

WHY SIT WE HERE UNTIL WE DIE?

by Don Pennington

We have a magnificent story contained in II Kings 7:3-4. It says, "And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if



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they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die."

The text we want to us is

"Why sit we here until we die?"

Our principal characters in this story are four lepers. As you know, the Bible says that leprosy is a type of sin; lepers, a type of sinners, so we have a magnificent picture of sinners and salvation in this chapter.

King Ben-hadad, the king of Syria, had set up a blockade around the city of Samaria, no one could get in and no one could get out. Because of this blockade, a dreadful famine was soon produced within the besieged city of Samaria. People in the city were starving to death because there was no food. We find four leprous men sitting outside the city gate and these men were dependent upon the generosity of the people that passed by to feed them. In other words, they were out there by themselves, they had no food, they had no provisions, there was no way of getting it, they had to depend on the people that walked past to throw them some crumbs or a piece of meat or bread. That is how they ate. Because of the famine in the city, there was no extra bread, no extra provisions to throw to the lepers. Now these lepers were in bad

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ELECTION

by Waldo Whiddon

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; 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; 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" (Eph. 1:3-6). God certainly foreknew all things because He had already planned them. One will find it very profitable to read the entire first



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chapter of Ephesians. Beloved, our salvation was planned and prepared before the foundation of the world. This was nothing less than an act of His marvelous work of grace because of His great love for His people. It has been said that God had to do some fast thinking when the human race fell in the Garden of Eden. That is utter nonsense. God already knew what would happen, and praise His holy ability, He already knew what He was going to do about it! We would like to discuss a few points of Scripture

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by T. T. Martin

"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" (John 3:16). "...that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). "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" (Isa. 53:5,6). "...Christ died for our

sins..." (I Cor. 15:3). "...our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins..." (Gal. 1:3,4). "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree..." (I Peter 2:24). "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust..." (I Peter 3:18). "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28). "...one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all..." (I Tim. 2:5,6). "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us..." (Gal. 3:13). "...our Saviour

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S CHIEF OFFICE

by C.H. Spurgeon

"He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you" (John xvi. 14, 15).

It is the chief office of the Holy Spirit to glorify Christ. He does many things, but this is what he aims at in all of them, to glorify Christ. Brethren, what the Holy Ghost does must be right for us to imitate; therefore, let us endeavor to glorify Christ. To what higher the Holy Ghost devotes himself? Be this, then, your continual prayer, "Blessed Spirit, help me ever to glorify

the Lord Jesus Christ!"

Observe, that the Holy Ghost glorifies Christ by showing to us the things of Christ. It is a great



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marvel that there should be any glory given to Christ by showing him to such poor creatures as we are. What! To make us see Christ, does that glorify him? For our weak eyes to behold him, for our trembling hearts to know him, and to love him, does this glorify him? It is even so, for the Holy Ghost chooses this as his principal way of glorifying the Lord Jesus. He takes of the things of Christ, not to show them to angels, not to write them in letters of fire across the brow of night, but to show them unto us. Within the little temple of a sanctified heart, Christ is praised, not so much by what we do, or think, as by what we see. This

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JESUS THE CHRIST AS SIN-BEARER

DON'T GO OUT THE WAY YOU CAME IN

by Fred Beard

Ezekiel 46:9

"But when the people of the land shall come before the LORD in the solemn feasts, he that entereth in by the way of the north gate to worship shall go out by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth by the way of the south gate shall go forth by the way of the north gate: he shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in, but shall go forth over against it." For our text; we are using verse nine of Ezekiel 46.

This passage has always been a blessing to me personally. I can



Fred Beard

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom.8:29-30).

Many sermons are preached and many tracts written on something like, "God's Simple Plan of Salvation." These all fail to under-

stand the Biblical doctrine of the depravity of man. None of the things of God are simple or understandable to the depraved mind of man. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). No matter how simple one could make the plan of salvation, it would still be beyond the mind of the most brilliant and most educated unsaved individual. Oh, we need

to realize the total incapability of the natural man to understand spiritual things.

Another thing that is wrong with the so-called, "God's Simple Plan of Salvation" is that it is not "God's plan" at all, it is "man's plan." These tracts and sermons do not tell us what God does in salvation; they tell us what man is to do in order to be saved. They do not teach the Biblical doctrine that salvation is of the Lord. They teach that it is all up to man. They teach what

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recall how that over the years; every time that I have been gathered together with those that claim the name of Christ as their Lord, as their Master, and as Saviour of their souls; that I have always gone home different than when I came. But all too often, most of us come in the place of worship, and go home the very same way that we came in. That's to our shame, beloved. We should never ever go out the way that we came in.

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man must do in order to be saved. In this message I am going to preach God's plan of salvation. I am going to tell you what God does in saving man.

First of all, we need to realize that salvation originates with and is accomplished by God. We need to know that salvation is that which God accomplishes, and not what man does. This is certainly the truth of the Bible. Salvation is of the Lord from start to finish. Salvation is of the Lord from its origin in the heart, mind, and will of God to its completion in the glorification of all the saved. Salvation is of the Lord in there being any such thing as salvation. Had not God desired, purposed, planned, purchased; and did He not accomplish salvation, there would be no salvation at all. This message is about the plan that God follows in accomplishing salvation.

My Scripture at the head of this message tells us the steps that God follows in salvation. It tells us of five things that God does in saving sinners. Please note that it tells us what God does. It tells us nothing about man doing anything. Arminian preachers are always talking about man's part in salvation. They teach that man's part is the deciding factor in any man's being saved. They teach that unless man does his part, all that God might do would not save any man. They teach that no matter what God does, there will be no salvation unless man does his part. Please read my text again. Read it carefully. Take it apart

word by word. Use the magnifying glass upon it. Examine it in its most minute detail. Then tell me if you can find in it anything that man does in salvation. This Scripture does not tell us what man does in salvation; it tells us what God does. Read each one of the five steps in this plan, and see that God does each thing involved. There is no room for a work of man in any of the five steps.

We might think of my text as a golden chain with five links studded with precious jewels, reaching from eternity past through all time into eternity future, which secures the eternal salvation of the elect of God. Now we all know that no chain is any stronger than its weakest link. If any link in this golden chain is dependent upon the work of man, the chain will be too weak to secure salvation. But



Joe Wilson

look at this five-link chain again and note that every link is altogether the work of God. Let us examine this chain, link by link. Let us examine this plan of salvation, step by step.

The first step in God's plan of salvation is foreknowledge, "For whom he did foreknow...". This word is one of the most misunderstood words in the Bible. The Arminian will immediately tell us that this is what he has taught all along - that God foreknew who would repent, believe, and hold out faithful to the end - and predestinated them to eternal salvation. Or if the Arminian wants to pretend to be a modified sovereign grace believer, whatever that is, he will leave out the "hold out faithful to the end" portion. But the Arminian misunderstands the Biblical usage of this word "foreknow."

Of course, the Bible teaches the Arminian doctrine of foreknowledge to an extent. Of course, God foreknows everything that will ever come to pass. Of course, God foreknows who will repent and believe the gospel and who will not. The Arminian does not realize that God's eternal and sovereign predestination of all things is the basis of His foreknowledge; he does not even believe in any Biblical and real doctrine of predestination. God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass - including the repentance and faith of some from among fallen mankind, and the impenitence and unbelief of the rest. (Of course, the first is by His effective and causative will; while the second is by His permissive, but controlling will.) God, therefore foreknows these things.

But this is not the Biblical usage of "foreknow." Let us look at some Biblical uses of "know." "AND Adam knew Eve his wife...." (Gen.4:1). This is not a general knowledge of what Eve would or would not do. This was a special, intimate knowledge of relationship and love. "And the

LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou has spoken: for thou has found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name" (Ex.33:17). This does not just mean that God knew what Moses would or would not do. This was a special, intimate, knowledge of personal relationship and love. "For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish" (Psa.1:6). This is not just to know about the way of the righteous. The Lord knows that about the way of the ungodly. This is a predestinating, providing knowledge accompanied by the Lord's presence. It is an intimate, loving way of relationship. "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee...." (Jer.1:5). This is not a knowing about Jeremiah, what he would and would not do. This was a personal, intimate knowledge of relationship and love. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth..." (Amos 3:2). Surely anyone can see that this was not a knowledge about Israel - God knows all about all nations - this was a knowledge of special relationship and love.

"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Mt.7:23). Anyone who is not blinded by preconceived prejudice can easily see that this is not a knowing about. God knows all things about all men. The words, "never knew you" mean that God never knew them in a personal and intimate relationship of saving love. "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (Jn.10:14). The Lord has an intimate, personal, loving relationship with His sheep. I could go on and on, but these are surely enough to show that this is a frequent meaning of the word "know."

Now add "fore" to this meaning of "know," and you have the Biblical usage of the word "foreknow" or "foreknowledge." It is not that God foreknows what men will or will not do (though this is true); it is that God, from all eternity, has had a special knowledge of intimate relationship and love for some from among fallen mankind. God knows some people with a special intimate knowledge of relationship and love, and He has always thus known them. Jeremiah 31:3 is a perfect definition of Biblical foreknowledge, "...Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love...." "Everlasting love" is a perfect Biblical definition of "foreknowledge."

This everlasting love is almost a Biblical synonym for election. The meaning of "foreknowledge" and "election" are close akin in the Bible; so close that one can almost be used for the other. Election is a very prominent doctrine in the Bible. Election is God's eternal and sovereign choice of some from among fallen mankind to be the objects of His saving grace. To give a small portion of the Biblical proof of election would stretch this message further than I desire to take it at this time, but you who know your Bible know that election is repeatedly taught therein. I make bold to say that the man who does not believe in election as I have defined it here does not, on that point, believe

the Bible at all.

The first step in God's plan of salvation is that God sovereignly and unconditionally chooses those who shall be saved. Loving them with an eternal love, He chooses them to be the recipients of salvation. This is the first link in the golden chain of eternal salvation.

The second step in God's plan of salvation - the second link in this golden chain of eternal salvation - is predestination. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be con-

formed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Someone said that, in eternity past God took a look at His Son, and liked what He saw so much that He determined to have a very large family, with every one of them just like Jesus. Praise the Lord! Pre- means "before." Destinate relates to "destiny." God pre-determined the eternal destiny of His elect people.

There is the doctrine of general predestination. This teaches that (Continued on Page 3, Col. 1)

FROM THE EDITOR

"But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Matt. 5:44).

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES. This is a commandment from God. We must do this. If we do not we are guilty of disobedience to our Lord. We need to give much thought to this matter. If there is anyone whom we do not love, we need to confess this sin and seek to gain victory over it. We need to start today (should have already been doing it) and endeavor to, asking God's help, love our enemies. Let me mention some things that should be involved in loving our enemies.

We should pray for them. I have learned that one of the best ways to get rid of bad feelings toward another and to start loving him is to honestly, frequently, sincerely pray for him. We should pray for material blessings on our enemies. We should especially pray for spiritual blessings on him. Of course, our praying must always be subject to God's will. There should not be a person on this earth for whom we could not honestly and sincerely pray for God to bless. Let us include our enemies in our prayer lists and pray earnestly for them.

We should be ready, willing, and even desirous to forgive them for anything they have done to us. Scripturally, we cannot and should not forgive one who has sinned against us until he or she repents, or at least says he repents. But we should always be ready to forgive. We should have a forgiving heart. We should have forgiveness ready to give him as soon as he repents. We should earnestly desire that he repent so that we can have the great joy of forgiving him. We should not want an enemy to crawl or to beg for forgiveness, but we should be quick to forgive. An unforgiving spirit is a sign that one is out of fellowship with the Lord, and is a serious hindrance to one's own prayer life.

We should be more grieved that our enemy has sinned against God than that he has sinned against us. We should grieve over our enemies' sins against God. We should earnestly desire that our enemy repent of his sins against God and be reconciled to God. We should consider that his relationship and fellowship with God is much more important than such is with us. Instead of being so concerned about ourselves and what one has done to us, we should be concerned about what that enemy has done against God. We should desire that our enemy get right with God no matter what develops between our enemies and us. Of course, if my enemy gets right with God, he will desire to get right with me, but I should consider that a very secondary matter.

We should never wish our enemies anything but the best that God can see fit to give them. We should be glad of any good that comes their way. We should not be envious of any blessing of any kind that God gives to our enemy. We should not wish upon our enemies any kind, of evil. How do I feel if I learn of some bad or some trouble that has come to my enemy? This will indicate my love for him or my lack thereof.

We should never take, or even desire, vengeance upon our enemies. We should be perfectly content to leave all this with the Lord. We should not seek the hurt of our enemy in any way whatsoever. We should not even want to hurt them, or want them to be hurt. Let them hate and hurt us, but let us never hate or hurt them.

Whatever evil our enemies might do unto us, let us overcome that evil with good. Let us seek their good all the days of our lives. Let us search out some good thing that we can do for them, and diligently do it. There is no greater way of overcoming evil than with good.

If others speak well of our enemies, let us not seek to detract therefrom. Let us not discourage this.

Let us seek out some good things about our enemies, and speak well of them as to these things. Let them have their just praises from us and from others.

Nothing that has been said so far must be taken in a way contrary to justice, truth, and righteousness. There are times when truth must be told regardless. There are things that must be done in righteousness. We are not to let a maudlin sympathy or a sissy type of so-called love blind us to truth and right actions. There are times when others should know the truth about others, and there are times when we should defend ourselves for right, for testimony, and for the work God has called us to do. So, let nothing that has been said in this article be interpreted in a way that ignores truth and right.

Loving our enemies will be good for us. Not only will it be good for our enemies, good for the total cause of our Lord Jesus Christ; but it will also do us much good. Our lives will grow spiritually, greatly and rapidly, by such love. Few things will promote one's spirituality, testimony, and grace like love for one's enemies.

