

MISSIONARY PREMILLINIAL BIBLICAL BAPTISTIC

The Baptist Examiner

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Paid Circulation in All States and in Many Foreign Countries

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

VOL. 62, NO. 17

ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, AUGUST 18, 1990 WHOLE NUMBER 2590

STUDIES IN PHILIPPIANS

by C.T. Everman
INTRODUCTION

As we begin our study of this letter written by the apostle Paul, while a prisoner in Rome, to the church at Philippi, we need to go back and review something about that church. This church was started by Paul on his second missionary journey. In Acts sixteen we find the account given of Paul's experiences in Philippi. After Paul, along with Silas, had visited the churches which had been established on his first missionary journey, he decided to go to the east into Asia, but the Holy Spirit stopped him. In a vision he saw a man of Macedonia saying, "Come over into Macedonia and help us. And after he had seen the vision immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel

unto them" On landing in Macedonia, Paul went to the city of Philippi where he found some women having a prayer meeting out by the river side. There he preached unto them and a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, "heard us: whose heart the Lord opened." The second convert was a poor slave



C.T. EVERMAN

girl, from whom Paul cast out demons. As a result of this, the masters of the slave girl, seeing their source of income gone, as

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THE NEW RELATION

by T. T. Martin

"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (Rom. 3:19). "...ye are not under the law..." (Rom. 6:14). "...the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:24-26). "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To re-

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THE KIND OF CHURCH THAT GLORIFIES THE ALMIGHTY GOD

by Willard Pyle

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light" (I Peter 2:9).

There need not be any doubt on this subject because the Word of God is full of precepts and examples that tell us vividly and accurately the kind of church that



Willard Pyle

glorifies God. May the God of all grace grant us churches of this caliber! We need to place the professing New Testament churches of our day and time on the divine scales of Almighty God and see them weighed in the balances to find out if they are wanting, or if they are truly His

churches.

I am afraid there are many dead flies in the ointment when it comes to professing missionary Baptist churches. There are sins which do so easily beset us, and out of our own midst have men arisen to sow the seeds of discord and disbelief.

Yes, we need to take heed to ourselves and to the doctrine, for in doing this we shall both save ourselves and them that hear us. Preachers, we need to take heed to the flock of God over which the Holy Spirit has made us the overseer, and to feed the church of God which He has purchased with His own blood. How the admonition to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" applies to our subject! If God had to reprimand one of His apostles and say "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men," how much must this be true of many a Baptist church in our day and time.

We live in a modernistic and materialistic world when it comes to church life. How sad we are

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HOW TO BE A BETTER BAPTIST

by Aaron West

"And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith" (Luke 17:5). This message is not going to be dealing with what a Baptist is but how to be a better Baptist. Every Baptist should want to be better. They should want to be the best they can be. There are some things that one must realize to become a better Baptist.

The first thing a Baptist must realize is the need or needs for being better. If we say that we need no improvement, then we definitely have a problem. There is indeed a need to be a better Baptist. Let us notice some of those needs. We need love. Oh, how we need love. Love for the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. But wait, let me back up. We need more love for Christ, right? Yes indeed, we need more love for Christ. I would say that that

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STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF PAUL - I

by John R. Gilpin

"For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription. TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you" (Acts 17:23). "For our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29).

May I say by way of preface that I believe in a God of power. The God of the Apostle Paul in fact, the God of the whole Bible - the God I reverence and worship and preach to you, is a God of power.

I think too many folk have a god that is about the size you can



JOHN R. GILPIN, SR.
(NOW IN GLORY)

put in a peanut shell. As a person carries a rabbit's foot around and gets it out and looks at it under adverse circumstances, a lot of people drag their god out when they have some little problem to come up in their life that is a little bit bigger than they can handle themselves. I am afraid the majority of people have a conception of God that certainly degrades Him, humanizes Him and makes Him a man rather than a Being who is absolute in every respect.

In the book of Psalms we find the Psalmist says that is a fallacy

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GOD'S COMMISSION TO JONAH

by John M. Alber

"Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me" (Jonah 1:1-2). Again, the call of God came as found in chapter three where we have these words, "And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great



John Alber

city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee" (Jonah 3:1-2).

When our God calls one into the gospel ministry as such, that call is often sudden and unexpected by the one that our God is calling. If you would go back and look into the Bible, both the Old and the New Testaments, you will notice that when God called a person into the ministry they were not looking for that call from God. Moses was busy

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

THE JUST JUSTIFIER

"To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). Read Romans 3:23-31.

With the doctrine of justification true Christianity stands or falls. Every true revival in this church age has been connected with this doctrine. A multitude of sermons have been preached on justification. Many books have been written on this subject. Romans, inspired of God, is of

course the greatest book on this subject.

Notice the following very carefully. 1. Every man must meet God. 2. Man's greatest need is a righteousness in which he can stand acceptable to God, approved in God's sight. 3. Man does not have and cannot produce such a righteousness. 4. God has provided such a righteousness in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. If you understand these things, you have progressed far in spiritual and Biblical truth, and you will have a pretty good un-

derstanding of the main message of Romans.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith..." (Rom. 1:16-17). Study this Scripture carefully. Note this: the saving power of the gospel lies in the

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The Baptist Examiner

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Owned, authorized and published by Calvary Baptist Church, Ashland, Ky.
Editorial Department, located in ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, where all subscriptions and communications should be sent. Address: P.O. Box 60, Zip Code 41105-0060.

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

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

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

JUST

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fact that therein a saving righteousness has been provided.

Romans 1:16-17 constitute the theme of the book of Romans. It is God's righteousness provided for unrighteous men through Christ. Paul then shows man's need of God's righteousness by showing the unrighteousness of man. He shows that the out and out sinner of the Gentiles needs the righteousness of God. He shows that the up and out, the self righteous sinner of the Gentiles needs God's righteousness. He shows that even the Jews are unrighteous of themselves and need the righteousness of God. Paul, under inspiration, then declares in Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Until and unless you see yourself as an unrighteous, hell-deserving sinner before God; you are not yet ready to hear the blessed news of the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. Until you realize that you are included in Romans 3:23 as a sinner, you will not be ready for the glorious news of free justification through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus of Romans 3:24.

I believe in preaching the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. I believe in giving the gospel to the unsaved. But, my friend, the sinner is not ready for the gospel until he realizes his lost and undone condition. One reason more people are not being saved is because more people are not lost - lost, that is, in their own understanding. Men are "lost" by the

law, and they are saved by the gospel. I mean that the knowledge of sin is by the law of God. Sinners are not ready for salvation until they know their sin and guilt before God. Let us preach the law holy, sin black, and hell hot; and it may be that we can then preach the blessed gospel of Jesus Christ, and that convicted sinners might with joy believe the good news of the gospel. Man needs to hear the bad news of his sin and unrighteousness, of judgment and hell before he is ready for the good news of the gospel.

Notice in my text, "that he might be just." God is and always will be just. This is another way of referring to His holiness. I do not know that we should rank one attribute ahead of, or as more important than other attributes; but if I were to do this, I would place holiness as such. Holiness is essential to God being God. Read the following statement thoughtfully and carefully. Sinners do not have to



Joe Wilson

be justified, but God has to be just. God does not have to justify sinners. He could have allowed the whole race of mankind to go to hell. It was entirely up to God's sovereign will if any were to be saved, and who were to be saved. Salvation was optional with God. But, if God was going to save anyone, He must find (I speak as a man) a way to justify man and retain His own holiness in all of its being. Holiness is not optional with God. God could not choose to be unholy. God would find a way to justify man without compromising the demands of His holiness, without compromising the claims of His holy law; or He would send all men to hell. God will be just in His justification of the unrighteous, or He will not justify them.

What is justification? My friend, it is so very important that one be clear on this great doctrine. Few doctrines are more vital to a proper understanding of salvation or of the whole of the Word of God. I urge you to study the whole of the Philadelphia Confession of Faith on this subject from which I quote the first part. "Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their person as righteous; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone, not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them as their righteousness; but by imputing Christ's active obedience unto the whole law, and passive obedience in his death, for their whole and sole righteousness, the receiving, and resting on him, and his righteousness, by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God."

It may help us to contrast justification with regeneration, sanctification, and glorification. Regeneration is the giving of spiritual life, the producing of a new nature. Sanctification is the progressive development of this new life in the believer whereby he becomes more and more conformed to Christ. Glorification is the completion of that which is begun in regeneration and continued in sanctification. One is thereby conformed to the image of Christ, which was purposed in predestination in eternity past (Rom. 8:29-30). In contrast with these three, justification is the declaration by God that the believer has an eternal and perfect legal standing before God. The first three relate to the believer's actual state and condition, whereas justification relates to his standing in the sight of God. Justification is a legal term. It relates not to relationship and condition, but to legal standing before God.

Let us compare the standing and state of the believer. The state of the believer is his actual condition before the Lord. It constantly varies. It is sometimes very good, and at other times far short of what it should and could be. We are all conscious of this variation of our state in our Christian lives. The standing of the believer is always the same. It is always a perfect standing. In glorification, our state will be eternally the same as our standing now is. Our state relates to our daily Christian experience. Our standing relates to our position in Christ.

Justification involves and includes the forgiveness of sins, but is also much more than this. Justification is God's declaration concerning the believer: 1. That he stands before God as if he had never one time sinned in any way. 2. That he stands before God as if he had always lived perfectly, and was perfectly righteous. Justification is a standing before God of sinless perfection. Oh, what a blessed salvation is this!

Look at three Scriptures that have much to do with justification. "...this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jer.23:6). "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Cor.5:21). "...he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph.1:6). "The Lord our righteousness," "the righteousness of God in him," and "accepted in the beloved" are perfect descriptions of justification. Someone asked, "How good does one have to be to go to heaven?" The answer given was, "As good as God." Wow! how can that be? How can anyone go to heaven if you have to be as good as God to get there? Justification is the answer. No man is as good as God. But Jesus is God and as good as God, and we are made the righteousness of God in Him, and He is our righteousness. We have a righteousness that is as good as God, for it is the righteousness of God. What a wonderful salvation is this! It is truly amazing that our salvation is such a salvation as this, and yet it is also true that anything short of or different from this is not salvation at all. Oh, so many have low views of the wonderful

salvation that we have in Christ.

Man needs this justification. In fact, this is man's greatest need. Man is totally depraved. He is guilty before God of many, very many, sins. Oh, who can number his sins? The sins of which one is aware are but the tip of the iceberg to those sins that are hidden from his eyes. The total guilt of man's sins are a heavy burden that will drag him down to eternal burning hell unless they are forgiven. God has great wrath against sin, and is determined to punish every sin with a proper and just punishment. Man is utterly unable to atone for even one of his many sins. Man is unable to provide a righteousness that is acceptable to God. In these things lies man's great need for justification.

