supreme. He possesses in Himself all authority and power, that is, the right and ability to rule.

To say God is sovereign is to say that He is accountable to no one. He does what He wants in heaven and on earth, He is free to express His holy glory as He sees fit. Everything and everyone in the universe is under His control, nothing happens that He has not

planned for He works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will. No one can overthrow Him or thwart His decrees. No one surprises Him or catches Him off guard. No one will ever be able to charge and convict Him of injustice, for He is wise and just in all His ways, He is light and in Him there is no darkness at all. The God of the Bible always has the final say, He cannot be frustrated, He is in a class all by Himself.

God's sovereignty not only applies to the universe in general and to men and women as they live and move and have their being in God's world, but it applies to salvation, the greatest of all His works.

The Scriptures teach us that it is God who saves sinners, and He does so on purpose according to

His plan. Before the foundation of the earth He chose out of Adam's fallen race a people or remnant. He chose these people in His Son, which means He chose to deal with them and bring them to Himself by the wonderful and perfect work of His Son who would come in the fulness of time and act as their representative, working out their salvation with His own hands.

The New Testament tells us how Jesus came to save His people from their sins, came as the good shepherd for His sheep, and came to die for the Jewish nation, and not only for that nation, but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one.

Not only has God chosen people in Christ, at just the right

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THE LIFE THAT GLORIFIES GOD

by Waldo Whiddon
100 Pine Hills Rd.
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"Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye



WALDO WHIDDON

cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That Ye love one another; as I have loved You, that ye also love one another. By

(Continued on Page 9, Col. 5)

THE GOSPEL

by Ted Gower
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TX 77619

What is the gospel? My cousin's son was in the first grade in school when his teacher asked him to name the four seasons and he answered; coon season, deer season, turkey season and squirrel season. And so it is in the religious world today if you should ask what is the gospel? They answer as did the boy about the seasons, either in what they have heard on the subject; and there is no need to try and list all the different answers we would get from religious folk, because we have all heard the many replies. We will concern ourselves with Scripture. Paul said in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Notice that Paul said it is the power of God unto salvation. So then, if the Gospel is the means by which God calls in His people, then when we see all the fleshly efforts of men attempting to win souls by flattery, fear and intellect, we know it is not according to God's Word.

In I Corinthians 15:1-4 Paul said, "MORE OVER, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that

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

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THE MAN WHO CHANGED MASTERS

by Eddie Roberts
319 N. Vermont
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"And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David, and gave him bread, and he did eat; and they made him drink water; And they gave him a piece of a cake of figs, and two clusters of raisins: and when he had eaten, his spirit came again to him: for he had eaten no bread, nor drunk any water, three days and three nights. And David said unto him, To whom belondest thou? and whence art thou? And he

said, I am a young man of Egypt, servant to an Amalekite; and my master left me, because three days ago I fell sick. We made an invasion upon the south of the Cherethites, and upon the coast which belongeth to Judah, and upon the south of Caleb; and we burn Ziklag with fire. And David said unto him, Canst thou bring me down to this company? And he said, Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master, and I will bring thee down to this company," (I

Samuel 30:11-15).

There are many different definitions for a Christian. One of them is "a man who has changed masters." "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin... ye became the servants of righteousness... servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity... servants to righteousness unto holiness... being made free from sin, and become servants to God..." (Rom. 6:17-20, 22). Let us take this historical event of our text where a young man changed masters (from an Amalekite to king

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

AMAZING GRACE

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2: 8, 9).

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace

appear
The hour I first believed!
Thro' many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath bro't me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing
God's praise
Than when we first begun.

The Lord has promised good to

me
His Word my hope secures.
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this heart and flesh shall fail
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess within the veil
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine,
But God who called me here

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AMAZING GRACE

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below

Shall be forever mine.

John Newton

Amazing Grace is surely a favorite song in many churches. I will say that it is a Sovereign Grace Baptist song. I will say that many people sing it who do not believe it. And if we do not believe a song, we should not sing it. The man who believes that men are saved by free will should not sing Amazing Grace. He should sing Amazing Free Will. The folk who believe that one is saved or kept saved by works, should not sing this song. They should sing Amazing Works. The Cambellites should not sing Amazing Grace, they should sing Amazing Water. In fact, only sovereign grace believers should sing this song, for they are the only ones who believe it.

Grace is such a wonderful, blessed and glorious word. It is so full of meaning, that no tongue can describe it and no mind fully take it in. I desire to, in part, endeavor to measure some of the fulness of this word.

Let us look at this grace from the standpoint of, who it is that shows this grace. It is shown by the true and sovereign God of the Bible. Well, that makes it great, doesn't it? For a great God can only show great grace. He is everything and we are nothing. Why does He even bother to concern Himself about us? Oh! As we compare ourselves with

Him (contrast is a better word), and realize that He shows grace to us, truly we are amazed at this wonderful grace. Then, we need to remember that this God Who shows such grace is the one sinned against. Oh, how we have rebelled against Him, cast His holy law behind our back, and plunged into the depths of black, and vile sin. Not only are we worse than filthy rags in His sight, but we have hated Him and done all we could against Him. Yet, praise His name, He has determined to show grace unto a multitude of such fallen wretches. Truly, such grace is amazing indeed.

We can then look at this grace



Joe Wilson

from the standpoint of those to whom this grace is shown. As I've already said, we are vile and wicked and have sinned greatly against Him. We have been utterly unconcerned about our lost condition and our need of salvation. We did not seek Him. We did not desire Him. We did not want His salvation. Yet, He saved us. Think of Manasseh, who had a godly father, but who sinned as few others had, even putting idols in the courtyard of the Lord's house. Think of Saul of Tarsus, a self-righteous bigot, a murderous persecutor, doing all he could against the name of Jesus. Think of the woman at the well. Living in sin, unconcerned about spiritual things, ignorant of the true God, seeking the water of this life. Think of yourself. What had you ever done to deserve such glorious salvation? Yes, when we look at the ones to whom grace has been shown, we see that it is amazing grace. We should also consider the innumerable multitude to whom this grace is shown. For the elect are a multitude no man can number. Each one individually and all together show grace to be amazing indeed.

Then we can look at what grace does for those to whom it is shown. Oh, 'tis not a small thing! What we need more than all else put together, that which is most important to all, that which no man could give us--that is what amazing grace has done for us. Grace unconditionally elects those who shall be saved. It is a sovereign election. How glad I am that it is not conditioned upon anything in man. For if it were, who among us could hope to be in that predestinated number? God has exalted His grace in that oftentimes, His choice has been of the vilest of men. Grace redeems us. Would you measure the heights of the exalted state of Christ ere He came down to earth? Then measure the infinite perfection of the life that He lived upon the earth. Then measure the depths of His suffering on Calvary when He endured the wrath of a thrice holy, sin-hating God against all the multitude of the elect of God. Yes, He did. He took their place. He bore their guilt. He suffered in Himself all they would have suffered

in an endless hell. And by this death, Christ through grace redeems us.

On the basis of this redemption, the elect are clothed upon with the spotless robe of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Through this redemption the elect are washed from the filth of their own sin and made whiter than the snow. Then grace calls us with an irresistible call. Oh, think of this. We would not have chosen for ourselves and God chose us. We could not have redeemed ourselves--and God redeemed us. But even then we would not come. We loved our sins. We turned a deaf ear to the general call of the gospel. We had no interest in, concern about, or desire for the salvation of the Lord. But amazing grace would not be defeated in its desire and purpose. The Holy Spirit came in efficacious power. He wrought the miracle of regeneration within us, and lo, we were willing, we were desirous, gladly did we come in repentance and in faith to Jesus Christ. It was the same grace of God that provided the feast of good things, that gave us the hunger and thirst and brought us to the banqueting house and His banner over us was love. When we consider our depravity and deadness and inability and unwillingness--and then consider that mighty power that made us willing at the appointed time. Yes, it is amazing grace of God that saved a wretch like me.

But amazing grace is not yet done. I am not yet in heaven. The devil is against me. The world is against me. How, oh, how will I ever make it all the way to heaven? 'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home. Yet, God's grace will never let go of a one upon whom its favor is set. God set His grace upon an elect number before all worlds began, and He will have with Him in glory, each and every one of them. We are once saved, always saved. Grace will keep us forevermore.

Now note that the grace of God is upon a chosen people. That Christ effectually atones for their sins, and theirs only. That the Holy Spirit irresistibly brings them to the salvation experience of repentance and faith. That they are kept by the power of God. Now this is grace. And this only is grace: Bible grace. Men who do not believe these truths may use the word "grace" and sing "Amazing Grace" all they want to, but they don't believe in the Bible doctrine of salvation by the amazing grace of God. I call them parrot theologians. A parrot learns to say words without having any idea what those words mean. So, many people say the word "grace," and have no idea at all what that word means as used in the Bible. But those who are Spirit taught in the things of God sing with the spirit and with the understanding of the amazing grace of God.

SOVEREIGNTY

(Continued from Page 1)

time He calls and summons His own in such a way as to bring them willingly to His Son, in whose care they are kept safe until they are perfected in glory!

Now it should be emphasized that God does this. At every stage, from the beginning to the end, He is intensely active.

Nothing is left to chance, He is in complete control, He will have in glory a people from every tribe and language and people and nation, a kingdom and priests who will serve Him and reign on the earth and sing praise to His name forever for He is worthy. This is why the apostle says, "It is because of Him (the God who chooses the foolish, weak, lowly, and despised) that we are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God -- that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is

written: 'Let him who boasts boast in the Lord.'"

What a breathtaking view of God! It leads us to worship and praise. It captures the imagination, it allows the mind and heart to soar above the earth into heavenly places as we try to hold on to the immensity and infinite glory of Almighty God. This one who sees all eternity before Him, and who knows precisely what He is doing at every moment in time, as He goes about the monumental task of rescuing sinners.

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FROM THE EDITOR

PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER. When someone asks you to pray for him, it means several things. It means that he feels a need of God's blessings in one or more ways. Oh, this is good. Many people do not realize their great need of God's blessings. Many are not at all concerned about this. But this one who has asked you to pray for him or her realizes the need of God's blessings and desires such. It means that this person believes in prayer. He believes that God answers prayer. He believes that prayer is God's appointed way of obtaining God's blessings. Likely, he has had some experience in prayer. Likely, he has prayed for others and maybe seen God answer some of those prayers. Likely, he has had prayers answered in his own experience.

When someone asks you to pray for him, it means that he has confidence in you and in your prayers. He believes that you are a true Christian. He believes that you are in touch with God. He believes that you can get your prayers answered. My friend, it is a great compliment to you when someone asks you to pray for him.

I recently told a brother, "I'm praying for you." He replied, "I don't know anyone I would rather have praying for me." Oh, how that humbled me as I realized my own sins and weakness in my prayer life. It made me want to get close to the Lord and really be on praying ground. I don't know when a remark has humbled me down more or made me more aware of my many sins and failures. This remark also lifted me up and encouraged me. It caused me to want to draw closer to the Lord. It moved me to some sincere praying. Yes, my friend, it is a great compliment to you when someone asks you to pray for him or her.

What do you do when someone asks you this? I am sure that we always respond to such a request with an, "I'll do that." But what do we do? I fear that we often forget all about the matter. How many times have you told someone that you would pray for him and then forgot all about it? How many promises to someone to pray for him have you broken? I speak to myself, even as I write this. I fear that all of us have been very neglectful in this matter. I fear that all of us have been guilty of - shall I call it "lying" yes, I will call it lying - what else can I truthfully call it? - in this matter. Why don't we say, "No, I don't have time to pray for you," or "No, I am not really concerned about you," or "Maybe I will, once or twice, if I think about it"?

Sometimes we will maybe pray one time for the person who has made this request of us. How many times do we really make the prayer request of our brother or sister a real matter of much prayer? I fear that this is seldom the case. I fear that we do not pray at all about the request, or that we pray half-heartedly and only a time or so.

When a brother asks us to pray for him, we usually say that we will, and we ask him to also remember us in prayer. Oh, don't we hope that he will remember our request far more than we do his? If he does not do better at this than we do, we might almost as well drop the whole matter and not waste words about it. If our brother does not pray for us more than we pray for him, often we will receive very little benefit therefrom.

What is this, "Pray for me, and I'll pray for you"? Is it just a statement without any meaning? Is it just a form or words? Is it just pious cant? Do we mean it when we utter these words, or do we show by our actions that these words are hypocritical and false?

Oh, how much it would mean if we really meant, "Pray for me, and I'll pray for you," and especially if we put such words into practice. Brother and sister, we need the blessings of the Lord. These blessings come in answer to prayer. We need to pray much, very much more than we do. If we meant it when we told others we would pray for them, and if they meant it when they told us such; and if we would all do this, only the Lord knows what this would mean to our lives, our service for the Lord, and our different churches. I plead for prayer for one another. I plead for honesty and sincerity when we tell a brother we will pray for him, or a sister. Let us mean it, or not ask a brother to pray for us. Let us mean it, or not tell a brother we will pray for him.

I confess my own guilt in this matter. How many times have the words, "I'll pray for you" been lying words on my lips - at least the issue proved them such for I did not do as I had said. Let me do this no longer. Let me be most sincere when I ask a brother to pray for me. Let me be most sincere when I tell a brother I will pray for him or that I will pray about a certain matter for which he has requested prayer. Words are cheap; they can be easily spoken, and we can, by our words, entrap ourselves into lying and hypocrisy if we do not do as we have said. We would never say to a request for prayer, "No, I am not going to do it," but that would be more honest than promising that we will and then not doing it.

PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER. Oh, this could mean so much to our lives and our churches. Let us do much of this. I am not asking that we stop telling folk we will pray for them. I am asking that we will do what we have promised. How richer our own lives would then be, and how many blessings might we bring upon others by praying for them as we have promised. Yes, let us tell one another that we will pray for them; and then let us be true to our word by doing so. Yours for more prayer.

