

WILL MAN DESTROY THE EARTH?

By Ted Gower

If we believe what men are saying today, we would believe that man will be the ultimate destroyer of the earth. We hear much said about global warming, and the greenhouse effect. Some talk of a coming ice age, we are told many things we must do to "help save the planet". The one thing the vast majority of the human race is concerned with, that being a nuclear war that will destroy mankind. Will God allow man to destroy himself and the earth? Is God not in control of His creation? I contend that



Ted Gower

He not only controls His creation, but dictates every movement and action of the earth, the universe, and every living creature in them. Therefore, as children of God we need not be upset

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THE NECESSITY OF THE SPIRIT'S WORK Part 2

by C. H. Spurgeon

4. This brings us to another point. The experience of the true Christian is a reality; but it never



C.H. Spurgeon

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SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

by C.D. Cole

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8).

"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all" (Rom. 4:16).

INTRODUCTION: Salvation is always an interesting subject with those who realize their sinfulness. The person who isn't interested in salvation is either

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None ever truly trusted Christ and lived as he pleased.

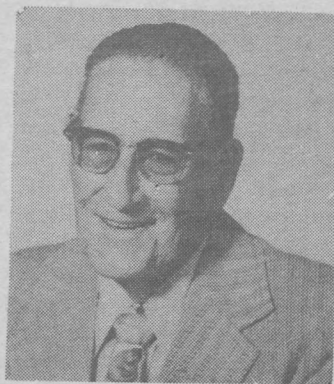
"THE KING'S NAVY"

By Waldo Whiddon

This is a marvelous planet that we live on. The globe has seven seas. Four-fifths of the planet earth is water. There are five major islands that crop up from the seas of the globe, and they are called continents.

God is omnipotent, and also

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Waldo Whiddon

MURDER

by H.C. McSwain

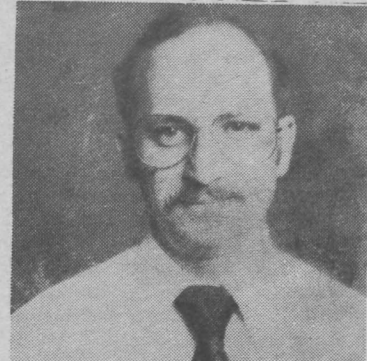
"Thou shalt not kill" (Ex. 20:14). These words were written many centuries ago by Moses as given by God. As a nation we have disregarded these words, especially in the last several years. Recently, our minds have been directed to Mr. Mark Kilroy, 21 years old, a pre-med student at the University of Texas. As most of you may remember, on his spring break, he went to Matamoros, Mexico. This is a town just over the border from Brownsville, Texas. On March 14, early in the morning, he was kidnapped off the streets of Matamoros. He was never seen alive again. In the meantime, his parents were much exercised about his whereabouts. On April 13, his body, along with several others, was unearthed on a ranch near Matamoros. It was further decided the people who were re-

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THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD AND THE THIEF ON THE CROSS LUKE 23:42,43

by John Pruitt

By human standards and human reasoning, Jesus was in no physical position to save anyone. He was accused of being an imposter. He, Himself, was nailed to a post unable to save Himself, much less someone else. He was the laughing stock of the whole Jewish community, how could He ever get anyone to believe that He could save them? From all appearances this Man was a miserable failure at what He had tried to



John Pruitt

accomplish. He had been rejected by everyone who was anyone. The Sanhedrin Court had pronounced Him guilty of blas-

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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 NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

PART I

by L.D. Gibson
(Now in Heaven)

Before beginning this article, I spent many hours studying the etymology of the word Ekklesia. Experience has taught me the importance of having the right word in the right place.

Many years ago I prepared a program for The Ohio Baptist Association. On that program was this subject, "The immanence of God and the transcendence of God" by Prof. W.T. Napier of Huntington, W. Va. When I gave the program to the printer, I said, "I would like to call your attention to the spelling of the word immanence." I said, "Please spell it just as it is in the

manuscript." He assured me that his man never made a mistake and one glance at the subject he would know the right word.

A short time thereafter I called at the shop for the programs. When they gave me the programs there was one of the programs on the outside of the package for inspection. I looked for the word immanence and to my surprise and disappointment the word was spelled imminence. When I lifted my eyes from the program the man said, "Anything wrong?" I replied, "Yes, you did the very thing that I told you not to do." He said, "Brother, it's your mistake, there is no such word in the English language." He picked up a dictionary and said, "You

should consult authority before you use words that you know nothing about." I said, "Do you have an unabridged dictionary?" He replied, "Yes sir." I said, "Let me have it and if I can't find the word immanence, I will plead guilty to your implied charge of stupidity."

He brought the dictionary and I turned to the word immanence and said, "Take a look at that word and compare it with my manuscript." He said, "It's our mistake, but it doesn't hurt the program for only one person out of a thousand would know any difference." I said, "I can think of a score or more of persons who

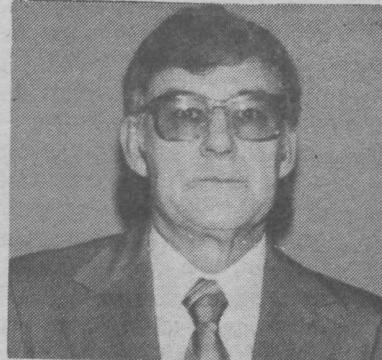
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THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION

by Ray Brown
P.O. Box 203

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We are going to discuss the doctrine of election; the doctrine that is hated and disliked by the majority of the world, the religious world, the lost world, and the unprofessed world who do not profess to know anything and don't care one way or the other. The religious world is very concerned about it. We must defend this doctrine. We believe in the five points of grace. Some people, who call themselves Baptists, refer to these as the five points of Calvinism, but I prefer to call them the five points of grace. The Lord Jesus Christ preached these doctrines, as did the apostle Paul and all the other



Ray Brown

apostles in the New Testament. We believe in total depravity, unconditional election, limited atonement, irresistible grace, and the preservation of the saints.

Under the banner of Arminianism we have freewillism. This is just one of the doctrines. There are thousands of them. But freewillism is the most damaging, deceiving, and the one most

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

GETHSEMANE, PRELUDE TO CALVARY

"And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and Prayed, Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and

his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation" (Lk.22:40-46). I strongly suggest that you also read Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42, and Hebrews 5:7-8.

Leaving the temple area of Jerusalem, one goes down the

mountain or hill, crosses the brook Cedron, and comes to the Mount of Olives. From the foot of this mountain three roads go around or over the Mount. At the foot of this Mount is the garden of Gethsemane. Let us go back through time and walk by this garden. It is near midnight. Suddenly we hear One praying in an agony. He is weeping as He prays. We can tell that His soul is heavily burdened in prayer to His Father. Who is this One

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GETHSEMANE

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praying so fervently? It is our Lord Jesus Christ. Traill said, "He filled the silent night with His crying and watered the cold earth with His tears, more precious than the dew of Hermon or any moisture, next to His own blood, that ever fell on God's earth since the creation."

I believe my sermon title is a good one, giving some explanation of this scene. Here a great battle was fought and a great victory was won. Jesus Christ went forth from this victory; quiet, calm, peaceful, with no struggle, to His death on Calvary. I believe there is a connection between Gethsemane and this. Surely, Gethsemane is a mysterious and unique scene in the earthly life of Christ. There is absolutely nothing else even similar thereto. I think we all recognize a mysterious quality about this scene. We feel greatly awed thereby. We feel that this is holy ground. We feel that we must tread this ground softly and reverently.

The marvellous upper room discourse had just been concluded with the even more wonderful priestly prayer of our Lord. Oh, John 13-17 is a most wonderful portion of the Word of God. I cannot suggest too strongly that you read this frequently, meditate upon it deeply, and hug it to your bosom as a most precious treasure. Calvary was likely about nine hours away.

Jesus leaves eight of His disciples near the entrance to Gethsemane; while going farther into the garden, taking Peter, James, and John with Him. Twice before

had these three been the only disciples with Him; at the raising of Jairus's daughter, and on the mount of Transfiguration. I have no explanation of this, and gladly leave it with my Lord.

Jesus tells them, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me" (Mt.26:38). Jesus goes a little farther into the garden alone. One writer tells us that He knelt. Evidently, He soon fell upon His face in the agony of His prayer to His Father. He prays, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Mt.26:39). He comes back to the three and finds them asleep. He rebukes them, addressing



Joe Wilson

Himself especially to Peter (remember, Peter had said that he would not forsake Jesus no matter what others did), and He warns them of the great need of prayer.

Jesus goes away and prays the second time. He prays more earnestly. His sweat becomes as it were great drops of blood. He returns to His disciples and finds them sleeping again. He leaves them in their sleep and goes to pray again, praying about the same words. He returns to His sleeping disciples and speaks to them as follows, "Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners" (Mt.26:45). Seemingly, He had desired their prayer fellowship in this hour, but now that opportunity is forever past. Jesus is now calm and peaceful. He goes forth to meet the betrayer and those with him in quiet majesty. In the same spirit He goes through the false trials, the mockery, the sufferings, and to Calvary. I think that the victory won in Gethsemane had prepared Him for this.

Let me now expound some details. 1. It is not sinful to pray for the same things more than once. I would say that we usually need to do this. There is a repetition that is vain, and there are repetitions that are not vain, but are the evidence of intense desire and perseverance in prayer. 2. Gethsemane shows us, as maybe nowhere else, the humanity of Jesus Christ. 3. Gethsemane shows us the total submission of Christ to His Father, and His absolute dependence upon Him. 4. From our Lord's warning to the three disciples, we learn (oh, we knew it already from our own experiences) that the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. We have the desire to live totally for the Lord and serve Him faithfully, but the flesh is a hindrance to us. Prayer is our source of strength in this battle.

5. Luke informs us that an angel came from heaven and strengthened the Lord. Oh, what agonizing praying He was doing that it took bodily strength from Him, and left Him in need of supernatural strengthening. Have we ever prayed so earnestly and intently that it drained us of physical strength? Why not? Is it because we are not as concerned and desirous of answers to prayer as we should be? 6. There is the matter of the bloody sweat. Did our Lord actually have blood mingled with His sweat, or was His sweat only similar to drops of blood? There is room for argument on both sides, but most of the older writers believed in literal blood mingled with sweat; and I am inclined to agree with them. This is not an unheard of thing. Surely, we see again the agony and intensity of our Lord's prayer at this time.

7. Now let us briefly notice some of the terms used to describe our Lord's feelings and praying at this time. "exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." "and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy." Oh, what a strong expression is this! It is as if the sight of that awful cup and its contents startled and amazed Him and pressed very heavily upon Him. "fell on the ground", He could not stand, or even kneel, under the heavy burden that was upon Him. "being in an agony." "prayed more earnestly." "strong crying and tears."

Who can measure the intensity, burden, and agony involved in these words? We can only read, wonder, and adore. Theologians use the term "Hypostatic union." This refers to the union of the divine and human natures in the one person of Jesus Christ. We may not use the term, but we must believe the truth of this. Jesus Christ is eternal God. He is as much God as if He were not man at all. He is very God of very God. Jesus Christ is human, totally and perfectly human. He had a human body and soul. Contrary to the thinking of some, the divine nature did not take the place of the human soul in the person of Christ. He is as much man as if He were not God. He is very man of very man. These two natures were inseparably and permanently united in the womb of the virgin Mary at the moment of conception. In the days of the Old Testament, Jesus had assumed a human form and appeared to man several times. Evidently, He only assumed such a form for this purpose, laying the form aside when the occasion was over. But in conception in the virgin's womb, the Son of God, the eternal God, the second person of the Trinity; joined His divine nature to that human nature conceived in the virgin's womb by the power of the Holy Spirit.

This matter is very mysterious. We cannot fully comprehend it. We must just believe it because the Word of God teaches it. We can believe this truth and rejoice in it even though we cannot fully understand it. There are things said about Jesus Christ that apply only to His human nature. There are things said about Him that apply only to His divine nature. There are other things said that apply to the total person. Understanding the fact of this union, and these things about this union, helps us to understand some problems and questions relative to some Bible statements about Christ.

He grew in wisdom. How can He, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, grow in wisdom? How can the

only wise God grow wiser? He could not in His divine nature. This applies to His human nature. We read of His hunger and thirst. How can the great God of the Bible have these needs and desires? This applies only to the human nature of Jesus Christ. It

is said that He slept. He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber or sleep. How can God sleep? What would happen to the world while God slept? God can't sleep. This applies only to the human

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FROM THE EDITOR

"...he that winneth souls is wise" (Prov.11:30). I know that some of our kind are opposed to using the term "soul winning." I think I understand why this is so, but it should not be. This is a Biblical term, and it is a Biblical duty. If some men and activities have brought reproach upon this term, that is no reason for us to discard it. Let us rather see to it that we do not use this as an excuse for our failure in the matter. Oh, we are so very wise in the things of the Word of God. We are so far ahead in Biblical doctrine. We know so much more truth than those who are always talking about "soul winning." Yes, we are so wise. But are we? What test and proof of wisdom does my text give? Is it our great knowledge of the deep truths of the Word of God? Or is it the winning of souls? Read the text again and answer this question.

He that winneth souls is wise, and he that is wise winneth souls; it is as plain and simple as that. We betray our lack of wisdom by our failure to win souls. We are not as wise as we think we are when we fail to win souls.

But, at the moment, I am more troubled about another facet of the subject. Not only would it be wise of us to win souls, but it is fast becoming an absolute necessity. I believe that our kind of churches are true churches. I believe in the perpetuity of the Lord's church. But this does not mean that an individual church, or a multitude of churches cannot cease to be. Brother, do not plead the promise of church perpetuity as proof that your church cannot die out. Perpetuity is a precious and wonderful truth, but it does not apply to any certain individual church or group of such; it only absolutely means that there will be one or more of Christ's true churches when He returns.