If we do not have this love, let us confess this sin and seek grace from God to develop such. Remember that the fruit of the Spirit is love and that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. Yours for more love.

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God has predestinated everything that will ever come to pass. I believe this without reserve. You need not ask me if I believe this or that or the other thing was predestinated, for the answer will be "yes." I believe in God's absolute, sovereign, and eternal predestination of all things.

This includes all the events of inanimate nature. The sun shines, the wind blows, the storms come - all according to God's predestination. It includes the acts of animate nature. The birds in the air and the beasts of the forest all move in the path marked out by eternal predestination, performing that which was purposed for them. This includes the world of human government, for the Lord ruleth in the kingdoms of men and setteth up over each of them whom it pleases Him. This includes the acts, good and evil, of men; for no man can act outside the eternal predestination of God.

There is a special predestination. This is that part of general predestination that relates to the salvation of God's elect. It also relates to the reprobation of the rest, but my subject in this mes-

sage relates to salvation. God chose a people from among fallen mankind and predestinated them to eternal salvation. That predestinated salvation culminates in each one of the elect being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Note the word "many" in my text. We do not believe that the elect constitute just a handful from among mankind; we believe they are a great multitude that no man can number. He gave His life a ransom for many (Matt.20:28). There are many names written in the Lamb's book of life. The total of the saved in glory will be exceeding large.

The third step in God's plan of salvation - the third link in this golden chain of salvation - is calling. "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called." There is a general call that goes to all who hear the gospel. I do verily believe in the free offer of the gospel - that is, that in the gospel of Jesus Christ eternal salvation is freely offered to all who hear that gospel upon the conditions of repentance and faith. This general call is sincere. All who respond thereto will be saved. It is not a show or a pretense.

But how do men treat this call; how do they respond to it? We

can answer that by stating the condition of the natural man. He is spiritually dead and cannot hear, understand, or respond to this general call. He is depraved and sinful and will not respond to such a call. He loves his sins; he does not want to be saved; he will not come to Jesus Christ. If God only calls or invites men to be saved, then no one will ever be saved.

God is determined to have some men saved. He chose them to salvation. He predestinated them to salvation. How is He to accomplish His purpose in their salvation? There is the effectual call given only to the elect. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power" (Psa.110:3). God has a special people called His people. By nature they are just like everyone else - unwilling to come to Christ. God will make them willing by His power. It is not the sinner's "free will" (whatever that is) power that brings salvation. It is not the power of the preacher or personal worker. It is the power of God (read this verse and see). God will make them willing by His power and at His predestinated time. It is in the "day" of His power. This portion of this verse of Scripture tells us of a chosen people, an effectual power, and a predestinated time; praise the Lord! How full is His Word!

Many, many years ago I visited a so-called Baptist church on a Wednesday night - I don't now remember why. The pastor was teaching (?) the book of Romans on Wednesday nights. He was on Romans 8:29-30 that night. He was in the process of explaining (?) the five things contained in these verses. He said that "called" was where man came in. That "called" was man's part. He explained (?) God called everyone, and it was up to man to respond to that call. If man did not respond to that call, all else that God did would be ineffective and no man would be saved. He said all this because he did not understand nor believe this Scripture. I ask you to read these verses again. Do you see that this preacher was right in saying that the other four things were all done by God? Of course you do. Now look closely and carefully and see if you can see any evidence that the "called" relates to the work of man. Are not all five things in this Scripture performed by God? Of course they are, and anyone who will read these verses and will believe them will easily see this. Before you can get man's part in salvation out of this Scripture, you will have to put it in. It certainly is not in there as God wrote it.

Now let me prove to you from this Scripture that this "call" is limited and effectual. The Scripture says, "whom he predestinated, them he also called." The call is not given to all men; it is given to those whom God predestinated. Only a person blinded by preconceived prejudice can fail to see this. The verse goes on to say, "and whom he called, them he also justified." Does this teach that God calls all men; that He even calls those who are not saved? No, it does not. It teaches that all the "called" will be justified. It is an effectual call. All who are called with this call will be enabled and caused to repent of their sins and believe in Jesus Christ.

The fourth step in God's plan of salvation - the fourth link in

this golden chain of salvation is justification, "and whom he called, them he also justified." Here we come to the Son's work in salvation. The three persons of the Trinity are concerned and active in the salvation of God's people. The Father chose (foreknew, fore-loved) a people and predestinated them to eternal salvation. The Spirit effectually calls these to the salvation experience. The Son did the work that forms the basis upon which these are justified. Yes, the Triune God purposed, planned, and accomplishes our salvation, praise the Lord!

Jesus Christ is God. He came into this world by way of the womb of the virgin, Mary. He lived an absolutely sinless life. He did not live this for Himself. He did not need to earn heaven for Him self. He lived this perfect life for His people. This perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to all of the elect. Jesus Christ also took the total of the guilt of all the sins of all the elect upon Him. He paid for that guilt on Calvary. He suffered the wrath of God against sin for us. He satisfied the claims of God's holy law in our behalf. By His death and sinless life, Jesus Christ provided the foundation upon which we are justified. He was made sin for us. We are made the righteousness of God in Him. We stand before God as if we had never sinned one time in the least possible way, and as if we had always in every detail perfectly obeyed the law of God. Oh, what a blessed salvation is this!

The fifth step in God's plan of salvation - the fifth link in this golden chain of salvation - is glorification, "and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Who among us can define or explain this word? Oh, it will take eternity to unroll all the precious and glorious meaning of this word - "glorified." I suppose that the best we can do here is to say that it is the culmination of God's purpose in predestination - "he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." I suppose that "conformed to the image of His Son" is as good a definition of "glorified" as we can have. Brothers and sister: there is glory ahead. There is nothing but glory ahead. "Only glory by and by."

Note that the word is

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on this controversial subject.

First, we did not choose Him, rather, He chose us! "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you..." (John 15:16). This alone shows us the sovereignty of God! We are elected according to His purpose. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied." (I Pet. 1:2). Then let us look further in this same chapter to verses nineteen and twenty. "But with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."

At this point, let us look at another short passage,

"glorified." It is in the past tense. Brother, when God purposes to do a thing, we can speak of it in the past tense; it is as good as done. We can be as certain of final glorification as if we were already among the redeemed in glory. We can be as sure of heaven as if we were already walking the streets of gold in our glorified bodies.

Oh, I do not know what lies between here and there. I do not know what storms we must sail through. I do not know what sorrows and sicknesses lie in our pathway. I do not know what is ahead for us in this life. But, praise God, I know that glory is at the end of the road for the children of God. I do not know all the toils of the road ahead, but I know that "The toils of the road will seem nothing, when I get to the end of the way."

Read my text again. Go over these five steps in God's plan of salvation. Study again these five links in the golden chain of eternal salvation. Notice that all the foreknown (elected, fore-loved) are predestinated to eternal salvation; no more, no less, no other. Note that all the predestinated are called; no more, no less, no other. Note that all the called are justified; no more, no less, no other. Note that all the justified are glorified; no more, no less, no other. Those with whom God starts in eternity past, He ends up with in eternity future. None are lost along the way. There is no place in these five golden links for any to get in or get out. It is a golden chain of five jewel studded links that secures the eternal salvation of God's chosen people.

Oh, this is a salvation that is worthy of God and His Word. Anything less than this or different from this would be unworthy of and dishonoring to God. This is a salvation that gives all the glory to God - He does it all; He gets all the glory. This is a salvation worth having. Praise God if you are included in God's plan of salvation. How can you know you are included? Have you believed in Jesus Christ? If so, you were called. If called, you were predestinated. If predestinated, you were foreknown (elected, fore-loved). If you have believed on Jesus Christ, you are justified. If justified, you will be glorified. Oh, my friend, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

"Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God" (I Thess. 1:4). Oh, we were chosen; we did not do the choosing. It is not in man to choose righteousness.

Secondly, if we go back and read the entire first chapter of Ephesians, breaking it down, reading it with the intent of purposeful studying; I am sure that we will see that election is God's sovereign act!

Thirdly, we believe that election was from the beginning. We note the first words in the Bible are "In the beginning God..." (Gen. 1:1). Also in reading the first chapter in the gospel according to John, we see that God is the beginning, both Father and Son. We are told this by the Holy Spirit, and He was there too! I believe, my brethren, that we were elected by the Holy Triune Council of the Godhead, the Holy Trinity, if you please! One cannot get to the Father

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
AUGUST 4, 1990
PAGE THREE

EPITAPHS

I.

Here lies a man who worshipped gold,
For nobler things he had no mind;
He called for succor but, behold,
His cankered god was left behind.
For to that region far and dim,
He could not take his god with him;
But left him where the devil rules,
To be the god of other fools.

II.

Here lies a man who worshipped fame,
And stormed the world his worth to prove;
On earth he won a noted name,
But 'twas not so in Heaven above.
He chased a bubble on the tide,
And saw it burst--and dropped and died.
A man may be accounted great,
While angels tremble at his fate.

III.

Here lies a man who worshipped sport,
Who never went to wisdom's school;
According to the last report;
he died as he had lived--a fool.
The curtain fell, the play was done,
The game was o'er, the race was run;
And wisdom glances at his bust,
And says, "Here lies a recreant's dust."

IV.

Here lies a man who brooding thought,
At last was tethered to despair,
And in his desperation sought
To end the ills he could not bear.
Oh, say not he was barred from Heaven,
That such a one is ne'er forgiven
For Samson was a suicide,
And with the faithful lived and died.

V.

Of all the fools beneath the sun,
Under this desecrated sod,
Devoid of hope, there slumbers one,
A man who said there is no God.
The guardian angels do not plume
Their wings o'er his unhallowed tomb,
Nor leave their footprints on the mound
Where not a ray of hope is found.

VI.

Here lies a man who fought with sin,
Until he reached this wayside inn,
Who served the Lord of life and light,
And turned aside to spend the night,
The angels shall keep vigil here
Till Christ in glory shall appear,
Then he shall reach a home of bliss
On that new earth to follow this.

The Baptist Examiner Forum I

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

Should the men run the church?

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By this question I am assuming that you are asking if women should be excluded from participating in business matters of the church. My answer is no, men should not be left to "run the church," and no women should not be excluded from participating in the business matters of the church.

As far as I am concerned, those who hold to this ridiculous practice have a warped understanding as to the purpose of women in the work of the Lord. I challenge anyone to show in the New Testament where women are not to take part in business, or that men are to run the church. I am of the opinion that a woman is as capable of being led by the Holy Spirit as a man; and is as capable of being spiritual minded as a man.

I am by no means suggesting that a woman should take the leadership in business matters or in spiritual matters. Nevertheless, if she is a member of the church she should have a voice; that is, if your church operates under a Scriptural democracy. The church should be run by the whole church. I thank God for the women in the church which I pastor, in helping run things. What would we do without them? Thank you for your question.



Joe Wilson

I am filling in for Sam who will not listen to his father about staying ahead with his answers. "And the saying pleased the whole multitude; and they chose Stephen...." (Acts 6:5). "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many" (II Cor. 2:6). "The many" here means the majority.

Some men like to take advantage of the Scriptures which speak of man's authority over women, and conveniently ignore some other Scriptures. Yes, the husband is the head of the wife and she is to be in subjection to him. But also, the husband is to

love his wife as Christ loved the church. There are two sides to the record, but some men just play the one side all the time.

There are some things the woman cannot do in church. She cannot speak in church. She cannot lead in prayer in church. She cannot teach men in classes authorized by the church. She cannot usurp authority over the man in any of these things.

We say that we believe in church authority. We also say that a church is a local, visible assembly of Scripturally baptized believers. When we use the word "church" in defining a church, we include the women. But, many of our brethren and churches, when using the word "church" in speaking of church authority, leave the women out. Brethren, the word "church" includes the same people when speaking of church authority as it does when defining what a church is. Many preachers and churches do not believe in church authority; they believe in male authority.

The church is to run the church. The church is to run the church. Write that on the blackboard a thousand times. The church is to run the church. So, whomever you believe constitutes the church; that is who is to run the church.

Of course, the Lord is to run the church for it is His church. Each member should seek the leading of the Lord as to how to vote in church business, and in this way the Lord runs His church. But so far as the actual "down here" running of the church, it is to be by majority vote of the members who are present at the meeting when business is decided.

Baptists believe in congregational government because this is what the Bible teaches. In a Baptist church, each member has one vote, no member has more than one vote, each vote counts the same; the majority vote is to run the church. The pastor is not to run the church. The deacons are not to run the church. The Sunday School is not to run the church. No individual or group in the church is to run the church. The church is to run the church.

Any member of the church has the right to get anything he or she desires before the church. Any member has the right to get his or her opinions about anything the church is to vote on before the church. Of course, women are not to speak in the church, but some way should be provided for any woman member's opinions to be put before the church (this also applies to children who are members of the church). No individual or group has the right to act as a screening committee and keep from a church vote something that a member wants the church to vote on. All things are to be decided by the majority vote of the church.

A woman or a child member of the church has as much to do with running the church as a

male member does. Brethren, if we don't believe this, we don't truly believe in church authority. The church is not just the male members. The church is not just the adult members. The church is all of the members. If we believe in church authority, we have to believe in "all the members" authority.

No, the men are not to run the church; the church is to run the church, and that includes all the members of the church.

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If "run the church" means that the men of the church make all the decisions concerning any business of the church, policies of the church, or desires and needs of the church, without consulting, or sharing these duties with the women of the church; the answer in my opinion, is "no". It is my belief that every member of a local church, regardless of age, or sex, should have a vote in decision making concerning the entire assembly.

Certainly, chosen men are to preach, teach, lead in singing, bring devotions, and fill the office of deacon. Women are prohibited from these duties, save teaching, or devotions to children, or other women, but not to a mixed adult assembly. I Timothy 2:11-13 says, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve." God's economy has been set up with the men leading and the women following. That is God's order in creation; but it does not make the woman lacking, or second rate bringing about an "unfulfilled" situation.