SOVEREIGNTY

(Continued from Page 2)

THE DOCTRINE UNDER ATTACK

Sadly, this view of God is under attack in our day. Some would tell us that we must rid ourselves of any concept that would set God up as a king reigning in the universe. They inform us that the idea that God is sovereign is offensive to men and women at the end of the twentieth century. But we cannot listen to them for a moment. We must acknowledge that the Scriptures from beginning to end are full of the sovereignty of God. Unfortunately, what is breathtaking for the believer is something that the wicked struggle against. What stirs the heart of the believer who understands the sovereignty of God, stirs evil thoughts within the ungodly. They hate such a God because He is not made in their own image, and they cannot manipulate and outsmart Him. His sovereignty makes them squirm and produces all manner of rebellious thoughts and desires.

However, the Bible is plain. Though the nations conspire and the peoples plot, the kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and His anointed, He who sits enthroned in the heaven laughs, the Lord scoffs at the foolish attempts of sinful people to remove Him from the throne of the universe. God is sovereign!

HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY

The same Bible that teaches God is sovereign also teaches that all His redeemed subjects have a responsibility to declare the gospel, which is His good news, to the world. Jesus said, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation." The apostle Paul exhorted the believers in Philippi, "Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the Word of life."

This responsibility to make known the gospel is not optional. It is a duty laid on us by our Master and Redeemer. We show the reality of our love for Him by doing what we are told. We also show love and compassion for our friends and neighbours and relatives when we tell them about the Lord Jesus Christ. How He has accomplished salvation for sinners, and as a result is able to rescue all who come to Him from wrath, the law, sin, death, and Satan. And not only this, but He is willing to save all who come under His authority. He freely offers Himself to sinners, no matter who they are, or what they have done, if they come to Him, they will be received and not rejected.

Because the gospel is of such great importance and deals with matters of life and death, we, as Christians, are to do everything in our power to make sure people understand the truth and see their need of God's prophet, priest, and king. To prove this all we need to do is go to the book of Acts and make note of the variety of words used to describe how the apostles communicated the gospel. In his book, "Tell the World," Eric Wright lists the following: "witness, testify, declare, speak, teach, proclaim,

preach, prove, reason, explain, persuade, give evidence, refute, demonstrate, exhort, instruct, guide, admonish, encourage, and strengthen." Such a list indicates that the apostles were not cold and artificial in their presentation of the gospel. They did not present the facts in a "take it or leave it" fashion. There was a fervency that characterized their endeavors, they tried to make the truth plain as well as attractive. They were fishers of men who with warmth and passion called sinners to repent and believe the gospel.

Dr. Luke's description of Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost illustrates the point. "Repent and be baptized, everyone of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off -- for all whom the Lord our God will call." With many other words he warned them; and pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

In this Peter reflects his Master who with real and loving concern said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

So we find in the Scriptures the truth that God is sovereign, and that we as Christians have the responsibility to evangelize. But it is precisely at this point that many detect a problem. There is the perception that the sovereignty of God and the responsibility to evangelize are irreconcilable enemies. They seem to be like two teams engaged in a tug-of-war, each pulling with all their might as they try to dislodge the other. Or like children on either end of a teeter-totter trying to throw the other off. If God is sovereign, why bother evangelizing? Will He not save His elect anyway? Or, if we must take the gospel to the world, how can God be sovereign, how can He have a remnant chosen by grace that must and will be saved?

The solution to this apparent problem is not to be found in jettisoning either the sovereignty of God nor the responsibility to evangelize. Since both are clearly revealed in God's Word we must hold both in high esteem. We never have the right to pick and choose which part of God's revelation we will accept and teach, and which part we will not. God has revealed all that He has made known for a purpose, to say or act otherwise is to exalt our wisdom at the expense of His wisdom. When confronted with apparent contradictions in the Scriptures we must work and ask God for wisdom and understanding so that we might see how they are related.

SOVEREIGNTY AND RESPONSIBILITY ARE FRIENDS

Closer examination will reveal that the sovereignty of God and the responsibility to evangelize are not enemies but friends. These truths support one another, they are integrally related to one another in the same way that the foundation of a building is related to the superstructure, or the hull of a ship is related to the rest of the ship. You cannot evangelize properly unless you understand

that God is sovereign. And if you understand that God is sovereign, you will be intensely interested in evangelism. To demonstrate this I will begin with some negatives and then move to some positive implications. I hope to show how a right understanding of God's sovereignty in no way runs contrary to the biblical mandate to evangelize. Then I want to show that a right understanding of God's sovereignty is essential if we are to take the gospel into the world as He has commanded.

IN TERMS OF THE NEGATIVES

One of the objections often raised goes something like this: "If God is sovereign, why should we bother with evangelism? If He knows the end from the beginning, if He has chosen a people whom He will bring to Himself through His Son, if these people will be kept safe all the way to glory, then why should we be involved, or give money, or work to go into the world and make known the gospel?"

The answer is that God has chosen not to save people without the involvement of people. He could have, if He had so desired, but He has chosen not to. The apostle Paul who made much of God's sovereignty knew this. He writes: "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be

saved. How then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!'"

So we can say that in a very real sense without evangelism, without Christians opening their mouths and declaring the gospel, no one will be saved. Why are these things necessary? Because God who is sovereign has chosen to do things this way! He has not only ordained the end result but the means to the end. This is glorious for it means that we, as human beings redeemed by grace, have the privilege of being intimately involved in God's greatest work. None of us were around or involved when He made the heavens and the earth, when He spread out the heavens and formed the continents and the seas and made all that moves on this great planet. But we are present and involved as He reveals His glory and splendor more wonderfully by calling sinners out of darkness into His marvellous light. Now He could have worked independently of us, He could have worked immediately, He could

have put us on the sidelines and demonstrated His power in a sovereign way that required no help or cooperation from us, but God has chosen to use us, His people, to accomplish His purposes. He has woven us into the scheme of things, so this great plan of salvation is a plan that involves you and me. Not one of His elect will be saved unless we speak because God has ordained that this is the way it will be.

In the second place others object to the sovereignty of God because they think it undermines a spirit of fervency and a sense of urgency. Surely a belief in the sovereignty of God will make us apathetic and lazy in our evangelistic efforts. If God has a people, if there is such a 'thing' as the elect, and they will certainly be saved, then we will drag our feet, we will act as those who have a job to do but are missing some of the enthusiasm they ought to have.

It should never be the case that our evangelism lacks urgency and fervency because we should view our responsibility to preach the gospel in light of the need of men and women. Our responsibility is not based upon God's decrees in election, but the needs of men and women, teenagers and

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GOD IN MY LIFE

by Dr. C. D. Cole

Psalms 113 to 118 are called the Hallel (Praise) Psalms. They were sung in families on the night of the Passover, a memorial feast celebrating Israel's deliverance from Egypt. The first two (113,114) were sung at the beginning of the feast, and the last four (115,116,117,118) were sung at the close. All were songs of thanksgiving for the mercies of God. It must have been one of these that Christ and His disciples sang at the Last Supper (see Matt. 26:30).

Some think Psalm 116 is the resurrection song of Christ. The prophet thinks of Christ as having passed through the agonies of the cross. His work of atonement is finished, and He is risen from the dead. Sitting on the right hand of the Majesty on High, He proclaims to the world the blessings He received from God during the day of His incarnation, and the glories He has received in the kingdom of His heavenly Father.

Inasmuch as Christ said that all that was written of Him in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms must be fulfilled, we can see how appropriately the words of Psalm 116 apply to Him. Moreover, the words of Psalm 116 are appropriate on the lips of every redeemed soul, for we too have experienced God's mercies and ought to voice our gratitude in song. We have three prominent themes in Psalm 116: Supplication; Redemption; Devotion.

I. Supplication

"I LOVE the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications." The Psalmist, speaking for himself and for all the redeemed, says, "I love the Lord because He has heard my prayers." Answered prayer leads to more praying: "...I call upon him as long as I live." The Psalmist was in dire distress: "The sorrows of death compassed me..." As hunters surround the stag with dogs and

weapons, so the writer is ringed around with trouble and danger. And when he saw no one around to help, he looked up to God and He helped him. And this was our experience in conversion. When there were no saviours around us, we looked up to Jesus Christ and He saved us. And let every redeemed soul say, "I love the LORD..."

II. Redemption

"For thou hast delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling." Salvation is of the Lord. The Lord Jesus Christ has redeemed us from death which is the wages of sin; He has dried our tears shed in mourning over sin; He has kept our feet from falling into false ways of salvation (Psa. 40:1,2; Acts 4:12; Gal. 3:13).

III. Devotion

"I will walk before the LORD..." This is the Psalmist's response to God's deliverance. He says, "Thou hast"; "I will." By a man's walk is understood his way of life. To walk before God is to live as under His all-seeing eye. Some live as only in the sight of men, regarding their judgment and craving their favour. "Thou God seest me" is a better influence than "My neighbour sees me."

There is "walking with God," which means communion, fellowship and companionship. Enoch walked with God. We also read of "walking after God," which means guidance, direction and example. "I said in my haste, All men are liars." The Psalmist is not saying that no man ever tells the truth, but that no man tells the truth all the time. There is only One of Whom it can be said, that He never told a lie, and this is Jesus Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life. Samuel Horsely: "In an ecstasy of despair, I said, the whole race of man is a delusion." The RSV: "I said in my consternation, Men are all a vain hope." Jonathan Edwards: "The meaning seems to be this--I was greatly

afflicted. I was in extreme distress, I was in great astonishment and trembling (as the word rendered "haste" signifies trembling as well as haste, Deut. 20:3); and in these circumstances I did not trust in man; I said, 'All men are liars, not fit to be trusted in.' It is a way of saying that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour the only One to be trusted, Acts 4:12..." "What shall I render unto the LORD for all his benefits toward me?" This is the question of every saved soul--"How can I ever pay God back for all He has done for me?" The Psalmist answers--"I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the LORD." The way to requite the Lord is to enjoy His salvation and call upon Him for more blessings. There are no material things with which we can requite Him; we can only pay Him back in love and thanksgiving. God needs nothing. He says: "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine..." Paul stood on Mars' Hill and said, "God is not worshipped with men's hands as though He needed anything."

We are indeed to give to the support of His cause, but this is not to enrich Him; it is to enrich ourselves. Christ: "It is more blessed to give than to receive." God calls for our gifts, not because He is needy, but because we need the blessedness of giving. The liberal soul shall be made fat. Proverbs 11:25; Malachi 3:10,11.

"I will pay my vows unto the LORD now in the presence of all his people." What will secret disciples say to this verse? We pay our vows in public; first, by open confession in baptism, and after that by taking part in public worship, by tithes and offerings, and by witnessing to others.

The Baptist Examiner Forum I

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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Please explain the taking up of the cross by a believer.

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"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matthew 16:24).

I have through the years heard this verse, and the other two concerning this subject, preached and taught in several different ways with different emphasis. I will not discuss those ways now, except to say that this verse isn't speaking of taking up salvation and that of man's own accord. I believe the Lord Jesus is here speaking of Christian commitment as to discipleship; following Him, being like Him in every aspect of our earthly life. Needless to say, this doctrine isn't much taught today. Usually the emphasis is "believe", but beloved, belief entails action. Faith is expressed by works. Our fellowship with Him is closely connected to our following Him and His ways in every aspect of this life: not merely spiritually and morally, but physically as well.

There can be many outward works that are good, but still lacking because total commitment from the human standpoint is hindered by someone or something as it was in the case of the rich young ruler in Mark 10:17-21. Jesus told him in his particular case to unburden himself from riches and to make a total commitment to Christ's way; the way of the cross. Hence self-denial may be involved at some point in our devotion and fellowship with Jesus. The way of total commitment to the Lord may at times involve persecutions, even by those close to us as Christ spoke of in Matthew 10:34-38.

Total devotion necessarily requires total obedience. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:" (Philippians 2:5) Christ must not only be our example, He must be the pattern followed for this life in its everyday living. In daily overcoming the world, resisting Satan, and crucifying the deeds of the flesh, the relationship is essential, not optional as those who even consider the doctrine at all today, would have us believe. "And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth me, is not worthy of me." (Matthew 10:38) Our attitude must be total devotion to Him with the commitment of taking whatever comes as a result,

whether persecution, self-denial, or earthly loss. I am ashamed to say that the majority of those who claim Him are not in this attitude, or state. There is a vast difference in the standing of many (which we as His children enjoy alike) and the actual state of the individual lives of most. Indeed, I have often heard His voice say, "Lovest thou me more than these?" Let us take up the cross of total commitment and devotion to Him wherever it may lead, for all things are for our good and His glory. We can, as His servants, do no less. Those things that we bear in this life are nothing to be compared with what shall be ours.

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Matthew 10:34-38

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."

What does it mean to take up your cross? This can easily be answered by examining the Lord's own cross. (Ph. 2:8). Christ laid aside His deity in order to become a servant; the Master became the slave, the judge became the condemned, the life-giver gave His life. He was completely surrendered to the will of the Father. He yielded to the Father's will when He prayed, "Not my will but thine be done." Beloved, this must be the prayer of every one of us.

When we think of the cross we might think of several things that the cross represents. (a) death (b) judgment (c) sacrifice (d) suffering (e) persecution (f) cleansing (g) giving (h) loving (i) faithfulness. In a word, Lordship.

For lack of space, we will only consider some of these. (a) Death--The servant of Christ must die to the world. "ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. 3:3, Gal. 2:20) "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now

live; in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me, and gave himself for me." This is a spiritual knowledge and an active faith.