I fear, oh I hate to even write it, but ignoring it won't change it; I fear that a multitude of our churches are dwindling and in danger of dying. For many of our churches, the matter of winning souls is not only an act of great wisdom, but is fast coming a matter of absolute necessity. Some of us are going to have to start winning souls, or we are going to die. This is a terrible thought, but it is also stark reality. It is simply true that the members we have are going to die out. For many of our churches, this will not be a long time in taking place. In many of our churches, the majority of the members are nearing the time when they must die - the young may die, the old must die. There are not large groups of young people in many of our churches. It is sad to even think it, but the evidence is in that many of the children of families in our churches today will leave our churches when they are grown, and in many of our churches there are very few children even now.

One TBE writer said, "There is an old look about our churches." He was referring to the fact that many of the members of our churches are elderly. Thank God for every one of them. We love them and rejoice over them. We would like to have many more of them. But the fact is that they will soon be gone from us in death. And most of our churches are not receiving enough new, especially young, members to take the place of these elderly members when they are gone. Many of us have already lost some of our elderly members and have not had enough new ones to make up for this loss - in other words, we are declining in total membership. I write with great heartache, for what I write is descriptive of my own church here. We have some fine, blessed, wonderful members that will soon be gone from us. I realize that this is sadly true of many of our churches.

God could bring saved members of other churches to the truths that we believe, bring them to join our churches; and thus keep us going or even cause us to grow thereby. I am not against this. In fact, I am in favor of saved people learning the truth and leaving false churches which teach false doctrines, and joining our kind of churches. There is no dishonor attached to thus proselyting people, saved in other churches, to the truths we believe. I am for this. I consider it an honorable work and a blessed result. But I do not believe we are going to have enough of this to keep us going. We also need to be careful in such matters. We do not want to get an unsavory reputation or bring reproach needlessly upon ourselves.

I say again that I do not believe we are going to see enough of the above to keep us going. I believe that the answer - and it may be the only answer - to our problem is soul winning. I believe that we must go soul winning. I believe that we must become more interested in, concerned about, and active in winning souls to Christ than we have heretofore been. I believe that we must evangelize or fossilize. I believe that we must win souls or die. If we have yet not reached this point, many of us are almost there. It is no longer just a wise thing to win souls - it is an absolute necessity.

In many of our churches, soul winning is the missing note. There is not much preaching about it, our services are not that kind of services, and most of our people including most of our preachers are not the least bit active therein. We may die preaching the sovereignty of God while we fail to win souls. We may die preaching church truth while we fail to give the gospel to the unsaved. We may die preaching all the doctrines of grace while we fail to even make an effort to win souls. I do think that I can see that some of our brethren are no longer ridiculing and rejecting the term "soul winning." I think I observe that some of our brethren are seeing more and more what I write about in this editorial. We need to quit praising it, thinking about it, and start doing it. God help us.

Please know that what I write here does not imply that I am forsaking church truth and the doctrines of grace, neither is what I write contrary to those truths. Soul winning is not contrary to other truths of the Bible; it is just another truth thereof. But it is a most neglected truth, and even more so an unpracticed truth of the Word of God. Brethren, we must win souls or die. We must win souls or die.

The greater the river, the less the noise; so it is the greater the life, the less the noise.

GETHSEMANE

(Continued from Page 2)

nature of Christ. It is said that He was wearied with His journey. The God of the Bible fainteth not, neither is weary. He was not weary in His divine nature; this applied only to His human nature. Jesus Christ died. How can God die? What would happen if God died? Jesus did not die in His divinity. His God-nature did not die. It was only in His humanity that He died. I believe that understanding these things will help us in understanding Gethsemane. In fact, I believe that this is the only way we can understand and enter into the mystery of what happened in Gethsemane.

Let us now seek to interpret Gethsemane. The question of questions involved in this matter relates to that mysterious cup and its contents. The theory that this relates only to Christ's physical death and sees Him as shrinking therefrom is not worthy of a second thought, as it would put our Lord below the multiplied millions of martyrs who have most willingly and gladly gone to death in Christ's behalf. Forgetting this, there are two views of this matter. There are those who say that physical death at that time (not later on Calvary) was the contents of that cup. They teach that the devil was trying to kill Christ in Gethsemane so as to keep Him from getting to Calvary and making atonement for sin. They teach that Christ was praying to be delivered from death at that time so that He could die on Calvary as planned and purposed for the salvation of His people. They teach that God answered this prayer, sent the angel to strengthen Him and the cup was taken away (I suppose they must say the cup was taken away, or I know not how they could hold this position). We can call this the premature death theory.

I reject this interpretation of Gethsemane for two major reasons. First, how had Christ dealt before with Satan's attempts to kill Him? I suppose we will agree that Satan was behind the several attempts to kill Him during His earthly ministry. What did He do? Did He do as He did in Gethsemane? Was He in a great agony over such attempts? Did He cry out to His Father to deliver Him from death at those times? No, He just walked right through or away from those who sought to kill Him, and they could not touch Him. Let the reader compare Christ's actions on the several attempts to kill Him with His actions in Gethsemane and see if he can imagine that the same thing is referred to. If you hold this theory, please make an effort to explain what I have just written.

Secondly, I reject this interpretation of Gethsemane because the Father did not take the cup away. Jesus did drink that cup. This, to my mind, conclusively settles this matter. After this experience in Gethsemane, Jesus went forth to meet Judas and those sent to arrest him. Peter drew a sword and cut off the right ear of one of that crowd. Jesus healed the man's ear and said to Peter, "Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18:11). The Father did not take the cup away. The Son drank the contents of that bitter cup. Notice

also that the cup was not given to Christ by the devil, but by the Father. How could this fit with the theory that the devil was trying to kill Christ and that this premature death was the contents of the cup?

Well, this leaves the theory that the cup was Calvary, and the contents thereof were the awful suffering of Christ on the tree when His soul would be offered for sin and He would take upon Him the exact equivalent of the eternal hell all the elect would have suffered had He not died for them. Oh, this makes the agony, the sorrowfulness, the heaviness, and the amazement understandable. Christ was made sin for us. The guilt of all the sins of all of the elect were imputed to Christ. To make atonement for them, He must be forsaken by His Father, He must suffer untold agonies, He must suffer as no one else ever had or ever will. Even a lost soul in hell will not suffer as Jesus did, for that one suffers only for His own sins; while Jesus suffered for all the sins of the elect, who are a multitude without number. I cannot understand Gethsemane so long as I view it as relating only to premature death, but I can understand it when I view it in this way. The cup of Gethsemane contained the wrath of God against the totality of the sins of the elect. This is what it contained. This is what it was. This will explain the agony and burden of the Saviour expressed in His prayer that, if possible, the cup might pass from Him.

I know of only one objection to this view. That is that to thus suffer was why Jesus came into this world, and that this position puts a difference between the will of the Father and the will of the Saviour. What I said earlier about the union of the divine and human natures in the one person of Jesus Christ is, I think, the sufficient and proper answer to this objection. Jesus had a divine will and He had a human will. His human will shrank from the terrible sufferings of Calvary, but was even then submissive to the will of His Father. I would explain this desire that the cup pass from Him the same way I explain His growing in wisdom, His hunger and thirst, His weariness and sleeping, etc. These things refer to His human nature, not to His divine nature. While His divine nature went forth to Calvary without shrinking, question, or hesitation; His human will desired that that suffering might pass from Him if possible.

Now, there is no conflict between the Saviour's will and the Father's will. Look at it carefully. Jesus desired that, if possible, the cup might pass from Him; but He was totally surrendered to the Father's will in the matter. He yielded His will to that of His Father.

This view that I defend here is the view of the vast majority of those who have written on this subject so far as I know. I checked many books in my library on this. I found that only two of them took the premature death view of Gethsemane, and one of them took the other view (the one I defend here) in another book of his. The majority being for something does not prove that it is right, but remember that the majority of which I speak are Christian writers who believe the Word of God.

I believe that the scene itself seems to support this view. It

seems to me to be a lower and lesser view of Gethsemane to take the premature death view thereof. The awfulness of the scene, the intensity of the Saviour's praying, and the words describing the feelings of the Saviour seem to me to demand something far beyond the premature death view. All this seems to me to support my position on this.

Our Lord's complete subjection to His Father's will in this matter seems to me to be more in support of the view I take. There is no conflict of wills. There is complete yielding on the part of our Lord.

The clinching and most conclusive proof of the position I take here is that the cup was not taken away. Jesus went forth from Gethsemane to drink the cup His Father had given Him. I do not see how advocates of the premature death view can answer this. I urge all such to consider this matter carefully. This clinched the matter for me, and I see no way around it. The prayer was answered, but the cup was not taken away. If you ask me how the prayer could be answered if the cup was not taken away, I remind you that Jesus prayed "Thy will be done." That was the controlling thought of Jesus's prayer. That was what He wanted in answer to His prayer. That was accomplished. The prayer was answered, but the cup was not taken away. Jesus drank the contents of the cup.

Now let us look at the theology of Gethsemane. I will not try to exhaust that theology, but will set forth a portion thereof. The love of Christ for His people shines forth here. Oh, see the agony before Him. See how His holy humanity shrinks therefrom. But see His love for His people in His willingness to suffer even the hell of Calvary for the salvation of His people. His submission to the Father's will in this sets forth in a brilliant light the love He had for His own.

See the awfulness of hell set forth in this scene in Gethsemane. It was no light thing from which the Saviour shrank. It was no light thing that brought Him into such sorrow, agony, and heaviness. He saw in that cup the realities and terrors and horrors of hell. Let the sinner look at Gethsemane and see that should he die without Christ, unutterable sufferings await him.

I think that the great lesson we learn here is that there is no way of salvation apart from the death of Christ. Hear the Saviour cry, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." What did He mean? I feel sure that He meant that if there were any other way for sinners to be saved other than by His going to Calvary, that He might be delivered from doing so. But His love caused Him to be willing to go to Calvary if there were no other way of salvation. Hear His cry to His Father. Surely, if there had been any other way for sinners to be saved, the Father would have spared His Son the awful, horrible sufferings of Calvary. When I hear this cry, and learn that the cup was not taken away; I know, most assuredly that there is no other way for sinners to be saved.

Pink is a good writer, but he errs most terribly when he says in his comments on Hebrews 10:7 that God could have accepted an animal sacrifice, or could have saved sinners without any sacri-

fice at all. If God could have done this, be assured that He would have never allowed His dear Son to suffer the hell of Calvary.

Imagine a sinner coming to the judgment. He tells God that he was a good man, he was baptized, he was a church member, and this should get him into heaven. Imagine a sinner coming to the judgment and telling God that he was of another religion and thereby should be delivered from punishment. Surely, God would inform them that the death of Jesus Christ was the only way of salvation, and that rejecting that, men are sure for hell. Oh, my friend, it is Christ or hell. This fact that the gospel of Jesus Christ; His death, burial and resurrection is the only way of salvation; this is the chief lesson of the theology of Gethsemane.

I exhort the saved to gaze on the scene at Gethsemane. Ponder it prayerfully. Then go forth to love your Saviour supremely, live for Him faithfully, and serve Him to the best of your ability. I exhort the unsaved to gaze on this scene, to realize his need of salvation, and to repent and trust the Saviour. May God bless you all.

SALVATION

(Continued from Page 1)

blind so that he cannot see any danger or conceived so that he thinks he can, by some hook or crook, escape by his own efforts, whatever danger there might be.

Our first text says that salvation is by grace thru faith; the second text says that it has to be of or through faith in order that it might be by grace. Let us keep in mind the necessary connection between grace and faith. Some teach salvation by faith without grace; others grace without faith.

I. THE SOURCE OF DANGER or the need of salvation.

a. The source of danger is the justice of God. Matthew 10:28, "and fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Nations preparing to defend themselves from the danger of Hitlerism; however great this danger may be it is nothing to compare to the danger every sinner faces from God.

b. The cause of danger. Why are men in danger from their Creator? Is our God such a cruel, bloodthirsty tyrant that His offspring, His creatures are in danger of being devoured by Him? Perish such a thought! It is not as His creatures - His offspring that we are in danger: our danger is the danger of rebels. Sin has caused the danger. The rebellion must be put down or God is deposed as the Governor of the world. Violated law is the source of our danger. Obedient creatures, such as holy angels, are in no danger of punishment from their Creator.

II. THE SOURCE OF SALVATION, or how can we be saved.

a. The source of salvation the grace of God. Isaiah 45:22 "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Now if God saves, He must either save as a matter of desert or a matter of grace. If sin is meritorious; if rebels deserve blessings from

their government; if God's enemies deserve His favor, then salvation is of man. But if sin deserves death, if rebels deserve punishment; if God's enemies deserve His wrath, then their salvation is of necessity by grace. The height of human ignorance is to think that salvation of sinners is by their own works, something they merit, a wage they earn.

b. The ground of salvation is satisfied law. Just as the cause of danger is violated law, so the ground of salvation is satisfied law. A violated law brings a curse; a satisfied law delivers from the curse.

c. How is the law to be satisfied? He who violated it cannot satisfy it and be saved. The law is satisfied when its penalty has been executed and the only way a transgressor can satisfy the law is to suffer its penalty, and that would not be salvation. So if the law is to be satisfied and the sinner saved, then somebody else must satisfy it for him by being punished in his place. This brings us to Christ, the Saviour, who bare our sins in His own body on the tree. On Calvary He was being punished for His people, rendering satisfaction to offended justice, receiving the wages for the sins we had committed.

III. THE MEANS OF SALVATION, or how the sinner gets the legal benefits of what Christ has done.

a. The means of salvation is faith. The salvation we do not deserve, the salvation grounded on satisfied law, the salvation provided by grace, the salvation wrought out by Christ, comes to the sinner through faith. If it came any other way it would not be by grace. If by works, it is not by grace; if without faith it is not by grace.

b. Our anti-mission friends divorce grace and faith. Matthew 19:6, "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." Here God joins grace and faith and we have no right to separate them. Grace is the fountain of salvation; faith is the channel. Grace is the cause of conversion; faith is the evidence. He called me, that is He converted me by His grace.