In and according to God's divine order for human beings is found great blessing and fulfillment by those observing and practicing that order. This does not mean, however, that the men run, control, or dictate every facet of the life and function of an assembly. The duties and privileges I mentioned that are prohibited to women, of course, the men perform; but the men are not to be the sole directors and voters of church decisions. This privilege and responsibility is to be shared by all members including the women of the church. Even though women do not speak out audibly in the assembly, men can bring a woman's wish, or motion before the church. When a motion is tendered, a woman may raise her hand in second, or vote without violating her position in divine order. I realize that some

churches vary considerably on this question, but I am giving my opinion and position as it is practiced in the assembly that I serve.

Just as the men are not to "run" the church in every aspect, neither are the women to "run" the church. The day to day affairs of the assembly are to be decided and shared within the divinely appointed dictates, or restrictions upon all male and female members. Male and female members of a local church are co-laborers, living stones, and valuable parts of the body in particular within their divinely appointed places. I Corinthians 14:40 says, "Let all things be done decently and in order".

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Examples given in the New Testament of how church business was conducted by the early churches show they employed the congregational form of government, that is, the whole church acted in the affairs of the church. When it became necessary to select one to take Judas' place as an apostle it was the one hundred and twenty, including the women, in the upper room who selected Matthias (Acts 1:16-26).

When it became needful to select men to oversee the feeding of the poor of the church at Jerusalem, the twelve (the apostles) told the multitude (the whole church) to choose seven men for the job, "And the saying pleased the whole multitude" (the whole church) "and they" (the whole church) "chose Stephen---, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, Nicolas--". (Acts 6:6). After much discussion in the council meeting in the Jerusalem church concerning the subject of the Gentile Christians keeping the law of Moses in order to be saved, it was decided by the whole church to send certain ones with letter back to the church at Antioch with Paul and Barabas, "Then pleased it the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabus;" (Acts 15:22).

Paul, in writing to the church at Corinth concerning the man who had his father's wife wrote, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together..." (the whole assembled church) "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh---" (I Cor. 5:4, 5). In II Corinthians 2:6 we are told that this had been done, for Paul wrote concerning this man, "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many" (by the majority of the church). The church was told to receive back the repentant man.

As the Scripture is very plain that all the members of the churches in the New Testament acted to select an apostle, to elect deacons, to send out representatives from the church, to discipline members; what right, or by what authority do we have today to restrict the conducting of

church business to only the men of the church?

To restrict the running of the church to only the men of the church would not be much different than having a body of bishops, or ruling elders, as some of the false churches have. If the church is to have the congregational form of government; every member, regardless of age, male or female, is to have a vote in the business of the church in which he/she is a member. This is the only form of government that a church should use according to the Scripture. While the women are commanded to keep silent even in the business meetings of the church, yet they have the same right to vote on issues as well as the man.

ELECTION

(Continued from Page 3)

except through the Son. One cannot get to the Son except the Father draw one nigh unto Him, and He does that with the drawing power of the Holy Spirit! Paul saw and wrote, Holy Spirit breathed, concerning these great truths. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory to our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thess. 2:13-14). Yes, election was from the beginning.

Fourthly, election includes preaching the gospel as a means of saving the elect. There are those who say; "If election be true, then there is no need to preach or teach," but God told us to go, go and carry the Word! Matthew wrote the words of the Lord concerning this matter. Some refer to it as "The Great Commission," but be that as it may, it is a command of the Lord Himself! "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." (Matt. 28:19-20).

That, my brother, is our command from God. He does the calling and saving. "Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath God not made foolish the wisdom of this world?" "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (I Cor. 1:20-21). Man can not handle the wisdom of God. The best we can do is to follow His instructions. He did not give us the names of the elect. Rather, He said go! We hew the log; the Master decides where the chips will fall! "...because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been

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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

If only faithful members of Baptist churches can receive any rewards, please explain Matthew 10:42; Mark 9:38-41; Luke 9:49-50.

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Ephesians 3:21 says, "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

The Lord Jesus Christ started the First Baptist Church in His earthly ministry. He gave it its marching orders. He gave it authority to preach, teach, and baptize. He gave it authority to discipline its members. He said that He loved the church and gave Himself for it. He was not speaking about a universal invisible monstrosity; but rather, He was putting emphasis on the church He started. He loves all the elect, but here He was putting great emphasis on His church.

So what about the reward you mentioned. I personally believe that when folks were saved in Bible times that they shortly thereafter were baptized and became members of a true church. I believe the Bible teaches this. So, if you are saying that He was speaking of those who are too sorry or to rebellious to become a member of the church; and free lancing their service yet getting a reward for their services, I think not. Why do you think our Lord started the church if not to receive glory? He did not intend folks to work free lance apart from the church.

The Bible tells us to do unto others as we would have them to do unto us. Would we not want someone to give us a drink if we were thirsty, or any other need we might have? I believe that one who would be this kind to his neighbor, that his reward would be given in this life as a blessing of some sort. The rewards given in heaven at the Judgment Seat of Christ will be earned in the church.

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We read in Ephesians 3:21, "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." The place then is in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. I cannot believe that a man who says that he is called of God to preach the

gospel of Christ, will not be Scripturally baptized, will not submit to the authority of the church of Jesus Christ, to have proper ordination, and yet begins preaching and telling people to repent and be baptized when he himself will not submit to proper authority -- will such an one be rewarded while in disobedience to God's Word?

In the early days of the church, there was no other kind of church except Christ's church. There was no denomination at that time. There was no convention. There were no Associations in these early years of the church. The testimony of historians is that there were no Christians except Baptists in the first centuries. I would dare say that before other churches, so called, came along there was not much controversy about rewards being in any other place except in and through the church of Christ.

We are asked to explain Matthew 10:42. The only church that existed at that time was a Baptist church. Christ built just one kind of church. To give a drink of cold water in the name of a disciple, means by the authority of a disciple. One who does such has so much as said that he believes that the disciple is doing the will of God. Would one who is a member of a false church give a cup of cold water to a true preacher? Will God honor one who is disobedient to His Word? Will God reward any who will not become a member of a true church, one who will not submit to Scriptural baptism, one who hates the doctrine of elective grace, one who hates the sovereignty of God, one who puts his or her title in a false institution? I say not.

I don't believe that Christ was speaking of one out of the fold, some one who was not one of His sheep. I believe that rather, He had reference to one who had been baptized with John's baptism giving a cold cup of water to one who was in need, one who was preaching the gospel of Christ and to help him on his way.

When one explains Matthew 10:42 concerning rewards, he explains Mark 9:38-41 and Luke 9:49-51, for they are principally the same.

Concerning the one casting out devils in the name of Christ; is one who is doing such doing it by the authority of Christ? I would hardly think that Christ would bless anyone who was attempting to cast out devils that was against Him, or who had not been ordained by Christ, or one who had refused the baptism of John, especially since John had the authority from heaven.

The answer Jesus gave the disciples in Luke 9:50 is certainly no warrant for any to teach or begin teaching false doctrine today or any day. This does not

mean that the so-called miracle workers have the blessings of God. Where is the Scripture showing that God will bless any who are teaching or preaching false doctrine? If an unsaved person gives a disciple a cold cup of water, will such an one receive a reward? Will those in false churches receive rewards for what they do, even if some are saved in such churches? To contend that they would is an encouragement for them to continue on in the error of their way. Where is our point of emphasis when we preach against false societies, if those teaching false doctrines are rewarded as well as those who preach the truth?

Someone may say the best place to get rewards is in the church; that this is the starting place. That is just like saying that baptism by immersion is the best way. It is not the best way, it is the only way, and that by the authority of a sound Baptist church.

I believe that there are some saved people in false churches. "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4). We cannot deny that there are some of God's elect in false systems of the world. Will God reward any of these false teachers in the false churches, even though some of God's people are in these churches? To say that God will reward them would be to put our approval on them, at least in some sense.

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Faithful members of Baptist churches are not the only ones that will receive rewards. Every person that has been saved has the ability to earn rewards. Being a Baptist is not a prerequisite. All the saved will one day stand before 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). At this judgment the deeds of every believer shall be revealed. Those deeds will be tried by fire to reveal of what sort they are. The results of that trial can be positive or negative. "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" (I Cor. 3:14-15). So the requirement for rewards is not to be a Baptist, but to have carried out deeds based upon the proper foundation. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 3:11).

Now, two of the three passages quoted refer to no loss of reward by those to whom Christ is speaking. The question asks that these verses be explained. I don't think that they can be harmonized with the first part of the question because they take place on two separate occasions and in two different locations.

"And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Mat. 10:42). This is spoken by Jesus as He sends out the twelve apostles. He is giving them instructions concerning the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The word "whosoever" is used to refer to all who perform deeds worthy of rewards. The word only has reference to the small size of the deed that is to be done to be worthy of a reward. It must be performed in the proper manner and for the right reason. These instructions were given to the apostles near the Sea of Galilee.

"For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because you belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward" (Mk. 9:41). This verse was spoken to the twelve at a house that was in Capernaum. The word whosoever is the same as used above. It is used to refer to all who perform deeds worthy of rewards. The verse is changed in that it now refers to giving a drink of water to the apostles. And it is now given in Christ's name, not the name of a disciple. Again, the small size of the deed is stressed, but we can also note that the station of the individual is not to be considered.

One of the most important lessons that we can learn from these verses is that we are to perform deeds, disregarding size, for those saints that we associate with on a regular basis, and for some that we may only meet once. All that which we do will be remembered and one day we will be judged for those deeds. God will not forget anything done in His name for His people. "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister" (He. 6:10).

ELECTION

(Continued from Page 4)

taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (II Thess. 2:13-15). Paul went to great lengths, suffering much for the lost while he was traveling and preaching the gospel. "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (II Tim. 2:10). Yes, it is vitally necessary to

preach the gospel to the lost.

Fifthly, all the elect will believe. We do not believe that God has ever missed, or lost one who had been ordained to eternal life! There will never be one in hell whom God fore-ordained and elected to salvation. "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48). "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). Faith and coming to Christ, is the same act of the soul. In "no wise" gives a very good reference to "eternal security of the believer." That is why the gates of hell cannot prevail against God's church.

The true church is made up of a body of baptized believers. It is a local assembly, not universal or invisible, but a living, pulsing body of the true believers in the finished work on Calvary. If the true believer cannot fall, then surely the greatest institution that was ever established to please God as a live functioning body on this earth certainly is also indestructible. Oh, Satan will try! The doors are at times entered by his disciples, but God is the greater power, and His church will prevail even during the onslaughts of Satan himself.

Sixthly, election took place in eternity. Salvation takes place when men hear and believe the gospel. A man must hear the effectual call. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom. 8:29-30). Yes, we were elected to salvation way back in or eternity past.

Seventhly, only the elect will hear the effectual call. There is a general call, and there is an effectual call. The minister never knows whom he is talking to. He may have certain feelings toward some one, but only the Spirit knows who will receive the effectual call. There may be two very close friends attending a service together. One suddenly seems to be overpowered by unseen power, while the other may feel or see nothing unusual. One heard the general call by the minister as he obeyed the command, "go ye." The other heard the effectual call that brought him to the submissive will of God who did the calling. The message was the same, but only one, the elect, heard the effectual call. "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen" (Matt. 20:16).

Again, we read, "For many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt. 22:14). Election makes sure that some will believe the gospel, otherwise, all would reject the precious gospel itself.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love" (Continued on Page 6, Col. 1)

ELECTION

(Continued from Page 5)

God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom. 8:28-30). Beloved, we believe that when God impregnates the heart of one of His elect, with the gospel the effectual call will be present and there will be a delivery! There and then will be born a new babe in Christ! Thank God for the effectual call into the family of God.

He not only chose us, my brethren, but He chose the means by which we are called. He gave us to His Son, knowing that He would lose none. There will never be one of the elect in hell! He will never be lost to perdition. We all should offer a hearty amen to that! "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matt. 24:31). We believe the doctrine of election, we believe the Bible does give us some great relief concerning this doctrine which is actually despised by some. I cannot understand the disbelief by some who claim to be so deeply rooted in the Word. However, the situation does exist. When I heard the effectual call I realized for the first time that I was lost; eternally lost, doomed to a devil's hell without some means of delivery. The Holy Spirit drove home the answer at the same time, and I was made to realize the need of a Saviour. The effectual call was given and I answered. I did not go after Him, but He drew me unto Him. Thanks to His election, and the effectual call. Amen.

DON'T

(Continued from Page 1)

Now, I know that there are some that will read this and laugh it off as if to say, "Well I came in the front door and I'm going out the front door; this is out of the Old Testament and doesn't mean anything for today." Well, to you I must say that you have already missed the meaning of the Scripture, and whereof the Spirit speaks to us.

First of all, the Scripture clearly makes a distinction as to whom the Word is written to. The Scripture says when the people of the land come before the Lord. Now that is important! The people of the land are every one of you, the saved, the lost, the backslidden, or other wise. But what is even more important is what is said next. "When you come before the Lord." That, my friends is an awesome thought, isn't it? Well, isn't it? I

fear that for the most part of mankind today, the thought of coming before the Lord has no fear and no real concern for them. Man has been coddled and lulled by the deceiver and false prophets of easy believism to think that God is only a God of love; and would never be a God of wrath. But that is not what the Bible that I am reading says. But that is another message. Let us return to this one.

Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them." Now I have to ask you: When you gather together, is it in the name of Jesus, or are you gathering together in someone else's name? Beloved, when we come together in the house of the Lord, it ought to be to worship the Lord of lords, the King of kings, our Lord Jesus Christ and for no other reason. Praise be to God it is His house, and we are His Church; bought with a price that is beyond compare. If you want to get together and pig out on food; (very popular in worldly churches) then go to one or the others house. If you want to play games, get together and play those games; but by all means keep the world out of the house of God. And while I am on this subject; if you want to run a business, then do so; but by all means, do it as a business, pay the taxes that are due as a business, and stop hiding behind the cross of Christ. Pay unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

One of those things, the most important of all, is mentioned here in our text. Coming before the Lord in the solemn feasts, to worship when we come together it should be to worship God, and to feast upon His Word. To hear of the one that laid down His life that I might live. I don't know about you, but that's solemn to me. And to hear that He not only laid it down; but praise God He picked it up again, and went to prepare a place for me that we will be together there some day. How I love to feed upon those words of my Lord. John 10:18 "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." This was a commandment that Jesus, God's only begotten received from the council halls of glory, where God made His choice of the human race, who were to be, at the appointed time, receptive to the call of the Holy Spirit by the work of grace, free grace. Where God gave, Christ paid; and the Holy Spirit converts. Praise be to God! It's all of God. Nothing has been left to chance.

As we come together, we come because He not only received the commandment, but He was faithful to keep that commandment; just as He kept all of God's commandments. We could not, and would not. But He did, and He did it for me; He did it for His people who were given to Him from the Father. Again we read in John 10:29, "My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." And then He asserts His power and deity in verse thirty "I and my Father are one."

When we come before the Lord, we come to a solemn feast. We come into the presence of the all mighty, all powerful, Holy God. And how we come is very important. We ought to come in fear. Now, I know that most of you will laugh at such an idea; but that is to your shame. The Word of God is filled with warnings that our God is to be feared, not with the fear of dread; but with the fear of anxiety. He is my Lord; He is my God. He will always be holding me in His hand, safe and sure. One with the power that is above all, is to be feared. Which of you would come to the Oval office and have no fear within you? Yet we so very often come before the presence of Almighty God and have no fear. We ought to come in prayer; prayerfully looking for and asking for a blessing from God. I am talking about a spiritual blessing. Most of us today think of blessings with dollar signs. Be careful beloved, the dollar can so very easily become your god. Exodus 20:3, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me."

I tell you, if you come into the house of God the right way, when you leave that place you will leave the right way; and it will not be the way you came in. How can that be? Let me share a little story with you. Some years ago, back when I first started preaching; I supplied in a church for their Sunday services. The morning services were just fine. I preached on the love of God, what Christ did for us, and the gift of salvation. But when the evening services came; I preached of godly living, and the sins that so easily beset us. And I will never forget the change in the people that were there that day. The morning was filled with smiles and praise and many an amen; But that evening brought frown and discomfort, and if there was an amen, I did not hear it. I asked the pastor of that church what happened. And this is what he told me. When you preach, you will have one of three things happen. You will have men get mad, glad, or gone. Now I hope that the message today will find you glad, possibly mad, but I pray not gone. Be that as it may, for that is in the power of the Holy Spirit, and His name never was and never will be Fred Beard.

So what am I saying? How are we to leave the house of God? Our text says don't go out the way you came in. Go out another way. Go out changed! Better, for having been in the presence of the Lord. How else can it be? Do you think that you can come before God and not change? Surely I tell you that there are many who do. I feel that most of those coming to and going from the house of worship have no change in them, and no change in their lives. But what Jesus said in John 10:14 "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine," ought to tell us that there is a problem there. What is that problem? Jesus answers that in John 10:25-30, "...I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall

never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."

Now I didn't say that, Jesus said it. His sheep hear His voice, His sheep come together in His name to worship Him. I ask you, how did you come together this day? How did you come in to the house of the Lord? And I ask you again, how shall you leave the house of the Lord? Don't go out the way you came in. Amen.

WHY

(Continued from Page 1)

shape they were outside the city, they had no food, there was no food in the city; so they just say "Why should we sit here and die? Why not do something about it. If we go into the city we're going to die there, if we sit here we're going to die here."

Down the road a little ways was the Syrian camp where there was plenty of food, plenty of provisions, plenty of clothing, they had enough to last a long time. These lepers said, "let's go to the Syrians. If they accept us and they feed us we'll live. If they do not we will die but we're going to die anyway. So why sit we here until we die." The lepers rose early in the morning and started walking down the road. Now the Syrians, this bunch of heathens that denied God, denied everything about God, heard a noise. There were no chariots, no horses, and no enemies; but God caused them to hear a noise. They said what is that? It sounds like the noise of a great army coming. I hear chariots, I hear horses, I hear the rumbling of chariots coming. Israel has hired the Hitties and they have hired the Egyptians and they're coming upon us. They took off running, maybe in their night clothes, and left every thing else behind. They left their tents, and their horses, even the camp as it was and fled for their lives. The lepers came up, looked all around, saw all the food, all the clothing and they said this is a good day. They ate all they could eat, they put on new clothes, and took the rest and hid them. They went back to the city, but were not allowed in the city. There was a man, called a porter, that could carry messages. So they called him and said, we know you people are starving in that city, we know where there is more food than you can eat and more clothes. You can all have a new suit of clothing. The porter went back in and told them what the lepers said. Now, at first they were sceptical and they said, well, it's a trap. They went out there and hid themselves, they know we're hungry. When we come out there to get the food then they will come inside our city and there we are. But then someone said, "I'm awful hungry, why don't we try it? Why don't we pick out a few men, let them take five horses each, that will make a lot of noise and they will think it's an army coming instead of just a few." So they did and went and got some food.

Now, we want to look at some spiritual lessons concerning sinners and salvation. First of all, we notice that these lepers were under a death sentence, and sinners are under a death sentence. These lepers were condemned to die. They were going to sit out there outside the city so they

would not contaminate the city, because what they had was contagious, so they had to be out by themselves waiting their time to die. You talk about a pitiful sight. We went with a friend to the hospital to visit his mother. Everyone on this one particular floor was waiting to die. They all had some kind of terminal disease, and no one on that floor was going to leave there alive. They were just there until they died. What a pitiful sight to look at. These lepers were pitiful to look at. They were sitting out there; maybe their hand was eaten up, or a foot off, or the side of their face eaten up; white as snow. No cure. Beloved, they were going to die. They were under the sentence of death. Now, likewise, sinners are under the sentence of death. Only they are going to die a spiritual death. These lepers in the leper colony were going to die physically. Sinners are going to die a spiritual death.

In Rom 6:23 we find these words, "For the wages of sin is death..." The wages of sin is death. We work all week long so on Friday we can get the wages of our labor. A sinner works all his life long to get his wages which is death. When death comes he is dead physically and spiritually. Physical death is a separation of the soul from the body. Spiritual death is separation of sinners from the presence of God, never to enter His presence again, only at the Great White Throne Judgment, and never ever as a friend. Ezekiel 18:4 says this, "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die." The sinner is just as condemned to die spiritually as the leper is physically. Now, beloved, what can he do about it? The first impression would be, nothing. There is something he can do about it. He can hear the preaching of the Word of God. Why sit we here and die? Why should a man sit at his house and die and go to hell, why should a man sit on a creek bank and die and go to hell? Why should a man go to any place of worldly entertainment and die and go to hell, when he can come and hear the preaching of the Word and perhaps God will have mercy on him? Why sit we here and die? Do what you can, go out and hear the preaching of the Word of God. Perhaps the Lord will save you.

Now, notice that sinners remain where they are. If they remain in the condition they are in they will die and go to hell. Notice the lepers, they were sensible enough to know that if they stayed where they were, death was inevitable. If we sit here and do nothing we are going to starve to death. These men were no fools, they were smart men. They knew death was inevitable if they just sat there. They also knew that if they went into the city where there was no food, they would die there. It looks very bleak, doesn't it? If I sit here I'm going to die, if I go in the city I'm going to die. Beloved, that Sunday morning that the Lord saved my soul, I knew that if I sit here I'm going to hell and if I run outside this church house and keep on going just as hard as I can go, I'm still going to die and go to hell. Now, beloved, what are we going to do? Why sit we here and die? If

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STUDIES IN ACTS

by Willard Willis

"And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15). The Holy Spirit fell on the apostles first at Pentecost. This second time, however, He falls on the Gentiles who are being added. His falling on them was to show that they were all one in Christ Jesus -- that the middle wall, by the death of Jesus Christ, had been torn down. The Gentiles were no longer a common class since they had been cleansed by the blood of the Lamb. The Jews and Gentiles could now enter God's temple -- the church -- together and worship and work side by side.

"Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that He said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 11:16). It is to be noted very carefully that Peter did not lay his hands on anyone prior to the baptism with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit, in fact, came upon the Gentile household while Peter was still speaking. The same was true on the day of Pentecost. I'm saying that no medium or middle person was used in the baptism with the Spirit. Jesus, in fact, and Jesus only, baptized with the Spirit; and He only did such on two occasions.

Some believe that other instances of Spirit baptism are to be found in Acts 8 and 19, but reference here is to the filling with the Spirit rather than the baptism of the Spirit. There is no Spirit baptism today. Spirit baptism occurred only at Pentecost and at the house of Cornelius.

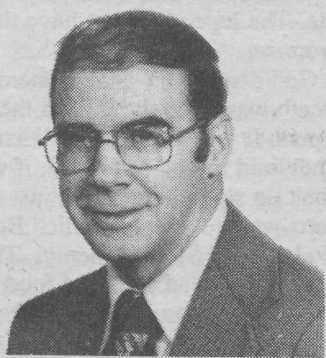
Spirit baptism involved the arrival of the Comforter to the church. Jesus, before He went away, promised that he would send the Comforter and this He did. The Comforter is now here and is not being sent over and over again through what many groups call "Spirit baptism." Paul, in Ephesians 4:5, refers to "one baptism." This baptism is water baptism. There would be two baptisms if there was Spirit baptism too.

This brings us to I Corinthians 12:13, which many theologians believe teaches Spirit baptism. They believe that all believers are placed in the universal church by Spirit baptism. The fact, however, that no universal church can be placed in the context of I Corinthians 12:13 is shown by I Corinthians 12:27. This latter passage shows clearly that Paul has in mind a local visible church. The "Ye" in 12:27 is the same church which Paul refers to in I Corinthians 1:2. Furthermore, if the baptism in I Corinthians 12:13 is Spirit baptism, then Paul lied, since he said, "We all," that is, himself and the members of the Corinthian church. I say that he would have lied, since he nor any of the members of the Corinthian church were at Pentecost or at Caesarea with Cornelius. I Corinthians 12:13 only makes sense when we understand it to mean that Paul and the Corinthians, under the influence of the Spirit, were baptized into the local church by way of water baptism.

Actually, I Corinthians 12:13, in the Greek, reads, "in one Spirit" rather than "by one Spirit." The Greek preposition

"EN," which is translated "by" in I Corinthians 12:13, is translated "in" on 1,863 other occasions. We are to see, then, that "in" is the preferred translation. The preposition "in," as found in I Corinthians 12:13, relates to being under the influence of the Spirit.

"Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?" (Acts 11:17). God gives His gifts to



Willard Willis

those of His own choosing; and we, of course, are not at liberty to restrict God in any way. We are all receivers from God. Every good gift and every perfect gift has come to us from our Father. We therefore have no right to say who receives gifts and who does not. This was the position taken by Peter. Our God will do all of His pleasure; and we are to say, "Amen."

"When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." (Acts 11:18). It was at this point that the high wall of prejudice, which the Jews held for the Gentiles, fell. We hear of the sound barrier being broken. Here it was the prejudice barrier which was broken. The "apostles and brethren," from this point on, knew that the field to be harvested was much larger than they had previously supposed it to be. "Go ye into all the world" suddenly took on a much larger meaning.

"Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only" (Acts 11:19). The group before us still held on to their prejudices since they were not aware of God's action through Peter and Cornelius. These preachers had, no doubt, been run out of Jerusalem by Saul when he was making havoc of the Jerusalem church. They had not stopped at the closest town or village but were still on the move. It was not fear which kept them moving, but it was their love for their Lord and souls. They had a great story to tell, and they travelled as far as Phenice, Cyprus, and Antioch to tell the greatest story ever told.

Phenice, or Phoenicia, was a province of Syria. It extended from Antioch to the borders of Egypt. I'm informed, however, that Phenice proper extended only from the cities of Laodicea to Tyre and included only the territories of Tyre and Sidon. This area was sometimes referred to as Canaan.

Cyprus is an island off the coast of Asia Minor in the Mediterranean Sea. Antioch was located on the Orontes River. It was the capitol of Syria for a long period. This city was built by a man by the name of Seleucus. He called the city Antioch in honor of his dad whose name was Antiochus. This city, for a long period, had the honor of being the most powerful city of the East.

Antioch was famous for the fact that Seleucus conferred the right of citizenship on the Jews as well as the Greeks and Macedonians. This gave the Jews the right to worship in their own way without any interference. This city was large and was considered as a metropolis. It had many gates and was adorned with beautiful fountains. It was also a city of great wealth. The major problem the city had was that of earthquakes -- earthquakes which nearly destroyed it several times. One earthquake in 588 killed 60,000 people. Antioch is now called Antakia and has a population of about 10,000 people.

It was in the above-mentioned towns that the Word was preached to "Jews only," since the preachers had not been made aware that the Gentiles were no longer to be called common or unclean. **"And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus" (Acts 11:20).**

The Greek language was spoken in Cyprus and probably in Cyrene too. This is why the preachers from these areas were able to communicate the gospel message to the Grecians who lived in Antioch. The Grecians they preached to were probably Gentiles since the previous Scripture relates to only Jews being preached to. There were also Grecians who were Jews. These were Jews who lived in a foreign land and spoke the Greek language. These Jews were also called Hellenists.

The preachers from Cyprus and Cyrene obviously went to Antioch later than those in verse 19. They therefore had been informed as to the fact that God had cleansed the Gentiles too. **"And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord" (Acts 11:21).**

Let us remind ourselves again that Seleucus, the builder of Antioch, had made it a free city. He had conferred the right of citizenship on the Jews as well as the Greeks and Macedonians. This fact gave the Lord's preachers an open door in this city since each person had the freedom to worship in his own way without any interference from the government.