(b) -- Judgement -- Paul said in I Cor. 11:31, "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged." This is talking about self judgment. Bearing your cross involves self-discipline. (c) -- Sacrifice -- God wants living sacrifices, not dead ones. Dead sacrifices tend to stink. (See Rom. 12:1-2)

(d) -- Love -- Jesus said, "If ye love me keep my commandments." (Jo. 14:15) (See Jo. 15:8-16) By taking up your cross you are expressing love through action. This means making Christ primary instead of secondary in your personal and private life.

Self will must be put away and God's will must be sought. Expressing love through action is more than a dead membership. Your heart must be in the work. Your service must be alive!

You know that there is nothing more difficult, more time-consuming, more boring than to have a job to do when your heart is not in it.

Two things to understand about "taking up the cross". 1. No one can take up the cross of Christ. Only the Lord Himself could bear that cross, and that He did. He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross". (Phil. 2:8) 2. Only you can bear your cross. No one can do it for you. Your personal relationship with Jesus Christ demands a personal responsibility. Thank you for your question.

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"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matt. 16:24).

Christ is telling us that if we are to follow Him, we are to surrender to His will. Taking up our cross is to do whatever He commands us to do. We must lay aside our own plans and follow Him, "Let him deny himself," regardless of what the world might think. Doing this may cause ridicule and persecution from the world, but like the apostles, we should rejoice, "...that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:41, 42).

To see an example of one who

took up his cross and followed his Lord we need to look at the life of the apostle Paul. His life, after his conversion, was devoted entirely to the cause of Christ and in the carrying out the plan God had for his life. In his instructions, just before his death, he told young Timothy, "watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (II Tim. 4:5). Of his own life as a servant of the Lord, he said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (II Tim. 4:7).

For an example of one who did not "take up his cross and follow me" is found in Paul's statement concerning Demas when he said, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica..." (II Tim. 4:10). Every Christian is called upon to separate himself from the world and this is what Christ refers to as cross bearing. In doing this one will meet many trials and troubles along the way, but as Christ patiently bore the old wooden cross to Calvary's mount to carry out that for which He came to do, we are to patiently endure our figurative cross by faithfully following His commands.

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boys and girls. People are perishing every day without the Lord. Unless they are savingly related to Jesus Christ they go out into a lost eternity. This should give a sense of urgency to our efforts. We have not been called to preach to the elect only for we have no idea who they are until they come in faith and repentance to Jesus. The command given to us by our sovereign Lord is to preach the gospel to all creation. We are not to consider them as 'elect' or 'non-elect,' we are to proclaim the good news because God has commanded it, and we are to love our fellow men who are in danger of everlasting destruction. God's wrath is like a huge stormcloud about to break on their heads, and they are unaware of it, they do not believe it like those in California who said, "we have heard about earthquakes for years but we never believed we would experience the destruction we have experienced until it happened." In the Scriptures we are told that there is coming upon this entire earth a destruction that will make the earthquake in Northern California seem like nothing. God is going to consume this earth with holy fire. This message has been preached for almost two millenniums, and yet people as they go about today say, "Tell us something new, something important... like how we can be rich and prosperous, don't tell us about judgment." The Bible tells us that although men will not listen and think we speak foolishness, and say with a mocking tone, "Where is the promise of His coming, ever since days of old things have gone on exactly the same," we are not to be deceived, He is coming and He is coming in judgment. This is the thing that ought to mold our concern. If

people are caught without Jesus Christ they are doomed forever. What Christian meditating upon these facts can hold his tongue? Does not the gospel burn within our hearts as a fire that cannot be controlled? When we rub shoulders with people for any length of time, if we profess to love them, then there comes a moment in time where love finds a way to speak and to testify to the reality of things unseen. Men and women need the Lord Jesus Christ and this is what ought to move us to speak.

Then in the third place, there are those who question whether the promise of salvation held out in the gospel is a sincere and genuine one if God is sovereign and He already knows whom He will save. How can He really offer salvation to the world, to all creation?

The answer is as follows. In the gospel, God promises to save whoever believes in the Son. It is true that God has a people and those people have been given to Jesus, but this in no way hinders God and Christ from calling sinners to repent and promising to receive them if they do. We must recognize that there are conditions attached to the gospel offer. God sends messengers into the world with the good news, but this good news is not unconditional. The gospel tells how Jesus Christ died for sinners, how He is willing and able to save sinners, but He is the one they must receive. It is in coming to Him that they are saved. If they come they will not be cast out. These are genuine and true promises. God is sincere in offering salvation to sinners, and we should be as free and sincere as He. He goes into all the world and says to people no matter what they have done, or what their color, or place in life, "Listen men, women, if you will seek my Son and cry out for forgiveness in His name, I will receive you."

These are the promises of the gospel and quite frankly they have nothing to do with election, with the truth that God sovereignly selects individuals. They are free and gracious based upon the ability and willingness of Jesus to save all who come to Him. Look how the prophet Isaiah puts it in the context of the Old Testament: "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labour on what does not satisfy? ...Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon." Our Lord Himself was not afraid to bring God's sovereign purposes and the promise of the gospel into the closest proximity when He said: "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away." We should never dare to suggest that because God has revealed the truth of election that He, in proclaiming the gospel, is insincere and is mocking and making fun of sinners by promising them things that are not true. Every single sinner that resorts to Jesus Christ

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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 "water" in John 3:5.

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I know of three popular schools of thought on this verse. 1. That water is referring to baptism. 2. That water is referring to the natural birth. 3. That water is referring to the Word.

Regeneration is the topic. Water and the Spirit are the elements of regeneration.

Those that believe in baptismal regeneration claim that water means the waters of baptism. This would make void salvation by Grace, not of works because Baptism is a righteous work. (See Matthew 3:13-15)

I believe it is possible that water does refer to the natural birth. When a child is born the sack surrounding the infant in the womb breaks releasing the fluid within. This is spoken of as one's "water breaking". Since Christ is comparing the spiritual birth with the natural birth this interpretation is adopted by many (You must be born once in order to be born again).

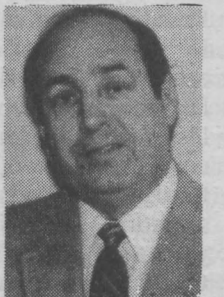
I also believe it is possible that Christ is referring to the Word. The Word is likened to water in many passages of Scripture. Christ used water to illustrate His message to the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:10). He refers to living water in verse 14: "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The Apostle Paul states that you are "...begotten you through the gospel" (I Co. 4:15). You are "...born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." (I Pet. 1:23).

Water is necessary to bring forth life and to sustain it. The Word of God is used by the Spirit to do both.

I believe the water in John 3:5 is referring to the natural birth in a literal sense, and to the Word in a spiritual sense.

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To be able to understand what the word "water" means in this verse, you must first be able to understand what it does not mean. In the first part of this chapter Jesus is teaching Nicodemus, who represents all those that are lost, what is necessary for entrance into the kingdom of heaven. Jesus instructs Nicodemus that if he is not born again,

he cannot see and he cannot enter the kingdom of God. There is only one way for a man to enter the kingdom of God. Everything else is excepted but the spiritual birth. That spiritual birth comes from only one place, above. The word "again" in verse five and in verse seven means anew or from above.

Now, let's look at the word "water" in verse five. Nicodemus did not know, or at least did not understand regeneration. He speaks of a physical birth in verse four as he attempts to understand being born again. The word "water" in verse five is linked to the Spirit with the word "and" as a conjunction. So, they must agree, they are joined together and refer back to being born. Is the physical birth associated to the Spirit? Not in the matter under consideration. So, the aspect of the physical birth can be eliminated as one of the meanings.

Next, consider the word "water" meaning baptism. There are those that hold to this belief. But is baptism necessary to enter the kingdom of God? Well, it is necessary if one is born again by the act of baptism. The fact is that there has never been anyone born again by the act of baptism. Baptism is an act of obedience that pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. And by that act of obedience, one gains entrance to the Lord's church, but not into the kingdom of God. If baptism did gain entrance into heaven, (and it does not), how was the thief on the cross able to enter paradise? He was never baptized, yet Christ told him that he would be in paradise at once. No, water does not mean baptism in this verse.

The only possible meaning of the word "water" in this verse is that it refers to the Word. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (Jn. 3:5). Two things must take place for man to be born again; he must hear the Word (gospel) and the Word must be made effective by the Spirit. Try substituting "Word" for water in this verse. Does it make sense? Is it not joined to the Spirit and refers back to being born again? These two are the essentials for the new birth. Without the Word (gospel) and the Spirit, no man can enter into the kingdom of God.

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Water is used in many places in the Scripture to indicate life.

Bread without water is not enough. Man cannot live by bread alone. He must have water to go with the bread.

In Revelation 22:17, "...And let him that is athirst Come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely". The invitation is to the thirsty. Those that are not thirsty will not come. They have no desire to come. When one is thirsty he will seek water to quench his thirst. When one hungers after the things of God he will seek to be satisfied with those things that are satisfying to the thirsty soul.

We read also in Isaiah 55:1, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters..." Here the Scripture speaks of water which satisfies the soul. There is nothing in this world that will satisfy the thirsty soul of man. He may seek after many things in his life time to find satisfaction, but he will never be able to do so, unless or until he comes to Christ who is our life. Pleasure will not satisfy the hungry soul, money will not quench the thirst that is in the breast of the famishing soul. Men will seek for that which can never satisfy, but when they come to that day of all days, before the God of all the earth, they will then find that all the earth meant nothing.

Jesus said, "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14). Here Christ is using water to represent that spiritual life that He gives to all who come to Him. Water satisfies the natural thirst, and Christ uses this to point out that which satisfies the thirsting soul, even His flesh and His blood (John 6:54). Again Christ said in John 7:37, "...If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." Jesus here spoke of spiritual thirst, not thirsting for natural water, but that water of life of which He spoke to the woman at Jacob's well.

The thirsting of the soul is the greatest thirst that there is. Men will desire to have just one drop of water in hell but will not be able to get any at all. But in this lifetime those who thirst and hunger after righteousness shall be filled.

The water referred to in John 3:5, is spiritual water or has reference to spiritual life. It does not refer to water baptism. Everlasting life is not procured by water baptism. There is no saving power in water. The obedience to the command to be baptized does not bring salvation. Baptismal waters cannot reach the source of the trouble of man. Regeneration is by the Spirit of God as is spoken of here in John 3:5 and also in John 6:63. Also regeneration

is spoken of as being ascribed to God the Father in 1st Peter 1:3, "...hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." This verse here speaks of the new birth as the work of God the Father through Jesus Christ. Also, the Scripture speaks of the new birth as being ascribed to the Son as in 1 John 2:29, "If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him."

The water spoken of in John 3:5, is not water baptism, but is here speaking of the birth of the Spirit or of the regeneration by the Spirit.

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There are at least three arguments on this verse, or three schools of thought. One is that the word "water" means one must be baptized in order to receive the Spirit to be saved. A Campbellite preacher told me that you receive the Spirit in the water at baptism. Some teach that the word "water" means the Word, that you are saved by the gospel Word and the Spirit. Some believe that our Lord was teaching two births, the natural and the Spiritual.

The first school of thought has no merit. If baptism was necessary for salvation, every professing believer who has died during this present dispensation is eternally lost, if he died without baptism. The thief on the cross, to whom He said "this day thou shalt be with me in paradise", never made it and our Lord told a lie. You know this cannot be.

The second school of thought has some merit. John 4:13-14 says, "Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Then again, John 7:37-38 says, "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. We see that our Lord used this word water figuratively in these verses. What do I believe? I am of the third school of thought. I believe that our Lord is explaining the new birth as well as the first birth to Nicodemus. This, I believe is made very clear: I think after Nicodemus asked the question in verse four, our Lord used layman terms to answer him with verse six, that man is born the first time of the flesh which is corrupt, but to be born of the Spirit fits one for the Kingdom of God. He then later, in chapter 4 and 7, explained that the Word was to be used. He knew that the Campbellites and the Hardshells would try to use this verse to teach their doctrines. These two

churches started about the same time, but used this verse in a different way. The Hardshell does not believe the Word is used in salvation while the Campbellites believe that water is used in salvation.

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before God and say to Him, "Lord I sought you, I repented of my sins and fled for refuge to your Son, but He would not receive me because I was not one of your elect." No one will be able to say that. The gospel is straight-forward. God's promises are true and genuine.

The last negative that is sometimes raised as people try to grapple with the sovereignty of God and our responsibility to evangelize deals with the matter of human accountability. How can a covering God hold men and women responsible? If He is in complete control, and saves whom He will, how can He find fault with those who persist in their sins?

In response to this we must say that in the Scriptures men and women are always viewed as responsible for their own sin and destruction. No one in the Bible is condemned because they have not been chosen by God. The lost are uniformly condemned because their deeds are evil. They refuse to come to the Son that they might have life. Though they know that to rebel against God is to deserve death, they continue in their madness, and encourage others in the same folly. Men are not condemned because they are not elect but because they love their sins and hug to themselves those things which bring them down to the depths of hell. We who are Christians know the truth of this. We can remember a time when these things were true of us. What was it that held us back from Christ? It was our love of sin. We were not held back by some decree of God that we were unconscious of, no, we loved what we were doing, and we were not prepared to give it up and come under the authority of the Saviour.