KING'S

(Continued from Page 1)

omnipresent. He sails the seven seas of the world at all times of the day and night. Biblically speaking, God has a navy of ships. The Bible, which is the great Sea of Life, documents a few of those ships as they sail the spiritual seas of our day. We would like to call your attention to about ten of those ships that are so common in our travels of the spiritual sea of today. We refer to it as "God's Battle-Fleet." We will deal with them one at a time.

First, Apostleship. This, beloved, is where Church Authority first rested with man after being given by Christ Himself, the Head of the First Baptist Church. "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." (Continued on Page 4, Col. 5)

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

JUNE 9, 1990

PAGE THREE

The Baptist Examiner Forum I

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

Should a church require more than a simple majority vote on any issue?

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While the form of government is not named in the New Testament I believe that there is ample evidence to show the Lord's churches how to behave themselves in the house of God. The epistles of Paul especially provide us with guidelines in proper conduct in all matters. The Holy Spirit did not leave out anything that we would need to know concerning church government.

The principle taught throughout the New Testament is that of "independence." If one will study the first four verses of I Peter chapter five, you will see that the governing power of the Lord's churches rests solely upon the people, and not any individual, group, or committee. In Acts 1:15-26 when a successor to Judas was being chosen, it was the people acting as one body who chose Matthias. These two passages, along with Colossians 1:16-19, teach us that Christ alone has the preeminence over His assemblies. In turn, the Lord committed administrative authority to each independent body.

As I have stated, the New Testament principle is that of independence. That independence is absolute as far as human authority is concerned. The Lord's church is independent of all other organizations, including associations, fellowships, and conventions. Just because our American Baptist ancestors formed the Philadelphia Baptist Association in 1707 does not mean that these organizations are Scriptural.

"The formulation of Associations was another element which contributed to Baptist success. At first, in many places, these began in simple annual meetings for religious exercises simply, but they naturally drifted into organic bodies including other objects as well. The Baptists were very jealous of them, fearing that they might trench on the independency of the Churches and come in time to exercise authority after the order of presbyteries, instead of confining themselves to merely fraternal aims. This has always been the tendency in the voluntary bodies of Christian history, and for this reason Associations will bear close watching at all times, as they are simply human in their origin." (The History of the Baptists, by Thomas Armitage, D.D., volume 2 pg.715). Apparently someone forgot to

watch. What Mr Armitage warned Baptists about was never heeded and I am afraid that what has happened has far exceeded his imagination.

Baptist churches should be independent from all other churches. Each church is responsible for its own conduct in the world. Each church must some day give an account for the way they conducted their business, and all other affairs pertaining to the Great Commission. **"For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him"** (Colossians 2:5, 6). Another verse of holy Scripture that comes to mind, which teaches us that the Lord's churches should act independently of one another, and from foreign organization is I Timothy 3:15. **"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."** In I Corinthians 14:40 Paul says, **"Let all things be done decently and in order."**

Perhaps the person submitting the question was not asking for a lesson in history. However, history, including the New Testament, should serve to emphasize the importance of a seemingly simple matter as whether a church should require a simple majority vote in a business meeting. I believe that the example in Acts chapter one will give ample support for the simple majority rule. If a church honestly and jointly seeks the Lord's will, and follows the leadership of the Holy Spirit in every matter, the majority rule will work. The Holy Spirit works primarily through the body, and not the pastor, deacon board, or committee. Thank you for your question.

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In my opinion, no. The democratic way in which a local New Testament Baptist church is governed gives each member a vote. On any one issue, after properly understanding and praying about it in seeking God's will, a member votes as he or she feels God is directing them. The majority then rules. The issue, or issues are decided by the majority voting. I realize that sometimes the result on an issue is not unani-

mous, or so close that each side of an issue thinks that the other is wrong. Certainly they both cannot be right, but the majority rules. It would at times be tempting to set rules for what seem to be more important issues than others, and there may be some assemblies that do. For example, we could say that a vote on some very important issue (calling a pastor?) must be unanimous, or have a 90% positive vote, or 80%, or some other figure. I personally believe we should not do that, because all issues in a business meeting are important in the Lord's church. Also, when we add such stipulations, it becomes easier to add, or manipulate other issues. I believe the vote should be as clear and simple as all other parts of the business meeting should be. If we refuse to abide by the majority decision on a given issue, we defeat, as well as defy a basic rule in congregational church government. In the assembly I now serve, a quorum of members is required to conduct a business meeting, which assures a fair representation of the membership. One example of majority rule in Scripture is that found in the punishment of the incestuous man in the Corinthian church. In speaking of his punishment and apparent repentance, Paul says of him in II Corinthians 2:6, **"Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many."** A literal translation of the words "of many", would be "by the many"; in other words, by the majority. God has given us a great and serious responsibility in conducting church business according to His will and for His glory. May our motives always be to that end.

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II Corinthians 2:6:
"Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many."

I am of the opinion here that "many" refers to the majority. Certainly Strong teaches this in his concordance. A part of his definition in the Greek is "a greater part." Vine says this should be rendered "the many" or "the more part." To me that means the majority. I think this was the practice of the early church and should remain the practice today.

Let me qualify that last statement a little bit. I try not to make a habit of telling other churches how to run their business. Your church's form of government is between you and the Lord. I certainly would not say

you are not a church if you do not practice democratic government. But, if you demand more than a majority vote for church decisions, then you are not practicing democratic government.

I know there are some churches who demand a two thirds or three fourths majority vote on some issues. An example of this would be for the receiving of new members. To me, it would be very inconsistent to demand a certain quota in some cases and not in all cases. There are churches who are run by a board or group without the congregation voting at all. I strongly oppose this. I know of churches that do not allow the women to vote, and of churches that do not allow children to vote. These churches might be fine churches in many areas, but they are not democratic in their government. To not allow one person who is a member to vote is to do away with democracy in the church. You are no better off than if you were run by the pastor or the deacons. I believe that every member has a right and an obligation to vote on church business. I believe that the majority of that church should have the say on matters regardless if that majority is by one vote or if it is unanimous. I know this could make some people angry, and they might quit the church. We are supposed to be mature children of God. Do we really want members in our churches who will go off and pout if they do not get their way? That is like leaving the country if your choice for president is not voted in. Why should the majority of people in the church be shunned? Should not their opinion count? Let us suppose that a church has twenty members. The church demands a three fourth majority vote. You have 14 people vote on something and 6 vote the other way. Is it right or even reasonable for the 6 to rule over the 14? It does not seem right to me.

Let me mention, before closing, that the perfect situation is for the church to be in harmony. Since I have been at Gladwin; which is 11-1/2 years, we have only had one vote that I can recall that was not unanimous. That vote had to do with what time to have Sunday night services. I believe in this and in all cases, the majority should rule. It so happens that I was not in the majority on this vote. However, I did not get angry and leave. We did not lose one single member over it. The church was not in complete harmony on this issue, so the majority ruled. That is right even if I thought the majority was wrong. It was not a Scriptural question and not a question of great importance. Wouldn't it be nice if every vote we had was unanimous? It isn't always like that, so I believe the majority should rule. Should a church require more than a simple majority vote? No, I do not think so. May God bless you all.

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The Congregational form of government is the Scriptural form for the Lord's churches.

This means the church is to be governed by its members. Under this form of government, it is the right of the majority to rule. From the Scriptural accounts given of the actions of some of the New Testament churches we see that they, in each instance, followed this form of government. In Acts 1:22-26 the church, after asking for divine guidance, **"gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias."** In Acts 6:5 the whole church chose the seven men who were to "serve tables." The Church at Antioch, being led by the Spirit, sent Paul and Barnabas out as missionaries (Acts 13:1-3). Later, the same church sent out Paul and Silas (Acts 15:40). In Acts 15:23 it is said of the church at Jerusalem, **"Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas"**.

In each of these accounts it would seem there was no dissenting vote, as it will be if all are led by the Spirit of God. The only account given in the Scripture where only a majority ruled on an issue was in the church at Corinth when it became necessary for the church to withdraw from the man who had "his father's wife" (I Cor. 5:1). Paul wrote the church to receive back into fellowship of the church that repentant man for, **"Sufficient to such a man is the punishment, which was inflicted of many"** (I Cor. 2:6). The "of many" means "of the more," or "by the greater number." The N.A.S. and other translations give it as, "inflicted by the majority."

Should a church require more than a majority vote on some issues? I see no need; to do so would seem to go beyond that required in the Word. The majority vote should be sufficient in all issues and will be if the minority will submit to the majority. There will be no minority vote if each church would follow the instructions given by Paul to the church at Ephesus. He wrote, **"I THEREFORE, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"** (Eph. 4:1, 3).

KING'S

(Continued from Page 3)

And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples; and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles" (Luke 12:13). Then again we read: **"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues"** (I Cor. 12:28). Jesus believed in the power of prayer as a man humbling Himself to the Father. We could learn a lesson there in His selection of His followers that were chosen as pillars of His earthly work, the church. We note in the foregoing Scrip-

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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

I heard a preacher say that Christ was the only reward believers would ever have. What do you think of this?

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"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Matthew 16:27). If Christ is the only reward that believers will ever have, then this verse makes salvation wholly and solely by works. This verse is speaking of faithfulness in serving the Lord.

Reward is not payment for work done. When a man is hired to do a certain job for a certain price, when the job is done he then receives his wages for the job completed. That is not being rewarded. If, when the job is finished the man doing the hiring, gave some extra money, then this would be reward money. It would be over and above what was promised. Reward is something received for a good deed, or sometimes for evil as the case of the hypocrites praying on the street corner and in the synagogues that they may be seen of men. They prayed that they may be seen, and they got what they desired.

In no sense of the word is Christ Jesus a reward to any who work for salvation, in this life or in the life to come. "... but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). Eternal life is surely salvation in the Lord. It is spoken of here in this verse as a gift from God. A gift is far different from a reward. A gift is that which is bestowed on another without any work considered, before or after the gift is given. God chose Jacob and not Esau before they were born, before having done any evil or good work. It was purely from the love of God and not from anything in Jacob. There is not anything in the creature which moves God to choose any. It is all of grace.

Again, we read, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt" (Romans 4:4). If a person would receive Christ because of works, it would not be a reward. If, after having worked a life time, then in heaven God would reward him with Christ, which would constitute a debt that God would be settling. God would be paying a person for work done. But God does not owe any man. He is obligated to no one.

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly,

his faith is counted for righteousness" (Romans 4:5). The faith mentioned in this verse is not from any works, but is a gift from God because of His grace and not from anything God saw in man. It certainly cannot be a reward. A reward is something given out of appreciation for some deed done. This certainly is not the case with Christ being given the sinner out of appreciation of what he has done. This would set aside every Scripture which teaches that salvation is a gift of God. It would set aside the righteous work of Christ. It would set aside the sacrifice that Christ made when He gave Himself. Christs suffering in the stead of the sinner, would be null and void.

Christ is not a reward to the elect of God, neither in this life nor in that which is to come. Rewards will be given to the faithful that have Christ already.

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I personally think that the preacher should either study his Bible or quit preaching. First of all, Christ is not a reward. A reward is given for service rendered. You earn a reward. We did not earn Christ. Christ is not a reward, but rather a gift of grace to undeserving creatures. The Bible teaches that the Christian will be rewarded for certain acts and service.

Mark 9:41 says, "For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward."

Yes, my brother, there are rewards for faithful service to our blessed Lord, but these rewards can be lost. II John 8 says, "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward." I Corinthians 3:12-15 "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

Ephesians 3:21 says, "Unto

him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." I personally believe that in order for a Christian to earn a reward that he must be a member of a true New Testament Baptist church. I believe this because our Lord said that He would receive glory in the church. There is an argument about the cup of water given that earned a reward. Beloved, the cup of water must be given in Christ's name in order to receive a reward. Who better could give a cup of water in Christ's name than a member of His church. I believe our Lord expected Christians to be members of His church, and that they work out of that church to give and to serve.

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Christ was not, is not, and never will be a reward for a believer. A reward, by definition, is something given in return for service or for merit. Service and merit speak of works, and Christ is not a reward for or a result of that which man can do. Christ is a gift, given in love freely by the Father, to children of His choosing that those children may have everlasting life. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn. 3:16). A gift is something that is presented freely and is to be received in the manner in which it is bestowed. Everything that the believer receives is a gift from God. It would be impossible for one to believe in Christ if he were not given the faith to do so. "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).

Believers will have rewards, and their rewards will be based upon obedience and service. "Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor" (I Cor. 3:8). When will man receive these rewards? Does he get them in this life? The Scriptures say that there is a set time when man will receive his reward. "Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is" (I Cor. 3:13). Notice the word shall in the

above verse, it is an emphatic word and means that those events will take place as stated. What is the day that this verse mentions? For the believer, it is the judgment 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). So, there will be rewards, but there can also be loss of rewards.

"If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward" (I Cor. 3:14). What are some of the rewards that man might receive? First, there is a reward for willingly preaching the gospel. "For if I do this willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me" (I Cor. 9:17). Paul speaks here concerning the necessity of preaching the gospel and the woe unto him if he does not. All may not preach from the pulpit, but all that are saved are required to witness of the gospel. Secondly, there is a reward for persecution because of the gospel. "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you" (Mt. 5:12). Then there is a reward for receiving those that are sent to us because of the gospel. "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward" (Mt. 10:41). These three should suffice to show that the believer will have rewards at the time of judgment.

Rewards, as we stated before, will be given on the basis of service and obedience to the commands of God. That service and obedience is not according to our standards, but according to His standards. Therefore, we must strive according to His laws or there will be no rewards. "And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully" (II Tim. 2:5). The crown is the symbol of rewards earned.

KING'S

(Continued from Page 4)

ture that He prayed all night before selecting the founders of His church to leave the work to when He was to depart the earth.

Beloved, after the free gift of salvation itself, I believe the next most cherished possession is the privilege of belonging to a New Testament Church! The world is spotted all over with churches of a sort, but not all are New Testament Churches. Beloved, the church authority that we have today was first exercised by the apostles. When the Lord was about to leave the earth, in the very last verses of Matthew in Chapter 28, He was talking to His church, and I believe it was in church capacity. The same instructions are effective to us today in 1990. Yes, we have a mother church, the First Baptist Church in Jerusalem.