How can a just God justify unjust sinners? This is the question of questions. An answer to this question must be found, or no man will be justified. No man and no human religion has found an answer to this question. God has set forth the one and only answer to this question in the

blessed gospel of Jesus Christ. God cannot justify sinners on the basis of good works. A depraved sinner cannot perform even one work that is good and acceptable in God's sight, for all that man might do is defiled and contaminated by his depravity. Even man's righteousnesses are filthy rags in God's sight (Isa. 64:6). Man not only cannot perform enough good works to earn salvation; he cannot even perform one good work. If a man could stop sinning now, and perform good works the rest of his life; those good works would not atone for the sins of the past. The way of salvation by works is forever barricaded by the depravity of man.

God cannot justify an unjust sinner by the works of the law. The Bible is clear on this. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom.3:28). "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the" (Continued on Page 3, Col. 1)

FROM THE EDITOR

SOME BIBLICAL SAFE-GUARDS AGAINST CONTINUED SINFUL LIVING BY ONE WHO PROFESSES TO BE SAVED. The Bible teaches, and we believe, Eternal Security. We believe, Once saved always saved. We praise God for this wonderful and very precious truth. There are those who say that this doctrine has a tendency to promote sinful living by those who believe it. I think we must admit that this doctrine could be perverted and mis-used in such a way. I think we might also say that we have observed some who seem to be using this doctrine (mis-using really) in this way.

We must believe and preach the totality of God's Word. I am very ready to state that many Baptists of today have over-emphasized this wonderful truth, and over emphasized truth can become close akin to error. I will also say that many Baptists of today have failed to preach much, if any, on the truths I will mention here, which I believe the Spirit has given to offset any suppose or possible tendency of Eternal Security to promote sin.

The Bible teaches that one may think he is a Christian and not really be one, that one might be deceived about this most important matter. The Bible teaches that salvation will have an effect upon the way one lives. These two together should definitely cause one who professes to be saved but is not living right to question the matter of salvation. Friend, these people who made a profession years ago, and have gone on living just as they did before that (sometimes they live worse) are not truly saved people. Those who continue on in sin the same as always have not been born again. They are deceived professors of salvation and not genuine possessors thereof.

The Bible teaches Perseverance, that is, that one who is truly saved will persevere in repentance, faith, and holiness all the days of his life. The "P" in our beloved "T.U.L.I.P." was not designed to stand for "preservation" as so many teach it today, but originally stood for "perseverance." Our forefathers rarely preached on Eternal Security; they preached this truth under the title of Perseverance. They preached frequently on "The Perseverance of the Saints". They rarely used the terms, "Once Saved, Always Saved" or "Eternal Security" as we do today. I believe that the modern trend to emphasize the truth of eternal salvation as Eternal Security and not as Perseverance is an evidence of and has contributed to the low level of Christian living among professed Christians of today. I also believe this has greatly contributed to the large number of professed Christians who are not truly saved today.

The Bible teaches Chastisement. We do not do or hear much preaching on this today. This doctrine is designed by the Spirit to promote holy living among the saved, and to unmask pretenders of salvation. We ought to preach this more than we do. A healthy fear of chastisement will contribute to holy living. A lack of chastisement as to professed Christians living in sin will unmask them and reveal their true conditions.

The Bible teaches rewards. I know that there are many who deny this, and some who ridicule it; but that does not change the fact that it is a Bible truth. This truth is designed by the Spirit to promote faithful service and clean living among the children of God. When men are taught this truth, and believe it, they will want to be the kind of Christian who will receive many rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. And, no matter what some super-holy, super-spiritual (they seem to think and imply this) believe, it is not wrong to serve God with rewards in mind. Of course, we should also do this out of love. The lack of any concern at all about rewards may reveal a worldly, contented attitude that has no strong desire to serve the Lord - or even that one is not truly saved.

These things that I have mentioned here need to be strongly and frequently preached. They, I believe, are designed by the Spirit to offset any possible tendencies of Eternal Salvation to promote continued sinful living by those who profess to be saved. Of course, I do not believe that Eternal Salvation, properly taught and believed in the power of the Holy Spirit does have this tendency. But it can be mis-used in this way. Let us preach Eternal Salvation. Let us also preach these other Biblical truths just as faithfully. Yours for better living by professed Christians.

JUST

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faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal.2:16). The law was never given as a way of salvation. If justification were by the works of the law, no one could be justified, for no man ever has or ever can, in this life, perfectly obey the law of God.

A just God justifies unjust sinners on the basis of the work of Jesus Christ. Our salvation is in Jesus Christ and what He has done; it is not in what we do or ever will do. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23). This verse includes us all. When we realize that anything short of the absolutely perfect glory of God is sin, no one of us can claim to be without sin. One may not have sinned nearly as bad as another, but the

best (if one can use this word) of sinners comes short, far short, of the glory of God. This verse, if it stood alone, would consign us all to the burning flames of eternal hell. But, praise God, it does not stand alone. Look at Romans 3:24, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Justification is free. Justification is by God's grace. Justification is through the redemption of Jesus Christ. Did ever such a bright and glorious verse follow immediately such a dark, sad, and condemning verse?

The word "propitiation" in the next verse, Romans 3:25, describes how the redemption in Christ is the basis for the believer's justification. This word relates to "satisfaction." The work of Christ perfectly satisfies God the Father. You and I cannot satisfy God relative to our sins. Jesus took the guilt of our sins upon Him, and undertook on Calvary to atone for them. Praise God, He succeeded in this undertaking. He perfectly satisfied the demands of God's holiness and the claims of God's holy law

against those for whom He died. The word "propitiation" is the word used for the mercy seat in the Greek translation of the Old Testament. It is also used for "mercy seat" in Hebrews 9:5. In the holy of holies in the tabernacle of the Old Testament was the ark of the covenant. It was a chest type construction. The mercy seat, made of pure gold, constituted the lid of this ark or chest. The broken tables of the law were in that ark. One day each year, on the blessed and important Day of Atonement, the high priest would sprinkle the blood of a slain sacrifice on that mercy seat. The Lord would look down on that mercy seat. Instead of seeing the broken law, He would see the shed blood of the substitute. This was all typical of the reality in heaven, and of the saving work of Jesus Christ. The Lord was typically propitiated by the blood on the mercy seat and the people were typically saved. The reality of this in Christ procures real salvation for believers.

When the publican prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner" in Luke 18:13, he rec-

ognized this truth. The word "merciful" is the Greek word for "propitiate." The publican was looking to the blood for salvation. He was asking God to be toward him as He was when He looked on the blood sprinkled mercy seat. He was not depending on his prayer; he was trusting in the blood. And, as in the case of every saved Israelite, he was not looking at the blood of the typical sacrifice, but at the blood of Jesus.

Now, let us look at the word "imputation." For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (II Cor.5:21). "Impute" means to credit to the account of another, to charge to one's account, to reckon to one as belonging to him. God imputed the guilt of our sins to Christ. They were charged to Christ as if He had committed every one of them. That guilt truly became His by imputation. He stood in God's sight as if He had committed every sin of every one for whom He was to die. Oh, what a load of sin was His! Only the God-man could bear such a load and satisfactorily atone therefor. His perfect righteousness is imputed to every believer. Oh, the perfect righteousness of Christ; it is even "the righteousness of God." The believer stands before God as if he had lived as absolutely perfect as Jesus Christ did. Note this double imputation. The guilt of our sins was imputed to Christ. His perfect righteousness is imputed to the believer. It is this double imputation that constitutes the basis upon which God freely justifies the believing sinner. It is in this way, and this way only, that a just God can justify an unjust sinner.

Philemon 17 and 18 illustrate imputation. Onesimus was a runaway slave who had been saved through the preaching of Paul. Paul was sending him back to Philemon, his master. Paul tells Philemon, concerning Onesimus, "If thou count me therefore a partner, receive him as myself." Philemon was to treat Onesimus exactly as he would have treated Paul. In justification we are accepted in the beloved. The Father looks at us and sees us in His Son, Jesus Christ. He treats us as sons because of His only begotten Son. Paul then told Philemon, "If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account." This is what Jesus said to the Father concerning His people. The Father charged to the account of Jesus all the guilt of all the sins of those for whom Jesus died; and Jesus paid that account in full - praise the Lord!

Let me say a few things here about justification. It is instantaneous. The moment one believes in Jesus Christ, he is justified. It is perfect and complete for every believer. The new-born believer is as perfectly justified as the aged saint. The backslidden believer is as justified as the one living closest to the Lord. Our state, our experience, is up and down, but our justification is always the same. The believer who is farthest from the Lord at the present moment is as perfectly justified as the believer already in heaven. Oh, the glory of grace! As to growth in grace, as to progressive sanctification, as to level of spirituality; there are many differences in believers, but there

is no difference at all in their justification. Justification is eternal. The believer is perfected forever by the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Heb.10:14). One cannot believe in Bible justification and believe in losing salvation. The very moment one believes in Jesus Christ, he is perfectly and eternally justified; oh, what a salvation is this!

Note three things about this way of justification in Romans 3:27-31. 1. Boasting is excluded, v.27. This justification is all by grace and by Christ, and the sinner has nothing to boast of. 2. It is offered to all, vv.29-30. Jew or Gentile can be justified in this same, one, and only way. I believe in the free offer of the gospel. I believe that in the gospel of Jesus Christ, eternal salvation is offered to all who hear the gospel on the conditions of repentance and faith. 3. It is in perfect harmony with and honors the law of God, v.31. This way of justification, of salvation, does not dishonor or set aside the claims of God's holy law. Rather it fully meets and satisfies the law of God.

Oh, my reader, are you justified? Do you have this imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ? No question could be more important than this. If you are justified; rejoice in such a wonderful salvation, praise God constantly therefore, live daily to His glory, and tell others about this "Amazing Grace" way of salvation. If you are not now justified, hear the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. Believe that gospel. Dear friend, repent of your sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

RELATION

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deem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." (Gal. 4:4-7). "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself..." (Eph. 1:5). "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (II Cor. 5:14,15). "There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?" (Luke 7:41,42).

In God's plan with men, His purpose in giving the law has been sadly misunderstood. To the Jews the law was given on tablets of stone and copied in

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HOW TO

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tending his father-in-law's sheep when he saw the burning bush and God called him to lead the children out of Egypt. Joseph was in prison and had no idea that God was going to place him in a place of service that would save his entire family from certain destruction. Samuel did not understand or realize that it was God calling him and placing him into a life-long ministry of serving the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Gideon was hiding from the Midianites when God sought him out and called him to deliver the children of Israel out of bondage. David was taking care of his father's sheep when God called him and had Samuel the Prophet anoint him as Israel's new king. When the Lord of glory began calling out His apostles, none of them were looking for or interested in serving the God of Heaven in that way. The apostle Paul is a perfect example of one that was called suddenly and unexpectedly.