THE POSITIVES

So much for the negatives, let me now move to the positive. It is not enough to say that the sovereignty of God does not hinder evangelism. We must go beyond this and assert that it is a proper understanding of the sovereignty of God that gives life and vitality to evangelism! If God is not sovereign in the full biblical sense evangelism is a giant waste of time, energy, and resources. We might as well forget sending missionaries to the ends of the earth, distributing Bibles and tracts, or giving a verbal word of witness to those around us. The reason for this lies in the condition of the people to whom we are sent. We are not sent to people who are merely scratched and bruised by sin and Satan. We are not sent to people who have a spark of divine goodness deep down inside that we must fan into a flame. We are not sent to

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SOVEREIGNTY

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people whose wills can somehow choose contrary to what they are, to their desires and appetites. The Bible tells us that we are sent as sheep among wolves, we are sent to people who are dead in trespasses and sins, who do not understand nor accept the things of the Spirit of God, who are slaves to sin offering the parts of the bodies in slavery to impurity and ever-increasing wickedness. As if this were not bad enough, the Bible also tells us that the god of this age is at work in them, blinding their minds so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

As we go out to declare the gospel of Christ we find that something more is needed than a mere proclamation of the gospel. What we need today, as has been needed in every day, is power! Not human power, but the resurrection power of Almighty God. We need a call from God that is effectual. Like that issued by the Lord Jesus Christ when He stood outside the grave of Lazarus. Here was a man who had been dead for four days and his body rotting, and yet when the Son of God called to him He called with more than a voice that could be heard. His call was accompanied with power so that Lazarus who had been dead came forth. This is what we need. This power is at God's disposal, and praise His glorious name, He exerts it in the salvation of sinners. He is pleased to bless our efforts. To take our words, weak and feeble though they be, and send them home to the heart by the Holy Spirit. This is what gives life and vitality to evangelism!

The great evangelist Paul knew this. "But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to salvation" In another place he writes: "For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction." And then his famous words in Ephesians: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith -- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God -- not by works, so that no one can boast."

Is the sovereignty of God a hindrance to evangelism? No, it undergirds evangelism for it tells us where the power lies that is needed to turn men from darkness to light, from Satan to God, and to whom the glory belongs whenever a prodigal comes home!

SOVEREIGNTY RELATES TO EVANGELISM

I want to conclude by spelling out five things that will be true of us if we understand how God's sovereignty relates to evangelism.

First, we will be courageous. We need courage as we face the world in which we live. A world with enormous problems, that in many ways is gospel hardened because of the cheap gospel that has been preached during this century. A gospel with a weak Jesus pounding at the heart of some obstinate sinner who seems

to have more power than the Son of God. People do not fear God, nor the wrath to come, as we go out into the world sometimes we are afraid to speak as we ought to speak. Here is where the sovereignty of God can help us. It was used by God to encourage the apostle Paul. Facing opposition in Corinth the Lord appeared to him at night and said: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent, for I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many city." God is involved when we are involved in evangelism. God has placed us where He has people to reach and save. This makes us bold even when the going is tough.

Secondly, this truth will make us honest. There is the temptation to dilute the truth, or hold back some aspect of the will of God because we are afraid that people will snicker, or laugh, or be very offended and say, "I could never believe that... a God of wrath, I like to think of God as a God of love and nothing but love, don't tell me about wrath." So we are tempted in the name of 'effective evangelization' to be so careful about what we say, to sugar-coat the truth, to dull its razor sharp edge. This is a temptation we can resist if we remember God is sovereign. He is able to overcome the natural resistance of the human heart to His truth. To tiptoe around what God has revealed in His Word is to deny this great reality. We know that the gospel of God is always considered foolishness by the unregenerate. They will mock, refuse to listen, and even accuse us of being out of our minds. But we also know that while the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, it is the power of God to those of us who are being saved. So when we come with weakness and with fear and trembling, and we are conscious that we do not have all the answers, and we do not have eloquent persuasive words that will win the praise of men, we still speak because we know there is such a thing as a demonstration of the power of the Spirit of God.

Thirdly, the sovereignty of God will make us patient. Isaiah writes: "As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth. It will not return to me empty but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it." God is not in a rush. There is a time to sow and a time to reap and God is in control of both. Normally speaking, harvest only comes after much careful preparation. We get so easily discouraged in our day. We wonder why we do not see a visitation of God like that in the book of Acts. But we forget that what occurred in Acts was preceded by thousands of years of preparation. Old Testament prophet after prophet came and declared the word of the Lord, and we know how those prophets were treated. Their ministries were not what we would call fruitful and successful by today's standards. They were men who were rejected and scorned and put to death. Then came John the Baptist. He had a special ministry of running ahead to prepare the way for the Lord, the promised Saviour. Finally He came, the

Lord Himself. Was His ministry a giant success? At first the masses followed Him, but then they went away when He told them the hard truths, when He was honest with them and told them the whole will of God, in the end He was left with a small band, and even they scattered at the moment of crisis. Our Lord's ministry was not an overwhelming success, at least to human eyes. But all the work of preparation bore fruit under the post-Pentecostal ministry of the apostles. Jesus sought to prepare His disciples for this in John 4: "I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labour."

God is patient and we must be ready to work until the day we die. We want to see revival come, but if it never comes we must be faithful and keep working because we know God's Word cannot return empty, it will accomplish all of His purposes. God will bring all of His own to heaven. The gospel will bear precious fruit, but always in God's time.

Fourthly, the sovereignty of God ought to make us humble. To the Corinthians Paul wrote: "What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants through whom you came to believe -- as the Lord assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants, nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow." There is no arrogant 'soul-winner' here, nobody going around like a religious gunslinger with notches on his belt to show how many people he has brought to Christ. As a matter of fact we find the very opposite here, we find a refusal on the part of the apostle to intrude into God's territory. Paul the great evangelist, maybe the greatest ever next to our Lord, was a man who was deeply conscious that after all was said and done if there was any response to the truth it was because God was active. Paul was careful not to take any of the glory to himself. What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? They were nothing. It is God who brings forth fruit and makes things grow. He knew his place and role, but he did not want to speak as though God ought to consider Himself privileged to have him on His team, speaking His gospel. Maybe one of the reasons for the sad state of affairs in the church is that human instruments are given a priority and honour that belongs to God alone.

Lastly, the sovereignty of God will make us prayerful. Who was a great man of prayer? Who in his letters frequently called upon believers to pray, and to pray specifically for him? The apostle Paul. This man who knew a great success knew the importance of intercession. And why was prayer so crucial to Paul? Because he knew that God was sovereign in the matter of saving sinners.

J.I. Packer in his excellent Book, "Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God", says this: "But if you and I are too proud or lazy to ask, we need not expect to receive. This is the universal rule, in evangelism as elsewhere. God will make us pray before He blesses our labours in order that we may constantly learn afresh that we depend on God for everything. And then, when God permits us to see conversions, we

shall not be tempted to ascribe them to our own gifts, or skill, or wisdom, or persuasiveness, but to His work alone, and so we shall know whom we ought to thank for them... Those today who, with Paul, believe most strongly that it is the sovereign agency of God, and that alone, that leads sinners to Christ, should bear witness to their faith by showing themselves most constant and faithful and earnest and persistent in prayer that God's blessing may rest on the preaching of His word and that under it sinners might be born again."

Packer is right. If we really believe that God is sovereign in grace, as in the rest of life, we should be a people of prayer. A people who go before God and confess our helplessness and plead with Him to come to our aid.

Why is there so little concern about prayer in our day? Why is it that churches can only get a fraction of their members to prayer meetings? Why do many pray as though prayer were a dead ritual? Is it not that we have lost touch with the reality that we need God to intervene on our behalf, and God is one who is sought in prayer. In the normal course of things God does not pour out great blessings until there is prayer. But herein is encouragement. Do you and I want to see revival, God building His church, and the day come when people will grab us by the arms and say, "Come, let us go up to the house of the Lord and hear the great things He has done and sing praises to His holy name"? Then you and I had better go to God and ask Him for it. Why? Because He is sovereign, only He can bring these things about, and He brings them about in answer to His people's prayers.

Let us go courageously, honestly, patiently, humbly, and prayerfully into this needy world with the wonderful gospel of our sovereign Lord, knowing that in the end, He must win the battle!

-Copied from The Gospel Witness

THE MAN

(Continued from Page 1)

David) as an example of the spiritual truth of becoming a servant of God after having been a servant of sin. We have three things in our story that matches what happens in the salvation of a sinner.

I. The sinner is seen in the young man. There are three physical things about this Egyptian that is true spiritually of every lost person outside of Christ. (1). He was a slave. He was not a free man. He had an Amalekite master. He was an alien and stranger to the commonwealth of Israel being an Egyptian. He did not belong to the people of God. He was not loved by his master. When ill, and his master thought him to be of no longer any service, he was left to die alone. All of these things are true of the lost. Sinners are in "...the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" (II Tim. 2:26). Sinners are servants of sin, John 8:34 and Romans 6:17. Men are not as free as they think themselves to be. Being strangers and foreigners to the household of God (Ephesians 2:19), the lost finds that "...no man cared for my soul" (Psa. 142:4).

(2). He was a sinner. This

young man had offended David. He was part of the army that had burnt David's headquarters and taken captive his wives and people, (Isam. 30:1, 14). He was doing all he could to injure David. This is true of sinners toward God. We are His enemies, Romans 5:10, "...when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God." Colossians 1:21, "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." (3) He was sick, (I Sam. 30:12-13). This man was in a perishing state. He was starving to death. He was half dead. He had no hope within himself. This is true of the lost. Men outside of Christ are sick with sin that leads to death, James 1:15. Sin-disease corrupts the heart, perverts the will, darkens the understanding and paralyzes all our faculties toward God. Sinners are helpless in themselves. Romans 5:6, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

II. The saviour is seen in David. There are three physical things about David in our story that is true spiritually of Christ Jesus our Lord. (1). David is sovereign here. David did not have to help this young Egyptian. The man actually deserved the opposite! David acts solely on the principle of grace. David was king. His name means "beloved." Christ, the beloved King of kings, saves by grace also. Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace are ye saved..." Sinners cannot come to Christ on the footing of merit, but must come as beggars of grace. (2). David is saviour here. IISamuel 30:11, "And they found an Egyptian in the field, and brought him to David..." This young man was too ill and weak to come to David. This was not a joint effort on David's and the Egyptian's part. He had to be brought to David. Even if he had ability to come to David, he would not for he was a stranger to him! Sinners cannot of themselves come to Christ, John 6:44, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him..."

(3). David is superior here. David was not only this young Egyptian's saviour, but also his lord. David asked service from this man. I Samuel 30:15-16, "And David said to him, Canst thou bring me down to this company?" "...And when he had brought him down..." David asked him to change masters. He was asked to stand against his former master. David takes him into his service. He became devoted to the interests of David. He does what David requested of him. When lost sinners are saved, they become servants of Christ. The Lordship of Christ comes with salvation, Colossians 2:6, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." O for grace to serve Christ as ardently as we did sin and Satan in our unregenerated days.

III. The salvation is seen in what David did for this dying young Egyptian man. There are three physical things David does for this youth in I Samuel 30 that are true spiritually of what Christ does for sinners. (1). (Continued on Page 8, Col. 3)

STUDIES IN ACTS

by Willard Willis

"Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him" (Acts 7:40). God, in delivering these rebels from Egypt, had turned the world upside down for them. He, in fact, had demonstrated His love and concern for them by sending ten great plagues upon the nation that had held them in bondage. He had cared for them as a mother cares for her children. They, however, expressed their gratitude by asking for other gods to lead them. They wanted new gods to go before them, or to take them by the hand and lead them. What an affront this was to the God who had saved them! It was also a great affront to God when those who sat before Stephen rejected the very one who had come to save them. They, in fact, had chosen Barabbas, a murderer, in preference to the Lord Jesus.

Stephen, then, continued to build up his case against the Sanhedrin and the nation which they represented. He drew closer to a total condemnation of them and his own death at their hands. God the Spirit, of course, was speaking through Stephen. The Spirit had come to this earth to witness regarding Jesus Christ of Nazareth; and He, through Stephen, was doing a perfect job.

"And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifices unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands." Acts 7:41. God had performed ten great plagues in behalf of the the circumcised. He had done numerous other things for them. They, however, did not rejoice in these things but in what their own puny hands had wrought. This action by the circumcised demonstrated a mean and selfish attitude. They, in fact, due to their attitude, deserved the worst from God; but God, in spite of them, kept His promise to their father Abraham. All of them, due to their sins, died by the way. Joshua and Caleb were the only ones of the original group who were allowed to enter the promised land.

Stephen informs us that the Jews -- the circumcised -- made themselves an idol and even offered sacrifices to it. An idol is an object of worship. Sacrifices involve a sacrifice one makes in order to honor the idol. Some, in fact, have gone so far as to offer their children as sacrifices. Those, however, in the text before us, sacrificed, first of all, their earrings and ornaments which they had brought from Egypt. I'm sure these items were very dear and precious to them, yet they gave them up freely for the purpose of making a golden calf. They then rejoiced in the works of their own hands, or that which their hands had made.

Many today have given a large portion of their wealth to a false church. This is their golden calf, or that which their own minds have devised. They, in this false church or golden calf, practice sprinkling for baptism. They use grape juice in the Lord's Supper. They believe in salvation by works and in falling from grace. They, as was true of the circumcised, have, in a sense of speaking, built their new-found organization with their earrings

and ornaments which they have brought from Egypt or obtained from the world. People who use their wealth for these kinds of organizations hurt themselves wealth-wise in this life, and then they hurt themselves in the world to come since they shall be judged for the help they gave to the evil cause.

"Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to



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me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness?" Acts 7:42. Stephen informs us that "God turned;" that is, God turned away from them. He abandoned them to their own desires. They wanted to worship God's creation rather than the Creator himself, so God gave them up to their desire. This is quite a come-down for the circumcised; or this is a much, much lower ground from where they were. They, in fact, fell from the top to the bottom.

They were given "up to worship the host of heaven." The word "host" means armies. It is here applied to the heavenly bodies because they are so numerous and because they are arranged in a military fashion in the heavens. Stephen points out that this fact is "written in the book of the prophets."

The message from God was, "...O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts, and sacrifices, by the space of forty years in the wilderness?" The meaning here is that they had not offered Him these things. They, at intervals, made these offerings to God, but they were continually stepping backward. They were like a rubber band, which, when released, will always revert back to its original form. God had been their friend. He had sent Moses to deliver them, and He had turned Egypt upside down in bringing them out. They, however, failed to give Him the honor due Him.