Secondly, leadership. This applies to the preachers, the pastors of the true New Testament

churches of today. The true church is led today under this authority by the ministerial leadership. The pastor is, or should always be first. He is the shepherd of the flock; the "overseer" if you please, after that whatever the local church consists of according to the Scriptures. The church staff consists of deacons and teachers first, then there are other very needful spots to be filled to handle all the regular responsibilities that go with an organization. Did you know that all these officers are pastor's aides? They certainly are!

Why is the pastor a leader? What qualifies him for this high office? We believe that the instructions for a bishop applies to the modern day God-called preacher, especially the pastor. "For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Titus 1:7-9). We could go on and on, but that alone will suffice for the description of a true minister of the gospel, a true preacher of righteousness.

Thirdly, stewardship. Oh, yes. We are getting personal now. That applies not only to the pastor, but to all of us on the membership roll! The preacher first, as we saw there in Titus 1:7-9 above, then to everyone who have received the good graces of God.

If we misuse that with which we are trusted, we must give an account to God. "AND he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward" (Luke 16:1-2). The Bible stresses stewardship concerning every person who is saved by the marvelous grace of God, and there is no other way to be saved. "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (I Pet. 4:10-11). We could go on and on and never finish with the subject of stewardship.

Fourthly, worship. "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth" (John 4:24). Oh, we claim to worship Him, but do we really worship Him in spirit and truth completely and wholly? Do we exalt Him as Lord and Master?

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KINGS'

(Continued from Page 5)

Do we worship Christ Jesus as the eternal Son of God? Do we truly obey Him as the Lord of our life? We should if we truly worship Him! Brethren, when I examine my own life, and we should make this a daily practice, I find more weakness than I want to find. When I view my short comings it causes me to go a step closer in my prayer life. I find myself falling so far short of what I know that He expects of me. We could do a better job of truly worshipping Him if we tried. Oh, what a gift He bestowed upon us, the hope that He gave us as we were delivered from despair to eternal hope. "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began" (Titus 1:2). Beloved, we worship Him because He is God!

Fifthly, fellowship. God meant for His people to have sweet fellowship together. Fellowship shows love for the brethren. "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:5-7). It is very difficult to have fellowship with the brethren if we are out of fellowship with the Master. It is very difficult to attempt to show a warm relationship with the brethren if we are out of fellowship with the Master.

Another way of showing true fellowship is found in Hebrews. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25). Here we see something very special in addition to fellowship. Attending church is not optional, but rather, a command of God! The speckled perch, or crappie, as they are called by some of the fishermen, may well be biting real good these beautiful spring days, but God says rather than meet out on the lake with them Sunday morning, meet in the church house in true fellowship with the brethren! It is a shame to go fishing on the Lord's Day anyway. Fellowship also creates better love and respect for the brethren, not to mention love itself.

Sixthly, friendship. "And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the Friend of God" (James 2:23). Oh, my brother, to be classed as a friend of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ, and holding a close friendship with God the Father! "Let brotherly love continue" (Heb. 13:1). "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together

in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard: even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore" (Psalm 133). Fellowship is to be enjoyed with the close association of the brethren.

Seventhly, broken ships. Broken fellowship, if you please. "Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end; While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation" (Heb. 3:10-15). God becomes angry with our joining the worldly crowds and breaks our fellowship. "Then Eliezer the son of Dodavah of Mare-shah prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying, Because thou hast joined thyself with Ahaziah, the LORD hath broken thy works. And the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish (II Chron. 20:37). Yes, the Lord will send you to the dry dock for repair.

Eighthly, suretyship. Are you sure that you are saved? "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (II Pet. 1:10). Yes, one can be sure of his calling. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal. The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (II Tim. 2:19). "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the ap-

pearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (I Pet. 1:3-9).

Oh, beloved, our salvation is sure. Paul told us in Ephesians 1:5, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." We did not choose Him, He chose us according to John 15:16. Have you completely trusted in the finished work on Calvary? He did finish it, leaving nothing for us to do in the way of saving our souls except pure unadulterated faith in the shed blood of our Saviour on the cross. You can be sure of your salvation because He promised us eternal salvation. There will never be found a child of God in hell that was once saved by the marvelous grace of God! Beloved, my God is able.

Ninthly, sonship. We are the sons of God by faith in Jesus Christ. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:11-13). One may ask you, "How do you know for sure that you are the son of God?" Have you ever been chastised by the Father? I generally answer them with that question. I believe that it is self-explanatory. My dad never went down the street lashing just any fellow that he met, primarily the reason was, it was not his child. He only lashed his own son for disobedience. We see something else in the Scripture that encourages this belief also. "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness" (Heb. 12:5-10). Yes, we are sons, and heirs with the eternal Son of God, Jesus Christ the Messiah!

Tenthly, zionship. The old ship of Zion! Let us talk about the Admiral of the fleet, the Son of God. Beloved, every fleet has an admiral. Jesus Christ is the Admiral of God's Fleet. He, beloved, is in full command of God's navy. The admirals of the

world wear gold trimmings as the mark of their distinction, or their prestigious post as what we of the world referred to as the "High Brass." Our Admiral of God's fleet is the precious insignia. He is the pure Gold. We referred to "Goldbraids" as referring to our top brass as it were. He is more precious than gold to us who have believed on Him unto salvation. He leads all other ships as He sails upon the old ship of Zion on the seas of our hearts. Oh, what a Saviour! What an Admiral sailing the spiritual seas of our world today constantly sailing in defence of our holdings for future claim by the Father. "Seeing then that you have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:14-16).

Then again we see, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb. 5: 8-10). As long as we are allowed to live on this continent we are sure that we are being protected by the greatest watchman that ever sailed God's seas of destiny. The Admiral on the great ship of Zion. Our dear beloved of the Gold Braid, the Admiral of the Fleet aboard the Ship of Zion who will sail until the soon coming to set up His kingdom upon the planet earth. Do you know Him? You may. He is calling as He is sailing. He will save you today by faith in the finished work on Calvary. It takes blood to cover sin. Have you met Him? If not, why not?

WILL MAN

(Continued from Page 1)

or anxious when we hear the ravings of the world. We have but to look into God's wonderful Word to know that He alone controls all things, and our fear is not to be of man, but of God; and especially we need to teach the fear of God to our children.

So, will man destroy the earth? Let us see what God has to say on the matter. We know that God created all things, and that for His pleasure, David said in Psalms 24:1, "The earth is the LORD'S and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." Now we know who the sole owner is; not only of the earth, but also of all that dwell in the earth. So when the owner speaks of His creation and possession, we His creatures need to listen so that we will not fear when men present their theories.

God said in Genesis 8:22, "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." This is a very definite statement made by God concerning the earth. So regardless of what men say, as long as the earth remains, there will be

summer and winter, and men will sow and reap. In the 8th and 9th chapters of Revelation, we see that even at that time there are still trees and green grass on the earth, creatures in the sea, and beasts on the earth. You see God is keeping things intact, as is, for times and events yet future and man will not alter what God has purposed to do on the earth.

In II Peter 3:7, Peter said, "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." So we see here the earth kept in store, reserved for a day of judgment in the future. It is God, not man, that will bring judgment on the earth. We only have to look at the book of Revelation to see the judgment of God upon the earth and the great day of His wrath. I wonder if this is not what men are trying to avoid, this wrath of God poured out on man. I have had men laugh at me because I believe these things will literally happen, but their laughing is no doubt a covering for their fear that these things might be so.

In Revelation 6:12-17, John said, "And I beheld, (keep in mind that the Lord told John in 1:1, "What thou seest, write in a book....," so John is describing what will literally take place on this earth) when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places, and the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the mighty men and every bondsmen, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

We see from these Scriptures, the earth still standing, man has not destroyed it, God has kept it in store for this time, for "the great day of His wrath." No one will be able to stand, from the kings to the bondmen. I want to warn you, if you are lost and without Christ today, that these things you have just read will take place literally, upon this earth, and the only refuge is in Christ. No man will come up with an invention that will prevent that day. No armies formed will stop it, no conferences or negotiation will stay this time of the wrath of God, and even after this great and terrible time, the lost still must stand in judgment before Almighty God at the great white throne, and even after that, eternity in hell. So any fear of what man thinks he might do is vain. Fear God.

We also see in the 19th chapter of Revelation the thousand year (Continued on Page 7, Col. 5)

STUDIES IN ACTS

"And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda" (Acts 9:32). Lydda was located on the road that lay between Jerusalem and Caesarea Philippi. The Greeks called Lydda by the name of Diospolis which means "city of Jupiter." There, in fact, at one time, was a temple in Lydda which was dedicated to Jupiter. This city is now only a miserable village named Saint George. It is called Saint George because it is said that a person by the name of Saint George was martyred there.

"And there he found a certain man named Eneas, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy" (Acts 9:33). We know from verse thirty-five that all the people in Lydda, as the result of what God, through Peter, did for Eneas, turned to the Lord. Eneas' eight years of suffering, then, was not in vain. His suffering, in fact, resulted in an abundant harvest of souls. One can be sure that Eneas is still praising the Lord for his eight years of palsy, and so are those who benefitted thereby. Let each of us learn from Eneas that God has a purpose for all those difficulties we are called upon to encounter. Let us learn that our apparent setbacks are, in reality, steps forward. They are victories rather than defeats. They are the result of God's working all things for our good.

"And Peter said unto him, Eneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately" (Acts 9:34). Jesus, when crucified, said, "It is finished." Eneas, through the power of Jesus Christ, could also say, "It is finished." He, in fact, was told to make his bed because he was through with it as far as his affliction was concerned. He would use it again, but for an entirely different reason. There, of course, is a limitation which God places on the afflictions which we are called upon to bear. There are some afflictions which stay with us until death us do part, but God's grace is sufficient to see us through these.

"And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord" (Acts 9:35). One casts a stone into a pond, and the waves ripple to the opposite shore. The waves from the healing of Eneas rippled across Lydda and Saron, or what the Old Testament calls "Sharon." Sharon was open country -- an open country that was very fertile. Sharon denotes any country of great beauty and fertility.

It is said that those in Lydda and Saron turned to the Lord. To turn is to change directions. They were traveling toward hell but made a right turn, in a sense of speaking, and headed toward heaven. The turn actually was a complete reversal of direction. They had been on a dark road, but they turned onto a lighted highway -- a highway where the Word was a lamp to their feet and a light to their path. They turned off a crowded highway to one where there were few that walked therein. They turned from the broad way that leads to destruction to the narrow way that leads to life. They turned from the

downward way to the upward way.

"Now there was in Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did" (Acts 9:36). We have been reading of Lydda and Saron and now we read of Joppa.

"Jaffa is celebrated in modern times for her gardens and orchards of delicious fruit more than for anything else. They are very ex-



Willard Willis

tensive, flourishing, and profitable, but their very existence depends upon the fact that water to any amount can be procured in every garden, and at a moderate depth. The entire plain seems to cover a river of vast breadth, percolating through the sand en route to the sea. A thousand Persian wheels working night and day produce no sensible diminution, and this inexhaustible source of wealth underlies the whole territory of the Philistines down to Gaza at least, and probably much farther south.

The fruits of Jaffa are the same as those of Sidon, but with certain variations in their character. Sidon has the best bananas, Jaffa furnishes the best pomegranates. The oranges of Sidon are more juicy and of a richer flavour than those of Jaffa; but the latter hang on the trees much later, and will bear to be shipped to distant regions. They are therefore more valuable to the producer. It is here only that you see in perfection fragrant blossoms encircling golden fruit. In March and April these Jaffa gardens are indeed enchanting. The air is overloaded with the mingled spicery of orange, lemon, apple, apricot, quince, plum, and china trees in blossom. The people then frequent the groves, sit on mats beneath their grateful shade, sip coffee, smoke the argella, sing, converse, or sleep, as best suits their individual idiosyncrasies, till evening, when they slowly return to their homes in the city. To us of the restless West, this way of making kaif soon wearies by its slumberous monotony, but it is Slysium to the Arabs.

I have been strolling along the streets, or rather street of Jaffa, for there seems to be but one, and a more crowded thoroughfare I never saw. I had to force my way through the mealy crowd of busy citizens, wild Arabs, foreign pilgrims, camels, mules, horses, and donkeys. Then what a strange rabble outside the gate, noisy, quarrelsome, ragged, and filthy! Many are blind, or at least have some painful defect about their eyes, and some are leprosy. The peasants hereabout must be very poor, to judge by their rags and squalid appearance. I was reminded of Dorcas and the widows around Peter exhibiting the coats

and garments which that benevolent lady had made, and I devoutly hoped she might be raised again, at least in spirit, for there is need of a dozen Dorcas societies in Jaffa at the present time." -- The Land and the Book (Thomson), vol ii, p. 271-281. (Tabitha).

Sharon was situated along the coast of the Mediterranean and extended from Caesarea to Joppa. Lydda was also situated in this same area. Joppa was a seaport city on the Mediterranean about forty-five miles northwest of Jerusalem. It was to the port of Joppa that Solomon had all the timber for the temple brought from Tyre. It then had to be transported another forty-five miles to Jerusalem. Joppa is now called Jaffa. It was from the port of Joppa that Jonah tried to flee from the Lord.

It was at Joppa, according to the passage before us, that Tabitha, or Dorcas, resided. I understand that Dorcas is Greek and Tabitha is Syriac. It was customary for Jews to have two names, one Hebrew and the other Greek or Latin. This was especially true in a seaport town such as Joppa, which was a town made up of both Jews and Gentiles.

Dorcas or Tabitha had earned quite a reputation because of her unselfishness. She, in fact, lived in order to help others. She searched for people to whom she could lend a helping hand and she found many. Our text, in fact, states that she was "full of good works and almsdeeds." To be full is to reach one's capacity. She, in other words, did all she could. She used every moment and all her strength so that she had nothing left to give, or any more time to give. She, in giving as she did, had her Lord in mind. She, it is said, was "a certain disciple" of the Lord. She knew that by serving the poor, she was serving Him. She considered her hands and feet to belong to her master.