Now, as the God of Heaven calls and places one into His service, He gives certain authority with that call. In the Old Testament, that call was given to individuals as the need would arise. In the New Testament, God places His authority in His church and the Man of God must work within that authority to have God's blessing and approval upon his work.

I. God's Call Is Always Sovereign.

Understand and know of a certainty, the God of Heaven is the One that elects His own special agents to serve Him. As God appointed their duty and their place of service in Bible days, so today is no different. That is one of the reasons that the Lord's churches need to make sure that God is leading in the choice of their pastor. God gives no account of His matters to man. As He has sovereignly chose us in Him unto salvation, so our God also places His servants into the ministry as it pleases Him. It should be pointed out here that the greater service brings greater responsibility with that call. Not

all have the same call or the same responsibility. The God of heaven gives to everyone according to his ability, and in that sovereign authority He demands implicit obedience.

II. That Call Was Arduous: Presented Great Danger

When our God calls and places into His ministry, the "Man of God" does not know the danger that may be his in the service of the Lord. Nevertheless, that is not a reason one should forget the call of God or refuse to answer the call of God. Jonah might have been ridiculed by others because of this call. The world can be very cruel in their ridicule of our belief if for no other reason than the natural man hates the things of God. Oh, the world can be so cruel towards God's people. If you remember, our Lord told His own: "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:14). The world in days gone by has ridiculed God's people in one way or another. Some of God's people have paid with their lives while others could have wished for a nicer end to their life than cruel persecution.

This call that Jonah received was new and unheard of in his day. Man does not like the idea of something new going on. Let me illustrate, please! Before the days of Columbus man rejected the idea of the world being a globe. They believed that if men would go far enough out into the sea, they would drop off the earth. But Columbus changed all of that with the discovery of this world. Now, spiritual things are even moreso fitted into that category. How many times have I heard people say, "We have always done it that way." At the time of Jonah, no one had ever taken the message of God to the heathen. Salvation was thought to be only for the house of Israel. Do we not often think that same way today? Of course we do! But that does not make it right.

When God calls into the ministry that call often requires a certain amount of self-denial. Let me illustrate from the Bible as to men that God called into His ser-

vice. The "Man of God" in Bible days was often called upon to sacrifice the finer things of life in order to serve God. How many times have I heard someone say, "It is God's will for your life to be rich and happy." How far that is from the truth! We live in a country where all have been blessed with more than the average person throughout the world. But most of God's true servants, in comparison to the world, have very little.

III. That Call That Comes From God Is Very Clear

Just as God's call to Jonah was definite, so it has always been the case. Moses understood that it was God calling him into the ministry. Samuel had no difficulties understanding the call of his God. David knew that it was God that had called him and given him the throne of Saul. Elijah had no questions with regards to God's call upon his life. Daniel gave the credit to God for his call, his ability. But as that call was clear and to the point, it was also very urgent. God had told Jonah, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come upon before me." (Jonah 1:2). Why is it so urgent? I am glad that you asked that question. You see, the Bible tells us of the plight of every man born of woman. Man is lost and undone because of his sin nature and his own doing. He is without hope and the enemy of God. The depravity of man is very clear in that because of man's plight he is somewhat in great need. It has pleased our God to reveal unto sinful man his need by the preaching of the good news. Indeed, our cry is urgent because all of man's deeds are wicked and they stand in need of God's so great salvation. Oh beloved, it is our duty as God's called servants to cry aloud unto a dying and lost world. It is not our duty to make disciples, for no man can do that, but it is our duty to proclaim the good news. The Bible plainly teaches us that God so uses the preaching of His Word to touch the life of those

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The Baptist Examiner Forum I

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

Did Christ die in His human nature, His divine nature, or both?

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"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:" (1 Peter 3:18)

Anyone looking back over the history of Christianity, can easily see from the fourth century and probably before, men taking various positions on the divinity and humanity of the Lord Jesus. From Arian's denial of the eternity of Jesus and believing Him to be a created being, to others seeing Him to be either totally human and not divine, or totally divine and not human, or some combination; a full gamut of positions has been established. The Scriptures teach that the Lord Jesus, being the Second Person of the Trinity, has in common with the Father and Holy Spirit the divine nature.

The Lord Jesus being a divine personality of the Trinity became incarnate, but the divine nature (total Trinity) did not, only the Divine Person. The Divine Person, the Son took on humanity. The personality of the Lord Jesus was a union, but not a mixing, or blending of divinity and humanity. He became the God-man. He was both human and divine, but the two natures were never merged. They remained human and divine. They were distinct from each other, but both necessary for the Person of the Lord Jesus as sacrifice, substitute, and sufferer.

Jesus, Who is God, suffered and died in His humanity. It was necessary for the Divine Son of God to take to Himself human nature, to become man; and as the second Adam, our representative, to suffer in His flesh for us having a soul and body as do we, as well as complete human experience. Having left His glory and taken to Himself humanity, He fully understands and has experienced our being, His creation. All of the sufferings, doubts, fears, limitations, and temptations our blessed Lord has fully experienced, yet without sin because of His divinity. He is the perfect representative and sacrifice. Praise His name! A great mystery is the God-man to the finite human mind's understanding. The humanity and divinity of the person of our Lord were both necessary for His work. His humanity gave the blessed person of our Lord the means of suffering and dying for

us, while His divinity expresses the divine power to perform His finished work. He suffered and died in His humanity. The sinless human (because of His divinity) became sin for us the elect; that we might one day be like unto Him.

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"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:7,8)

If physical death is all that it took to pay my sin debt, I would not need Divine intervention. If all that was necessary was for the human nature to die, then everyone could go to heaven. The Word of God talks about two deaths. "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire." This is the second death." (Revelation 20:14) With the reprobate sinner, (all sinners who go to hell are reprobate sinners), there will be two deaths. The first will be the physical death. This death will separate him from him from his family, friends, and the rest of the world. Except for the memories it will be as if he never existed. I have had family and friends to die. I loved them, and oh how I miss them; but they are gone from this life for ever. If they were not saved, they will face yet another death. This separation will involve more than a departure from a physical existence. The second death will mean an eternal separation from God. They will face eternity without the slightest hope of ever being saved. What a dreadful thought!

Now I believe that our substitute, Christ Jesus suffered the equivalent of the damnation and separation that every one of His elect people deserved; no more, no less. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (II Corinthians 5:21) If this is true, then He had to die two deaths. He died in the flesh, because of the mortal wounds inflicted by the Roman soldiers, and the design of Roman crucifixion. However, those mortal wounds and that physical suffering did not pay for the sins of His people. History will testify that there have been others who have suffered as much physical pain and agony as Jesus did. The physical torture that our precious Lord endured during

those last few hours of His life as a man was a demonstration of the contempt that depraved man had and has for the Son of God. One thing I might inject at this point is that it was not the sins of the reprobate sinner that nailed my Jesus to the cross, it was my sins. Oh may this thought humble everyone of God's people. May we fall on our faces before Him, and praise His wonderful name. Therefore, the second death that our Lord suffered was the necessary substitutionary death for our sins. While the Lord was on the cross, and just before He gave up His physical life, He cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was at that time that the Father separated Himself from the Son. The Son became sin, and the Father turned His face from Him.

I would like to point out while we are dealing with this question, that Jesus Christ did not have sinful human nature as we do. First of all, He did not have a human father. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:18) Second, because He did not have a human father, He could not possess the depraved Adamic nature. He "knew no sin." Philippians 2:6-8 should be considered very closely. As you read these verses, notice the words "form", "likeness", and "fashion." He was always and altogether God, even when He died on the cross. Notwithstanding, even when He was separated from the Father, and became sin for His elect people, He was deity. Thank you for your question.

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"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren.... Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:10-18).

These verses tell us that in order for the eternal Son of God to bring "many sons unto glory," it was necessary that He become man, that He might be made "perfect through sufferings," not as to His character, but as a Saviour. There was never any imperfection in Him as man. He was always perfect, but His perfect life is not what saves. For Him to save sinners it was necessary for Him to suffer and die. In this way He was made the perfect Redeemer. He did this by taking on the nature of man. It was that He might through death destroy the power of Satan. As the eternal God He could not die. Therefore He became man that He might die, thereby paying for the sins of those who had been given Him by the Father. In order for the Saviour to save, He must be like those whom He was to save, that is He must have a human nature the same as they. "for both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one." If He was to be "a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God", He must in all things "be made like unto his brethren." If He is able to succor them that are tempted, He must Himself be tempted. If He is to die for the "children unto his brethren," which God had given Him, He must die their death. As God cannot die, He must die as a man. If we are to be made "like Him," he had to first be made like us.

The question is raised, how could Christ have suffered in a few hours the equivalent of the eternal suffering of the sinner in hell? To answer that question I quote T.P. Simmons, "Christ was divine and, therefore, infinite in ability to suffer. He said that no man could take His life from Him; that He would lay it down of Himself. Having the power, therefore, of retaining His life at will. He did retain it through such intensity of suffering that He drank the last dregs of hell's poison for all those to be saved through Him. While it was necessary that Christ be divine in order to endure in a few hours the eternal suffering due believing sinners, it was also necessary that He be human to endure the equivalent of that which human beings are to endure in hell. Human suffering can be endured only in human nature" (A Systematic Study of Bible Doctrine, p. 227).

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their sacred writing; to the Gentile the law was written in their hearts. The one class had more light than the other, and therefore will be judged differently.

"For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law" (Rom. 2:12).

"For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;" (Rom. 2:14,15).

Whether Jew or Gentile, God had one purpose in giving the law. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (Rom. 3:19). God's plan with the law includes "every mouth," "all the world," whether the law was written in their hearts or in sacred writings; and His purpose is, not that they should be saved by keeping the law, for then no one would be saved, for, "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23), but that they might be brought under judgment to God, every mouth stopped guilty, and thus be brought to realize their need of a Redeemer.

On this point God's Word makes His purpose very plain: "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster" (Gal. 3:23-25).

The Law's Purpose

God's Word is plain, that God put men under the law, not that they should be saved by keeping it, but that they might be led to see their need of a Saviour, one to redeem them from the curse of the law. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us..." (Gal. 3:13); and then, having redeemed them from the curse of the law, and from all iniquity (Titus 2:14); to adopt them as His own children, "...heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ..." (Rom. 8:17).

So wonderful is the plan that it is hard for a human being to grasp it. God's plan with men is not simply to save them, but to put them above all other created beings. "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son..." (Heb. 1:5).

Yet, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself..." (Eph. 1:5). "...heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ..." (Rom. 8:17). He puts us far above angels; "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26).