Stephen, of course, through God the Spirit, is about to place a similar charge against his audience. He is about to place his audience in the same bag of rotten apples. He is about to place them in the same gutter. They, of course, agree with what Stephen says their fathers did; but they consider themselves to have been walking on the straight and narrow road. They felt that no charge could be placed against them. There are multitudes today who think they are in the center of God's will. These are they who were baptized as infants and as a result fully expect to go to heaven when they die. They, as was true of the Sanhedrin, would be furious if one informed them

that they are enemies of God.

"Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon." Acts 7:43. God, in Jeremiah 3:14, refers to Himself as being married to Israel. He proceeds to compare His wife to an unfaithful wife. See Jeremiah 3: 6, 20. They, the circumcised, "took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of their god Remphan." They took up these, or carried them with them. Sometimes a girl in high school will wear the class ring of her sweetheart. It is with her wherever she goes. She wants all to know that her life is centered around her sweetheart. God's wife, not His girlfriend, had found and courted others. They were called Moloch and Remphan.

The tabernacle of Moloch refers to a tent which contained the image of Moloch. It is customary for idolatrous nations to carry their idols with them. One, for example, will oftentimes see the supposed image of the Virgin Mary on the top of dashboards on cars. We also find from Acts 19:24 that the heathen of that day all had an image of Diana. I've read that one form of Diana was sold as a charm and was used to keep evil away from them.

The name Moloch signifies king. He was the god of the Ammonites to whom human sacrifices were made. One will find from Leviticus 18:21 and 20:2-5 that Moses forbade the Israelites to dedicate their children to Moloch by passing them through the fire. We learn from II Kings 21:3-6 that Manasseh made his sons pass through the fire in honor of Moloch.

The image of Moloch was made of brass. His arms were outstretched so as to appear that he was embracing those who came to him. They, when offering children to him, would heat his image to burning hot. The child, of course, died when placed in the arms of the image. It is not certain what this image represented, but it is believed that it represented a heavenly body and likely the sun. This bears out Acts 7:42 where it is said that "God gave them up to worship the host of heaven."

Stephen, in bringing up this matter before the Sanhedrin, was delivering a cutting reproof to them regarding the action of their fathers. Stephen also reminds them of how their fathers had worshipped an image called "the star of your god Remphan." It is generally agreed that the part of the host of heaven which this image related to was the planet Saturn, or Mars. This conclusion is drawn from the fact that "the star of your god Remphan," can be read, "Chiun your images, the star of your god." The word "Chiun" is another word for Remphan. The same word "clevan" in Arabic denotes the planet Saturn.

God, because of that which Israel his wife was carrying as an emblem of her devotion, declares that He would carry Israel "away beyond Babylon" (v. 43). We, of course, are all aware of how God scattered Israel out among the nations (note Jeremiah 25:9-12).

"Our fathers" had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, that he should make it according to the fashion that he had seen." Acts 7:44. "the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness" was the tabernacle which Moses was commanded to make. It was referred to as "the tabernacle of witness" it was a visible witness that God was with them and cared for them.

You may recall that the two charges made against Stephen were that he had spoken blasphemy against Moses, or his law, and against the temple (Acts 6:13, 14). Stephen, up to this point, had shown his great respect for Moses and his law. He now proceeds to show that he did not blaspheme the temple, or the holy places of worship. He proves his point by acknowledging that the tabernacle was of divine appointment and that even the manner in which it was fashioned was from God (Exodus 25:40, 26:30). This particular charge against him, therefore, must be thrown out.

"Which also our fathers that came after brought in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David" Acts 7:45. You may recall that of the original generation which left Egypt, only Joshua and Caleb were allowed to enter Canaan (Numbers 14:22-24). The reference, then, to the "fathers which came after" relates to those who came after the time when the tabernacle was built. Stephen proceeds to point out that such was brought in with Jesus. Jesus is the Greek for Joshua. The reference therefore is to Joshua.

"Into the possession of the Gentiles," as our text states, relates to the land of Canaan. It was these people whom God drove out from before the face of the Jewish fathers. Stephen points out that they continued to drive out the Gentiles until the days of David. They, during David's time, were driven out completely.

"Who found favor before God, and desired to find a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. But Solomon built him an house" Acts 7:46, 47. Stephen has now traced his and the fathers of his audience from Abraham on down to David. Step by step he has briefly re-run the pilgrimage of the fathers of his nation. He had been charged with blasphemy and was defending himself before the high court of the land. He, of course, put up a great defense for himself and showed that he knew as much, if not more, about Jewish history as those who sat before him. He also showed that his love and dedication to the fathers and the teachings from God was second to none. He, therefore, deserved to be heard, and his words heeded, since he spoke with knowledge, wisdom, and authority. The fact that he was only a deacon, rather than holding some higher office, should have made no difference. Knowledge and wisdom should have the same effect, no matter what their source may be. God the Spirit, in fact, can and does work through whomever He pleases.

Stephen then, in the Scripture before us, has traced the circum-

cised down to David. David was a man after God's own heart because of his faith in God. He, in fact, showed how much he trusted God when he went up against Goliath in the manner that he did. It was not just Goliath, but the entire life of David was one that demonstrated a great faith in God. He made many mistakes, but the overriding factor in his life was his intense faith in God. We, of course, know from Hebrews 11:6 that without faith it is impossible to please God. Faith, on the other hand, pleases God greatly.

The ark and the other holy symbols, up until the time of David, did not have a permanent dwelling place. They were moved from place to place. David sought to build a permanent residence for the holy things of God. Solomon built the temple, but David laid the ground work.

"Howbeit the most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands; as saith the prophet, Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool: What house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what is the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made all these things?" Acts 7:48-50.

That which Stephen states in these Scriptures is probably why he was charged with blasphemy against the temple. The Sanhedrin, after all, and the entire Jewish nation did not foresee a future day when other people besides themselves would be privileged to worship God. They believed that temple worship, as they knew it, was all there was and all there ever would be. Stephen had obviously brought this matter up prior to this event and now brings it up again. Stephen's audience at this point, no doubt, began to be heated up. The water in the pan, in a sense of speaking, begins to simmer as Stephen gradually turns up the flame.

Stephen, before he brought up this matter relative to the future worship of God, first acknowledged how that God did appoint the temple and its means in the worship of God. He also acknowledged how God had appointed and used Moses and the law, or the "lively oracles." Jesus, however, had brought a change. He had established His church, and the church rather than the temple was the pillar and ground of the truth. God had revealed Himself by the temple worship. It was there that His glory was seen. Later He revealed Himself by way of His own Son. His glory was revealed through the Son. Now, God's glory is revealed through the Lord's body -- the church. The shadow had passed, and Jesus Christ the substance had come. Jesus fulfilled all the types which were set forth by the temple. The temple worship therefore was obsolete. The message now was for the believers to go into all the world and preach the gospel.

The temple of God on earth today is the Lord's body -- the church. I Corinthians 3:16, which is addressed to the Lord's church (I Corinthians 1:2) reads as follows: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"

(Continued on Page 8, Col. 1)

STUDIES

(Continued from Page 7)

It is easy for one to see, carnally speaking, why the Sanhedrin objected to God's message through Stephen. The Jews, in the main, to this day, are still holding to their temple worship. They have failed to see Jesus Christ of Nazareth as the Messiah who fulfilled the entire temple function. The lamb pointed to Him as well as the brazen altar on which the lamb was laid and cut into its many pieces. Millions of lambs, in fact, were killed; but each lamb pointed to the one Lamb, Jesus Christ, who was offered once for all time.

It was not Stephen as a person that the Sanhedrin was opposed to. It was the message he delivered. They would have had the same reaction against anyone with the same message as that delivered by Stephen.

The message by Stephen, in the Scriptures before us, is that God could not be confined to the temple in Jerusalem. God is too big and too great to be restricted within the temple walls. God, in fact, can be worshipped through Christ Jesus and by the power of the Spirit, from valleys, hills, mountain tops, and cities around the world. One doesn't have to go to the temple in Jerusalem in order to sing, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me." See John 4:20-24.

"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." Acts 7:51. The expression "stiffnecked" is used on various occasions in the Old Testament. It is taken from a term used when oxen refused to be yoked. The Sanhedrin, and the nation they represented, also refused to take the yoke of Christ Jesus upon them. He had said, "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me;" but they, as is true of stubborn oxen, drew back. They said, in essence, who are you that you can tell us how to worship God? Jesus, of course, by His miracles, His life, and by His words, proved who He was. The prophecies regarding Him were all fulfilled by Him. There was no reason, therefore, for them to be stiffnecked. They should have submitted themselves to His every word and done so with gladness. He, after all, had come to seek and to save the lost. He was and is the only hope for any creature of earth.

Stephen charges his audience with being "uncircumcised in heart and ears." They had been physically circumcised when they were eight days old. This act identified them as children of Abraham and heirs to God's promise to Abraham. They, however, needed to go a step further and be circumcised in the heart and in the ears, or to hear and heed. Circumcision, as a formality, is vain. One, in other words, to be a son of Abraham, must practice the faith and obedience of Abraham. It is as stated in Romans 4:3: "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for

righteousness." Abraham, then, was circumcised in his heart and ears. Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," or be circumcised in the heart and ears.

Stephen's words to the Sanhedrin were that they always resisted the Holy Spirit. It was not that God the Spirit was overcome by them, but they ignored Him. They, in other words, resisted the outward call of God the Spirit through the preaching of Stephen and others. No person, on the other hand, has ever resisted the inward call of the Spirit, or the quickening performed by God the Spirit. The natural man, which the Sanhedrin were, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. It is only when there is a quickening to spiritual life that God's Word is heard and heeded. Nicodemus, one member of the Sanhedrin, was quickened to spiritual life. He was circumcised in heart and ears.

"Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers." Acts 7:52. We are to keep in mind that Stephen's words were inspired by God the Holy Spirit. The charge against the Sanhedrin, through Stephen, was coming directly from heaven. God was speaking through Stephen, and His message was that their action against His Son Jesus was not the first of its kind. He, in fact, had sent many previous messengers -- messengers whom their fathers had persecuted and even slain. God finally sent His own Son; and the crowd, which sat before Stephen, had murdered Him. See Luke 20:9-18.

The Sanhedrin, of course, at this point, were boiling more and more as God, through Stephen, turned up the flame. The steam, in fact, will soon blow the lid from the pot; and they will violently attack Stephen.

"Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it." Acts 7:53. One cannot be certain whether Stephen means that God used angels as instruments in giving the law to Moses or whether they were gathered as witnesses when the law was given. The significant point, however, is that the law came down from heaven. It was not a thing of earth, yet it was not kept. There could be no weightier matter than that which comes directly from the throne of God. To fail to hear and heed such is the height of rebellion and stupidity. One cannot do a worse thing for one's self than to disobey God. One, on the other hand, cannot do a better thing for one's self than to obey God. We should never forget, as the old Puritan said, that "Only that which is done for Christ will last."

"When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth." Acts 7:54. Stephen, through God the Spirit, gradually turned up the flame of truth until the lid blew off. They obviously held back and held back their anger until a great amount was stored up. It was at this point that they released all their anger at one time.

God the Spirit, through Stephen, had cut them to the heart. Stephen had not minced

words but had used the sword of the Spirit to cut them deeply. It may sound cruel for God's people to cut sinners to the heart. We, however, are doing them a favor by doing so. One of the major problems with the pulpit today is that ministers do not use the Word to cut people all the way to the heart. The only tickle their ears, or say pleasant things to them. They are very careful not to offend anyone. These same people will gnash upon these kind of ministers when they find themselves in hell together.

I'm very thankful for ministers who told me the truth. They stepped hard on my toes. They cut me deeply, and I'm glad they did. Thank God for ministers who cut to the heart with the truth.

THE MAN

(Continued from Page 7)

David gave him survival. I Samuel 20:12, "...his spirit came again to him..." David gave this young man physical life in a sense. Luke 8:53-55, "...she was dead. And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit came again..." Sinners have to do with a greater than David. Christ gives spiritual life to sinners. Christ gives eternal life to sinners. Christ gives abundant life to sinners. John 10:10, "...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (2). David gave him sustenance. This young man was given water, bread, a piece of a cake of figs and two clusters of raisins. The son of David, the Lord Jesus, gives to us poor sinners food also. Not food of this world, John 4:32, "But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of." We feast upon Christ through the Word of God. Job 23:12, "...I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food."

(3). David gave him security. I Samuel 30:15, "...And he said, Swear unto me by God, that thou wilt neither kill me, nor deliver me into the hands of my master..." David promised the man not to kill him or deliver him back to his former master. Thus is it with Christ. We sinners are free of Satan forever as we are in Christ's hands (John 10:28-31). God will not kill us, and Satan cannot get us! Are you a Christian? Have you changed masters? Why not today?

GOSPEL

(Continued from Page 1)

Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." So we see Paul reminding the brethren here at Corinth that the gospel that he preached was the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; and I contend today that nothing will benefit a lost person a pertaining to salvation, other than the preaching of the gospel.

We have but to look at the sermons in the book of Acts, to see that the gospel these men preached was the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. I en-

courage you to read these things for yourself, here are the places you will find sermons recorded; in Acts 2:22 and following, Acts 3:12 and following, Acts 10:34 and following, Acts 13:16-41, Acts 17:22-32 and Acts 26:22, 23. Today, as we observe and listen to so-called preachers, we see that the preaching of the gospel to lost people is too simple and does not include enough education and sophistication. After all how can man receive any honor and praise of men if he has no more than he can do after preaching the gospel? So to men, just preaching the gospel is foolish, for the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but to us which are saved it is the power of God (I Corinthians 1:18). Thank God for His power that translated us from darkness into light, for all the persuasions of men could never do what God has done for us.