"And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper chamber" (Acts 9:37). We will never know here on earth, but it would be of interest to know if Dorcas, due to her good works and alms giving, became ill. Perhaps she, due to lack of sleep and an excessive workload, brought her illness upon herself, or perhaps she caught some disease from the people she helped. We cannot be sure on this matter, but the possibility is there. It is likely that she gave her life for others.

Dorcas' friends washed her body, which was customary before burial, and laid her in an upper chamber. They, however, even in death, did not need to be in despair, since their Lord is greater than death itself. What a friend they had in Jesus, and He would soon prove to them how great a friend He really was.

"And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them" (Acts 9:38). I'm sure that the disciples were not fully aware as to why they were compelled to bring Peter to Joppa, and to do so without delay. God the Spirit, however, planned to bring Dorcas back to life, and He planned to use Peter as His means. The apostles, up to this point, had

not raised anyone from the dead. God the Spirit, however, through Peter, was to perform a work that would generate a great response. Dorcas, after all, was known and loved throughout Joppa. She had given her all to others. The others therefore would not be able to praise God enough for raising their beloved Dorcas from the dead.

Dorcas made a great impression by doing good. She was not a preacher, but one who expressed her love to God by doing good to others. May we also watch for opportunities to help those who have real needs. Dorcas may have been a quiet person here on earth, but her action on earth made the bells of heaven ring.

"Then Peter arose, and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them" (Acts 9:39).

The key word throughout this story is found in Acts 9:36 where it is emphasized that Dorcas was a "disciple." She obviously, as a disciple, did what she could. The fact that she was a disciple is what motivated her. The people were greatly benefited by her life, but the benefits were a result of her love for her Savior. She, as His disciple, worked to please Him; and the people reaped the harvest thereof. The coats and garments which they showed Peter were coats and garments she had made in order to honor her Lord and Master.

The attitude of some people makes it difficult for one to help them, but such becomes easy when we do so for our Lord. We are even blessed more when we help people under difficult circumstances. I'm thinking, for example, of people who refuse to say thanks or people who think that society owes them a living.

It appears obvious that coats and garments made by Dorcas were being worn throughout the city of Joppa. This brings one to ask, "Is there any evidence of my life's work in the community in which I live?"

The story of Dorcas shows clearly that acts of mercy are very important for the disciples of our Lord. It is very important to witness by speaking God's Word to people, but it is also very important to speak to people by acts of kindness and mercy (read Matthew 25:35-46).

"But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body, said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up" (Acts 9:40). Tabitha's work on earth was not finished. She received only a brief rest, and then it was back to work again. It must have been very difficult for Tabitha to come back from Paradise to earth again, but I'm sure she was glad to do so since it was her Lord's will.

The act of bringing Tabitha back to life was equal to the creation of Adam or Even since all the functions of her body had stopped. It is true that she still had her body with all its parts, but they were all dead and were as if they did not exist. God, then, through Peter as His channel, performed a great miracle.

Peter, by saying "Arise" to Tabitha, was showing how much

faith he had in His God. Such showed how big Peter's God was to him. God, in fact, as far as Peter was concerned, was bigger than death. Peter's Lord, after all, had conquered death. Peter was a witness to the fact that His Lord's grave was empty -- that He had risen from the dead. Peter before commanding Tabitha to arise, prayed. He prayed to that One in whom we are more than conquerors.

"And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive" (Acts 9:41). Peter, according to Acts 9:40, had "put them all forth." He obviously compelled them all to leave the room, as doctors in some instances do. The doctor, after his examination, will then present his findings to the family. Peter, however, did not perform an examination and report his findings, but he "presented her alive." He, in fact, presented her alive from the realm of the dead. Her body had been cold in death and her eyes set in death. Her mouth could not speak and her arms could not embrace her loved ones; but Peter, as God's means, changed all of that.

"And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord" (Acts 9:42). I'm sure that all the conversation in Joppa centered around Tabitha. It is said, in fact, that "many believed." One would think that all would have believed, rather than many; but we can thank God for those who did believe. The rest remained doubters even in the fact of such a great miracle. They, of course, will kick themselves forever and ever as they burn in the flames of hell.

"And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner" (Acts 9:43). Peter, as he tarried with Simon, must have spent hours upon hours telling him about his experiences with Jesus. There were so many things which he had seen Jesus do and heard Jesus say. The story about the great catch of fish must have been one of his favorite stories since he had been a fisherman. We will learn later that Peter was at Simon's home in Joppa when he received word from Cornelius to come to his home in Caesarea.

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reign of Christ here on the earth, and after that the earth is still standing as Satan is loosed out of his prison and goes out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth. So man has still not brought about the destruction of the earth, nor the elimination of man's food and water supply.

No, friends, man will not destroy the earth, and he will not completely destroy the plant and animal life, because as we stated before, God has and will keep it in store, reserved for the day of judgment. In II Peter 3:10, Peter said, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth

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also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." So without a doubt, the earth and everything in it will be destroyed by God, not man. So we need not be anxious nor troubled by the reports of the world, but let us rest in the comfort of God's Word and the great promises that He has given us. In Revelation 21:1, John said, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." The destruction of the old and the creation of the new, was, is, and shall be of God.

DOCTRINE

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likely to draw young people into its cult. It is a very popular doctrine. It's taught and preached just about everywhere and I believe our young people and those recently saved need to be on guard against it. Under the banner of Arminianism we also have the five points of freewillism. You will not find these five points of freewillism in God's Word because they are man's doctrine. We want to show what this doctrine is in itself.

Notice in the book of Ephesians chapter one. Paul is writing to the church at Ephesus. He was showing them what a great blessing and a great honor they had. He was also showing them how God had elevated them and exalted them.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Eph. 1:4).

God has chosen us in His beloved Son. In His only begotten Son, God has chosen us in Him. What a great honor this is! This took place before the foundation of the world. This took place back in eternity.

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all

things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. 1:5-11).

Every purpose is established by counsel. That is why Paul used the word "counsel". Notice it is used in the singular. Every purpose of God is established by counsel. What is the counsel? It is the Triune God-Head. It is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These three entered into an everlasting covenant before the foundation of the world. Each one pledged in this covenant that He would do a certain thing in the covenant. God the Father pledged in this covenant that He would choose a people. Jesus Christ pledged that He would save and die for these people. The Holy Spirit pledged that He would bring these people to the foot of the cross and they would be saved. This is what it is talking about. Anything outside of sovereign grace sure wouldn't be God's pleasure. It would be the pleasure and glory of man.

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

Paul said you know your election by your calling, and you know your calling by the receiving of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul said you have heard and received the gospel. You know and understand these things because God has revealed them to you by the gospel and through the gospel.

"Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:14).

"Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power" (Eph. 1:15-19).

Paul was trying to show them what power it took and what power it was that brought them out of the sewer and placed them upon the mountain peaks of perfection; by His divine sovereign grace in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the working of God's mighty power. Romans 1:16 says, "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."

This power is the power that brought forth Jesus Christ from the tomb. He raised Him from the dead and set Him at his own right hand in the heavenly places. Far above all principalities, powers, mights, dimensions, and every name that names not only in this world but also in that one which is to come. He has put all

things under His feet and given Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body.

We are going to discuss the five points of grace and the five points of freewillism and see how they compare. The Arminians will not allow election to be an eternal, peculiar, unconditional, and an irreversible act of God. They will not let that be. They will fight against it. Why do they do this? There are two things we must understand. They do not believe in the sovereignty of God, nor do they believe in the total depravity of man. Until a man knows the sovereignty of God and the total depravity of man he will never comprehend or be able to understand the doctrines of sovereign grace. They say they believe in the sovereignty of God; and they also say they believe in the total depravity of man, but they do not. In Daniel 4:35 we see the sovereignty of God. "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

God does as He pleases. God doesn't have to have our permission to do anything. God is the sovereign God of this universe. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18). He said I am vested with all power in heaven and in earth. So He has all power in heaven and earth as God did because He is God.

"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:2-3).

In I Thessalonians 1:4 Paul is writing to the church, "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God."

The Arminians will not allow election to be a peculiar, unconditional, irresistible act of God. What do they believe? We proved beyond any shadow of doubt that God is sovereign and man is totally depraved. Does the freewillist believe that God is sovereign? If he does, why does he say God must have his permission to save him? They say that they believe in the sovereignty of God and that God is all powerful and all wise, but yet they say they have a will in salvation. They don't believe in total depravity like they say they do; they believe in partial depravity. They don't believe they are truly dead. They believe they still have a little spark of life left in them. They believe they can resist the power of God and resist the effectual calling of the gospel of Jesus Christ. They truly believe this. But how can they? What do they base it on? They believe they have this right and this power in their own hands.

They believe that Jesus Christ died for everyone that ever lived or ever will live upon the face of this earth. This is freewillism. They will agree that God spake the world into existence and made man, but they will not agree that

man is unable to save himself. They will not believe that God can save a man unless man gives him permission to do so. That is their doctrine.

I will agree that a person who is in freewillism and teaches freewillism as a doctrine has a will. But that will is inclined to do evil, and it cannot do good in God's eyes. I can do good moral things in the sight of man and in the community where he lives, but I cannot do one spiritual divine act in the sight of God that will be pleasing to God.

They teach that God is unable to save them unless they give their approval. Here is the way their doctrine of election goes. They believe that God has a vote, Satan has a vote, and man has the deciding vote. It is based on the moral precepts of man, that he has this right and this power. When man makes up his mind he wants to be saved and become a Christian, he will cast his vote. This means they believe that Christ died equally and indiscriminately for the lost as well as for the saved. This is known as general atonement.

Let's find out what election is. Notice in Ephesians 1:4, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

God chose us in Him before the foundation of the world. Man wasn't even created. God chose us to eternal salvation. God substituted in His Holy Trinity, self-contained and self-satisfying. He had not created any world that needed His attention. He had not created any angels that would glorify and honor Him. God was in need of nothing. He was self-pleased, self-contained and self-satisfied. God didn't need anything, but it pleased God to speak them into existence, to make a world and to place man upon the earth so that he could declare His manifestive glory.

Many people ask me how could God love people who were not born yet. They ask how God could love someone or something that did not even exist until He spoke it into existence. I tell them God chose us in Christ before He spoke us into existence. God loved Christ, and when God embraced Christ He embraced all of His elect. We had our being in Christ. This divine sovereign grace of God that was bestowed upon me was given to me and preserved for me in Jesus Christ.

"Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called" (Jude 1:1).

This verse tells us that we are preserved in Jesus Christ. This means we are assured of eternal life. Election is not salvation. Arminians try to argue the point that election is salvation, but it is not, according to the Word of God. Election sets us apart and preserves us in Jesus Christ.

Any system of doctrine that conditions the saving purpose of God on the act or merit of man is Arminianism no matter what name it goes by. Arminianism discredits the power of God and places the power in the hands of man. Rationalism means you cannot believe by faith; you must see, feel, taste or smell something before you can believe in it. Was it not enough that Christ

died for us on the cross? Can we not believe by faith through the gospel of Jesus Christ? Are we not empowered by the Holy Spirit to believe? Arminianism is the most damaging and hateful doctrine that Satan has ever come up with. Arminianism exalts man and insults God. It fosters human pride and steals glory from God.

Freewillers assert that saving grace is man's choice; he may or may not receive it as he pleases. This is not the divine sovereign grace that was given to us in Christ Jesus before the world was spoken into existence. This is man's doctrine.

We will go back to our text to study this power. The effectual calling of the gospel of Jesus Christ is the power God uses to save sinners. Notice what Paul is saying in Ephesians 1:17-19. "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power."

The working of God's mighty power, not man's power. Man tries to make himself God. He tries to control God. They will not permit God to rule over them because they believe they are gods in themselves. One day God will reveal to them who is all-powerful, when it pleases Him to do so.

What is the exceeding greatness of God's power to us who believe according to the working of His mighty power? It is in the gospel of Jesus Christ. If God did not deal with us with His exceedingly great power we would all be lost. Ephesians 2:8 says, "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."

Paul said that a man is saved by sovereign divine grace. Arminians treat grace like it is table grace or a small child's prayer. That is not what I am talking about. I am talking about the divine saving grace of God. It was wonderful grace that God Himself provided the surety to save us from our sins, or we would all be lost. It was amazing grace that Jesus Christ was willing to perform such a work for us. Without the consent of Jesus Christ, we would not have a surety.

The Arminians believe a man can be saved and lost at will. The Word of God says you are saved at God's appointed time or not at all. You are saved through the gospel of Jesus Christ. They believe the saving power of the Holy Spirit is not irresistible but that is left up to the will of man and not God. They are saying that man can reject the Holy Spirit and the mighty power of God.

I hope and pray I have not offended anyone with this message. I strongly believe people should be aware of these false doctrines. Read and study the Word of God to help you understand the true meaning of the doctrine of election. May God bless you.

MURDER

(Continued from Page 1)

sponsible for his and the other deaths, were drug dealers and Satan worshippers. According to police, the victims had been killed and the bodies had been used in some kind of ritualistic sacrifices to insure the cult members some kind of special protection from the authorities. Obviously, it did not work. But what did work was murder. But not ordinary murder. No, a million times no. The bodies were said to have been carved up into several pieces in the sacrificial rituals. As horrible as this news might be, and as astonished as we Americans might be, it is not a new thing. These kind of people have long been around.

Deuteronomy 12:31 says: "...for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods." This passage is in reference to the ritualistic practices of the Canaanites sacrificing their children to their gods. However, instead of cutting them up, they just burned them. In II Kings 2:27, we can see the account of how one of the kings of the Moabites sacrificed his eldest son to appease his god. But even worse, Ahaz, king of Israel, did the same as the heathen. In II Kings 16:3 we read: "But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel." One would not expect much from the heathen, but much more is expected from Israel. According to the Psalmist, they (the Israelites) sacrificed their sons and daughters to devils (Ps. 106:37). According to the police, these people did some of the same. We can see just how up to date the Bible is.