But men can only come into this higher relation to God as sons by being redeemed from under the lower relation, under the law. Hear God's Word: "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the

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Tears, and cries, and beating of the body may all be counterfeit; while the true penitent's eyes yield no tears.

The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Is there anything in the atonement for the non-elect? If not, how can God judge them?

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I have searched the Scriptures over and over but cannot find anything for the non-elect. The atonement was made for the elect, the sheep Jesus called them, and none else. Jesus said in John 10:14-15, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep." This is also taught in several other places, but do we doubt the words of our blessed Redeemer? You might look these Scriptures up, if in doubt. John 17:6, 9-10.

How can God judge them? Beloved, God can do what He wants to, when He wants to, how He wants to, where He wants to. Look at Daniel 4:35, "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

God will judge man because of sin. Jesus Christ our Lord bore the sins of those given to Him by the Father in His own body on the cross of Calvary. The sins of the non-elect were not among them, therefore, He can judge them at the Great White Throne Judgment.

The only thing that the non-elect receives from the atonement is God's chosen ones being the light of the world under the Great Light, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are said to be the salt of the earth, peace makers, pure in heart, stated by the Saviour Himself in Matthew five. If it were not for the elect this world would be far worse than it is now, for without the peace makers there would be no peace at all. When we, the salt of the earth, are raptured there will be no preserver of the peace.

As far as I can find, the atonement is limited to the salvation of God's elect.

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I have heard some people say, "Can God condemn the heathen without giving them a chance?" I

have heard some Arminian Baptist preachers say that God will somehow take care of the heathen who have never heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. For, say they, it would be cruel and unkind to send people to hell who have never heard of Christ and had a chance to be saved.

What is a chance any way? Man left unto himself does not want a chance, as some call it. Man, in his state by nature, does not want a chance. Man in his natural state does not want to retain the knowledge of God in his heart. The least that the non-elect hear, the happier they are, until or unless the Lord begins to deal with them.

God shall save His people from their sin. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). This Scripture does not refer to the non-elect at all, but it does say that God will save His people. This Scripture does not imply that there is something in the atonement for the non-elect.

God does not call the non-elect with the effectual call. Those who are not of His sheep do not hear the Shepherd's voice, but the sheep hear the voice of the Shepherd.

The non-elect are not drawn to Christ. Contrary to popular belief of the religious world, the non-elect are not drawn to Christ and given an opportunity to accept or reject Christ. Nothing could be further from the truth. Those that are drawn to Christ are saved.

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44). The non-elect are not drawn to Christ. The atonement has no effect on them. In His sacrifice, Christ paid for the sins of the elect. Christ, in His death did nothing for the non-elect. Luke 19:10 says, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." This Scripture is speaking of the sheep that are lost. The lost elect, not the lost non-elect. Only the names of God's people are in the Lamb's Book of Life. Only the elect are included in the everlasting covenant made between God the Father and the Son and to be quickened by the Spirit in time. How can there be something for the non-elect when they were not included in the eternal covenant and when their names were not put in the Lamb's Book of Life in eternity past?

Where is the Scripture that says or teaches that Christ died for all men without exception. If there is no Scripture, then it follows that Christ did not die for all men, but only for the elect.

God blesses the heathen with rain and sunshine. He blesses them with food and the good

things of this life. "...for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5:45).

Wherein does this have anything to do with the atonement? God is good to the non-elect by being their benefactor. God was good to Pharaoh when he pleaded with Moses for him to entreat the Lord to cause the hail to cease. Was this based on the atonement? I say not. The non-elect do not regard the goodness of the Lord. As Pharaoh whose heart became harder as God would send the plagues.

How can God judge the non-elect if there is not anything in the atonement for them? God can judge them because they are His property. They are His by creation. God can judge them because He has commanded them to repent. God has the sovereign right to command them to repent. They have arrogantly refused to repent, and have continued in their sinful ways. God has appointed a day in which He will judge them because of their sins and because they are sinners and sinned against God.

God can judge the non-elect because He is the ruler of the universe. He is the creator of all things and by Him all things exist. God therefore, will keep order and men will obey Him now or meet Him in judgment.

God can and will judge the non-elect because He does whatsoever He pleases. "Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places" (Psalm 135:6).

God, in His counsel, decreed to save some from among fallen mankind. These are the elect of God. All others He passed by, leaving them in their sins. Although God commanded them to repent, they will not repent, they are reprobate, God will not grant them repentance. They will live in their sins, they will love their sins, they will die in their sins and God will bring them to judgment because their sins are not covered by the blood of the Lamb.

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There is nothing in the atonement for the non-elect. There cannot be anything for them because the atonement was provided for the elect of God only. The purpose of the atonement is to bring the elect into a right standing with God. The atonement refers to the sacrifice of Christ for His people to satisfy the justice

of God. The word atone means to make amends for wrong doing or a wrongdoer. Since Christ was sinless, He made amends to God for wrongdoers. Not all wrongdoers are included because He, Christ, did not die for everyone. Consequently, the atonement was not made for everyone. It is limited to the elect, therefore it is a limited atonement. Now, when the word "ment" is added to "atone," it means "a result of". So, in actuality, we should be considering the result of the atonement, or the results of Christ dying for wrongdoers.

The result of Christ dying for His people is that they will no longer be enemies of God, but will be reconciled to God. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (Rom. 5:10-11). In the Old Testament, when the word atonement was used, it usually meant to cover or a covering. It was used seventy-two times in this manner. In the New Testament atonement is used only one time. It is translated from the Greek word "Katallage" and means reconciliation. Reconciliation means a change on the part of one party, induced by an action on the part of another. The result of Christ dying on the cross and the application of His blood in the atonement gives the one that is saved reconciliation with God. When one is reconciled to God, he is no longer an enemy because of the covering of Christ's blood.

How can God judge them? All men are judged on the basis of their sins. All sin will either be borne by the individual or by a substitute. The only substitute for man's sins is Jesus Christ. If a man's sins are not punished in Christ, then he must be punished for them. "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after" (1 Tim. 5:24). The sins that "go before" have been covered and punished in the person of Christ. Those sins that "follow after" have not been covered, and since they are not covered, the individual must suffer for those sins. There are those that take the position that God is unrighteous in this matter, but we are told that He is not. "But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?" (Rom. 3:5-6). There is never any unrighteousness with God. He is just in all that He does.

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adoption of sons" (Gal. 4:4,5).

This higher relation as sons of God can be attained only by men coming out from under the law; and men can come out from under law only by being redeemed from under the law.

Not Under Law's Curse
God's Word teaches clearly, then, that when one is redeemed,

he is no longer under the law. "...for ye are not under the law..." (Rom. 6:14) "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law..." (Rom. 3:19).

Then there are some under the law and some not under the law (Gal. 3:24,25). Pause, reader, and try to grasp the meaning of this. If the believer is redeemed from all iniquity (Titus 2:14), and is not under the law (Rom. 6:14), then he is sure of heaven; for "...sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Rom. 5:13). It is not reckoned or imputed because it has all been reckoned or imputed to Christ (Isa. 53:6, Titus 2:14). Why, then, serve God? Not from fear of the law; not from fear of hell; but from love of Him who redeemed us from the curse of the law, having been made a curse for us (Gal. 3:13).

Now Sons of God

Just as clearly God's Word teaches that those who are redeemed from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13), from all iniquity (Titus 2:14), become the sons of God; for that purpose "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal. 4:4-6).

But there is, in God's plan with men, beyond this a still more blessed, wonderful teaching: "Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son..." (Gal. 4:7). The one who is redeemed from under the law never gets back under the law again. That means, then, certainty of going to heaven, certainty of being a son of God forever. And this new relation, and this certainty of heaven are settled for men, not when they die or when they have united with some church, or have been baptized, but the moment men repent from their sins and trust the Saviour as their Redeemer from all iniquity; for God's Word says, "...whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16); and "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26).

The Motive of Love

This new relation with God gives men a new motive. Under the law guilty, condemned by it, the motive was fear. But when men have been redeemed from under the law and adopted as sons of God, the motive of fear is no more the motive of life. "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15).

The motive of the son toward the father is not fear, but love. And this love is produced by the fact that God, in love, provided this great, wonderful plan for men, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of

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children by Jesus Christ to himself..." (Eph. 1:5), and the fact that the Saviour loved us and gave Himself for us (Gal. 2:20) Hence Paul tells us, "the love of Christ (not the fear of the law, nor the fear of hell) constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again" (II Cor. 5:14,15).

Our Saviour, the night before His crucifixion, made clear that this was to be the motive in the life of God's children. In instituting the Lord's Supper He said, "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matt. 26:28); then, following this, before leaving the supper room, He said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15) not, "If ye are afraid of the law keep my commandments"; not "if ye are afraid of going to hell keep my commandments"; not "If ye wish to make sure of going to heaven, keep my commandments"; but, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

But why love Him? Because "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." That this love, and that this kind of love is clearly the motive power of the real Christian life, notice the teaching of the Saviour in Luke 7:41,43.

This is no mere theory, that love ought to be the controlling motive, but it is the controlling motive. And it is not a mere theory that love ought to constrain the real Christian, the real believer, but the love of Christ does constrain us (II Cor. 5:14).

One may be moral, of deep piety, and yet if the motive power of his life is not this love, he is lost, not a real Christian. God's Word makes this plain, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (I Cor. 13:1-3).

Two of the mightiest preachers of all times, men whose tongues were those nearest to angels in preaching, Chalmers and Wesley, after years of most powerful preaching, came out and stated that during all those years they were lost, not Christians. Why? They had not been really redeemed from all iniquity (Titus 2:14); they had not been forgiven

most; the motive had not been the motive of him who is forgiven most. Why? Because eloquent, powerful preaching cannot redeem from iniquity, and God has said plainly, "...without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22).

Men may write great books explaining the mysteries of God's Word, commentaries, Sunday School lesson helps, instructions to Christians; yet if the motive power of their lives is not love based on the fact that they are forgiven most (Luke 7:43), redeemed from all iniquity (Titus 2:14), they are lost, not real Christians.

Why? Because there is nothing in understanding all mysteries and all knowledge in writing commentaries and other helpful books, to redeem from all iniquity. And God has said plainly, "...without shedding of blood is no remission."

The great capitalist, the multi-millionaire, may turn philanthropist, and spend all his wealth in building schools, or libraries, or houses for the poor, or in feeding hundreds of thousands in times of widespread drought; the Catholic nun or Protestant or Baptist nurse may give her life in the epidemic in nursing the sick; and the heroic fireman give his life in rescuing others from the flames; yet they are all lost, unless the motive power of life is love, produced by the fact that they are forgiven most, redeemed from all iniquity.

Why? Because there is nothing in giving away money to care for the poor, nor in giving up life for others, to redeem from iniquity.