You see, God not only elected a people, He also determined how He would call them in, "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thessalonians 2:14). Some may ask, why did God choose the preaching of the gospel to call in His elect? Because it pleased Him (I Corinthians 1:21).

What I will say now will no doubt offend many, but God forbid that I withhold the truth to spare feelings. Through the years I have watched as education (so-called) has gained control of almost every institution and organization that we know of, and is swiftly consuming the religious world, and I see it taking hold in the Lord's Churches. When I was growing up in the Ozarks and first started to school, the teachers did not have a high school education. A little later they had high school, but no college; and these were the best teachers I can remember. Of course, as the education system became organized and gained more control, they passed laws that prohibited any one from teaching that did not have the proper amount of college hours; and let me ask you, are our schools better today than they were 30 to 40 years ago?

And we have seen the same thing happen in religion. The religious world today would not even consider allowing a man to pastor or preach in their building that had not attended their schools. I know of a church that goes by the name Baptist, that voted many years ago to let no man preach in their building that had not been to seminary; and at the time the vote was taken I doubt if any of the members had a high school education. So you see this teaching has filtered down from those who have obtained degrees of what ever sort. They have made the people to believe that this is the way it must be. I do not have the ability to effect any of these that I have mentioned; but I do want to appeal to men called of God to preach the gospel not to be taken in by fleshly desires for exaltation, but remember the words of our brother Paul who said "for Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the

gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect (I Corinthians 1:17).

Then in I Corinthians 2:1-5 Paul said, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

I'm afraid that we have many people today whose faith is in the wisdom of men. They love the way Brother so & so prepares and delivers his sermon. Many preachers are more concerned about how pleased the people are with their preaching than God. I heard it said one time, and I believe it, that if most preachers suddenly lost their notes and outlines when they stood up to preach, they would not be able to preach a lick.

What happened to men whom God called to preach out from between the plow handles? They didn't look to men for learning, but took their Bibles and preached the glorious gospel of Christ.

DISCIPLINE

(Continued from Page 1)

Churches are composed of redeemed yet imperfect beings, and there are liable to be misunderstandings, strifes, contentions and such like, hence, discipline is necessary in the government of a church.

From the great commission we see that the teaching or training of the disciples of Christ has been committed to the Lord's Church. (Matt. 28:20). This teaching or training must be suited to the needs of different classes of discipline, and it must consist of more than a mere announcement of the truth. We find this to be true according to the epistles to the churches and according to Christ Himself. We note therefore: three kinds of discipline.

I. Formative Discipline. This is the primary and simplest form of discipline. It consists of teaching, instructing, and guiding the willing-hearted in the ways of truth and righteousness (I Tim. 4:6 & John 14:26). Churches should engage themselves diligently in this form of discipline. It is the best and most satisfactory method. If it is faithfully used, other less desirable forms of discipline will not be so much needed.

II. Corrective Discipline. The most diligent formative discipline will not prevent lapses from the straight and narrow path on the part of believers. Some are sure to be overtaken by sin. This class is spoken of in Galatians 6:1. These are not the stubbornly and persistently sinful, but such as live righteously in the main, but are overcome by some temptation or habit and thus fall into sin. They are to be restored by the spiritually minded in the church. (Continued on Page 9, Col. 4)

STUDIES IN II PETER 2:14-22

by Clyde Everman

"For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error" (v. 18).

In verse 17 of this chapter the apostle Peter had said that these false teachers were dry wells, "wells without water." Also they were clouds carried by a tempest. The meaning is, they gave great promise of providing much spiritual aid to the thirsty soul, yet like a dry well or clouds without water, they can give no help. The question may be asked, How can they attract followers, seeing they are empty and have nothing to give? Peter now gives the answer in verse 18. They are eloquent speakers. They know how to impress people by their speech, "they speak great swelling words of vanity." One way to confuse people is to use words that no one understands. That is what these false teachers do, using "words of vanity", "inflated words", words having no meaning. The fact that a man can be a great speaker, eloquent in speech is no sign that he speaks the truth. It is said of Apollos in Acts 18:24 that he was an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scripture, yet he did not have the right message. On the other hand, the apostle Paul, being a well educated man, yet he told the church at Corinth, "I came to you, not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (I Cor. 2:1, 4). The truth does not need enticing words of man's wisdom in order to be received. The truth spoken in plain and simple language employed by the Holy Spirit is that which will bring results. The false teachers do not have the Spirit and power, therefore, in order to gain followers they must resort to "enticing words of man's wisdom", "great swelling words of vanity."

One way they are so successful in getting people to follow them is they appeal to the lust of the flesh. They appeal to the desires of the old nature, "they allure through the lusts of the flesh." We must remember that the lusts of the flesh are more than just that of sexual sins. There are many desires of the old nature. In Galatians 5:19-21 there is quite a large list given of these lusts. The word "allure" means "bait" or "trap", which means they use these lusts to bait the trap to catch "unstable souls" (v. 14). They do this "through much wantonness." This means they use a variety of lascivious acts in setting traps for their listeners, "they set traps baited with lusts" (Beck tran.). The ones whom they trap are "those that were clean escaped from them who live in error." They attempt to trap the new Christian, the one who only recently come to the truth, the one who has just escaped from those who live in sin. (V. 19) "While they

promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage."

The thought here is that while these false teachers promise freedom to their listeners, they, themselves are servants (slaves) of corrupting sins. Proof of their slavery is the fact that they are overcome by their evil habits and in bondage, to them. They promise freedom. They claim to be servants of God, yet they are servants of sin. In what way are they in bondage one may ask. They are in bondage to their love of money (v. 3). This covetousness causes them to use every kind of scheme to deceive and receive support from people. They are in bondage to their fleshly lusts (v. 10). They are bound by pride (vs. 10-12). They do every thing possible to build themselves up, while tearing down others in order to gain fame and honor. "For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage." This tells us that whatever controls a man, love of money, lusts of the flesh, pride, etc, is that to which a man is in bondage. These false teachers promise freedom, but their promises only bring bondage. They promise life, but their way brings death.

Christ Jesus brings freedom to those who put their trust in Him, but that freedom is entirely different from the freedom these false teachers talk about. Freedom as taught in the Scripture is not "going your own way," or "doing your own thing." That in fact is the bondage of sin which Peter is talking about. Christ said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). Only those who know and believe the truth of the Word of God have freedom, true freedom. That freedom is not free to do as one pleases, but it is a freedom from the penalty of sin, freedom from the power of Satan. It is a freedom to follow the Lord's commands. This freedom is not a license to sin, as these teach, but is a freedom to do God's will and to follow Him.

(2:20). "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning."

This passage is often quoted to show that the Scripture teaches that one can lose his/her salvation after once being saved, that is the "falling from grace" belief. Neither does this passage, nor any other passage of the Word of God, teach that one who has placed his/her trust in the shed blood of Christ can ever be lost. In fact the Scripture abounds in passages that teach the "eternal security" of the believer.

What does this verse teach? First let us see of whom this is said. We see that this whole second chapter has been describing the false teachers who had entered "among you" (v. 1). They were teaching a false doctrine, denying the atonement of the blood of Christ (v. 1). They were deceiving the people as to moral living (v. 2). They were said to be ser-

vants of their own fleshly lusts (v. 14, 19). They were referred to as "brute beasts made to be taken and destroyed." In Jude 19 they are said to be, "sensual, having not the Spirit." Does this sound like people who have put their trust in Christ and have become children of God? Nothing could be farther from the truth. These were false teachers who were leading some astray by their false teaching. They had come to the knowledge of the truth, yet they had not received it, in fact they denied the truth (v. 1). They had cleaned up their lives, "escaped the pollutions of the world," made a profession of faith, Joined the church, Jude said "crept in." But the apostle Peter said this was a temporary reformation and that when they again become entangled in sin, "the latter end is worse than the beginning." We know this to be true. The drunkard who gives up his drinking for a time but goes back to the bottle is worse than he was before. Any one who reforms for a time from his sins is far worse in those sins when he returns to them than they were before. This is the thought of this passage, these false teachers of whom Peter is describing come in looking like Christians, acting like Christians, claiming to be Christians, but when they return to their old ways of sin their condition is far worse than before. In fact, verse 21 tells us, "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

This verse tells us they would have been better off never to have heard the truth, than to have known the truth yet not received it. This verse tells us they knew the way of righteousness, but it does not say they believed it. This reminds us of Judas Iscariot, a charter member of the first church, one who was with Jesus three and a half years, hearing, seeing all that Christ said and did, yet in the end turned from the truth to betray Christ the Saviour. It would have been better for him never to have been with Christ and to have known the way of righteousness. Judas, although a member of the Lord's church, one of the twelve apostles, the one who carried the money bag (the treasurer), yet he was never saved, Christ called him a devil, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (John 6:70). Peter is saying the same thing concerning these false teachers.

2:22) "But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb. The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

The apostle Peter concludes his description of these false teachers by comparing them to the dog and the sow. The proverb concerning the dog is very similar to that in Proverbs 26:11, "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly." We have no record of that of the sow. Peter used these two animals to illustrate these of whom he is warning us against.

Both dogs and swine were unclean animals as far as the Jews were concerned. The dog of that day was not a pampered house-

hold pet as he is today but was considered as unclean and as for his food, he did not get it out of a bag from the supermarket, but had to hunt for what he could find. Sometimes he ate that which did not agree with him and he would vomit it up, but his nature was to turn and again eat that which he had vomited. Yes, this is disgusting, but that is what Peter wanted us to see, these teachers are like the dog, like the dog who has a nature to do what he does, these have a nature to do what they do, go back to the evil which they once did. Like the sow that was washed and cleaned up returns to wallowing in the mud. Why did the dog return to his vomit? Why did the sow return to the mud-hole? Is it not because the dog's nature is to do what he did? Is it not the nature of a hog to wallow in the mud? Being sick at his stomach and vomiting might make the dog feel better but that does not change his nature. Washing the sow may make her look better but washing does not change her nature. The dog still had a dog's nature, the sow still had a hog's nature.

What Peter is saying is that these false teachers, although they may have reformed and appear to have become children of God, yet they have not changed any more than did the dog or the sow. Their temporary ceasing from sin may, like the dog that vomited, make them feel better and like the washed sow look better, but no change in their nature. They had not trusted in Christ for salvation, they were not His sheep. In no way were they ever saved. This passage does not, as well as any other passage of Scripture does not teach that one who has put his/her faith in the shed blood of Christ can ever be lost. The apostle John wrote, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (I John 5:13). How long does "eternal life" last?

In chapter two Peter has dealt with the character and the conduct of these false teachers. He has shown what they are and how they act. He has not pulled any punches in describing these, but this is done that we might be on guard against them. If we are well established in the faith, if we have a good foundation in the Word of God, we should have no trouble in identifying them for what they are when they appear. In chapter three their false teaching is taken up and shown to be as false as they and their profession is. In our next study we will look into what they teach concerning the second coming of our Lord.

To be continued...

DISCIPLINE

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The spiritually minded in the church should go to those who have erred and, in meekness seek to recover them from their sin. If this plan is followed, many will be saved from greatly injuring themselves and the church. Another instance of corrective discipline is found in Matthew 18:17. Here we have the case of one brother offending against another.

After the offended one has taken the first two steps and there has been no avail, he is to bring the matter to the attention of the church. The church is then to judge the case and seek to reconcile the two estranged brethren. This is corrective discipline.

III. Excisive Discipline. By excisive discipline is meant the cutting off or excluding of a member of the church for some wicked offence or for a persistent course of sin. No matter how well a church may acquaint herself in the use of both formative and corrective discipline, she will find the necessity now and then of withdrawing from some person the hand of church fellowship.

The purpose of excisive discipline. 1. The good of the excluded. Whenever the one excluded seems to be a saved person, this should be the uppermost thing. And even when it is clear that the offending person is lost, we should pray that his exclusion will help to bring about his salvation. Paul recommended the exclusion of the incestuous man at Corinth, first of all, for the destruction of the flesh (carnal nature). We should pray for the excluded that God will use the discipline for their own good. In the case of the man at Corinth we see that the discipline accomplished its desired purpose. From II Corinthians 2:6-8 we see that this man repented. Many a disciple has been awakened and brought to his senses by exclusion from the church.

2. The good of the church. Paul assigned another reason for the exclusion of the man at Corinth. He tells them to purge out the old leaven because "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (I Cor. 5:6,8). The church must exclude the wicked in order to protect the rest of her membership. If the wicked are left in the church, it will tend to corrupt the entire church.

3. The glory of Christ. We need to exclude the wicked for the glory of Christ. The church is His body. It represents Him in the world. It dishonors Him for His body to be defiled with wickedness. Paul argues against divisions in the church on the ground that Christ is not divided (I Cor. 1:13). Likewise we may argue against the permission of wickedness in the church on the ground that there is no wickedness in Him.

Offenses worthy of Excisive Discipline. I Personal offenses. (Matt. 18:15-18) A church should not allow one of its members to bring before it a grievance against another of its members until the first two steps have been taken. 2. Doctrinal offenses. (Rom. 16:7; I Tim. 6:3-5) From each of these passages excisive church discipline in the case of the persistent teachers of error is a reasonable cause. 3. Moral offenses (I Cor. 5:1-7; II Thess. 3:6,14) We are to walk worthy of our calling.

LIFE

(Continued from Page 1)

this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:31-35).

There was one burning passionate desire in the heart of our

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LIFE

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Lord Jesus when He was on His way to Calvary; namely, that the Father through Him and He in the Father be glorified. Beloved we believe that this is the whole purpose of redemption; the glorification of God. All the events of our times, particularly those in the Middle East in and around Israel, have to serve this purpose; that He, the Lord, be glorified in the eyes of all nations.