I. LIFE IS PRECARIOUS

1. This tragic incident reminds us of just how precarious life is. We cannot know from one moment to the next if we will be around for another day. This young man did not go on spring break never expecting to see his folks again. He was out for a little fun, not murder. James 4:14 says, "...For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." We have all seen smoke and how quickly it disappears after it is pressed into the atmosphere. I used to go to the train station in the days of the old steam engine. Many times, I have seen this Scripture vividly illustrated as the steam was blown from the engine with a great deal of noise and fanfare. It was very visible for a second or two and then it was gone.

2. This reminds us of another important fact: what we are going to do, we must do quickly, as our lives are not guaranteed for any more than this second. I read about the school bus accident in Radcliff, Ky., last May, 1988. In that accident, 27 people died and 24 of these were children. The man who caused that accident is walking around, maybe still driving around. If life is so uncertain, even for Christians, what about the unsaved person? With death possible at any moment, how can you afford to continue in your present pathway? Why not, by faith, come to

the Savior now and place your life and soul in His hands?

II. SIN AND SINNERS ARE VERY MUCH ALIVE

1. A passage in Romans 1:31, well describes those people (and others no doubt). It says in part, "...without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." I am sure Satan has had himself a great celebration for the last several months over the activities of these animal like beings. Despite what the liberals tell us, this is just another grim reminder that sin and sinners are still very much alive. And of course, it can't be forgotten how drugs are again seen as the moving force behind the activities of these people. Even though it did not occur in our country, we should hold our government accountable for the many murders and free movement of drugs in our society. Last year, 1988, in Washington, D.C., where the laws are made, there were over 372 murders! And drugs were as available as Pepsi. Would we be overly critical if we suggest they are asleep at the wheel? Isaiah fitly describes them when he says: **His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber**" (Is. 56:10). When drugs are so freely moved, sold and used as they are today, sin and sinners are at their best (worst would be a more appropriate word). If our government does not do what is necessary to stop such activities as these, then you or I, or one of our children, may well be the next victim of some crazed Satan worshippers in your or my town. In due time, if this trend keeps up, and our government does as it is presently doing, no place in these dear old 50 states will be safe.

2. It also reminds us of how low the human being can stoop if all restraints are removed or at least relaxed to a large degree. The liberals have ruled our nation for the last two decades or more. They told the people good manners, good morals, strict enforcement of the laws were not necessary; that people were just naturally good and did not need the Ten Commandments, God, the Bible or any other vestige of Christianity. They said don't worry. We have it under control. I knew they were lying then, and I am even more convinced now. When people don't have any moral values and not many restraints, they will degenerate to the level of animals. The book of Romans also has a word for the lily livered liberals. It says **"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,"** (Rom. 1:22). A smart alec kid once asked me did I know why alligators are called alligators. I replied I did not. "Well," he said, "it is because they look more like alligators than anything else." These people look more like fools than anything else.

III. SATAN IS ALIVE AND WELL

1. This is also a grim reminder (and a lot of people do need this reminder) that Satan is alive, well, and if anything, stronger than ever. The terms; mass murder, Satan worship, and cults, are becoming all too familiar. The prevailing idea seems to be if we can educate people well enough, bankroll them well enough, give them pleasure enough, entertain

them enough, create the proper environment (but above all, don't ever mention moral values), all will be well. (It is interesting to note that some of the people involved in these murders were also well educated). The truth is, an educated person can be just as subject to the wiles of Satan as the uneducated. He is more than delighted to use one and all. The only requirement is a willing mind. Peter depicts Satan as roaming about seeking any available meal (individual) who is carelessly walking along the highway of life (II Peter 5:8).

2. And what about you, my unsaved friend? Your relationship with Satan has always been great. I am sure he is delighted with you, but are you delighted with him? The expression I saw on the face of the young man digging up the grave outside of Matamoros, was not one of joy. He may have thought he was having fun when he participated in the killings, but now he is left to fend for himself. After Satan has used someone up, he throws them aside much like we dispose of garbage. On the other hand, after one has received Christ as his Savior, he has His promise **"...I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"** (Heb. 13:5).

IV. WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

1. Before discussing the solution, let's look at the difference between murder and killing. Our bleeding heart liberals have been so vociferous in their protests against the death penalty, it seems to have paralyzed our judicial system (they seem to have a propensity for paralysis). Their argument is that no one, not even the state has the right to take anyone's life; they further reason the sixth commandment, rather than promote the death penalty, actually prohibits it! What convoluted thinking. Their problem is they aren't able to see the difference between the meanings of murder and kill. The commandment does not prohibit killing, it only prohibits murder.

2. To kill someone simply means to take their life. (This is what the state does when it puts someone to death.) To murder is quite another matter. The dictionary gives the definition as **"...the unlawful and malicious or premeditated killing of one human being by another; also killing done while committing some other felony, as rape or robbery."** You see, the reason for God prohibiting murder is because He gives life and He reserves the right to take it (except under certain conditions, it is delegated to the state).

3. And what about all the injustice found in our justice system? Are we to completely throw out the system? That injustices exist, there is no doubt. But before we throw out the baby with the dirty bath water, let's examine the situation. In the main, the laws are not to be blamed. For example, there are laws on the books that spell out exactly what is to happen to people who murder in the first degree. Yet, we see such people get nothing more than free room and board, thanks to the poor taxpayer. On the other hand, we see someone who does not commit some terrible crime, end up with life in prison. Where is the justice? What is causing the problem? The problem is caused by the bleeding hearts who administer the justice system.

4. And what is the solution?

Again, the Bible has the solution. It is a simple one. It prescribes exactly what is to happen to such people: **"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man"** (Gen. 9:6). The death penalty is the solution. (And while we are considering the teachings of the Bible, why not start teaching all the commandments again?) Our jails (more like motels than jails) are full to overflowing, death row has become "rest row," our judicial system has taken a vacation. Yet, if we will listen to the Bible, God, and just good sense, we can extract ourselves from this morass of murder and drugs. Regardless of what one thinks of the death penalty, all have to agree, that once a known and proven murderer has been put to death, there is no more possibility of him or her committing another murder.

5. And the strange part about this whole affair is we already have death penalty laws in force. All we need to do is to carry them out. At the present time, it seems doubtful to this writer, that a person can commit a crime heinous enough to receive the death penalty, or if some jury is bold enough to actually pronounce it, then the judicial system never seems to get around to actually placing the condemned person in the chair. In fact, it has become so ridiculous, the people on "rest row" have a much better chance of dying from old age than any electric chair!

Conclusion: The sixth commandment prohibits murder. There is a difference between murder and killing. Murder is the unlawful taking of life by one human from another. Killing is what the state does after the accused is condemned by a court of law. The terrible murders of late only serve to remind us that life, at best, is uncertain; that sin, sinners and Satan are all alive and well. And even though we find ourselves in a mass of murder and drugs, the Bible has a solution: start teaching and practicing the ten commandments again and swiftly carry out the death penalty for all murders.

TESTAMENT

(Continued from Page 1)

will likely attend that meeting who will know the difference and out of deference to them I demand a correction." He reprinted the programs without extra charge.

I have given you this bit of my experience to impress upon your mind the importance of selecting the proper words in the discussion of any subject.

Now let us look at the word, Ekklesia, and I quote from the late Boyce Taylor.

"Before we go further in the study of revelation it will be well for us to get clearly in mind our reasons for saying that Ekklesia never means anything but an organized assembly."

Every man's interpretation of revelation depends on what he means by the word Ekklesia or church. If he starts wrong by perverting the words of the Lord Jesus and making His Ekklesia mean a universal, invisible, unorganized, and unassembling body, then his whole exposition of revelation will be heretical and will drip with ambiguity. He lays a heretical foundation and his building will be hay, wood, and stubble. So we want to go pa-

tiently into what the New Testament means by the word Ekklesia or church. We maintain that in every place where it is found in the New Testament, whether used of Israel in the wilderness or of the church of the first-born in Heaven or the citizens of Ephesus or of a New Testament Church, it always and everywhere refers to an organized assembly. We think we have good and sufficient reasons for maintaining that position. Our readers will have to be the jury to render the verdict as to whether our logic will hold. If you care to go more fully into this study, get a copy of Jesse B. Thomas' book, "THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM."

Our first reason for contending that the Ekklesia never means anything but an organized and assembled church is that the Lord Jesus, who is the author of the Book of Revelation, uses the word Ekklesia 20 times in Revelation. And every time He uses it, He refers to a local organized and assembling church. Seven times He uses it in the singular in naming the seven churches of Asia. Thirteen times He uses it in the plural in referring to the seven churches and their successors. Whenever He spoke of a larger group than a local church He always used it in the plural.

B. H. Carroll, for many years a teacher in Baylor University and later the organizer of the Southwestern Theological Seminary, in a newspaper controversy with W.J. McClothlin as to the meaning of the word Ekklesia, says, "The proposed new sense of the word Ekklesia destroys the essential ideas of the old word, namely; organization and assembly, and would leave Christ without an institution, an official business body on this earth."

Our Lord Himself uses the word 23 times. Once in Matthew 16; twice in Matthew 18; and 20 times in Revelation. These 23 instances settle the meaning of the word. Back in the days when T.T. Eaton was the editor of the Western Recorder, in discussing with the "invisibilisticists" the meaning of the word Ekklesia in Matthew 16:18, he gives the seven reasons for saying the church Jesus built was a local church:

(1) That is the meaning of the word Ekklesia.

(2) That is Christ's universal usage of the word.

(3) That is the only meaning that would have been understood by the Apostles.

(4) This is the only church recognized in the New Testament.

(5) That is the only kind of church to which the promise has been fulfilled.

(6) That is the only kind of church adapted to human nature.

(7) That is the only kind that is suited to preach a pure gospel.

Professor H.E. Dana of the Fort Worth Seminary in his book, **CHRIST'S EKKLESIA**, page 23, says: "There were in the classical use of their terms four elements pertinent to its New Testament meaning:

(1) The assembly was local.

(2) It was autonomous.

(3) It pre-supposed definite qualifications.

(4) It was conducted on democratic principles.

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TESTAMENT

(Continued from Page 9)

Ramsay, in "St. Paul the Traveller," says on page 124: The term *ekklesia* originally implied "the assembled constituted a self-governing body like a free city."

Harnack, in his "History of Dogma," says the Catholic idea of the church sprang up in the third century. Eusebius, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Hiera Cornelius, and Cyprian all speak of "Holy Churches" and never of the Catholic or universal church. On page 83 of Volume 3, Harnack says: "No thought of the desperate idea of the invisible church. This would probably have brought about a lapse from pure Christianity. It is neither Biblical nor Scriptural but is a desperate idea born in the brain of a heretic and swallowed by Scofield in our day to decoy Baptists into the camp of the enemies of the only true churches, built and preserved by the Lord Jesus Himself."

Joseph Cross, in his book, *COALS FROM THE ALTAR*, says this: "We hear much of the invisible church as contradistinguished form the church visible."

Of an invisible church in this world I know nothing; the Word of God says nothing; nor can anything of the kind exist, except in the brain of a heretic.

The church is a body; but what sort of a body is that which can neither be seen nor identified? A body is an organism occupying space and having a definite locality.

Roy D. Mason, in his book, *THE CHURCH THAT JESUS BUILT*, says something like this: (I quote from memory) "A mere aggregation is not a body, there must be organization as well. A heap of heads, hands, feet, and other members would not make a body. They must be united in a system each in its proper place and pervaded by a common life. So a collection of bricks and board would not be a house."

This material must be built up together in artistic order, adapted to utility. So a mass of roots, trunks, and branches would not be a vine or a tree; the several parts must be developed according to the laws of nature from the same seed and nourished by the same sap."

Bishop Hort, one of the publishers of the Wescott and Hort Greek Testament, whose scholarship and ability certainly cannot be called in question, confesses the "necessity of finding some other than etymological, grammatical, or historical grounds" on which to prove the universal church. That means it cannot be proved by the word *ekklesia* nor by the grammatical construction of New Testament days. Where does Mr. Hort say then that the idea of an universal church came from?

He says the idea of an universal church came away from this side of the New Testament from the theology of unspired men. Note what he says. He says that the idea of an universal church is not "the proper original of *Ekklesia*:" that it is not traceable to "current usage" that the word *ekklesia* is always limited by Paul himself to a local organization which has a "corresponding unity of its own," "each is a body of Christ

and a sanctuary of God." By each he means each local church. Again he says: Paul uniformly speaks of the individual church "as the body of Christ" (I Cor. 12:27) "a virgin" (II Cor. 11:2) "a temple" (I Cor. 3:16) and in Eph. 2:2 he refers to the church as "a holy temple." All the references are from Hort's Christian *Ekklesia*. Mr. Hort's testimony that Paul's use of the *ekklesia* in Ephesians and Colossians is to the local church at Ephesus and Colosse is especially convincing because Scofield and all the balance of the "universal heretics" go to Ephesians and Colossians to substantiate their heretical teaching.

Jesse B. Thomas, in the book, *CHURCH AND KINGDOM*, calls attention to the fact that in John 2:19-21 Jesus calls His own body a temple: this involved both local and visible tangibility. II Peter 1:16; I John 1:1. So building in Matthew 16:18. All these allusions, according to Mr. Thomas, point irresistibly to a concrete organism. In Eph. 2:21 (R.V.) the local church as a building and "fitly joined and compacted as a body." The first in 2:21 and the latter in 4:16.

Alexander Campbell, in Christian Baptist, page 214: "*Ekklesia* literally signifies an assembly called out from others and is used among the Greeks, particularly the Athenians, for their popular assemblies, summoned by their chief magistrates and in which none but citizens had a right to sit.

By inherent power it may be applied to any body of men called out and assembled in one place.

If it ever loses the idea of calling out and assembling, it loses its principal features and its primitive use."