When God, "...that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26), "...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). Men must not, they must not, from intellectual pride, religious prejudice, family or race ties, nor from any other motive, trifle with God and presume to dictate terms to the Most High. Were it one poor, obscure man who presumed to do this, men would say that he deserved to be left to answer for his own sins before God at last. But vast numbers, with religious denominations and university titles cannot change the Most High. God does not go by majorities. Earth's respectability does not pass current in heaven. "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God..." (I Cor. 3:19).

Who is this Being to whom puny men in their pride and prejudice presume to dictate terms as to how they may escape the just penalty for their sins, as to how their sins should be taken away?

"Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of

understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing...All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity...It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in: That bringeth the princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity" (Isa. 40:12-15,17,22,23).

A professor in a great university has recently said, that to the "modern mind," untrained, as the Jews, to daily sacrifices, unused, as those of ancient times, to blood-atonement,--remission of sins by blood,--substitution does not commend itself. If he and those who think like him do not care enough as to their eternal destiny to strive to become acquainted with blood-atonement to realize their need of it, and to see that God, in love, has provided it, complete and eternal, then there is nothing left but for them to go out into eternity to meet the just penalty of their sins; for even then God will be just to them. No one, barbarian or civilized, will ever be treated unjustly by the Most High.

Does Grace Lead To Sin?

But it is objected that, if men are taught and believe that they have been redeemed from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13), that they are not, after that, under the law (Rom. 6:14), that they have been adopted as God's sons (Gal. 4:7), and that they are no more servants, but sons (Gal. 4:7), they will not serve God from love of Christ for dying for them (II Cor. 5:14,15), but that they will become careless and not try to live Christian lives.

That is true with hypocrites; they will profess to believe that they are thus redeemed, saved, and will live careless, worldly lives. But really redeemed men will love most (Luke 7:43), and live better lives from love.

The Saviour said, "...If a man love me, he will keep my words..." (John 14:23). "...If God were your Father, ye would love me..." (John 8:42). And John, writing to believers only says: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (I John 3:1-3).

The one who is thus redeemed and adopted as a son of God not only purifies himself because prompted by love to the Saviour for redeeming him from all iniquity, but because he is born again, and this new nature leads him to hate sin and to love holiness.

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is

born of God..." (I John 5:1). "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (I Peter 1:23). This is no mere theory, no mere theological dogma. Cases innumerable throughout the Christian era could be cited, where the most wicked men and women in a moment have been completely changed by simply being led to accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour, as their Redeemer from all iniquity.

In the author's work as an evangelist he has seen the most debased, hopeless men and women revolutionized morally, not by gradual processes, but in a moment, by leading them to repentance and faith in the Saviour as their complete Redeemer from all iniquity and the moral revolution was not temporary, but permanent. Science cannot account for these moral revolutions brought in a moment. Infidelity cannot account for them. God's Word does account for them, that they have been born again, born of God, and have been taken from under the law and have been placed under a new motive power.

In a city a great mass-meeting for infidels was widely advertised; a large audience assembled. The leader asked all the men in the audience who had once been down in the depths of sin, everything gone, hopeless, and had been led to trust the Saviour as their Redeemer from sin, please to arise. Between three hundred and four hundred well-dressed business men and workingmen arose. The leader then asked all who had been down in the depths of sin, everything gone, hopeless, and they had been led to believe in infidelity and it had made better men of them, please to arise.

One lone man staggered to his feet and he was drunk!

Science and infidelity cannot explain this difference. God's Word does explain it. There is no other explanation.

It may be objected that many who profess to be thus redeemed from all iniquities, to be born again, do not continue to live better lives. God's Word explains every one of these cases: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (I John 2:19).

In closing this article, reader, pause and consider: are you yet under the law? Have you been redeemed from the curse of the law? Have you been adopted as a child of God?

It is one thing to say, "Our Father," it is quite a different thing to be really a child of God, and heir of God and joint heir with Christ.

Is the motive of your life love of Christ because He has redeemed you from all iniquities? Do not be deceived by calling the motive love when really it is not love. If you have been trying to serve God, thinking that if you continued to serve Him, continued to try to do your Christian duty, you would go to heaven after this life, but that if you failed to serve Him and do your Christian duty, you would not be saved, then your motive has not been love, and you are lost. If you have been trying to serve

God and do your Christian duty, fearing that if you failed you would be lost, then your motive has not been love, and you have never been redeemed from all iniquity and adopted as the child of God.

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:1-4).

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12).

KIND

(Continued from Page 1)

made to be that because sin abounds, the love of many has waxed cold. However, the promise found in Matthew 16:18 is still as true and as accurate as it was when it fell from the blessed lips of the Lord Jesus, our Saviour.

I. This Church Was Divine

This church had a Divine origin. In Acts 2, we read about one of the most glorious occasions in this world. We find that God had fulfilled His promise to the first new church "this is my body," in this world, and through this church I shall receive honor and glory. How we need to keep in mind that this is the kind of church that brings honor and glory to the Lord Jesus, and that is the only kind that will ever glorify His name. No other kind of assembly will bring honor and glory unto God, other than the same kind that we find in existence on the day of Pentecost. All other assemblies are man-made, and cannot, and will not. God will not accept them in their work towards His name. Only the kind of church that He recognized then, does He recognize today, and if we are not members of that assembly, we cannot bring glory unto His name. Our life is lost as a Christian, even if we are saved, if we are not associated with, and a part of, the kind of body that we read about on the day of Pentecost.

I am not saying that the church began on the day of Pentecost, but I am saying that the kind of a church that you find on the day of Pentecost had a divine origin, and unless our churches have a divine origin, they are not of God. This church was organized out of material that John the Baptist prepared. It had a divine origin, and it glorifies God because God sent that church into the world, and He only sent that kind of a church into His vineyard to work for His namesake.

That church had a divine organization. I am not talking about a worldly organization system; I am talking about a Scriptural organization that God ordained when He established His church.

"Ye also, as lively

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STUDIES IN ACTS

by Willard Willis

"Now about that time, Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church" (Acts 12:1). Reference to "that time" is a reference to the famine and the time when Paul and Barnabas carried relief funds to the elders in Jerusalem. The time was probably about the fifth or sixth year of the reign of Claudius Caesar.

The Herod who "stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church" in Jerusalem was Herod Agrippa. He was the grandson of Herod the Great.

History informs us that Claudius Caesar, during his reign as the Roman Emperor, enlarged the dominion of Herod Agrippa so that Judea and Samaria were included in his territory. This fact meant that the Lord's church at Jerusalem was in his territory.

Herod felt himself to be superior to the Lord's church. The members, as far as he was concerned, were to obey him. He was their superior. He therefore wanted their allegiance to be to him rather than to Jesus Christ of Nazareth. He therefore "stretched forth his hands" by way of his appointed men. His purpose was to "vex" them so that they would transfer their allegiance to him. Our text states that he vexed "certain of the church." He, in other words, vexed a few in order to convince all of his intentions.

"And he killed James the brother of John with the sword." (Acts 12:2). One does not kill unless he or she is filled with bitterness and hatred. My reference is not to our courts, but to personal grudges. Herod did not do the killing himself, but he assigned someone to do it. He, therefore, was the murderer.

We have, then, Satan through Herod Agrippa, making another effort to shut down the church at Jerusalem. It therefore was Satan who really vexed the church. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12).

James was killed with the sword which means that he was either beheaded or pierced through. It is said that James was the brother of John. He and John, according to Matthew 4:21, were sons of Zebedee. He is commonly called James the greater in contradistinction from James the son of Alphaeus, who is called James the less (Matthew 10:3). One will find from Matthew 20:23 that our Lord foretold the death of James. The passage reads: "...Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with..."

"And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread)" (Acts 12:3). Here we find the principle on which Herod acted. It was not that he wanted to do the right thing. He, in fact, considered what ever pleased the people to be right. Herod, as king of the land, was supposed to protect the innocent. He, however, used his high office only to promote his own popularity.

The fact that Herod did what he did and got by with it shows that he was only carrying out the will

of the Jewish people. It shows that he had the full backing of the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin, no doubt, were the ones who encouraged him to act as he did. They, after all, had been responsible for the death of Stephen and the severe persecution vent by Saul of Tarsus.

Herod, in an effort to be very popular with the Jewish people, set his sights on Peter. Peter, after all, had been used by the Lord as a mighty instrument in tearing down Jewish strongholds. He had even joined hands with the Gen-



Willard Willis

tiles at the home of Cornelius. He had convinced the church at Jerusalem that they should follow in his steps. It now appears that the strong hand of Herod Agrippa would strike a fatal blow upon him. Herod, after all, had killed James and received a loud applause from the Jewish people for his action. He had now hoped to receive a louder applause for his action against Peter.

Our text informs us that the action taken against Peter occurred during the "days of unleavened bread." The seven days of unleavened bread occurred after the Passover. Herod obviously chose this time, since it was a time when multitudes of Jews assembled in Jerusalem from many different places. It was a time when Herod's action would have the greatest impact. He was saying to the Jews, by way of laying hands on Peter, that he was against every false religion, that is, religions which they considered false. He chose the peak time of the year in order to receive the loudest applause possible.

"And when he had apprehended him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people" (Acts 12:4). No information is given as to where Peter was when he was arrested. He may have been at home with his wife or in church. His arrest, however, was very disturbing to the members of the church. We will learn from verse five that they prayed without ceasing for him.

James, it appears, died soon after his arrest. Peter, on the other hand, is locked up in the city jail. He did not receive an immediate sentence because of the solemnness of the religious festival that was in progress. The minds of the people, during religious festivals, were not to be detracted from religion to the trial of a criminal. Trials of criminals therefore were delayed until religious celebrations had expired.

Herod, in detaining Peter, placed him under the guard of four quaternions of soldiers. A quaternion was a company of four. The total number of soldiers, then, who guarded him was sixteen. The Romans divided the

night into four watches so that the guards could be relieved. The four guards who were on duty were divided so that two were with Peter and two were at the door.

Herod, by assigning so many guards to Peter, was saying to the Jews that his intentions were to carry out their will at all cost. The Sanhedrin, I'm sure, were very happy when it was known that Herod had assigned sixteen soldiers to guard Peter. They, no doubt, felt that this would be the end of Peter.

Herod's plan was to hold Peter in prison under the watchful eyes of sixteen soldiers until after Easter. The Greek word for "Easter" here is the word for "passover." It is important to point out that Good Friday and Easter were not observed by the early church. Our Lord was in the earth three days and three nights. Good Friday denies this fact. We are to observe the resurrection of our Lord each Sunday. The celebration of Our Lord's resurrection at Easter is an invention of men and had its origin in Babylon. Furthermore, our Lord arose in the evening since he was buried in the evening. I'm saying that three days and nights from the time of burial requires that the resurrection occur at the same time as the burial. The Jewish day began at 6 a.m. and ended at 6 p.m. The third hour, for example, would have been 9 a.m.