First, let us look at some of the reasons why the Father was so well pleased with His Son. When the Lord Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan river, God spoke from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:17). Jesus did not please His Father because He attended many Bible classes every day, but because He never thought of Himself. He never chose the easy way for Himself. He never ran away from difficulties. His lips never uttered a word of complaint. Up to the end He was content to please the Father. Only as He was hanging on the cruel Roman cross, laden with the sins of the elect world, did He cry, "...My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46). Even before the crucifixion He said in perfect faith to His Father, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4). Also, before His death on the cross; He cried out, "...It is finished...." (John 19:30).

Yes, beloved brethren, He glorified the Father while dying on the cruel cross for you and me.

Secondly, let us look at some of the things that the word "glorify" means. The heavenly Father was everything to Jesus. His one desire was, "Not I, but rather, My Father!" He always wanted it to be known that the Father always came first. He had no other goal, or no other thought in mind but the Father. He never wanted or did anything without looking to His Father. "Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." (John 5:19). Dear friend, by not doing anything on His own but what the Father wanted, our Lord Jesus glorified the Father.

We, as God's children, can undertake so much and do it with great joy, but this does not mean that it is God's will, or that our deeds are in accordance with His will or His deeds. We should never do anything for the Lord without looking to Jesus first, and waiting until you have a clear yes or a clear no.

Isaiah said something that has given me a desire to be sure that I am on the right track when I am studying to please the Lord. "And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." (Isa.

30:21). I find that if we do something which we have not asked of the Lord, it usually turns out to be a curse in the end. We believe that one of the main causes of spiritual unfaithfulness is that we do much, and are very busy for the Lord without having first sought Him and found Him in prayer. We should examine ourselves before the Lord, and see whether all that we do is in accordance with the will of God. In the Bible sense, to glorify, means not doing or thinking anything without looking to Jesus to see what He thinks and wants.

Thirdly, let us look unto Jesus. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2). We always accept these words in Hebrews gratefully as a strengthening of our faith, but there is a higher application to them. What would be impossible for the average man, Jesus did with love and joy! It is amazing that there is such a great love for lost souls that He went through the most agonizing hell for the likes of me just for the joy of it. Oh, what a Saviour! Yes, brethren, I believe He suffered for me all the hell that was justly mine to satisfy the Father. What does Jesus want? He wants us to take a good look at that figure there on the cross. Realize that it should be us instead of Him. Then trust Him, repent, come to Him, the one and only hope of life everlasting. We will never live a life that glorifies God until we trust Jesus unto life everlasting. He is as good as His Word! He will never leave, or forsake us.

This was Moses' secret. Moses was not perfect. He was a man with limitations, but the Scriptures testify concerning him that, "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured; as seeing him who is invisible." (Heb. 11:27). Moses looked to God continually. Only in this way could he win against the tide with great perseverance and do the will of God for all Israel. He stood alone, but he looked to his Lord and brought Israel through the wilderness.

The sweet Psalmist also experienced this, and that is why he desired complete dependence on the Lord whom he wanted to glorify. "Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the LORD our God, until that he have mercy upon us" (Ps. 123:1-2).

This is a blessed secret, just as a servant or a maid watches the hand of their master or mistress to see if they give them a sign, so we are to look to our Lord, our master. In the continual recognition and doing of His will, the Father is glorified in the Son, in whom we are, in all spheres of our lives. In all our daily tasks, we should be found to be closely guarding our every step in the act of humility in reverence to Him of whom we claim as our ever lasting abiding High Priest. He is Lord and

Master of the life of a Christian.

Fourthly, as we do all to the glory of God, we look at some more of the important steps in our lives that we face daily. Eating, drinking, and, oh yes, some amount of playing. Beside our three main meals, we are often found in between meals with a cup of coffee or tea, and we usually eat something with it. Now, the Bible does not forbid this, but it says, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (I Cor. 10:31). Does this sound foolish to you? Unbelievers may eat to satisfy their hungry yearnings, but we as children of God are told to do this also to the glory of God. How can we eat and drink to the glory of God? We can do this by acknowledging that everything we eat or drink is a gift of God, given to us so that we can serve Him better. We shall receive a completely new blessing from our meals when we eat them consciously to the glorification of God. It is not so much what we do, as how and for whom we do it. We who are born again believers, and you are born again if you have been saved by the marvelous grace of God, are looking for the soon coming rapture of the saints, when we shall appear before the Judgement seat of Christ. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (II Cor. 5:10). Much of what we do cannot abide before the eyes of God, and will be burned.

The fifth thing that we want to hurriedly study today is, Why have the many promises in the Bible been given to us? We believe the answer to that is that they, of course, are to comfort and strengthen us. However, the main thing is its glorification of God as it is written in II Cor. 1:20, "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." Whatever we do, dearly beloved, we are always to remember that we are to glorify the one who paid it all on Calvary's cross.

Dearly beloved, in conclusion let me say, the surrender of our own lives in the death of Jesus is the greatest glorification of the Father! Therefore, to truly glorify God, we should present our bodies to God as an acceptable sacrifice, as it says in Romans 12:1, "I BESEECH you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Not only to give of ourselves completely to glorify God here in this verse, but Paul says that it is only reasonable that we do it! Brethren, we need to daily put our shoulder to the wheel, making some endeavor of our own to glorify the One who so lovingly and ably kept us from a devil's hell. We, as brethren in Christ, let us stand up and be counted! He did not mind standing for us, let us stand with Him..Amen.

BLOOD

(Continued from Page 1)
thing that is now killing him." How often does this happen. The

world promises life but delivers death.

On the other hand, the blood of Jesus Christ is said to cleanse us from all sin and thereby gives us life and that everlasting. To my knowledge, no one has ever yet been disappointed or deceived by this promise.

The idea of a blood sacrifice is very old, in fact, as old as man. The first implied sacrifice recorded in the Bible is found in the book of Genesis. It says: "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them" (Gen. 3:21). Although we are not specifically told God killed innocent animals to clothe them in skins, logic demands such a thing did occur. The Scriptures also state in Hebrews 9:22: "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." Although the words "for sin" do not occur here, it does no violence to the passage to add it.

The idea of blood sacrifice is not unique to Judaism or Christianity, although I am of the opinion all such ideas started with the one recorded in the book of Genesis. We have many examples of sacrifices being offered to the heathen gods in many different places in the Old Testament.

The idea of all such sacrifices is to gain some advantage with a deity of some sort. That is even true in the case of Christianity. We offer, by faith, the sacrifice of Christ as our sin bearer and therefore gain acceptance unto God. The book of Romans expresses it thusly: "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:24-26). Essentially, what these verses say is that Christ became a sacrifice and that we, by faith in His blood (the sacrifice), are justified, while at the same time, this procedure enables God to remain just. And of course, all of this is the result of the grace of God.

I. A HISTORY OF SACRIFICES

1. I have already alluded to the first implied sacrifice. We are not given all the facts in regards to this sacrifice but it is easy to arrive at certain conclusions in the matter. We know for a fact that God did everything in this matter. He provided the animal skins for them and apparently even placed them on Adam and Eve. We must believe that innocent animals had to die in order to provide these skins. Most certainly, this is the first intimation of the sacrifice that the Son of God would, at a much later date, make of His own body on the tree. The fact that God personally carried out the entire procedure, is also very significant. Certainly, up to this point, the first human beings had no understanding, knowledge, or, for that matter, any need of such a thing. In my opinion, the reason God did this was to set a

precedent or example in this matter. Certainly, at a later date, people were instructed to provide and make their own animal sacrifices, so that indicates God changed His method of dealing with human beings in regards to providing a sacrifice.

2. We are also told in the book of Galatians, that God personally preached the gospel to Abraham: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed" (Gal. 3:8). We are also told that the definition for the gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. So, we conclude that God preached the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ to Abraham.

But should we conclude this is the first and only O.T. saint the Lord preached to? By close examination of the passage under consideration, we note the emphasis is on nations. God was explaining to Abraham that not only the Hebrew people would be justified by faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, but so would the Gentile nations.

3. But regardless of what one wishes to believe about the above passage, it is clear the second recorded sacrifice is associated with Abel, the third man to have lived in this world. Hebrews puts it like this: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. 11:4). Coupling this with the passage in Romans 10:17, which says that faith comes by hearing the Word of God, we have to conclude that Abel, in some manner, heard the Word of God, either audibly or by picture, and was given instructions as to how to make his sacrifice acceptable, as opposed to Cain's, which was not acceptable. I am of the opinion the example given by God to Adam was still vivid in the mind of Adam's children. We conclude the blood sacrifices made by Abel clearly picture to us, the blood sacrifice made by Christ on the cross, at a much later date.

4. We are further told that Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob made these blood sacrifices. This pretty well brings up the time of Moses, under whom, God officially instituted the sacrificial system in the law of Moses, given in the book of Exodus.

But we are told quite clearly that the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins (Heb. 10:4). Now if this is true, it seems like a lot of wasted time, energy, and a lot of animals sacrificed for nothing. But of course, we have to understand the real purpose of the sacrificial system put in place by the law of Moses. Again, we are not left in the dark as to what real purpose it served. Galatians 3:24 says: "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." So, we can conclude the sacrificial system was to instruct the Hebrews as to the coming of Christ, and the sin removing, propitiating blood sacrifice. He made on the cross. Every animal

(Continued on Page 11, Col. 3)

Our abode in this world is short and uncertain, our removal out of it sure and speedy, and our return to it again impossible and never to be expected.

HERESY LEADS TO HERESY LEADS TO HERESY - Part II

by Joseph M. Wilson

"And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim.4:4).

Since becoming editor of this paper, I have several times called attention to the fact that heresy breeds heresy. I had an article in the last issue along this line. I have observed this many times during my ministry. One will go into some heresy. He rarely stops at that. He goes on and on and on, further and further, deeper and deeper into heresy. I have seen the Priesthood of the Church men go on and on into wilder and more foolish conjectures until one wonders where they will finally end up. I have seen some of them go on to say that only Baptists will be saved and in heaven. One told me that one would have to be baptized by a Baptist preacher or he could not be saved. Understand that all who go so far in these things do not go as far as others, but enough do to show the trend of these false doctrines.

The one I wrote about in our last issue under this heading has travelled far down the road of heresy since leaving our position. Otherwise, he would have never thought of saying that those on the broad way in Matthew 7:13-14 are children of God on their way to heaven. I say again that heresy breeds heresy. Now I point out that each heresy seems to be worse than the preceding one, and that ere long men are teaching the most ridiculous, perverted, absurd things - things they would not have dreamed of when they began their journey into the land of heresy. They would have shrunk back in horror had someone told them they would someday be teaching what they now do. I remember when I warned a dear friend that if he kept fooling around with Post trib, he would likely wind up Amill. He told me that if he saw it leading to that, he would give it up; but now he is an avowed Amillennialist. This is not true of all Post-tribs, but is true of enough to show a trend.

Now, as I observed this tendency of heresy to lead to more heresy, with each heresy more absurd and perverse, I wondered about it. I wondered, why? It seemed that men were almost taken captive by heresy and could not get loose. I told one brother, "They are going to get you, and you won't get loose." It seems that heresy has a bewitching power, and men, once under its spell, go further and further down dark and forbidden paths. I wondered about this. There seemed to me to be a supernatural power involved.

I believe that the verse which heads this article gives the answer to my wonderment. It is a scary and frightening verse. It should be an effective warning against dabbling in false doctrine. Note the words "turn" and "shall be turned" in this verse. Note the difference in "voice" in these verbs. The first "turn" is in the active voice and tells us that one actively turns his ears from the truth. The words "shall be turned" are in the passive voice and tells us that this one who has himself turned from the truth is now brought under the power of another who turns him into fables. This verse helped me more in my

desire and efforts to understand why men would go so far in folly and absurdity in their heresies than anything I have ever seen.

Why will men, once sound in doctrine, now believe and teach such awful and absurd things? This verse gives us the answer. Why will men teach that Judas and Esau were saved? Why will men teach that one must be a Baptist or go to hell? Why will men teach that those on the broad way are children of God on the way to heaven? Why will men teach that one can have life and go to heaven; but that that one is not justified, cannot pray, does not have the Holy Spirit unless he is a Baptist? Why will one teach that Old Testament saints in heaven are made Baptists there? Why will men teach that one can be a child of God without being a Baptist, but must be a Baptist to be a Son of God? Why will one teach that one in outer darkness where there is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth is a child of God missing some rewards? I could go on and on. I believe that the verse given at the head of this article provides the answer.

Men turn their ears away from the truth. They are active in this. They do it themselves. Why they do it, I don't know; but they do. Maybe they have an antipathy for some who hold the truth. Maybe they have too much love and admiration for some who hold error. Maybe they misunderstand the truth and think it teaches some things it does not. Not being able to separate truth from erroneous deductions mistakenly drawn from it, they turn away from the truth. Maybe they are not willing to pay the price for standing for the truth. I don't know why men turn from the truth; doubtless, there are many and differing reasons.

Please understand that I am not saying these men are not saved. Truly saved people turn from many truths of the Bible and teach many heresies.

Now, after these men turn from the truth, another power comes into action. Another power takes over. This other, evil, supernatural power turns them to fables. This is the power of demons. Demonic power is the only answer to the question of how men can believe some of the things they do. Look at some of the things I have mentioned above that some men now believe and teach. How can a sane man believe such? Demonic power is the only answer.