David Lipscombe, in "Gospel Advocate," October 28, 1926 -- "There is not the shadow of any universal church in the New Testament, nor is there the representation of a tangible church or one that can be reached and associated with, save the local church."

Again in the same article, Mr. Lipscombe says: "Just so, when speaking of things common to all churches, we say the church is the body of Christ, not meaning that all the churches are consolidated to make one body, but that each and every church is the body of Christ in its locality and what is common to all is affirmed of the church as of one body. This style of speech is common. This can be its only meaning. There is no development of the church of Christ in the world save in the local church. Paul uses this same general language, of the church being the body of Christ, to the church at Corinth that he does to Colossians, Ephesians and others: "Ye are the body of Christ and members in particular." The church at Rome, the church at Ephesus, at Colosse, each was just as much "the body of Christ and members in particular," as the church at Corinth.

The church at Jerusalem was a complete body of Christ before another church was established. It lost none of its completeness when other churches were planted. And every other church was as complete within itself as was this church at Jerusalem. Each church was in itself a complete body of Christ, without any reference to any other church, or churches, in existence. God has given to us the local church as the only manifestation of His body. It is the only body ordained

or recognized by God as acceptable to Him. It is the "pillar and support of the truth." It is "the body of Christ."

The body of which He is the Head. "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth according to the effectual working in the measure of every part maketh increase of the body into the edifying of itself in love."

The New Testament *Ekklesia* continued:

The Greek word for church in the New Testament is "*Ekklesia*." *Ekklesia* is the only word in the New Testament that is translated church. The word *Ekklesia* occurs 115 times in the New Testament. Three times it has reference to a political meeting of the citizens of Ephesus. It is translated assembly in those three instances in Acts 19:32, 39 and 41. These three instances of the word *Ekklesia* establish very clearly two things about the meaning of the word.

The Greek *Ekklesia* in the city of Ephesus was an organized body and an assembling body. In the whole 115 times it occurs in the New Testament, it is never used one time with any other meaning than of an assembly that assembles and that is organized.

As George W. McDaniel well says: "Among the Greeks, *ekklesia* was the assembly of the citizens of the free city-state gathered by a herald's blowing of a horn through the streets of a town. It is of the citizens of Ephesus that it is thus used in Acts. Two things were clear, namely the citizens were organized and gathered.

The word, *ekklesia*, is used once in Acts 7:38 of the congregation of Israel assembled before the tabernacle in the wilderness by the blowing of a silver trumpet. Again, two things are made clear, namely, the *ekklesia* was organized and gathered.

The word, *ekklesia*, is used once in Hebrews 12:23. "The church of the Firstborn." As used in that passage it has the same essentials. When there spoken of they are assembled and organized. These expressions all show that they will be assembled when thus spoken of: "Are come unto Mount Zion"; "unto the city of the living God"; "unto the heavenly Jerusalem"; unto "an innumerable company of angels"; "which are written in heaven"; "to the spirits of just men made perfect"; "and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant." All these things show that this church was gathered in Heaven. That they were organized as well as assembled is proven by the facts that the names of this assembly are written in heaven; both essentials are there -- organized and assembled.

These are the instances found in the New Testament where the word *ekklesia* refers to some gatherings except a local Baptist Church. In every one of them, whether of the citizens of a Greek city, or the gathering of ancient Israel before the tabernacle, or of the gathering of the church of the Firstborn in heaven, it had the same two essentials included namely, organization and assembly. In every other instance of its use in the New Testament the word *ekklesia* refers to a local Baptist Church. One of the established rules of the interpretation of God's Word, in Greek as of all other languages, is that if the ordinary meaning of

the word will make sense, even in a doubtful passage, then its ordinary meaning is the correct meaning. Therefore, we maintain that in all the other 110 passages where the word *ekklesia* is found in the New Testament, it will not only make good sense and not contradict other Scriptures, but it will harmonize the whole New Testament with itself and that no other meaning of the word *ekklesia* was ever dreamed of until the third century or from A.D. 267 on. Now let us face some facts. The interpretation of the Book of Revelation depends more upon a clear and accurate interpretation of the meaning of *ekklesia* than every thing else put together. If the church Jesus built and called "My church" and promised perpetuity to is composed of all saved and is an invisible church; and the Book of Revelation is a history of an institution that cannot be seen, and cannot meet, and has no ordinances, and nobody knows who is in it, or how or when they get in, and whether they can never get out, then every statement made by the Master about making the identity of the church clear and plain is false.

The meaning of the word *Ekklesia* (church) as used in the New Testament.

Since words are tools with which we work, every writer should have some knowledge of etymology.

It is impossible for truth and error to dwell together without conflict. How can two walk together except they be agreed?

They cannot, for they will be trying to pull each other down. Do you think the intrepid Paul would have kept silent in a day like this, when error is stealthily stalking through the land?

He did not give place to the Judaizers, "No, not for an hour." And when Peter swayed and swerved from the true doctrine of grace, he did not fail to set Peter on an insipient path of doctrinal rectitude.

Christian courage is always better than cowardly compromise.

How can an honest man be silent, or a silent man be honest?

Men talk with inexcusable ignorance about an invisible church

We hear statements like these: "If one is born again, he is already in the church, I don't care whether his name is on any church roll or not."

"The only true church includes all the saved, and that church is invisible."

"There is only one church and no one gets into it except he is born again."

Let me remind you that there are no such expressions found in the Bible, yet they would have you believe that they are on every page of Holy Writ. Baptists, by the thousands, are being swept into this maelstrom of a false ecclesiology; and their interest in the program of their own church has drifted to zero; and their lives have become a liability to the cause they profess to represent. Vacant store buildings, tents, and garages are being utilized to accommodate the new religious sects that are springing up, each claiming membership in this universal, invisible church.

Denominationalism is denounced, and yet each new sect is trying to start another. Every one of these religious cults adopts the same shibboleth.

They all teach there is but one true church, but they do not hesitate to call their particular sect a church, with full authority

from heaven to administer the ordinances. If there is but "one true church," and that the universal, invisible church, then it logically follows that all others are false and man made. The local churches are being discarded and thrown on the scrap-heap of oblivion. About the only excuse for their existence is to further the interest of the "Big Church."

Why should any one be loyal to a local church if he believes there is no Scriptural support for such an institution?

Many Baptists, deeply imbued with the universal church idea, refuse to give of their means or time to support their local church.

And many are forsaking the assembling of themselves together in their own churches.

According to their teaching, there is no real visible church -- the visible organizations being the inventions of men, and may be set aside when they see fit.

The "Big universal church," it is claimed, is "known only to the eye of God." And embraces within its folds every one who claims to be born again.

They say the local churches are only "branches" of the invisible church. Said Jesus: "By their fruit ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20). "Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?" Here, Jesus is teaching that the nature of a tree is determined by the fruit it bears. Apply this law to spiritual things and make your deductions accordingly. Furthermore, they tell us that the invisible universal church is spiritual and there is a oneness that characterizes it everywhere.

This unity can be discerned only by what is seen on the outside.

Looking upon this vast concern, what do we see? What is the effect, or fruit, produced? Where this teaching, and thinking, is dominant in the sentiment and thinking of people, there are more religious sects than in communities where people have not been swayed by such teaching. There has to be some explanation and excuse made for all these sects with their diverse teachings, and the universal church is their alibi.

It is argued by some that it doesn't make any difference what one believes just so his heart is right.

One should worship God in his own way, and if he prefers to be a Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, or something else, that is the road he should travel to heaven. But he must be sure he is in the invisible church.

The advocates of the universal church are not agreed as to when it started. Some go back to Adam, others to Abraham, others to John the Baptist. Some say it originated during the personal ministry of Jesus, while others are sure it had its "birth" on the first Pentecost after Christ's resurrection.

They are not agreed as to its membership. Some say it includes the saints of all ages, others say it includes none but the elect, while others claim none are in it except the saints after Pentecost.

It is passing strange in the face of all this confusion, that it is claimed that the oneness that Jesus prayed for is realized in the universal church. But Jesus prayed for a oneness that would convince the world that He was

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TESTAMENT

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the anointed of the Father (John 17:21). What is there in an invisible church that would cause the world to see Jesus? It is the local church that the world sees and persecutes.

It is the visible, local church that preaches the gospel, administers the ordinances, and executes the whole commission of Christ. The work of the commission requires visibility -- visible preachers, visible auditors, visible ordinances, and visible offerings. Every thing in the tabernacle was to be made, and was made, according to a divinely furnished pattern; and God was no less concerned about the building of His church. There was to be no deviation from the divine law then, and there is to be none now.

Man's wisdom has not supplanted the "Wisdom from above" in any case.

--to be continued

SOVEREIGNTY

(Continued from Page 1)

phemy. Physically, He was in no condition to help anyone, not even Himself. He was wounded and bleeding and would soon be dead. Why would anyone, much less this thief who was hanging alongside of Jesus at eye level, look to Him to save him? The answer to that question is only revealed to those who have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit. When Jesus asked His disciples "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?", they replied John the Baptist, Elias, Jeremiah, or some other prophet. "He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?" Peter said "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God." Matthew 16:16. "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Barjona." Jesus' response to that emphatic statement was this "...For flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 16:17). So it is that men can proclaim the message of grace to the world, but God must quicken the understanding of a man before he can receive it.

The fact that Christ Jesus was hung on a cross between two thieves was no mere coincidence, nor was it accidental. There are no accidents with God nor is there any such thing as coincidence. "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou has anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

When Pilate gave his executive order for Jesus to be nailed to a tree between two thieves, God had already given His executive decree before the foundation of the world. (Acts 2:23) Isaiah had already prophesied 750 years before that He would be numbered with the transgressors (Isaiah 53). It had to happen precisely the way that God had decreed it. Psalms 119:89, "Forever, O LORD, thy Word is settled in heaven."

Why did it have to happen that way? You can be certain that for everything God has a purpose, and

that purpose is holy and right. Everything that God does is by His infinite wisdom, and He is all-wise and all-knowing and perfect in all. Let us consider a number of possibilities. 1. Isaiah 53:3, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him: he was despised, and we esteemed him not." 22:6, "I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people." This scene, as did the awful humiliation that He suffered during the several trials by the Jews and the Romans, magnified the utter contempt that the lost world has for Him. As a final and ultimate show of their total rejection of God's righteousness and holiness, they hung Him on a cruel cross among those who were considered the scum of society.

2. The jeering crowd heckled Him, challenging Him to come down from the cross and save Himself. They reminded Him that He had claimed to be the Saviour of men, and the Son of God. Matthew 27:39-44, "And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth." He was there, of course, as a substitute for others. In order to become a substitute He must put Himself in their stead. He was hanging there as a sinner in the midst of a world of sinners. He was to suffer our punishment and die our death. Isaiah 53:4-6 "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." What they saw in Him on the cross, wounded, bloody, helpless, humiliated, is what they were in reality. This is the condition of every sinner before God.

3. There was a stark contrast between the sheep of God and the goats of the world. One malefactor hung on His right hand, and one on His left. The right hand of God represents His righteous people and the place of acceptance and honor. The left hand represents the position of dishonor and contempt. Christ is at the right hand of the Father. The sheep are at the right hand of the Shepherd. The goat on the left continued to rail against Him and curse Him for his own miserable circumstance. The lost sheep heard the voice of the Shepherd and came to the fold (Jn.

10:1-5). In this dramatic scene therefore, we have one who is dying in his sins, one who is dying to sin, and One who is dying for sins.

4. By having the Saviour die between two criminals, the death of the cross demonstrated God's sovereignty. One received, one rejected. Both of the malefactors were justly condemned; they were both equally wicked sinners. Both at first rejected Him and railed against Him. Both were helpless to save themselves. Both were in the presence of the Saviour. Both had as it were an equal opportunity to be saved. Why then did one receive Him and the other reject Him? All human reasoning must be put aside at this point. Whatever we reason in the flesh for the one's rejection will be contradicted by the other's acceptance. If we say that one was persuaded, then why not the other? This is emotion. If we say one understood, then why not both? This is intellect. If we say that one had faith, then can we condemn the other for lacking? This would be human virtue. The truth of the matter is that the answer simply cannot be found in human reasoning. The answer is God's sovereign election and irresistible grace.

The two thieves represent two kinds of sinners. There was essentially no difference in their spiritual condition. They both represent the whole of humanity. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). They were both the children of wrath. They both at first reviled against the Saviour (Mat. 27:4). The word "revile" means to use verbal abuse, to speak profanely, to speak against someone in a blasphemous way. The One receiving these railings from the thieves, the soldiers, and the Jewish mob was the only One who was without sin. Both were dying and would be plunged headlong into eternity. One would go to heaven and the other would go to hell, one into paradise, the other into damnation. "One was impenitent and died in his sins while the other layed claim to the saving grace of God" (A. W. Pink). They two represent all men; either dying in their sins, or coming to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Before a sinner can be saved he or she must see themselves as a dying thief on a cross; completely helpless; completely lost and undone; otherwise, one cannot be saved.

What about election? In His infinite wisdom, God has designed the ways and means of salvation to please Himself. No one can use election as an excuse not to repent of his sins. But before you can repent, you must know that you are a helpless, sinful wretch in the eyes of God. If you never see yourself that way, you will never be saved. You may think that everything is all right.

You have been such a good person. Certainly you are not as bad as some other people. You have been a good husband or wife. You have been a good parent. You have been a good child. Surely this has to count for something. Just going to church has to count for something. I used to think that I was doing God a favor by going to church. But the truth is, in your heart, you are a hypocrite, subconsciously pretending to be something you cannot be. In your heart you are rebellious, subconsciously rejecting and rebelling against the gospel. You are in essence reviling the Saviour. How do I know these things? I

know it the same way that every other saved person anywhere in the world knows it. Because we also once hung on that cross next to the Saviour. We also had to cry out, "Lord, remember me!"

Can you see yourself as that dying thief? Jeremiah 17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Will you call upon the Lord today? "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13). Every lost sinner is in the same position as these two thieves. Most will go the way of the thief on the left; he plunged headlong into hell, never to hear the gospel again. I set before you a blessing and a curse, life or death, heaven or hell. Which will you choose? Matthew 11:28 says "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give You rest." I pray that God will reveal this truth to you. Amen.