God the Spirit was with the preachers from Cyprus and Cyrene since we are informed that a "great number believed, and turned unto the Lord." They believed that Jesus the carpenter, the son of Joseph and Mary, was the Messiah -- that His work on earth was to save sinners. They believed that He died and rose again in order to justify sinners. They believed that they were included in His atonement. They, therefore, **"turned unto the Lord,"** that is, they received Him as the Lord of their lives. They agreed that they would hear and heed His every Word.

"Then tidings of these things came unto the ears

of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch" (Acts 11:22). Antioch, as we have already stated, was a splendid city. It was the gateway to the East. A revival in this city was most certainly headline news, and news which excited the Lord's church at Jerusalem. They therefore reacted by sending Barnabas, a native of Cyprus and probably well acquainted with Antioch. Barnabas, with his background, would be able to communicate with the people of Antioch. He would be able to inform them of the benefits that were theirs now that they were believers. He would also be able to instruct them regarding what their Lord expected from them.

"Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord" (Acts 11:23). It is by grace that we are saved, and this fact was very obvious when Barnabas arrived in Antioch. He, in fact, saw a great number who, as the result of God's grace, had believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. The fact that they were saved by grace means that they didn't merit or earn the great salvation which was theirs. It was the free gift of God without any works of any kind.

Barnabas, according to the scripture before us, was "glad" because of what he observed. He, after all, knew the value of their new found faith. He knew that what they had received was eternal life. He knew that nothing could separate them from the love of God which was in Christ Jesus the Lord. He knew that no one could pluck them from the Father's hand.

Barnabas, as the result of what he observed, **"exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord."** Barnabas knew that their believing was just the beginning. He exhorted them to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they had been called and to do such with "purpose of heart," that is, with a firm and fixed mind. He advised them to have fixed goals and to strive to meet those goals. These goals could involve reading, praying, visiting, church attendance, etc.

Barnabas further advised them to **"cleave unto the Lord"** that is, let nothing detract them from following Him. He knew they had to live in the world and work in the world, but he advised them to let neither of these take their eyes off Jesus.

"For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord" (Acts 11:24). We know from Acts 4:36 and 37 that Barnabas was most certainly a good man, for he sold all he had and laid all his receipts at the apostles' feet. He, in other words, had given all to his Lord and Master. He held back nothing. The church, then, was wise when they sent Barnabas to Antioch. They, no doubt, sent the best man they had among them.

Barnabas, it is said, was **"full of the Holy Ghost."** He therefore was influenced and empowered by the Spirit. His words and acts were Spirit wrought. They had their source in the Spirit. The result therefore had to

be good and it was, for it is said that "much people was added unto the church." We know, of course, from Acts 2:47 that God adds to the church those that should be saved, that is, saved from the guilt of their sins.

"Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:25, 26).

We know from Acts 9:26 that the disciples were afraid of Paul. Barnabas, however, the good man that he was, took him to the apostles and explained why they should accept him as one of them. Later on (Acts 9:29) the Grecians tried to kill Paul. This action caused the brethren to take him to Caesarea; and from there, they sent him to Tarsus (Acts 9:30). Paul was a native of Tarsus. He, in fact, is referred to as "Saul of Tarsus." The "brethren" who sent Paul to Tarsus probably included Barnabas, since Barnabas knew that he had gone to Tarsus. He, in fact, according to the Scripture before us, departed to Tarsus to find Paul.

We know from Acts 11:21 that a great number in Antioch had turned to the Lord. Barnabas therefore was in need of help in teaching these new believers the "all things." He, through the influence of the Spirit (keep in mind that he was filled with the Spirit), set out to find and bring Paul to Antioch. This, of course, was a very wise decision on the part of Barnabas. The Spirit, in fact, through Barnabas and Paul, would turn Antioch upside down. Antioch, which was a gateway to the East, would become a springboard for the gospel going into all the world.

Keep in mind, too, that Antioch was a city where the government kept hands off of a person's belief and worship. God, of course, arranged such so that the gospel message would not be restricted.

One can be sure that Barnabas, when he located Paul in Tarsus, found him preaching Jesus Christ as the Messiah. Paul, in fact, on the Damascus road, had seen and heard too much to keep quiet. He was an apostle and filled with the Spirit. We therefore can be sure that he witnessed in his native country of Tarsus.

I'm sure that Barnabas and Paul had a very interesting meeting somewhere in Tarsus. Paul, of course, because of the influence of God the Spirit, gave up whatever he was doing and went to Antioch with Barnabas. We don't know whether they travelled by sea or by way of the mountainous country to Antioch. They, however, after arriving in Antioch, witnessed for one entire year to the new believers. Their witnessing, no doubt, resulted in many trained soldiers for the Lord Jesus. Many, no doubt, were able to give an answer to all who questioned whether or not Jesus was the Messiah. The disciples made at Antioch by Barnabas and Paul were so Christ-like that they were called "Christians." This title meant that they were trained

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and equipped to follow closely in the path that Jesus Christ had set before them. They were being conformed to His image by God the Spirit and therefore were Christians or Christ-like.

Many have died because they were Christians, since the true Christian or follower of Jesus Christ will not conform to the world system. They were and are a separated people and are willing to suffer as a Christian. "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf" (I Peter 4:16).

"And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem to Antioch" (Acts 11:27). It becomes more and more obvious that God caused Seleucus to make Antioch a city whose people enjoyed freedom of worship. God, in other words, paved the way for the work which He had planned for Antioch. This work, of course, would spread fast from Antioch since it was a gateway to the east. The city was an excellent field for sowing too because it was made up of foreigners such as the Jews, Greeks, and Macedonians.

The prophets who went to Antioch from Jerusalem were men who could foretell future events. There are cases, however, where the word "prophet" simply refers to teachers or instructors sent from God. This is because the prophetic office included teaching people the Holy Scriptures.

"And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar" (Acts 11:28). God's program for that period of time included a dearth. The dearth was designed so that it fit in with the work of the Jerusalem church. God the Spirit, in fact, gave Agabus the ability to foresee the dearth and to announce its pending arrival. The result was as follows: "Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea" (Acts 11:29).

Barnabas and Paul, then, had preached for one year to the Christians in Antioch. They had told them of God's love for them and how they should love the brethren. The dearth which Agabus was able to foresee caused the new Christians to apply that which they had learned. It also, by way of the sacrifice of their earthly goods, brought them into a close relationship with the Christians in Judea.

God desires a tried people, and the earth was about to be God's way of trying His chosen in Antioch. Did they really love God? The dearth would prove them. It is as stated in the following Scripture: "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God" (I John 4:7). "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he

brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (I John 4:20).

The fact that Agabus was able to foretell the dearth, or famine, shows that it was by design. God, in other words, predestinated the dearth, or Agabus could not have known about it. One cannot predict the future if the future is not being controlled. A prediction may or may not come to pass if there are no controls put in place to cause it to occur.

The Scripture before us informs us that the dearth occurred "in the days of Claudius Caesar." Claudius Caesar, the Roman emperor, began his reign in 41 A.D. and reigned for thirteen years. His wife, Agrippina, poisoned him in an effort to place her son Nero on the throne. The historians refer to no less than four famines which occurred during the reign of Claudius Caesar. One of the famines was particularly severe in the land of Judea.

Dio, Eusebius, Suetonius, Tacitus, and Josephus all have written about the four famines which occurred during the reign of Claudius Caesar. Josephus, in fact, has told of one very severe famine that occurred in Judea. He said that "many people died for the want of what was necessary to procure food withal."

The brethren, then, at Antioch took up a collection, according to their ability to give. They, in other words, gave a part of themselves. They followed the action of those in Acts chapter four who shared their earthly possessions with the less fortunate.

Barnabas, who had sold all he owned and laid the receipts at the apostles' feet, now is assigned with Paul to carry the collected funds back to Judea. "Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul" (Acts 11:30).

The Gentiles at Antioch and the Jews at Jerusalem, by way of the action taken, would be sealed together. The gift would act as mortar to seal them together. The communication between the two had been in word, but now it would be in deed too. It would also be a means for Gentiles to say thanks for telling them about Jesus Christ at Nazareth. It is as stated in the following Scriptures:

"But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things" (Rom. 15:25-27).

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sinner remain in their present condition they are going to hell. In Hebrews 9:26 we find these words, "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of him-

self." The lepers have a little hope. They know there is a Syrian camp down the road that has food in it. They didn't know whether they could get any of that food or not, but if they just sat there they wouldn't. Beloved, here's a man called Jesus Christ who died for the sins of His people. If I go to hear that preached, I might get a call from Him. If I sit here I won't. Why sit we here and die? Go listen to the preaching of the Word of God. Maybe He will have mercy on you. Remember the sentence was passed upon Hezekiah. He said you're going to die. Set your house in order. Now, Hezekiah could have said, "Well, I'm going to die so I am just going to sit here. I'm going to do nothing else;" but, Hezekiah said, "Perhaps the Lord might show me mercy." So he turned his back to the people, he turned his face to the wall and he prayed and God granted him 15 more years. Why sit we here and die? You say that's a mighty small straw. Beloved, it is a straw. They say a drowning man would grab at a toothpick if it floated past him. It's better than nothing. When we hear the preaching of the Word of God, perhaps He will show mercy upon us. John 3:18, "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Beloved, we must hear the preaching of the Word of God. There has never been a man saved that didn't hear a message. Not a one. The gospel is used in salvation. In John 3:36 we read, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." If he remains where he is, he will certainly perish. So why sit we here and die? There is only one thing that you can do, and that is go listen to the preaching of the Word of God. Perhaps the Lord might show mercy. Perhaps He might save you. We bring our children, our mothers and fathers, or friends to church, we have no guarantee that God is going to save them. But, we know that if they don't hear the preaching of the Word of God, they won't be saved. At least do what you can do, go listen to the preaching of God's Word.

The lepers had no promise, but God extends numerous promises in His word. They had no assurance that the Syrian army was going to feed them. They said if we go down there, they may welcome us, they may feed us or they may shoot us on sight, but what have we got to lose? We're going to die anyway. They had no assurance whatsoever that God would intervene in their situation. They didn't know God was going to work a miracle when they went down there. They didn't know that He was going to cause them to hear a noise and take off running. Isaiah 1:18 says this: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." The promise of God; is though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as wool. Is the Lord going to save you if you come and hear the preaching of the Word of

God? I don't know, but I know He is not if you don't. Perhaps the Lord will show mercy. Matthew 11:28 says this, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." That is a precious promise to lost people, but will it happen? I don't know, but you better go hear the Word of God preached to see. There isn't any sinner that need fear that he will come to God and be rejected. John 6:37 tells us this, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." I will in no wise cast him out, if he comes to Me. The lepers did not have that promise.

God dispels the sinners enemy. Death was upon the trail of these lepers. It was gaping upon them. They said if we don't move, if we don't do something, if we just sit here we are going to die. But, God dispelled the enemy. The Syrian army had plenty of food in their possession, but the city of Samaria was starving to death, the four lepers were starving to death. The enemy had all the food and everything in their control, but God intervened and turned that situation around. What did God do? He just caused a noise. Isn't that something? The sovereignty of God, all He had to do to defeat this tremendous army, this great enemy, was to cause a noise. It was not even a true noise, it was just a noise. God sent a noise through the camp that sounded like horses, and chariots and soldiers beating down upon them. They said we had better get out of here. Israel has somehow persuaded the Egyptians and Hittites to fight for them and here they come. So the Syrians left the camp. God conquered their enemies and He can conquer our enemies. The greatest enemy any sinner has is death and God conquered death, hell, and the grave for His people. Why sit we here and die? Why not do what we can do? We can go hear the preaching of the Word of God. Perhaps He will show mercy upon us. The lepers did not know whether they would get fed or not, but they would not get fed if they didn't go. If that is the only thing you can do, do it. Go where the gospel is being preached and listen. That is the only thing you can do. There is no power within you and there was no power within the lepers. All they could do was just get up and go walking down the road. Why sit we here and die?

Now these lepers were very happy. They found a good thing. II Kings 7:9 says, "Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household." Beloved, they said this is a day of good tidings, this is a day that good things have come to our house. Let's go tell others about it. After the lepers had found the food and had eaten to their satisfaction then they went back to the city and told the people that there was food enough for everyone. Although the people were first doubtful, they soon found that it was indeed a day of good tidings. Sinners who come to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation may find that this is a day of

good tidings. Why sit we here until we die? Now what is the message? I think we find that in Acts 16:31, what Paul and Silas told the Philippian jailer "....Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..." Beloved, regardless of where a person may attend services, the only message of good tidings that he will hear is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Why sit you there and die? When Jesus has died for the sins of His people. Go, perhaps He might have mercy on you, perhaps He might save you. I have seen people go to church for years and never make a profession of faith and I have seen others that were saved the first time they were ever in church. When my mother passed away, there was a lady I had known for years. She had attended church ever since a little girl, her father was a deacon of the church, she was always there but never made a profession of faith. She lived a good life, she was more faithful than about 95% of the church members, but she never made a profession of faith. At the funeral home she told me the Lord had saved her. How wonderful. If you are a sinner here today, why sit you here and die? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

HOLY

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puts great value upon meditation, upon the study of God's Word, and upon silent thought under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, for Jesus says, "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

Here is a gospel word at the very outset of our sermon. Poor sinner, conscious of your sin, it is possible for Christ to be glorified by his being shown unto you. If you look to him, if you see him to be a suitable Saviour, an all-sufficient Saviour, if your mind's eye takes him in, if he is effectually shown to you by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby glorified. Sinner as you are, unworthy apparently to become the arena of Christ's glory, yet shall you be a temple in which the King's glory shall be revealed, and your poor heart, like a mirror, shall reflect his grace.

"Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,

With all thy quickening powers;" and show Christ to the sinner, that Christ may be glorified in the sinner's salvation!

If that great work of grace is really done at the beginning of the sermon, I shall not mind even if I never finish it. God the Holy Ghost will have wrought more without me than I could possibly have wrought myself, and to the Triune Jehovah shall be all the praise. Oh, that the name of Christ may be glorified in every one of you! Has the Holy Spirit shown you Christ, the Sin-bearer, the one sacrifice for sin, exalted on high, to give repentance and remission? If so, then the Holy Spirit has glorified Christ, even in you.

Now proceeding to examine the text a little in detail, my first observation upon it is this, the Holy Spirit is our Lord's Glorifier: "He shall glorify me." Secondly, Christ's own things are his best glory: "He shall glorify me: for he shall re-

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ceive of mine, and shall shew it unto you;" and, thirdly, Christ's glory is his Father's glory: "All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

I. To begin, then, the Holy Spirit is our Lord's Glorifier. I want you to keep this truth in your mind, and never to forget it; that which does not glorify Christ is not of the Holy Spirit, and that which is of the Holy Spirit invariably glorifies our Lord Jesus Christ.

First, then, have an eye to this truth in all comforts. If a comfort which you think you need, and which appears to you to be very sweet, does not glorify Christ, look very suspiciously upon it. If, in conversing with an apparently religious man, he prates about truth which he says is comforting, but which does not honour Christ, do not you have anything to do with it. It is a poisonous sweet; it may charm you for a moment, but it will

ruin your soul forever if you partake of it. But blessed, are those comforts which smell of Christ, those consolations in which there is a fragrance of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the King's palace, the comfort drawn from his person, from his work, from his blood, from his resurrection, from his glory; the comfort directly fetched from that sacred spot where he trod the winepress alone. This is wine of which you may drink, and forget your misery, and be unhappy no more; but always look with great suspicion upon any comfort offered to you, either as a sinner or a saint, which does not come distinctly from Christ. Say, "I will not be comforted till Jesus comforts me. I will refuse to lay aside my despondency until he removes my sin. I will not go to Mr. Civility, or Mr. Legality, for the unlading of my burden; no hands shall ever lift the load of conscious sin from off my heart but those that were nailed to the cross, when Jesus himself bore my sins in his own body on the tree." Please carry this truth with you wherever you go, as a kind of spiritual litmus paper, by which you may test everything that is presented to you as a cordial or comfort. If it does not glorify Christ, let it not console or please you.

In the next place, have an eye to this truth in all ministries. There are many ministries in the world, and they are very diverse from one another; but this truth will enable you to judge which is right out of them all. That ministry which makes much of Christ, is of the Holy Spirit; and that ministry which decries him, ignores him, or puts him in the background in any degree, is not of the spirit of God. Any doctrine which magnifies man, but not man's Redeemer, any doctrine which denies the depth of the Fall, and consequently derogates from the greatness of salvation, any doctrine which makes sin less, and therefore makes Christ's work less, -- away with it, away with it. This shall be your infallible test as to whether it is of the Holy Ghost or not, for Jesus says, "He shall glorify me." It were better to speak five words to the glory of Christ, than to be the greatest orator who ever lived, and to neglect or dishonor the Lord Jesus Christ. We, my brethren, who are preachers of the Word, have but a short time to live; let us dedicate all that time to the glorious work of magnifying Christ. Longfellow says, in his Psalm of Life, that "Art is long," but longer still is the great art of lifting up the Crucified before the eyes of the sin-bitten sons of men. Let us keep to that one employment. If we have but this one string upon which we can play, we may discourse such music on it as would ravish angels, and will save men; therefore, again I say, let us keep to that alone. Cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music are for Nebuchadnezzar's golden image; but as for our God, our one harp is Christ Jesus. We will touch every string of that wondrous instrument, even though it be with trembling fingers, and marvelous shall be the music we shall evoke from it.

All ministries, therefore, must be subjected to this test; if they do not glorify Christ, they are not of the Holy Ghost.

We should also have an eye to this truth in all religious move-

ments, and judge them by this standard. If they are of the Holy Spirit, they glorify Christ. There are great movements in the world every now and then; we are inclined to look upon them hopefully, for any stir is better than stagnation; but, by-and-by we begin to fear, with a holy jealousy, what their effects will be. How shall we judge them? To what test shall we put them? Always to this test. Does this movement glorify Christ? Is Christ preached? Then therein I do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. Are men pointed to Christ? Then this is the ministry of salvation. Is he preached as first and last? Are men bidden to be justified by faith in him, and then to follow him, and copy his divine example? It is well. I do not believe that any man ever lifted up the cross of Christ in a hurtful way. If it be but the cross that is seen, it is the sight of the cross, not of the hands that lift it, that will bring salvation. Some modern movements are heralded with great noise, and some come quietly; but if they glorify Christ, it is well. But, dear friends, if it is some new theory that is propounded, if it is some old error revived, if it is something very glittering and fascinating, and for a while it bears the multitudes away, think nothing of it; unless it glorifies Christ is it not for you and me. "Aliquid Christi," as one of the old fathers said, "Anything of Christ," and I love it; but nothing of Christ, or something against Christ, then it may be very fine and flowery, and it may be very fascinating and charming, highly poetical, and in consonance with the spirit of the age; but we say of it, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity where there is no Christ." Where he is uplifted, there is all that is wanted for the salvation of a guilty race. Judge every movement, then, not by those who adhere to it, nor by those who admire and praise it, but by this word of our Lord, "He shall glorify me." The Spirit of God is not in it if it does not glorify Christ.

Once again, brethren, I pray you, eye this truth when you are under a sense of great weakness, physical, mental, or spiritual. You have finished preaching a sermon, you have completed a round with your tracts, or you have ended your Sunday-school work for another Sabbath. You say to yourself, "I fear that I have done very poorly." You groan as you go to your bed because you think that you have not glorified Christ. It is as well that you should groan if that is the case. I will not forbid it, but I will relieve the bitterness of your distress by reminding you that it is the Holy Ghost who is to glorify Christ: "He shall glorify me." If I preach, and the Holy Spirit is with me, Christ will be glorified; but if I were able to speak with the tongues of men, and of angels, but without the power of the Holy Ghost, Christ would not be glorified. Sometimes, our weakness may even help to make way for the greater display of the might of God. If so, we may glory in infirmity, that the power of Christ may rest upon us. It is not merely we who speak, but the Spirit of the Lord, who speaketh by us. There is a sound of abundance of rain outside the Tabernacle; would God that there were also the sound of abundance of rain within our hearts! May the Holy Spirit come at this moment, and come at all

times whenever his servants are trying to glorify Christ, and himself do what must always be his own work! How can you and I glorify anybody, much less glorify him who is infinitely glorious? But the Holy Ghost, being himself the glorious God, can glorify the glorious Christ. It is a work worthy of God; and it shows us, when we think of it, the absolute need of our crying to the Holy Spirit that he would take us in his hand, and use us as a workman uses his hammer. What can a hammer do without the hand that grasps it, and what can we do without the Spirit of God?

I will make only one more observation upon this first point. If the Holy Spirit is to glorify Christ, I beg you to have an eye to this truth amid all oppositions, controversies, and contentions. If we alone had the task of glorifying Christ, we might be beaten; but as the Holy Spirit is the Glorifier of Christ, his glory is in very safe hands. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" The Holy Spirit is still to the front; the eternal purpose of God to set his King upon the throne, and to make Jesus Christ reign for ever and ever, must be fulfilled, for the Holy Ghost has undertaken to see it accomplished. Amidst the surging tumults of the battle, the result of the conflict is never in doubt for a moment. It may seem as though the fate of Christ's cause hung in a balance, and that the scales were in equilibrium; but it is not so. The glory of Christ never wanes; it must increase from day to day, as it is made known in the hearts of men by the Holy Spirit; and the day shall come when Christ's praise shall go up from all human tongues. To him every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Therefore, lift up the hands that hang down, and confirm the feeble knees. If you have failed to glorify Christ by your speech as you would, there is another who has done it, and who will still do it, according to Christ's words, "He shall glorify me." My text seems to be a silver bell, ringing sweet comfort into the dispirited worker's ear, "He shall glorify me."

That is the first point, the Holy Spirit is our Lord's Glorifier. Keep that truth before your mind's eye under all circumstances.

II. Now, secondly, Christ's own things are his best glory. When the Holy Spirit wants to glorify Christ, what does he do? He does not go abroad for anything, he comes to Christ himself for that which will be for Christ's own glory: "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." There can be no glory added to Christ; it must be his own glory, which he has already, which is made more apparent to the hearts of God's chosen by the Holy Spirit.

First of all, Christ needs no new inventions to glorify him. "We have struck out a new line of things," says one. Have you? "We have found out something very wonderful." I dare say you have; but Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, wants none of your inventions, or discoveries, or additions to his truth. A plain Christ is ever the loveliest Christ. Dress him up, and you have deformed him and de-

famed him. Bring him out just as he is, the Christ of God, nothing else but Christ, unless you bring in his cross, for we preach Christ crucified; indeed, you cannot have the Christ without the cross; but preach Christ crucified, and you have given him all the glory that he wants. The Holy Ghost does not reveal in these last times any fresh ordinances, or any doctrines, or any new evolutions; but he simply brings to mind the things which Christ himself spoke, he brings Christ's own things to us, and in that way glorifies him.

Think for a minute of Christ's person as revealed to us by the Holy Spirit. What can more glorify him than for us to see his person, very God of very God, and yet as truly man? What a wondrous being, as human as ourselves, but as divine as God! Was there ever another like to him? Never.

Think of his incarnation, his birth at Bethlehem. There was greater glory among the oxen in the stall than ever was seen where those born in marble halls were swathed in purple and fine linen. Was there ever another babe like Christ? Never. I wonder not that the wise men fell down to worship him.

Look at his life, the standing wonder of all ages. Men, who have not worshipped him, have admired him. His life is incomparable, unique; there is nothing like it in all the history of mankind. Imagination has never been able to invent anything approximating to the perfect beauty of the life of Jesus Christ.

Think of his death. There have been many heroic and martyr deaths; but there is not one that can be set side by side with Christ's death. He did not pay the debt of nature as others do; and yet he paid our nature's debt. He did not die because he must; he died because he would. The only "must" that came upon him was a necessity of all-conquering love. The Cross of Christ is the greatest wonder of fact or of fiction; fiction invents many marvellous things, but nothing than can be looked at for a moment in comparison with the cross of Christ.

Think of our Lord's resurrection. If this be one of the things that are taken, and shown to you by the Holy Spirit, it will fill you with holy delight. I am sure that I could go into that sepulchre, where John and Peter went, and spend a lifetime in reverencing him who broke down the barriers of the tomb, and made it a passage-way to heaven. Instead of being a dungeon and a cul-de-sac, into which all men seemed to go, but none could ever come out, Christ has, by his resurrection, made a tunnel right through the grave. Jesus, by dying, has killed death for all believers.

Then think of his Ascension. But why need I take you over all these scenes with which you are blessedly familiar? What a wondrous fact that, when the cloud received him out of the disciples' sight, the angels came to convoy him to his heavenly home!

"They brought his chariot from above

To bear him to his throne;
Clapp'd their triumphant wings, and cried,

"The glorious work is done."
Think of him now, at his Fa-

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
AUGUST 4, 1990
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APPRECIATED LETTERS

Dear Brother Wilson:

I'm still enjoying my January 6th Baptist Examiner. They are always food for my soul.... A sister in Christ,

Katie Sparks,
Vanceburg, Kentucky

Dear Brother Wilson:

Enclosed is a check for the renewal of The Baptist Examiner. We really enjoy the paper...thank you again for TBE. We love it so much. May the Lord richly bless and keep you. Love in Christ,

C. E. & Leila Wilson, Florida

Thank you for The Baptist Examiner. I have received many blessings through the years. A check for \$..... is enclosed.

Robert Bourn, West Virginia

Brother Wilson:

We enjoy the tapes and the paper. May the Lord bless the work there. The enclosed check is for use, as it please Him, in His work. May the Lord bless all at Calvary.

Brother Alvin Howell,
Tennessee

Dear Brother Wilson:

The Calvary Missionary Baptist Church here in Springfield, Oregon has voted to send \$.... a month to be used in the publishing of The Baptist Examiner. We feel this is supporting missionary work in teaching and preaching the gospel of Christ.

Meldon Roseberry

Brother Wilson:

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

Elder James Hamric,
Ellaville, Ga.

CLOSED VERSUS ECUMENICAL COMMUNION

Churches, which believe in being born again, usually practice some kind of a restricted communion or Lord's supper. They differ only in the degree to which their table is restricted. Some draw the line at the salvation experience; some draw the line denominationally or by church affiliation; some require scriptural baptism. Others, in addition to the above, require "membership" (in good standing) in the church offering the supper (closed communion). We offer the following scriptural rationale for the latter position. We trust that gainsayers, who disagree with us, will not just disagree but offer some sort of scripturally based argument to their "ecumenical" or open or close communion position (instead of the usual sentimental objections).

The Church, A Sovereign Body
"Tell it on to the church... whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven..." (Matthew 18:16-18).

The local church body has been given authority (and responsibility), by Christ himself, to make whatever rules that are necessary to advance the Lord's best interests and to protect itself from wolves. A church has the right to receive, reject, and to refuse who and whatever they will if these decisions do not conflict with either the letter or the principle of the scriptures. Most Baptist church covenants state that they do "...enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ..." These covenants refer to a local church body, rather than to a mystical, invisible body, as did the Corinthian church that was told that it was "the" body of Christ and not merely part of the body (I Cor. 12:27). Baptists, who believe otherwise, should either honor or discard such covenants. There is only one body (Eph. 4:4), the local church body, a body that must give account to its Lord and Head!