It was Herod's purpose to bring Peter forth to the people after the Passover celebration. Herod obviously planned to have a public execution of Peter. He, in other words, planned to make a big event of it. He, no doubt, had in mind a circus atmosphere for the execution. This would give the people the privilege to react as they did at the death of our Lord.

"Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him" (Acts 12:5). Herod had tied all human hands by the fact that he had locked Peter in prison and assigned sixteen soldiers to guard him. The church, however, went over Herod's head and prayed to God about the matter. They, in fact, prayed to God without ceasing. This fact means that their prayers were intense and that they were steady and ardent. I'm sure that they, through God the Spirit, prayed prayers which were full of faith, or confidence, in God.

"And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison" (Acts 12:6). We have here an impossible situation as far as man is concerned. We have, in fact, Peter chained to a soldier on either side of him. We have the prison door locked, and we have two soldiers making sure that the door stayed locked.

Peter, during this entire ordeal, was sleeping between two soldiers. He was to be executed the next day, but he was still able to sleep. One can most certainly call his sleep the sleep of contentment. He had complete faith in his God and left the entire matter in the hands of his God. He was ready to die if necessary, or he was willing to stay here a while longer. This decision he left in the hands of his God while he got his night's rest. He, after all, would need the rest just in case the Lord had more work for him

to do here on earth.

"And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands" (Acts 12:7).

Fervent prayers had been ascending to God's throne from the church in Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas, who had come from Antioch with famine relief, were likely praying with the rest of the church. The result was that God dispatched an angel all the way from heaven to resolve the matter. The angel, of course, had no trouble in finding Jerusalem and the very jail where Peter was housed. I would judge that the angel descended from heaven and landed at the jail door, or even within the jail itself. Spirits, in fact, have no trouble entering through man-made walls.

The first action taken by the angel was to shine a light in the prison. It takes power to produce light, which shows that the angel was a being with power. The light was for Peter's benefit since angels can see in the dark. The angel therefore turned on the light before he got Peter up from his sleep.

The second action taken by the angel was that of smiting Peter on the side. The angel was a spirit and yet he had the ability of a man with natural hands. He not only smote Peter on the side, but he reached down and raised him up. Here, again, his spirit nature did not prevent him from acting in a natural way. He, in fact, lifted Peter from a sleeping position, which means that he exerted the power needed to perform such a feat.

The angel's words to Peter were, "Arise up quickly." I'm not sure why there was any urgency. The angel, I'm sure, could have taken all day had he chosen to do so; but he chose to act quickly.

Our text informs us that the chains fell from Peter's hands. The chains had bound him and held him fast, but suddenly he had become a free man again. He, because of being chained to two soldiers, may not have been able to rub his own eyes or scratch an insect bite. His arms and hands, however, after the chains fell off, were his again to use as the need arose.

There are many kinds of chains that bind God's people today. It may be a disease, old age, or debts; but God is able to cause any chains to fall from our hands. We should always ask him to remove our chains. He, after all, may be willing, as He was with Peter, to set us free.

"And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me" (Acts 12:8). We have here a prison breakout with an angel from heaven overseeing the entire ordeal. It is interesting to observe that the angel regarded Peter's well-being as very important. He, in fact, waited until Peter was properly dressed. He made sure his sandals were properly fastened, and he made sure that his garment was upon him so he would not become cold from the night air. The angel needed none of these things for himself, but he understood the needs of mortal man. He knew that Peter was not made of stone but that he, while

still in the flesh, was subject to the cold and to possible injury to his feet. We can be sure that our God always considers and supplies all those things we have need of.

"And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision" (Acts 12:9). Peter followed the angel, but he could not believe that what he was experiencing was true, or real. The reason nothing appeared to be real was because his experience related to that which was not natural. It was not natural for chains to fall from hands, or for soldiers not to be awakened when the chains fell to the floor. It was not natural for the guards at the door not to intercept him. It was not natural for him to be awakened by an angel and then to walk behind an angel.

The angels was likely one of those that visited our Lord's empty tomb and also spoke with the disciples when our Lord went up in a cloud. This was likely his third trip to this area of the world. He, in fact, may have been Michael.

"When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him" (Acts 12:10).

The first and second ward by which Peter and the angel passed were probably guard stations. The guards, no doubt, were put to sleep by the angel. You will recall that those who guarded our Lord's tomb were put to sleep. There was still a barrier before Peter and the angel before Peter would be completely free. It was the iron gate by which the city was entered. The gate, however, proved to be no barrier for the angel. The gate, in fact, opened as if a giant motor had opened it.

We are to see that power is the word when we are dealing with the heavenly personalities. They truly can leap tall buildings at one single bound, or overcome any obstacle by the snap of their fingers, or by word of mouth. The angels also are ministering spirits to us today. God will dispatch an angel if we should ever need one.

The iron gate which the angel opened so easily was the gate from the prison out into the city. The prison was obviously situated so that a step through the gate was a step into the city.

The angel did not leave Peter until he could walk alone without danger. There are certain things which we can do on our own. We can't open a large iron prison gate; but once it is opened to us, then we can go from there. God will help us when we really need help, but He will not act as our arms and legs when they are able to move on their own. He, of course, gives us the power to move them.

"And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent His angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the

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ACTS

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expectation of the people of the Jews" (Acts 12:11).

Peter, after stopping to ponder all the events that had just occurred, drew the conclusion that His Lord -- the Lord Jesus Himself -- the one he had walked and talked with for many years, had sent His angel to set him free from Herod and all that Herod had planned for the people relative to his execution.

There had been a big event planned when Herod brought Peter before the people. There, in a sense of speaking, would have been a circus atmosphere with hot dogs, cokes, beer, and balloons; but God, by way of His angel, ruined their planned party. Peter, in fact, lived many years after this event and wrote the great books of First and Second Peter.

"And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying" (Acts 12:12). Peter, then, after thinking the matter over, decided to go to the home of Mary. Her house may have been the nearest place from where he was, or it may have been that her home was a usual gathering place. The fact that so many were there seems to say that the latter is true. The time was probably before midnight since the young lady, Rhoda, had not gone to bed.

It is said that Mary was the mother of John whose surname was Mark. John, no doubt, was his Hebrew name while Mark was his Greek name.

It is said that many were gathered at Mary's house for the purpose of prayer. May we learn from this incident that gathering together to pray for those in need is most certainly Scriptural. God may or may not answer our prayer with a "yes," but we should at least ask Him.

"And as Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda" (Acts 12:13). I'm told that the "door of the gate" refers to the door of the vestibule. The house was entered by way of a door into the vestibule.

A damsel, or girl, met Peter at the vestibule door. The girl's name was Rhoda -- Rhoda which means a rose. I understand that it was common for the Hebrews to name their daughters after flowers. Susanna, for example, means "lily," while Tamar means "palm tree."

"And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate" (Acts 12:14). It is said that Rhoda recognized Peter's voice, which means that she must have called to him through the door and asked who was there. Rhoda, when she heard Peter's voice, turned and ran to the others rather than opening the door. Peter, of course, must have wondered why the door wasn't opened immediately. He, in fact, was having more difficulty getting into Mary's house than he had in getting out of jail. The big iron gate to the prison had opened on its own accord, but the door

to Mary's house remained closed. It was not that Rhoda did not want to open the door, but she was so excited that she simply forgot to open it. The fact of Rhoda's excitement shows the extent of her concern and the concern of the others for Peter.

"And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel" (Acts 12:15). Sixteen soldiers, an iron chain on each arm, and a large iron gate had stood between them and Peter. They had been in constant prayer that God would overcome all of these obstacles and bring Peter to them. Now that Peter was there, they called the messenger of the good news "mad" or insane. They, in fact, were surprised that God had heard and answered their prayers. Their faith was not as great as it should have been, but God still honored their request. It is a sad fact that believers are often surprised when their prayers are answered. We are all prone to be slow to believe.

Rhoda had to continue to try to convince the people there that Peter was really and truly standing outside the door. Rhoda "constantly affirmed" that Peter was outside that door. They told her that she was mad, or had lost her senses; but she would not be moved from her position. She, in fact, convinced them that someone was out there. They, however, came to the conclusion that the person out there was Peter's angel. It was, as we are prone to say today, "The news is too good to be true."

The Jews believed that each one of God's children had a guardian angel. This is why they thought that Peter's angel had come to give them some news regarding Peter.

"But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished" (Acts 12:16). Perhaps the angel should have stayed with Peter until he had gotten him into Mary's house. The problem, of course, wasn't that great; but Peter, on doubt, did begin to wonder if he was going to obtain an entrance.

It is said that "they" opened the door, which seems to say that they all crowded around the door when it was opened. The result of their finding Peter standing there was that of astonishment, or wonder. The big question related to how in the world he escaped.

"But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place" (Acts 12:17).

Peter, by the use of his hand advised every one to calm down, or to hold this peace. Peter had two reasons for this request; one was so that no outside attention would be aroused, and so that he could convey to them concerning the means of his escape.

The angel had accomplished Peter's escape, but Peter attributes the same to his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Peter knew that the angel was the Lord's means in his deliverance. May we also be careful to attribute every good and perfect gift to our Lord. It had been his Lord who had subdued the soldiers, shined the

light in the prison, removed his chains, and opened the large iron gate. It had been his Lord, by way of an angel, who had shown so much care for him.

The news was so great and important that he asks that James and the brethren be informed. Peter said, "Go", which seems to mean that a messenger was to be sent immediately. James and the brethren, after all, were as concerned as the others; and news of Peter's release and the manner of his release would give them cause for great rejoicing -- rejoicing which would far excel any sleep they would be awakened from.

It is said that Peter "departed, and went into another place." It appears obvious that Peter stopped by Mary's house so as to report the good news to them and to ask them to notify James and the brethren of his escape and the manner of his escape. He then proceeded on to another place, or a place of safety. Peter, after all, was a wanted man; and one can be sure that he would be diligently sought after as soon as it was known that he had escaped. The Catholic Church says that he went to Rome, but there is no evidence that such is true.

"Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter" (Acts 12:18). The word "stir" speaks of movement. The movement, then, among the soldiers was intense since there was no small stir. The soldiers, after all, would die if they didn't locate Peter. They therefore were like the rest of us when faced with death. They, I'm convinced, left no stones unturned in their effort to locate Peter. He, however, had gone to another place, a place of safety.

"And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the keepers, and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from Judea to Caesarea, and there abode" (Acts 12:19).