I do not believe that a saved person can be indwelt by a demon, but I do believe that they can come under the influence of demons. The Bible speaks of "doctrines of devils," (I Tim.4:1). It would seem to me that every false doctrine is of the devil. Certainly, false doctrines are not of the Lord. At best, they are products of the depraved minds of men who originate and teach them. However, I cannot but believe that demons have a part in the originating and spreading of every false doctrine. Many times these doctrines are taught and spread by unsaved men. But sometimes some of these doctrines are taught and believed by saved people. I believe that these people are doing this under the power and influence of demons. I believe that those who

teach that those on the broad way in Matthew 7:13-14 are children of God on the way to heaven, do so under the power and influence of demons. This doctrine is surely a fable. This man, to whom I referred in our last issue, once believed the truths that we do. He turned his ear away from many of these truths. Demons then turned him to this fable to which I just referred. I verily believe that this demonic power is the only possible answer as to why men believe some of the things they do. Plain, common sense would keep a man from believing some things that many believe. A sane, sensible, saved man just could not believe some of the things many are teaching today without the supernatural influence and power of demons turning him thereto.

Beware of turning your ears away from the truth. In doing so, you subject yourself to the power of demons; and you will likely be turned to fables that you would now not even think of believing. As I have said already, I have seen men go from truth to some of the most perverse and absurd heresies. I have wondered why would men do this; how could anyone believe such wicked and especially such absurd things? I believe that II Timothy 4:4 supplies the answer. I believe that demonic power is the only answer. I believe that men have of themselves turned their ears from truth, and demonic power has turned them to fables. It may be that other things enter into men turning from truth. It may be that some other things enter into their turning to heresies. But, some of the absurd things men believe (such as those on the broad way being children of God on the way to heaven), (such as only Baptists are saved), (such as no sin except doctrinal sin) - such things, and many others can only be explained by demonic influence and power.

Men in high places and with wide influence can be subject to this demonic power and influence. Men with great mental abilities can be. Men with great scholarship can be. Men who are truly saved can be. Men who believe much truth can be under demonic influence and power in other areas. Men who are truly saved can be under demonic influence and power in some areas. I tell you that the only explanation for some men believing and teaching things they now teach is demonic power and influence. Comments and criticisms welcome. Criticisms of this position will be considered for publication, depending upon author, attitude, etc. and at the editor's discretion. Please know that I am applying II Timothy 4:4 to all false doctrines, but especially to those of such absurd character as that which initiated these two brief articles. I will welcome some brief articles from some of the brethren along this same line - pro and con. If from our kind of Baptists, I will most likely print such. From others, I will exercise (as I do in all I print) my discretion.

BLOOD

(Continued from Page 10)

whose blood was shed for sacrificial purposes, said in figure or type, exactly what John said, when he exclaimed: "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the

world." Now if one does not see that, all is lost and futile in as far as the law doing anything of a beneficial nature for its adherents.

II THE IMPORTANCE OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

1. A casual study of the N.T. reveals the great importance it puts on the blood of Christ. The question is why? Ephesians 1:7 says in part: "In whom we have redemption through his blood..." Why did it say, for example, redemption through his blood? Why did it say, for example, redemption through His body or His life? We have already seen the importance of animal sacrifices in the O.T. The importance of those sacrifices was placed on the shedding of the blood itself and not on the body of the animal. It was a picture of the innocent dying for the guilty. We are told by none other than Judas Iscariot himself as to what the answer is: "Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood..." (Matt. 27:4). One would have expected him to have said, "I have betrayed an innocent man" not innocent blood. Why did he state it in such an unusual manner? Because that is exactly what he did: betray innocent blood. Christ is the only man of which this could have been said. This establishes His worthiness as the perfect sacrifice or the only One which could, indeed, give us God sanctioned blood redemption. Even Jesus Himself said: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28). It is also interesting to note He said "many" as opposed to "all."

2. We are told expressly that it is faith in His blood that confers this redemption on us. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:24-26). I ask a very pointed question: how can we have faith in blood, which is essentially an inanimate object? We are told without the shedding of blood there is no remission (of sins). The positive side would be with the shedding of blood (the kind acceptable to God), there is remission (of sins). We have to exercise faith in His blood because it is our only hope for remission of our sins.

3. On one occasion, Jesus wanted to shed some of the hangers-on and Johnny-come-latelys. He made a very bold but misunderstood statement. He said "...Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). Needless to say, He suddenly lost many of His disciples. Of course, He still has the Catholic folk who seem to believe He literally meant to drink His blood. Quite obviously, it could not be literal language. I believe we have a real interpretation in the book of I Corinthians 11:25: "After the same

manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." What Christ was saying is that everytime we drink the wine in the observance of the Supper, we are symbolically drinking His blood. But what is the purpose of this symbolism? When we drink something, we are making it our own personal possession and we are assimilating it into our body system. So the message seems to be one of a personal nature: we must take His innocent blood and make it our personal property and an integral part of our life.

4. But there is something else of great importance in regards to the blood of Christ. Ephesians 2:13 tells us: "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." This is another good reason to believe that God killed an innocent animal in Adam's case, because after sinning, Adam was far off from the Lord, but we saw them at one again after the skins were put in place. By the blood of Christ, we are reconciled to God.

5. The writer of the book of Hebrews, after telling about the high priest going into the most holy place in the tabernacle once a year to offer blood sacrifice for his own sins and those of the people, says, Christ, "...by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:12). This clearly says that by His blood, we have eternal redemption.

6. But there is more. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God"? (Heb. 9:14). Here we see the blood of Christ purges or cleanses us from all our dead works of the past, which accumulated before we applied the blood of Christ to our sins.

7. Reading Hebrews 13:12: "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." This passage tells us, among other things, we are made holy by His blood.

8. Again in Hebrews 13:20, we are told of an everlasting covenant. It reads: "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant." Now a covenant is a contract of some sort. In this case, it is a contract between God and us signed by Christ in His own blood. Would He do that for me? for you?

Conclusion: We cannot begin to estimate the importance of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Of all the things we have mentioned, it is impossible to pick out the most important. To the Christian, all of these are important, but to the nonbeliever, only one is of great importance at first: namely, eternal redemption. Revelation 1:5 reads in part: (Continued on Page 12, Col. 1)

CAN YOU IMAGINE THIS?

Paul going to purgatory when he died?
 "...having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Php. 1:23). "...to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord" (II Cor. 5:8).

BLOOD

(Continued from Page 11)

"...Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

How can we take a "blood bath"? We, by faith, apply His blood to our sins. I do believe the blood of Jesus cleanses me and all believers from all sins. If someone reading this message has not done this, then why not do so now?

THE SOVEREIGN GOD

They cannot shell His temple
 Nor dynamite His throne
 They cannot bomb His city
 Nor rob Him of His own

They cannot take Him captive
 Nor strike Him deaf or blind
 Nor starve Him to surrender
 Nor make Him change His mind.

They cannot cause Him panic,
 Nor cut off His supplies;
 They cannot take His kingdom,
 Nor hurt Him with their Lies.

Though all the world be shattered,
 His truth remains the same,
 His righteous laws still potent,
 And "Father" still His name.

Though we face war and struggle
 And feel their goad and rod,
 We know above all confusion
 There always will be God.

-Albert Leonard Murray

THE SECRET OF STRENGTH

"When I am weak, then I am strong." "When" and "then" are the two pivots of the text -- the hinges upon which it turns.

"When I am weak." What does that mean? It means when the believer is consciously weak, when he painfully feels, and distinctly recognizes that he is weak, whether we know it or not; but when we not only believe this to be the fact, but see it to be the fact -- then it is that we are strong. When it is forced home upon us, that we are less than nothing and vanity -- when our very soul echoes and re-echoes that word, "Without me ye can do nothing" -- then it is that we are strong.

When a man is thoroughly weak -- not only partially, but altogether weak -- then is he strong. When apart from the Lord Jesus Christ, he is utter weakness, and nothing more -- then it is that he is strong. Let me persuade you to make a full confession of weakness to the Lord. Say, "Lord, I can not do what I ought to do; I can not do what I want to do; I can not do what I used to do; I can not do what other people do; I can not do what I mean to do; I can not do what I am sure I shall do; I can not do what I feel impelled to do; and over this sinful weakness I mourn." Then add, "Lord, I long to serve thee perfectly, yet I can not do it. Unless thou help me I can do nothing aright. There will

be no good in my actions, my words, my feelings, or my desires, unless thou continue to fill me with thine own holy energy. Lord, help me! Lord, help me!" Brother, you are strong while you plead in that fashion. You can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth you; and he will strengthen you, now that you are emptied, of self. How true it is, "When I am weak, then am I strong!"

-- C.H. Spurgeon

ANNOUNCEMENT

There will be revival services at the Sovereign Grace Baptist church at 507 Marion Pike, Coal Grove, Ohio April 9-15, at 7:00 nightly and regular time on Sunday morning. There will be different speakers Monday through Thursday. Elder Willard Willis will be speaking Friday through Sunday on "The Trail of Blood." Danny Thomas is the pastor of the church.

The Calvary Baptist Church of Hagerstown, Maryland, recently organized the following people into a church: Rodger Lewis, Terrie Lewis, Jaime Lewis, Mark Lewis, Ken Boswell, and Russell Shoemaker. The new church has chosen the name, Landmark Baptist Church. The church meets at 316 Mulberry St., Hagerstown, Maryland. They have services on Sunday at 10:00 a.m., 10:45 a.m., and 7:00 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday. The Lord has already blessed them with some new members. Pray for this new church. For further information, call deacon Rodger Lewis at (301) 797-4714. The church is praying about, and looking for a pastor.

The Grace Baptist Church of Ellabell, Georgia will have a revival April 23-29. Services will begin at 7:30 p.m. each evening. Sunday Services will begin at 10:00 a.m. with a noon meal provided. Elder David West of Landmark Missionary Baptist Church, Moncks Corner, S.C. will be the guest speaker. This meeting will commemorate the fifth anniversary of this church. All are invited to attend. The church is located on Mack English Road in Ellabell. For further information contact the pastor, Elder Aaron West, 72 Mack English Rd., Ellabell, Georgia 31308; telephone 912-858-3106.

APPRECIATED LETTERS

Brother Joe:

I have been enjoying TBE for some time now and would like for my parents and son to receive it. This is truly a great work you have going and you would be pleased to hear the comments from the brothers and sisters here at Friendship Baptist Church when we receive a new issue of the examiner. Most of us here have a burning yearning for the truth and a desire to learn that your publication has really helped with. Please remember our pastor, Brother Paul Jackson, in your prayers as he has some stubborn sheep to teach and instruct. He is really a blessing to our church and our community. We thank the Lord for him every day. Your in the Lord,
 Sam Henry, Glenwood, Ga.

Brother Wilson, I appreciate the paper very much and your stand on the Scriptures. I was very much pleased with your discourse in the July 8, 1989 paper. Keep up the good work.

Elder James Hamric, Ellaville, Ga.

Dear Brethren:

I was at a fellowship meeting in Oakland, Ca., and I picked up a copy of your paper and thoroughly enjoyed it. I would count it a privilege to be put on your mailing list. It is very hard to find good missionary Baptist papers. May the Lord richly bless your endeavors in this paper.
 Larry R. Tilton, Salinas, Ca.

Dear Brother Wilson:

I am sending a donation to be used as you see fit. How I wish it could be more. We need your prayers for our grand-daughter. I am so thankful for the Examiner. It is comforting to read the messages at this time. God bless and keep each one there.

Mrs. Merle K. Hall,
 Knob Noster, Mo.

ANNOUNCEMENT BIBLE CONFERENCE

April 6-8, 1990

The Faith Baptist Church, P.O. Box 349, Lawtey, Florida and Pastor Martin Hoffman will have their 40th Anniversary Bible Conference April 6-8.

Friday - 7:00 p.m.

"His Coming Draweth Nigh" Elder Randy Rosbrook
 "In The World, But Not of the World" Elder Tom Sollosi
 "The Balance Between Church Authority and Pastoral Authority" Elder Tony Herald

Saturday - 9:00 a.m.

"Total Depravity's harmonious Relationship to Other Doctrines" Elder John Pruitt
 "The Effect The Doctrines of Grace Have on Evangelism" Elder Curtis Taylor
 "Election vs Man's Freewill" Elder Paul Jackson

Saturday - 1:00 p.m.

"The Lord's Church, A Local Church" Elder Wayne Crow
 "History of Baptist in America" Elder Milburn Cockrell
 "Baptists Rule of Faith and Practice" Elder Al Lyons

Saturday - 7:00 p.m.

"The Man of God in the House of God" Elder George Sledd
 "The Blood of Christ" Elder Walter Cade

Sunday - 9:00 a.m.

"God's People Shall Persevere" Elder Steve Shelton
 Subject to be announced Elder Dub McSwain
 "Repentance" Elder Don Schunck

The church invites anyone who can to attend. Meals will be provided and lodging in the area is reasonable. For reservations, directions or information call Pastor Marty Hoffman at (904) 728-3106.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Almond Katrian in mission work in Guyana, South America, will be preaching at our Bible Conference. He will be available for preaching in other churches following the conference. For more information, contact this editor.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Elder William H. Peacock is the new pastor of the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church in Texarkana, Texas. The church is located at 1217 Dillon St., in Texarkana. Pray for this church and her new pastor. If you are ever in the area, visit with them.

FROM ONE RELIGION TO ANOTHER

A man may turn from one religion to another and still have the "form of godliness, while denying the power thereof." In other words, you may change your religion; but unless your religion changes you, you will be nothing more than sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal; and you will not sound nor tinkle long. A lady once said to her preacher, "Sir, I am going to turn from the separatists to the church." His reply was, "Madam, you are turning from nothing to nothing."

--Copied

IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS!

'Mid sunshine, cloud or stormy days,
 When hope abounds or care dismays;
 When trials press and toils increase,
 Let not thy faith in God decrease --
 "In every thing give thanks."

All things we know shall work for good,
 Nor would we change them if we could;
 'Tis well if only He commands;
 His promises will ever stand --
 "In every thing give thanks."

He satisfies the longing heart.
 He thwarts the tempter's cruel dart,
 with goodness fills the hungry soul,
 And helps us sing when billows roll.
 "In every thing give thanks."

--Selected