Ordinance Eligibility
"...when a stranger... will keep the passover... let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it... no uncircumcised person shall eat..." (Ex. 12:48).

Certain requirements must be met, in both Testaments, before one is eligible to participate in its respective ordinances. One such O.T. example, the ordinance of the passover, was prohibited to strangers until they were circumcised (including a grandfather who might be visiting). In the case of the N.T. ordinance of the Lord's Supper, only saved and baptized members (of the church offering the supper) are eligible. Even members, under certain circumstances, may be prohibited. We realize that non-Baptists and Interdenominational Baptists object to this, but let us examine the principles and demands of scripture.

Closed to the Unsaved
"...ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils..." (I

Corinthians 10:20, 21).

Most fundamentalist type Christians, despite their church affiliations, would concede that communion should be withheld from the unsaved (even their own children) to avoid mixing the Lord's table with the devil's table.

Closed to Public Sinners
"...not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator... with such... no not to eat..." (I Corinthians 5:11).

Most fundamentalist brethren would even go as far as agreeing that the church should try to police itself of corruption and immorality by refusing the Lord's supper to those guilty of known public sin even if they are brothers and members.

Closed to Division
"When ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you... there must be also heresies among you... When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper..." (I Cor. 11:18-20).

Many Interdenominationalists and Interdenominational Baptists would be divided on this point. Some would insist that heretics such as Catholics and JW's should be refused; some would prohibit Charismatics; some would insist that brothers and sisters in the Lord should not be refused even if they differed with the church on eternal security or baptism. Nevertheless, the Scriptures make it plain that heresy, rebellion, or divisions, or differences, within the church's own membership, voids the Lord's supper. Differences and divisions from another church would but amplify such a nullification rather than diminish it.

A simple procedure for the elimination of heresy, division, and rebellion from the Lord's table might be to announce that those who belong to warring factions or to those who oppose or disagree with the church's doctrines, constitution, or by-laws, church covenant, or decision of the church, etc., are not invited to the supper and announce to partake is to do so at the expense of disobedience to the Scriptures (right or wrong). The very opposition to closed communion, if a church employs it, constitutes division, therefore, disqualifying such opposition from the supper. When you examine yourself, check if you are a rebel who shouldn't partake.

Closed to Disobedient Saints
"If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (II Thess. 3:14, 15).

Many fundamentalists will object to this Scripture. They will want to know, "Where is the line? Are any of us perfect? Should we not be straining at gnats on insignificant things?" We maintain that the principle is clear. When a person, group or church willfully oppose the Word on anything, they are rebels. It is up to the individual sovereign churches to decide what is insignificant and what is not and not their free-lance detractors.

Closed to Undisciplinables
"...with such... no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that

are without (non-members)? ...Do not ye judge them that are within (members)..." (I Corinthians 5:11, 12).

The fornicating brother of I Corinthians 5 had to be a member of the Corinthian church in order to be judged or be disciplined by that church. You just don't go around disciplining other church's members (unless you are Catholic). We should judge them that are "within," but we are out of bounds when we seek to discipline them that are "without." Nevertheless, there are some who would return us to the days of the Spanish Inquisition and the Salem witch trials where it was legal to both prosecute and persecute those who were not members of the church. Either non-member fornicators and such must be allowed to participate in our communion, while our member fornicators are prohibited from the supper, or we must exclude all non-member participation, for we are not permitted to judge non-members.

Communion Closed to Type-Breakers

"...the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ (Corinthian local church)?" I Cor. 10:16. "For we being many are one bread, and one body..." (I Cor. 10:16, 17). "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" (I Cor. 6:15).

Tampering with God's type is a serious business. A man, in the Old testament, was struck dead for merely touching the Ark of the Covenant. Moses was denied entrance into the promise land for striking the rock twice. The tabernacle and the temple were to be built to the exact specifications. Yet, there are those who think less of the New testament building, the local church, Christ's body on earth. Just as the tabernacle typified Christ's temporary body, and the temple typified Christ's permanent body, the local church typifies Christ's functioning body as outlined in I Corinthians 12. All three are concrete, visible, tangible, and organized! We will have none of this invisible, mystical, universal body nonsense. It is our bodies that are members of Christ! Non-members may indeed be able to remember the Lord's broken body, still, they disrupt and distort the type of the Lord's unified, organized, functioning body coming together in union (communion), in one place, as one bread and one body!

Objections
The only objections that even pretend to use Scripture, that we know about, in answer to closed communion are, 1. "It is the Lord's table, not the church's table." 2. "A man is to examine himself and not others."

To follow this line of reasoning, imagine opening up business meetings to all Christians despite their membership or affiliation, because it is the Lord's business meeting and not the church's (You think Baptists have wild business meetings now? Wow!).

Yes, a man is to examine himself but only after the other requirements have been taken care of as we have outlined in I Corinthians 5:11, 12; 11:18-20; 10:16, 17 with Eph. 4:4; II Thess. 3:14, 15.

Compromise
There is a compromise position afloat today called close

communion, which advocates offering the table to Baptists only. Obviously, this raises the question concerning Free Will Baptists, Seventh day Baptists, Holy Ghost Baptists, Modernist Baptists, Billy Graham, Norman Vincent Peale, Harry Truman (cussin' Baptists), etc. All Baptists! Of course, there is the same amount of Scripture available to prove close communion as there is to prove open communion. Zilch! None! Close communion would open the door for all Baptists to get together and even hold combined communion services. After all, the only thing that would change would be the quantity of Baptists participating. What's a few more going to matter?

Conclusion
Closed communion has a Scriptural basis. Open or close or ecumenical communion does not have a shed of scripture to stand. Closed communion helps a church to preserve and protect its unity and identity as a true church and to dissociate itself from both the denominational hierarchies and renegade movements of our day.

HOLY

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ther's right hand, adored of all the heavenly host; and then let your mind fly forward to the glory of his Second Advent, the final judgment with its terrible terrors, the millennium with its indescribable bliss, and the heaven of heavens, with its endless and unparalleled splendor. If these things are shown to you by the Holy Spirit, the beatific vision will indeed glorify Christ, and you will sit down, and sing with the blessed Virgin, "My soul doth imaginify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."

Thus, you see that the things which glorify Christ are all in Christ; the Holy Spirit fetches nothing from abroad, but he takes of the things of Christ, and shows them unto us. The glory of kings lies in their silver and their gold, their silk and their gems; but the glory of Christ lies in himself. If we want to glorify a man, we bring him presents; if we wish to glorify Christ, we must accept presents from him. Thus we take the cup of salvation, calling upon the name of the Lord, and in so doing we glorify Christ.

Notice, next, that these things of Christ's are too bright for us to see till the Spirit shows them to us. We cannot see them because of their excessive glory, until the Holy Spirit tenderly reveals them to us until he takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to us.

What does this mean? Does it not mean, first, that he enlightens our understandings? It is wonderful how the Holy Spirit can take a fool, and make him know the wonders of Christ's dying love; and he does make him know it very quickly when he begins to teach him. Some of us have been very slow learners, yet the Holy Spirit has been able to teach something even to us. He opens the Scriptures, and he also opens our minds; and when there are these two openings together, what a wonderful opening it is! It becomes like a new revelation; the first is the revelation of the letter, which we have in the Book; the second is the revelation of the Spirit, which we get in our

own spirit. O my dear friend, if the Holy Ghost has ever enlightened your understanding, you know what it is for him to show the things of Christ to you!

But next, he does this by a work upon the whole soul. I mean this. When the Holy Ghost convinces us of sin, we become fitted to see Christ, and so the blessed Spirit shows Christ to us. When we are conscious of our feebleness, then we see Christ's strength; and thus the Holy Ghost shows him to us. Often, the operations of the Spirit of God may seem not to be directly the showing of Christ to us, but as they prepare us for seeing him, they are a part of the work.

The Holy Ghost sometimes shows Christ to us by his power of vivifying the truth. I do not know whether I can quite tell you what I mean; but I have sometimes seen a truth differently from what I have ever seen it before. I knew it long ago, I owned it as part of the divine revelation; but now I realize it, grip it, grasp it, or what is better, it seems to get a grip of me, and hold me in its mighty hands. Have you not sometimes been overjoyed with a promise which never seemed anything to you before? Or a doctrine, which you believed, but never fully appreciated, has suddenly become to you a gem of the first water, a very Koh-i-Noor, or, "Mountain of Light." The Holy Spirit has a way of focusing light, and when it falls in this special way upon a certain point, then the truth is revealed to us. He shall take of the things of Christ, and show them unto you. Have you never felt ready to jump for joy, ready to start from your seat, ready to sit up in your bed at night, and sing praises to God through the overpowering influence of some grand old truth which has seemed to be all at once quite new to you?

The Holy Spirit also shows to us the things of Christ in our experience. As we journey on in life, we pass up hill and down dale, through bright sunlight and through dark shadows, and in each of these conditions we learn a little more of Christ, a little more of his grace, a little more of his glory, a little more of his sin-bearing, a little more of his glorious righteousness. Blessed is the lift which is just one long lesson upon the glory of Christ; and I think that is what every Christian life should be. "Every dark and bending line" in our experience should meet in the center of Christ's glory, and should lead us nearer and nearer to the power of enjoying the bliss at his right hand, for ever and ever. Thus the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to us, and so glorifies Christ.

Beloved, the practical lesson for us to learn is this, let us try to abide under the influence of the Holy Spirit. To that end, let us think very reverently of him. Some never think of him at all. How many sermons there are without even an allusion to him! Shame on the preachers of such discourses! If any hearers come without praying for the Holy Spirit, shame on such hearers! We know and we confess that he is everything to our spiritual life; then why do we not remember him with greater love, and worship him with greater honour, and think of him continually with greater reverence? Beware of committing the sin against the Holy Ghost. If any of you feel

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HOLY

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any gentle touches of his power when you are hearing a sermon, beware lest you harden your heart against it. Whenever the sacred fire comes as but a spark, quench not the Holy Spirit, but pray that the spark may become a flame. And you, Christian people, do cry to him that you may not read your Bibles without his light. Do not pray without being helped by the Spirit; above all, I may you never preach without the Holy Spirit! It seems a pity when a man asks to be guided of the Spirit in his preaching, and then pulls out a manuscript, and reads it. The Holy Spirit may bless what he reads; but he cannot very well guide him when he has tied himself down to what he has written. And it will be the same with the speaker if he only repeats what he has learnt, and leaves no room for the Spirit to give him a new thought, a fresh revelation of Christ; how can he hope for the divine blessing under such circumstances? Oh, it were better for us to sit still until some of us were moved by the Spirit to get up and speak, than for us to prescribe the methods by which he should speak to us, and even to write down the very words we mean to utter! What room is there for the Spirit's operations then? "Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove," I cannot help breaking out into that prayer, "Blessed Spirit, abide with us, take of the things of Christ; and show them to us, that so Christ may be glorified."

III. I am only going to speak a minute or two on the last point. It is a very deep one, much too deep for me. I am unable to take you into the depths of my text, I will not pretend to do so; I believe that there are meanings here which probably we shall never

understand till we get to heaven. "What thou knowest not now, thou shalt know hereafter." But this is the point, Christ's glory is his Father's glory: "All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

First, Christ has all that the Father has. Do think of that. No mere man dares to say, "All things that the Father hath are mine." All the Godhead is in Christ; not only all the attributes of it, but the essence of it. The Nicene Creed well puts it, and it is not too strong in the expression: "Light of Light, very God of very God," for Christ has all that the Father has. When we come to Christ, we come to omnipotent omnipresent omniscience; we come to almighty immutability; we come, in fact, to the eternal Godhead. The Father has all things, and all power is given unto Christ in heaven and on earth, so that he has all that the Father has.

And, further, the Father is glorified in Christ's glory. Never let us fall into the false notion that, if we magnify Christ, we are depreciating the Father. If any lips have ever spoken concerning the Christ of God so as to depreciate the God of Christ, let those lips be covered with shame. We never did preach Christ up as merciful, and the Father as only just, or Christ as moving the Father to be gracious. That is a slander which has been cast upon us, but there is not an atom of truth in it. We have known and believed what Christ himself said, "I and my Father are one." The more glorious Christ is, the more glorious the Father is; and when men, professedly Christians, begin to cast off Christ, they cast off God the Father to a large extent. Irreverence to the Son of God soon becomes irreverence to God the Father himself. But, dear

friends, we delight to honour Christ, and we will continue to do so. Even when we stand in the heaven of heavens, before the burning throne of the infinite Jehovah, we will sing praises unto him and unto the Lamb, putting the two evermore in that divine conjunction in which they are always to be found.

Thus, you see, Christ has all that the Father has, and when he is glorified, the Father also is glorified.

Next, the Holy spirit must lead us to see this, and I am sure that he will. If we give ourselves up to his teaching, we shall fall into no errors. It will be a great mystery, but we shall know enough, so that it will never trouble us. If you sit down and try to study the mystery of the Eternal, well, I believe that the longer you look, the more you will be like persons who look into the sea from a great height, until they grow dizzy, and are ready to fall and to be drowned. Believe what the Spirit teaches you, and adore your Divine Teacher; then shall his instruction become easy to you. I believe that, as we grow older, we come to worship God as Abraham did, as Jehovah, the great I AM. Jesus does not fade into the background; but the glorious Godhead seems to become more and more apparent to us. Our Lord's word to his disciples, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," as we grow older, seems to turn into this, "Ye believe in me, believe also in God." And as we come to a full confidence in the glorious Lord, the God of nature, and of providence, and of redemption, and of heaven, the Holy Spirit gives us to know more of the glories of Christ.