Herod sent out the FBI, in a sense of speaking, to try to locate Peter. His picture, in a sense of speaking, was in every post office; and his friends, no doubt, were questioned as to his location. Herod's efforts, however, turned up nothing. He therefore examined those who were assigned to guard Peter. Their story, I'm sure, appeared to be a big lie as far as Herod was concerned. Herod was sure that Peter could not have broken his chains, walked past the guards, and opened the large iron gate. He therefore ordered the guards to be killed.

We are informed that Herod **"went down from Judea to Caesarea, and there abode."** The natural thing for Herod to have done would have been to order the execution of other apostles. He, after all, wanted to please the Jews; and such an act would have pleased them. Herod, however, pulled up stakes and moved to Caesarea. His action was obviously caused by the Almighty. God, by this action, stopped the slaughter of His apostles.

It is possible that Herod actually believed that Peter had escaped in a miraculous manner. He therefore did not wish to become further involved. He, however, ordered the death of the guards as a cover-up. I say that such is a possibility.

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stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (I Peter 2:5). This is God's divine organization. When God ordained the tabernacle, He not only designated exactly how that tabernacle was to be put together to bring glory unto His name, and I believe that when Jesus organized and established His church, He put it together that it might glorify His name. There must be a proper organization when it comes to a New Testament assembly if we are to serve Him in the capacity that God said. Just a haphazard gathering of people is not necessarily a church of the Lord Jesus. Just to grab up a few people and start off an assembly of your own is not a Scriptural organization. We need to understand that organization in the Bible sense is a divine must, if we glorify His name.

This church not only had a divine origin and a divine organization, but it had divine officers. You go into a lot of churches today and they have all kinds of individuals working with all kinds of titles. We have the "Reverend" in our Baptist churches, and we are headed toward the "Most Right Reverend." We are trying to "ape" the Catholics, and we have all kinds of officers.

A New Testament church must have divine officers in it. God put first in the church, apostles. We recognize that is not for today, but He also placed in the churches ordained elders. He placed also deacons, that the church might serve Him in this world. I will not go into all this, but I just mention these things, as this is the kind of church that glorifies His name.

There were divine ordinances placed in that assembly. The kind of church that glorifies His name is an assembly where you find His ordinances being practiced in His name and in His way. That is the kind of church that glorifies His name. You have to have the divine ordinances.

Not only were there divine ordinances, but there were divine orders given to that church. There are a lot of preachers who try to be lord over God's heritage, and try to get the church to do things that God never gave one iota of an order to do. If we want to glorify God, then that pastor that God has raised up, if he is God's man, is to tell that church exactly what God gave as the order to New Testament assemblies -- nothing more and nothing less. How much better off our churches would be if we would eliminate many things that so-called preachers try to get churches to do, which God never did authorize nor give any precept concerning whatever.

Briefly, I'll mention this: We need divine offerings. Churches are to be run with divine officers and having divine ordinances, but there also needs to be divine offerings if that church is to function like God intends it to do. This is the kind of church that glorifies the Lord.

II. This Church Was An United Church

I am not saying it was a United Baptist Church in that word

sense, but this was an united church. I turn to the day of Pentecost and I see they are united in prayer. A church that glorifies God will be a united church--a church that unites in calling on the name of God to do that which God has promised to do through His assembly. How long has it been since our churches individually have united in prayer to seek God's power and God's leadership and the unction from on high? We need to be united in prayer.

This church was also united in praise. When I attend this Bible conference, I thank God for the songs of praise that redound to His honor and His glory. I believe the kind of church that glorifies God is the kind where you find praise unto His matchless name.

This church was united in preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus. On the day of Pentecost, when Peter got up to preach, he brought the message, but there were eleven other apostles that stood up with him and said, "Amen, Peter, preach on; that is exactly what we believe."

Our churches need to get behind the preaching of the Word of God. When your pastor gets up and preaches his message and you go out in the community and say, "Oh, well, we don't all believe that," you kill the spirit of New Testament church work in that community. There are people who go around behind the preacher's back--people that are not qualified to know what the Bible teaches, and they undermine the preaching of the Word of God. We need to stand together in preaching the Word of God.

This church was united in their practice. I love sound Articles of Faith and unless we practice what we preach, we also kill our influence. We need to walk together. I love to read about Peter and John as they walked together to the temple at the hour of prayer. To me, that means there was harmony and fellowship, and they walked in the same step. We need people today that will live lives that will verify what we preach. This is the kind of church that glorifies God.

III. This Church Was A God-Magnifying Church

This church at Jerusalem, which was a local New Testament assembly of baptized believers, was a missionary Baptist church. Most churches you go into today, about all you hear is what they are doing for the Lord: "We are bringing the kingdom in." They are not bringing any kingdom in. We need to magnify Almighty God. On the day of Pentecost, the theme of their talking and praying and praising and preaching was the wonderful works of God. We need to have churches like that today, that when you walk in, you hear them talking about what God has done on their behalf. We need a God-magnifying church. "The Lord reigneth" is what we need in our churches.

IV. This Church Was A Christ-Exalting Church

It exalted the person and work of the Lord Jesus. They praised His name for eternal salvation because of the eternal redemption and the eternal purposes in the plan of Almighty God. We need people that will exalt the name of the Lord Jesus.

V. This Church Was A Spirit-Filled Church

They walked in the spirit. They prayed in the Spirit. They

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were led of the Spirit. They had the fruit of the Spirit. They were Spirit-filled Christians.

VI. This Church Was A Bible-Believing Church

You didn't hear anybody saying, "The Apostle Paul said that" or "The first ten chapters of Genesis are fables." Beloved, they magnified the Word of God. They believed "thus saith the Lord" and "it is written." They glorified and magnified the God of the Bible and His Book.

VII. This Church Was A Church That Was In Love

This was a loving church. We need people that love the Lord in our churches. You get people to love the Lord and you can settle a lot of problems in the churches. Love the Lord and things will go right among the members. We need churches that are in love with God the Father. "We love Him, because He first loved us." We need the spirit of love in our assemblies. How we need to love God the Father, and how we need to love Christ the Son, and how we need to love His Word, and how we need to love each other!

I think of the statement of the Lord Jesus when He said: "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Rev. 2:4,5).

The kind of church that glorifies God you will find in the pages of His Book. I say again, God give us churches of this caliber that will glorify His name!

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of the human race that the human race has a habit of making God as one of us, or putting God down on a plane as one of us. He says: "I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof ... thou thoughtest that I was altogether such as one as thyself..." (Ps. 50:11, 12, 21).

Beloved, the God I want to talk to you about, is One far above men. When the Apostle Paul was in the city of Athens, he was waiting for some of his traveling companions who worked with him in his missionary endeavor. They were to meet him in the city of Athens. While he was waiting for them to appear, Paul walked about the city and observed everything that was going on in the city of Athens. Athens was a city of culture. It was a city of education. It was an outstanding city of renown in its day. On every side and on every corner and in every place that Paul turned, he came face to face with an idol or an image of a god.

It has been said by historians that regardless of how many people there were in the city of Athens, there were more gods

than there were people. There were gods on every corner. There were gods erected all over the city. There were gods to the various avocations and callings of life. There were gods that represented every trade. As I have said, gods were more numerous in Athens than even the population itself.

As Paul walked about the city of Athens he beheld these gods and these idols, and his soul was stirred within him. He became engaged in conversation with the Stoic and the Epicurean philosophers within the city, and as a result they invited Paul to come into their court or the place in the municipality where public sessions were held. They asked Paul to set forth his belief about God, because what he was saying to them was entirely new. It was a strange God that he was setting forth. When Paul stood up to speak within this city of Athens, he said, I perceive that you are too religious. You have too many gods; but that isn't the point that makes you too religious. I found not only the gods that were named to the various crafts, but I found another god with this inscription "To the unknown god."

Now these people were so religious that they had all the gods that they could think of with idols erected to them, and then they said within themselves, "Maybe we have made a mistake. Perhaps we have overlooked some other god. It could be that there is another god that we haven't heard about, and we haven't put up an idol to him. Therefore, lest we offend this deity that we know nothing at all about, we will erect another god and put on it an inscription, To the unknown god. We can't afford to make any god mad."

In that respect, I am reminded of the woman who used to listen to me preach over the radio because I preached salvation by grace. Then she went to a Seventh Day Adventist Church on Saturday because they preached law. She told me once, "Brother Gilpin, I know it is either by grace or by law, and I can't afford to take any chance."

Well, these folk in the city of Athens were just about on that basis. They didn't want to take any chance of offending any god. Therefore, they erected an image, this idol, to the unknown god. As Paul walked about and observed their superstition and their religion, and as he spoke to these people, the Stoic and the Epicurean philosophers, as they met on Mars' hill he said, I perceive you are too religious, in that you have erected this idol to the unknown god. Then he said, The one that you ignorantly worship, is the God I want to present to you.

I am rather of the opinion that what Paul said here on Mars' hill could be just as truly said to the average congregation in the average Baptist church today. I am rather of the opinion that the majority of Baptists have a mighty little conception so far as God is concerned. I have been dealing with people for the last several years as a Baptist preacher, and I find the majority of people, even in Baptist churches, surely have a mighty small conception of Him whom we speak of as God.

Now I want to tell you something about the God of the Bible, especially the God of the Apostle Paul.

I. The God of the Apostle Paul was the God of creation.

There is no one in all the Bible who emphasizes the fact that God is the absolute creator more than does the Apostle Paul. Listen: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds" (Heb. 1:1, 2). "And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are works of thine hands" (Heb. 1:10). "For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God" (Heb. 3:4). "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him" (Col. 1:15, 16).

You can't read these verses without the realization that the God of the Apostle Paul was the God of creation. He made this world. He made all things. Notice again: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. 11:3).

Beloved, here is one preacher who does not in any wise accept the evolutionary theory as to the origin of this world and all things therein. I tell you I am not a theistic nor an atheistic evolutionist. I believe in a creation that came about through the power of Almighty God.

I think of that little lad who rushed into the house one day and said, "I have made a startling discovery. I have learned how they make horses." His mother said, "How do they make horses?" He replied, "Mr. Shultz, the blacksmith, makes them. I just came by the blacksmith shop and he was making one." The mother asked, "Did you see him make a whole horse?" He said, "No, but he was just finishing one, for he was tacking the shoe on one as I came by."

Now beloved, there are a lot of people, just like that little lad, who have seen a little piece of bone, and they have looked at that bone, and have magnified it into a monster that you couldn't put into a church building. They have jumped at some conclusion based on a fragmentary bit of evidence, and they have brought into existence monsters that have never existed in this world.

I say to you, God spoke this world into existence. When I think about this world, how big it is, how great it is, and how expansive it is, I am amazed when I say to you that God created this world.