NECESSITY

(Continued from Page 1)

can be known and felt without the Spirit of God. For what is the experience of the Christian? Let me just give a brief picture of some of its scenes. There is a person come into this hall this morning--one of the most reputable men in London. He has never committed himself in any outward vice; he has never been dishonest; but he is known as a staunch upright tradesman. Now, to his astonishment, he is informed that he is a condemned, lost sinner, and just as surely lost as the thief who died for his crimes upon the cross. Do you think that man will believe it? Suppose, however, that he does believe it, simply because he reads it in the Bible, do you think that man will ever be made to feel it? I know you would say, "Impossible!" Some of you, even now, perhaps, are saying "Well, I never should!" Can you imagine that honorable, upright tradesman, saying, "God be merciful to me, a sinner?"--standing side-by-side with the harlot and the swearer, and feeling in his own heart as if he had been as guilty as they were, and using just the same prayer, and saying, "Lord, save, or I perish." You cannot conceive it, can you? It is contrary to nature that a man who has been so good as he should put himself down among the chief of sinners. Ah! but that will be done before he will be saved; he must feel that before he can enter heaven. Now, I ask, who can bring him to such a leveling experience as that, but the Spirit of God? I know very well, proud nature will not stoop to it. We are all aristocrats in our own righteousness; we do not like to bend down and come among common sinners. If we are brought there, it must be the Spirit of God who casts us to the ground. Why, I know if anyone had told me that I should ever cry to God for mercy, and confess that I had been the vilest of the vile, I should have laughed in their face; I should have said, "Why, I have not done anything particularly wrong; I have not hurt anybody." And yet I know this very day I can take my place upon the lowest form, and if I can get inside heaven I shall feel happy to sit among the chief of sinners, and praise that Almighty love which has saved even me from my sins. Now, what works this humiliation of heart? Grace.

It is contrary to nature for an honest and an upright man in the eye of the world to feel himself a lost sinner. It must be the Holy Spirit's work, or else it never will be done. Well, after a man has been brought here, can you conceive that man at last conscience-stricken, and led to believe that his past life deserves the wrath of God? His first thought would be, "Well, now, I will live better than I ever have lived." He would say, "Now, I will try and play the hermit, and pinch myself here and there, and deny myself, and do penance; and in that way, by paying attention to the outward ceremonies of religion, together with a high moral character, I doubt not I shall blot out whatever slurs and stains there have been." Can you suppose that man brought at last to feel that, if ever he gets to heaven, he will have to get there through the righteousness of another? "Through the righteousness of another?" says he, "I don't want to be rewarded for what another man does, not I. If I go there, I will go there and take my chance; I will go there through what I do myself. Tell me something to do, and I will do it; I will be proud to do it, however humiliating it may be, so that I may at last win the love and esteem of God!" Now, can you conceive such a man as that brought to feel that he can do nothing?--that, good man as he thinks himself, he cannot do anything whatever to merit God's love and favour; and that if he goes to heaven he must go through what Christ did? Just the same as the drunkard must go there through the merits of Christ, so this moral man must enter into life, having nothing about him but Christ's perfect righteousness, and being washed in the blood of Jesus. We say that this is so contrary to human nature, so diametrically opposed to all the instincts of our poor fallen humanity, that nothing but the Spirit of God can ever bring a man to strip himself of all self-righteousness, and of all creature strength, and compel him to rest and lean simply and wholly upon Jesus Christ the Saviour.

These two experiences would be sufficient to prove the necessity of the Holy Spirit to make a man a Christian. But let me now describe a Christian as he is after his conversion. Trouble comes, storms of trouble, and he looks the tempest in the face, and says, "I know that all things work together for my good." His children die, the partner of his bosom is carried to the grave; he says-- "...the LORD gave and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." His farm fails, his crop is blighted; his business prospects are clouded, all seem to go, and he is left in poverty; he says, "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation." You see him next laid upon a

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CAN YOU IMAGINE THIS?

Jesus begging for money to keep His work going?

"...freely ye have received, freely give" (Mt.10:8).

NECESSITY

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sick bed himself, and when he is there, he says, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted,...Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." You see him approaching at last the dark valley of the shadow of death, and you hear him cry, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Now I ask you what makes this man calm in the midst of all these varied trials, and personal troubles, if it be not the Spirit of God? Oh, ye that doubt the influence of the Spirit, produce the like without Him, go ye and die as Christians die, and live as they live, and if you can show the same calm resignation, the same quiet joy, and the same firm belief that adverse things shall nevertheless work together for good, then we may be perhaps at liberty to resign the point, and not till then. The high and noble experience of a Christian in times of trial and suffering, proves that there must be the operation of the Spirit of God.

But look at the Christian, too, in his joyous moments. He is rich. God has given him all his heart's desire on earth. Look at him: he says, "I do not value these things at all, except as they are the gift of God; I sit loose by them all, and notwithstanding this house and home, and all these comforts, I am willing to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. It is true, I want nothing here on earth; but still I feel that to die would be gain to me, even though I left all these." He holds earth loosely; he does not grasp it with a tight hand, but looks upon it all as dust, a thing which is to pass away. He takes but little pleasure therein, saying, "I've no abiding city here, I seek a city out of sight." Mark that man; he has plenty of room for pleasures in this world, but he drinks out of a higher cistern. His pleasure springs from things unseen; his happiest moments are when he can shut all these good things out, and when he can come to God as a poor guilty sinner, and come to Christ and enter into fellowship with Him, and rise into nearness of access and confidence, and bold approach to the throne of the heavenly grace. Now, what is it that keeps a man who has all these mercies from setting his heart upon the earth? This is a wonder indeed, that a man who has gold and silver, and flocks and herds, should not make these his god, but that he should still say,

"There's nothing round this spacious earth, that suits my large desire; To boundless joy and solid mirth, My nobler thoughts aspire." These are not my treasure; my treasure is in heaven only. What can do this? No mere moral virtue. No doctrine of the Stoic ever brought a man to such a pass as that. No, it must be the work of the Spirit, and the work of the Spirit alone, that can lead a man to live in heaven, while there is a temptation to him to live on earth. I do not wonder that a poor man looks forward to heaven; he has nothing to look upon on earth. When there is a thorn in the nest, I do not wonder that the lark flies up, for there is no rest for him below. When you are beaten and chafed by trouble, no wonder you say, "Jerusalem! my happy home! Name ever dear to me; When shall my labours have an end, In joy, and peace, and thee?" But the greatest wonder is, if you line the Christian's nest ever so softly, if you give him all the mercies of this life, you still cannot keep him from saying, "To Jesus, the crown of my hope, My soul is in haste to be gone; Oh bear me, ye cherubim, up, And waft me away to his throne."

5. And now, last of all, the acts, the acceptable acts of the Christian's life, cannot be performed without the Spirit; and hence, again, the necessity for the Spirit of God. The first act of the Christian's life is repentance. Have you ever tried to repent? If so, if you tried without the Spirit of God, you know that to urge a man to repent without the promise of the Spirit to help him, is to urge him to do an impossibility. A rock might as soon weep, and a desert might as soon blossom, as a sinner repent of his own accord. If God should offer heaven to man, simply upon the terms of repentance of sin, heaven would be as impossible as it is by good works; for a man can no more repent of himself, than he can perfectly keep God's law; for repentance involves the very principle of perfect obedience to the law of God. It seems to me that in repentance there is the whole law solidified and condensed; and if a man can repent of himself then there is no need of a Saviour, he may as well go to heaven up the steep sides of Sinai at once.

Faith is the next act in the divine life. Perhaps you think faith very easy; but if you are ever brought to feel the burden of sin you would not find it quite so light a labour. If you are ever brought into deep mire, where there is no standing, it is not so easy to put your feet on a rock, when the rock does not seem to be there. I find faith just the easiest thing in the world when there is nothing to believe; but when I have room and exercise for my faith, then I do not find I have so much strength to accomplish it. Talking one day with a countryman, he used this figure:

"In the middle of winter I sometimes think how well I could mow; and in the early spring I think, Oh! how I would like to reap; I feel just ready for it; but when mowing time comes, and when reaping time comes, I find I have not strength to spare." So when you have no troubles, couldn't you mow them down at once? When you have no work to do, couldn't you do it? But when work and trouble come, you find how difficult it is. Many Christians are like the stag, who talked to itself, and said, "Why should I run away from the dogs? Look what a fine pair of horns I've got, and look what heels I've got, too; I might do these hounds some mischief. Why not let me stand and show them what I can do with my antlers? I can keep off any quantity of dogs." No sooner did the dogs bark, than off the stag went. So with us. "Let sin arise," we say, "we will soon rip it up, and destroy it, let trouble come, we will soon get over it;" but when sin and trouble come, we then find what our weakness is. Then we have to cry for the help of the Spirit; and through Him we can do all things, though without Him we can do nothing at all.

In all the acts of the Christian's life, whether it be the act of consecrating one's self to Christ, or the act of daily prayer, or the act of constant submission, or preaching the gospel, or ministering to the necessities of the poor, or comforting the desponding, in all these the Christian finds his weakness and his powerlessness, unless he is clothed about with the Spirit of God. Why, I have been to see the sick at times, and I have thought how I would like to comfort them; and I could not get a word out that was worth their hearing, or worth my saying; and my soul has been in agony to be the means of comforting the poor sick desponding brother, but I could do nothing, and I came out of the chamber, and half wished I had never been to see a sick person in my life: I had so learned my own folly. So has it been full often in preaching. You get a sermon up, study it, and come and make the greatest mess of it that can possibly be. Then you say, "I wish I had never preached at all." But all this is to show us, that neither in comforting nor in preaching can one do anything right, unless the Spirit work in us to will and to do of His own good pleasure. Everything, moreover, that we do without the Spirit is unacceptable to God; and whatever we do under His influence, however we may despise it, is not despised of God, for He never despises His own work, and the Spirit never can look upon what He works in us with any other view than that of complacency and delight. If the Spirit helps me to groan, then God must accept the groaner. If thou couldst pray the best prayer in the world, without the Spirit, God would have nothing to do with it; but if thy prayer be broken, and lame, and limping, if the Spirit made it, God will look upon it, and say, as He did upon the works of creation, "It is very good;" and He will accept it.

And now let me conclude by asking this question. My hearer, then have you the Spirit of God in you? You have some religion, most of you, I dare say. Well, of what kind is it? Is it a home-made article? Did you make yourself what you are? Then, if

so, you are a lost man up to this moment. If, my hearer, you have gone no further than you have walked yourself, you are not on the road to heaven yet, you have got your face turned the wrong way; but if you have received something which neither flesh nor blood could reveal to you, if you have been led to do the very thing which you once hated, and to love that thing which you once despised, and to despise that one which your heart and your pride were once set, then, soul, if this be the Spirit's work, rejoice; for where He hath begun the good work He will carry it on. And you may know whether it is the Spirit's work by this. Have you been led to Christ, and away from self? Have you been led away from all feelings, from all doings, from all winnings, from all

prayings, as the ground of your trust and your hope, and have you been brought nakedly to rely upon the finished work of Christ? If so, this is more than human nature ever taught any man; this is a height to which human nature never climbed. The Spirit of God has done that, and He will never leave what He has once begun, but thou shalt go from strength to strength, and thou shalt stand among the blood-washed throng, at last complete in Christ, you are one of His. May the Spirit lead you to your chamber now to weep, now to repent, and now to look to Christ, and may you now have a divine life implanted, which neither time nor eternity shall be able to destroy. God, hear this prayer, and send us away with a blessing, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Elder Sam Wilson will be in revival services with the New Testament Baptist Church near Bristol, Tenn. June 12-17. Services will be at 7:00 nightly and at regular times on Sunday. Elder Dan Phillips is the church pastor. Two great preachers will be working together. Attend this meeting if you can. Pray for it. For further information contact Dan at 615-764-3771 or 615-323-3281 (church).

TENTH ANNUAL BIBLE CONFERENCE

THEME: THE PRECIOUSNESS OF BIBLICAL TRUTH
JUNE 8-10, 1990

Friday Evening 7:00

CHRIST AS GOD'S PROPHET -- ON DEPRAVITY

Wayne Camp, Memphis, Tennessee

THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST

Jack Duplechain, Memphis, Tennessee

Saturday Morning 9:30

UNITY OF THE SPIRIT AND UNITY OF THE FAITH

Ray Sexton, Tulsa, Oklahoma

THE PRECIOUS WORD THAT TURNS BITTERNESS INTO BLESSING

David Lee, Coweta, Oklahoma

Saturday Evening 6:30

BURDEN-BEARING

Earl Smith, Plumerville, Arkansas

WICKED MEN USEFUL IN THEIR DESTRUCTION

Max Nunley, Las Cruces, New Mexico

Sunday Morning 9:30

HEAVEN AND EARTH SHALL PASS AWAY,

BUT MY WORDS SHALL NOT PASS AWAY

Charles Stewart, Noblesville, Indiana

THE WORK OF GRACE, AND OUR WORK IN GRACE

Orval Heath, Mena, Arkansas

Sunday Evening 6:30

THE FOUNDATION OF OUR FAITH

Dale Atkinson, Canon City, Colorado

FAITH IN GOD'S WORD

Charlie Buford, Scottsboro, Alabama

Saturday lunch and dinner will be provided by the church to all who attend.

ELECTION

You were predestinated before you were conceived.
I knew on Whom you would believe.
Since I chose you from beginning to end,
Only on Me do you depend.
To say you chose Me in your own way,
Is blasphemous for you to say.
The effectual calling will draw you to Me.
My gift to you is completely free.
I alone hold your fate.
On your own will you do not wait.
If it wasn't for My precious grace,
The pits of hell is what you'd face.
I say, Whosoever will believe
And believe Me, My elect will receive,
A home in Heaven with the saints above.
For I say I am love.

Patty Sutherland
Sanford, Florida