I have talked with you as well as I could upon this sublime theme, and if I did not know that the Holy Spirit can take what I have said out of my very heart, and can put it into your hearts, and he can do to it whatever I have omitted. "Go ye who love the Lord, and glorify him. Try to do it by your lips and by your lives. Go ye, and preach him, preach more of him, and preach him up higher, and higher, and higher. The old lady, of whom I have heard, made a mistake in what she said, yet there was a truth behind her blunder. She had been to a little Baptist chapel, where a high Calvinist preached, and on coming away she said that she liked "High Calvary" preachers best. So do I. Give me a "High Calvary" preacher, one who will make Calvary the highest of all the mountains. I suppose it was not a hill at all, but only a mound; still, let us lift it higher and higher, and say to all other hills, "Why leap ye, ye high hills? This is the hill which God desires to dwell in; yea, the Lord will dwell in it forever." The crucified Christ is wiser than all the wisdom of the world. The cross of Christ has more novelty in it than all the fresh things of the earth. O believers and preachers of the gospel, glorify Christ! May the Holy Ghost help you to do so!

And you, poor sinners, who think that you cannot glorify Christ at all, come and trust him,-- "Come naked, and come filthy, come just as you are," and believe that he will receive you; for that will glorify him. Believe, even now, O sinner at death's door, that Christ can make thee live; for thy faith will glorify him! Look up out of the awful depths of hell into which con-

science has cast thee, and believe that he can pluck thee out of the horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and set thy feet upon a rock; for thy trust will glorify him! It is in the power of the sinner to give Christ the greatest glory, if the Holy Spirit enables him to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Thou mayest come, thou who art more leprous, more diseased, more corrupt, than any other; and if thou lookest to him, and he saves thee, oh, then thou wilt praise him! You will be of the mind of the one I have spoken of many times, who said to me, "Sir, you say that Christ can save me. Well, if he does, he shall never hear the last of it." No, and he never will hear the last of it. Blessed Jesus, --

"I will love thee in life, I will love thee in death,

And praise thee as long as thou lendest me breath;

And say when the death-dew lies cold on my brow,

If ever I loved thee, my Jesus, 'tis now."

"In mansions of glory and endless delight,

I'll ever adore thee in heaven so bright;

I'll sing with the glittering crown on my brow,

If ever I loved thee, my Jesus, 'tis now."

We will do nothing else but praise Christ, and glorify him, if he will but save us from sin. God grant that it may be so with every one of us, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake! Amen.

SIN

(Continued from Page 1)

new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. 5:9). "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). "...the son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

Reader, God's justice and love are both shown in the Saviour dying for our sins.

Substitution is the only way of salvation when justice and love are both considered. It was God's justice that made it necessary for Christ to die for our sins. "...even so must the Son of man be lifted up" (John 3:14). "...that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26).

And it was God's love that sent Him to die for our sins, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son..." (John 3:16).

What you, reader, ought to desire to know, is simply God's way. The Scriptures at the beginning show clearly that the sinner's only escape from the just punishment of his sins lies in Jesus dying in his place to set him free from the just penalty due his sins; and they make it plain that this settles the full penalty for all sin.

The Innocent for the Guilty

But the objection is raised and pressed with all the force of hu-

man ingenuity and scholarship, backed by the prestige of some occupying the highest position in the literary and theological institutions, that it is morally wrong for the innocent to suffer the penalty of the guilty. Let us face this objection honestly and earnestly, for our eternal destiny turns on this one point. Is it morally wrong for the innocent to bear the sins of the guilty?

In the first place it is not morally wrong, because God would not do anything morally wrong, and God did let the innocent suffer the penalty of the guilty. The language of Scripture teaching that Jesus suffered the penalty of our sins for us is plain and simple, and all efforts to take from the Scripture language its simple, plain, natural meaning are pitiable, and if contempt were ever justifiable, would deserve the contempt of all honest men. Let the reader go back and read the Scriptures at the head of this article and decide for himself as to their obvious, intended meaning.

Now, because God's Word tells us plainly that God gave His only begotten Son, that He might be just, and thus the justifier of him who believes in Jesus, that Christ died for our sins, that He gave Himself for our sins, the just for the unjust--it is right for the innocent to suffer the penalty of the guilty. To any honest, candid man, which is the correct way to reason? This thing is wrong; God did this thing; therefore, God did wrong? or, God does right; God did send Christ, the innocent, to suffer and die for our sins, to redeem from all iniquity; therefore it is right for the innocent to suffer the penalty of the guilty?

Nor is Christ suffering as our substitute the great exception, as some timid ones have granted. It is in line with God's plan with men; it is in line with the best and noblest there is in man; and the opposite teaching, that it is wrong to let the innocent bear the penalty of the guilty, is not only wrong, but horrible and the extreme of heartlessness. Two men passing along the street at night hear groaning in the gutter; striking a match, they see two men lying in the gutter with their faces all gashed and bleeding. In a drunken street fight they have almost killed each other. Who did the sinning? Those two men lying in the gutter; they deserve to suffer the penalty of their sinning. But these other two men join hands, pay a physician a nurse and the hospital bill. In principle that is the innocent paying the penalty of the guilty. To say that this is wrong would mean to condemn the community to pass by day after day and see those ghastly, festering wounds, those parched lips and bloodshot eyes, and to listen to those dying groans. And yet in principle that is exactly what those demand for this sinful, sin-injured human race when they say that it is morally wrong for Jesus the Saviour to suffer the penalty of our sins.

A son becomes a drunkard; his drunkenness and debauchery utterly wreck his health. Some night the father finds his drunken son down in the street, a helpless invalid. The son did the sinning;

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CAN YOU IMAGINE THIS?

The world getting better?

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (II Tim.3:13). And, just open your eyes and look around you.

SIN

(Continued from Page 11)

he deserves to suffer the penalty of his sins; but the father takes him to his home and cares for him and supports him. In principle that is the innocent bearing the penalty of the guilty. To say that this is morally wrong would be to condemn that father to pass by day after day and see his son suffering the just consequences of his sin, to see him slowly starving to death, to see him gasping in death, and not be allowed to come to the rescue. Yet when men object to Christ bearing the penalty of the sinner's sins they are, in principle, taking that stand; for in principle, Jesus, dying for our sins, did what the father did with the son.

A prominent woman in America was dying from lack of blood; back of it somewhere was violation of some law of God, some law of health. Her noble husband has the surgeon join their arteries, and every beat of his noble heart drove his well blood into the body of his dying wife, and he saved her life. These objectors praise that act; they see nothing morally wrong in it. Yet when Jesus, in principle, did the same thing for sinners in order to save them, these same men, with a haughty, scornful tone, say that it is morally wrong for the innocent to suffer in place of the guilty. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?..." (Rom. 9:20).

Had the objectors said that it was wrong to force the innocent to suffer the penalty of the guilty, that would have been true, but Jesus was not forced. Listen to Him, John 10:17,18: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again..."

Christ Died For The Purpose of Redeeming Sinners

Nor is Christ dying for our sins, as taught by the Scriptures, a makeshift, but, rather, a real, full redemption, ransom. Just as a captain can honorably, honestly be given in an exchange of prisoners; just as a diamond can redeem a debt of many dollars; just as one man is allowed to pay another's debt; just as one man is allowed to pay another's fine in a courtroom; so our Lord and Saviour "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity."

Hence, that awful cry, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He was in the sinner's place, suffering the sinner's penalty for sin. "For he hath made him to be sin for us..." (II Cor. 5:21).

Instead of proudly cavilling and warping and trying to avoid the simple, plain meaning of God's

Word, should you not rather, reader, bow in reverence before such love, realize that it was for you, yes, you, and that through His suffering and in no other way, you may escape the just punishment of your sins and spend eternity in heaven?

The world weeps over the story of the noble fireman who gave his life to rescue a little girl from a burning building, but it coldly scorns and proudly rejects salvation through the redemption of Jesus the Christ. Oh, the pride and wickedness of the human heart! Be not you, reader, of those who sit in the seat of the scornful, but the rather of those who at the last day will sing: Revelation 5:9, "...Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."

God Punished Our Sins in Christ Let us consider carefully what it really means when we are told that "...Christ died for our sins..." (I Cor. 15:3); that He "...gave himself for our sins..." (Gal. 1:4); that "...his own self bare our sins in his own body upon the tree..." I Peter 2:24; that "...Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust..." (I Peter 3:18).

God's Word explains it clearly: "...that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). "That he might be just." Notice it carefully, "that he might be just." Take it in its full meaning, "that he might be just." A question: How could God be just and justify any sinner apart from the fact that "Christ died for our sins," and "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all"? Reader, no man, however learned, will ever answer that question. He may sneer; he may cavil; he may warp, he may try to confuse; but he will never come out in the open and answer that question. He may say that it is morally wrong for the innocent to bear the penalty of the guilty, but that objection is met and answered above in this article.

Let us face a trilemma: three, and only three plans, were possible for God with man---

First, to have been just with man, without any love or mercy; hence, for every sinner to have suffered the just penalty for his sins, without any redemption. That would have meant hell for every responsible human being, without any heaven at all.

Second, to have been all mercy and all love and no justice. That would have meant no moral laws; for why have moral laws, if there would be no penalty, no justice? That would have meant a premium on crime. That would have meant the debased, the debauched, the immoral, the drunken, the fiend, on a level with the chaste, the pure, the upright, the true. That would have meant unbridled rein to passion and lust and every other evil in-

clination, and no penalty following. That would have meant hell in trying to get rid of hell.

Third, there was left but one other possible plan to be just and at the same time extend love to the sinners. In the nature of the case, real redemption, without any makeshift, was the only way this could be done. "...even so must the Son of man be lifted up" (John 3:14). "...that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son..." (John 3:16). "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (I John 4:10).

This leads to another question: How can God be just and not justify "Him that hath faith in Jesus"? Again men may quibble and warp, and ridicule, but no one will ever answer the question. And the reason why this question will never be answered leads to another question: From how many of His sins is the one "that hath faith in Jesus" justified? We have now gotten to the very center of the whole problem of salvation. Let us give it most careful consideration.

Christ Died For All Our Sins

In not one of the Scriptures cited at the head of this article is there one word that limits the number of sins for which Christ died, or from which the believer is justified. That of itself is sufficient warrant for us to conclude that Christ died for all of the sins of the believer, that when he "gave himself for our sins" (Gal. 1:4), it included all of our sins, and that the believer is justified from all of his sins.

One man promises another that he will pay his debts. That of itself means all of his debts, unless the one making the promise was simply juggling with words. While this of itself would be sufficient, God in His Word has made it positive and absolute as to how many of the believer's sins were laid on Christ; "...the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6); for how many of our sins Christ died (I Cor. 15:3); from how many of his sins the believer is justified (Rom. 3:26).

In Leviticus 16:21,22 God gives us a picture, foreshadowing the Saviour, of laying the sins on the substitute: "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities..." "...Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

But how many of our sins? Let God's Word answer: Titus 2:13,14, "...our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity..."

Look at it again, reader; grasp its full meaning; let it be impressed indelibly upon your soul.

Then as certainly as the believer is redeemed by Him, he is

redeemed from all iniquity; and as certainly as he is redeemed from all iniquity, that certainly the believer is going to heaven, for there is nothing left that can cause him to be lost. Hence God, through Paul, has told us "...by him all that believe are justified from all things..." (Acts 13:39).

If our Saviour Jesus Christ gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, how can God be just and not justify every one that believes from all things? And if the believer is justified from all things, he is certain to go to heaven. This is God's plan; this is God's will; "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10:10). "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14). "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:12)-

Hence Jesus said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

While thus is manifested God's justice, and the only way that God could be "just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26), for Jesus Himself said it (John 3:14); let the reader not forget that is equally manifests God's love, and the Saviour's love (I John 4:10).

"...the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20), how infinitely more amazing is the love when we see that it has obtained

eternal redemption for us (Heb. 9:12); that it has redeemed us from all iniquity (Titus 2:14); and that everyone that believes is justified from all things (Acts 13:39)?

Reader, the greatest crime that is ever committed on this earth is to reject this so great salvation (Heb. 2:3); this redemption from all iniquity (Titus 2:14), and to trifle with the amazing love that provided a way by which He Himself might be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus (Rom. 3:26).

We shudder at the horrible crimes reported in the daily papers, at those recorded in history, but far greater, far blacker, more terrible, is the crime of a human being rejecting this great provision of God's love. Only intellectual pride, religious prejudice family or race ties, love of the world, or secret sin, can be the cause of the reader taking such a fatal step; and fearful will be the consequences of letting any one of these cause the rejection of the only salvation that God's love and justice could provide.

The reader cannot plead that God has not given sufficient proof that He has given us a revelation in His Word; nor can he plead that God's Word does not make the message plain. It is a solemn and awful step, readers, one never to be retracted, to decide to reject this salvation, and to go out into the dark, unending future beyond the grave, unredeemed from iniquity, with no certain hope, when God has warned you, "...without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). It is an awful eternal crisis, when you see God's only provision for you, so complete, so perfect, so sure, and then face His warning, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life..." (Deut. 30:19).

ANNOUNCEMENT

I am often asked about a place that binds books and Bibles. I can highly recommend the work mentioned in this announcement.

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II SAMUEL 23:5

With David's Lord and ours, a covenant once was made, Whose bonds are firm and sure, whose glories never fade, Signed by the sacred Three-in-One, in love ere time begun, Firm as the lasting hills, this covenant shall endure, Whose potent SHALLS and WILLS make every blessing sure;

And in this covenant thou shalt view sufficient grace to see thee through.

John Kent, 1803

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church at 1117 North Tremble Road in Mansfield, Ohio will be having a Bible Conference August 18 and 19. Services will begin at 10 a.m. on Saturday and conclude at noon on Sunday. The church will provide noon and evening meals. Scheduled speakers are Dan Phillips, Oscar Mink, Sam Wilson, Joe Wilson, Bill Younger, Kenneth Long and Steve Cornette. For further information contact Pastor James Walters at 419-756-0775.