How large do you suppose this world really is? I don't know. It is bigger than my little mind is able to conceive of. I heard a man give an illustration some time ago that helps us to understand something about the size of this universe. He was talking about how fast that sound and light travel. He said that you could put a switchboard out yonder on the farthest star, and if you

had a telephone line connected between here and that farthest star, if you were to pick up the telephone receiver here, it would take 93 million years for the click to be heard on that farthest star.

Beloved, I tell you, this world is a place of expanse, and my God, the God of the Apostle Paul, made it all. There isn't a tree that grows out of the ground, there isn't a blade of grass that comes from beneath the soil, there isn't a star that is shedding forth its light, there isn't a fish within the waters which my God did not create. Beloved, I say to you, the God of the Apostle Paul is a God of creation.

II. The God of the Apostle Paul is a God of absolute sovereignty

If you don't know what I mean by sovereignty I will drop back to a simple statement of the years gone by. A man who was a railroader, who had never gone to church much in his life, came to the services one night with his daughter and heard me preach. I talked about the potter's house in the book of Jeremiah. I spoke about the visit to the potter's house and how he moulded the clay on the wheel and how it was marred in his hands. I said that is the picture of God. God is a sovereign God. That man who had never attended services but very little in his life said to his daughter when he went out of the church building. "What did Brother Gilpin mean when he said that God was a sovereign God?" She said, "Dad, it just means this, that God is the boss." Beloved, God is boss. God is sovereign.

Notice again: "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (Acts 17:24).

Beloved, there isn't anything on this earth that takes place by chance. There isn't anything that takes place just by accident. He is Lord of heaven and earth.

Every once in a while I pick up the paper and I read that an automobile has crashed and the people have been killed. The newspaper says it was an accident. I read it to say within myself, that is the language of the newspaper, but that is not the language of the Bible, because the language of the Bible does not allow, and does not speak of an accident. Beloved, there is no such thing as an accident in a world that is controlled by a sovereign God. God is on His throne. Listen again: "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation" (Acts 17:26).

Read this verse, beloved, and tell me that He isn't a sovereign God when it declares that He has determined the times before appointed. There isn't anything that God hasn't determined before it came to pass.

Oh, how I thank God for this blessed truth that every event of our life is a predetermined event. You say, "But, Brother Gilpin, that sounds like fatalism." No, I will show you wherein it is not fatalism.

Suppose a carpenter were to start out to build a house and he didn't have a set of plans or blueprint, and he didn't know

what he was going to build. He is going to build a house, but he doesn't know what it is going to be like. Now, beloved, if he would try to build a house in that manner, that would be fatalism, and when the house was built it would certainly be fatalistic in its appearance. Beloved, if a carpenter has a set of plans to go by if a carpenter has a blueprint to follow in building a house, how much more does a sovereign God run this world on schedule. I tell you, He is a sovereign God, for He has determined "the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation."

I ask you, do you think you are living where you ought to live? Do you think you ought to live some place else? Do you think that the place where you are living is the place where God wants you to live? I tell you one thing, you are exactly where God has determined for you to live, and not only is it determined where you live, but He has determined the bounds of your habitation. He knows just how far your yard or your acreage is going to extend.

Brother, sister, I am not talking about a god that you can get out of a peanut shell and look at you when you get the stomachache. I am not talking about a god that you only call on when the doctor is standing by the bedside. I am not talking about a god that you have on hand in case of an emergency. Rather, I am talking about a God that is absolute and sovereign in every particular.

The times and the events of our lives are determined by Him. I don't believe that there is an event in my life that has ever taken place but what God determined it before it came to pass. You say, "Brother Gilpin, that is predestination." Yes, beloved, and I thank God for it. The Baptists of the years gone by praised God that they could preach a God of predestination, but it has gotten to the place today when you talk about election and predestination in the average Baptist church, then the congregation thinks you have borrowed an expression from some dead language of the past. Beloved, this is just good old Bible language; He has predetermined the events of our lives. Read again:

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" (Rom. 9:21).

That lump of clay the potter takes into his hands, hasn't he the power to mould it into a grotesque, hideous looking image, or the power to make it into a vase, or a thing of beauty? Beloved, if the potter has power over the clay, how much more does our God, the Eternal Potter, have power over you and me, who are just little lumps of clay!

I stand here humbled in the presence of the man who has never seen and who has never known what it was to look out upon the beauties of God within this world. In my heart I can say that I feel sorry for the brother that he has never been able to see, and at the same time I can say to him that an all-wise God (Continued on Page 10, Col. 1)

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before the foundation of the world planned his life thus to be.

Recently I went to visit a Baptist preacher friend, whose wife is an invalid. When I say "invalid," I mean that in the most pathetic sense. For eight years she has been getting worse and worse and worse. Now he has to handle and care for her just as though she were a babe. As I talked to this Baptist preacher, who has been one of the subscribers to our paper and a loved man for years, though I had never seen him before when I talked to him, he said, "Brother Gilpin, an all-wise God before the foundation of the world knew what the condition of my wife would be, and He planned my marriage in this wise so she would have somebody to take care of her."

I tell you, beloved, we have a God who is a sovereign God. Listen: "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." (Job. 14:5).

Yes, our days and months are determined of God. God has even set a boundary, beyond which we cannot go. All the doctors, nurses, hospitals, and miracle drugs in the world can never cause one to live longer than God's appointed time for his life. How wonderfully sovereign is our God!

Do you play chess? Well, I don't. It's too deep for me, but I have seen chess played. I have seen the "king" and the "queen" and the "pawns" and the "knights" and the various pieces of chess on the board, and the individual who is playing, moves those pieces at his will. He is directing the game. Those pieces of chess do not move themselves. Rather, the man who is playing moves them himself.

I look upon this world as one great chess game. I see here within this world some of us who are nothing but pawns. In fact, the majority of us are just as common as pawns on a chess board, and as a man moves those pawns backwards and forwards, so our God moves this world, and in a sovereign way controls and directs and governs your life and mine.

Oh, how I thank God for this truth! Every time it comes to my mind that He is a sovereign God, my mind goes back to Proverbs and I recall a marvelous statement showing His sovereignty, for it says: "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will" (Prov. 21:1).

Let me tell you, if the man next door rises up tomorrow and turns against you and becomes a bitter enemy, just remember that God has turned his heart. If the worst enemy comes to your house and knocks on your door and begs your forgiveness, it is because God has sent him there. God turns the hearts of men.

I am certain as can be that God has separated me from people whom I thought were dear friends, and I am as certain that God has turned enemies in my

behalf. Beloved, as the Lord turns a river of waters, so He turns the king's heart. He is a God of sovereignty.

III. The God of the Apostle Paul is a God of Omniscience.

When I say "omniscience," I mean that God sees everything that takes place. We read: "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:13).

You say, "Everybody believes that God is omniscient." Don't "kid" yourself in thinking that even you believe it. If you believe that God is omniscient, then pray tell me why do you live so poorly in His sight? It is one thing to believe in your head, and it is another to believe in your heart. There isn't a man or woman, if I were to ask you if you believed that God sees you and knows all things, who wouldn't say, "Yes, I believe that God is omniscient," but I say, if you believed it you would act a whole lot differently as to what you do. I can't believe that church members would live as carelessly as they do if they believed that God were looking down upon them every hour of every day. I just don't believe that church members would live as poorly and carnally if they believed that God were looking down upon them.

Do you mean to tell me that a church member would pass by the offering box with his tithe in his pocket, and not put his tithe in, if he believed that God is a sovereign and omniscient God, and that He is looking down upon him every hour of every passing day? I say to you, if all church members really believed that God is omniscient, there isn't a doubt in my mind that the treasures of Baptist churches would be filled to overflowing.

Do you mean to tell me that a Baptist would partake of, and participate in, the sins of this world if he believed that God is a sovereign God, and that God is looking down in an omniscient manner upon him? Brother, sister, I say to you, if you believed that God is omniscient, you would be a different man and a different woman to what you are.

Sometime ago I saw a beehive with the bees on the inside. It was the only time that I ever saw a beehive that I felt safe in watching. This one was made of glass and they couldn't get out, and I saw them working and moving about in that glass beehive. I saw every move that they made. As I turned away, I thought, that is the way that my God is looking down upon us today. He sees this world just as I beheld this glass beehive. He beholds all of us and everything.

Beloved, you and I stand, as Paul says in Hebrews, before God naked. Everything about us is open and naked before the eyes of God. He sees all, I tell you, it would make a lot of difference in the lives of Baptist preachers if they believed that. It would make a lot of difference in the lives of Baptist laymen if they believed that. Beloved, the God of the Apostle Paul is a God that is omniscient, as well as the sovereign Creator of all.

IV. The God of the Apostle Paul is a God that cannot lie. We read: "That by two immutable things, in which

it was impossible for God to lie..." (Heb. 6:18).

Notice, it is impossible for God to lie. In that He is just the opposite to us, for it is impossible for us to tell the truth. The Psalmist David said, "I said in my haste, All men are liars," and Mr. Spurgeon very quaintly added, "He could have taken his time, and said it, and it would still have been true." But contrary to man, God cannot lie.

Oh, let me burn it into your soul that the God of the Apostle Paul is a God that can't lie. It was this God who cannot lie who said: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law" (1 Cor. 14:34).

It was this God who cannot lie who said: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world..." (Eph. 1:4).

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

When a preacher says that an individual is saved by grace, is kept by grace, and that all hell can't take him out of God's hands, he is backed up by a God that cannot lie. Whenever you meet a preacher who preaches apostasy, you are listening to a man that is lying. God cannot lie and God said this couldn't happen.

Beloved, this puts me on shouting ground to know that my God can't lie. There have been a lot of lies told on Him. There has been a lot of preaching done that surely didn't honor Him. There has been a lot of preaching that has gone out even supposedly in His name, that has been a lie in every particular, because it was directly and diametrically opposite to what the Bible teaches. Beloved, I thank God that the God of the Apostle Paul, the God who wrote every word of the Bible from Genesis 1:1 to Revelation 22:21 that God cannot lie.

V. The God of the Apostle Paul is a God who doesn't forget.

We read: "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love..." (Heb. 6:10).

Now you are pretty forgetful, aren't you? I am, and you are. God knew that we were going to be forgetful. That is why He used the word "remember" so many, many times.

Go back and read in the Old Testament that it says, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." He knew the Jews were going to forget about it. Go back and read that it says, "Remember Lot's wife." He knew that God's people were going to forget what a simple, idiotic professor she was, and He wanted us to remember that when we set our face to follow the Lord, we are to go forward and not turn back, so He said, "Remember Lot's wife." He knew how much time we were going to waste and how much of our lives were going for nought, and not be counted. Therefore He said, "Remember how short my time is." We are prone to forget so much.

You who are reading this sermon will forget most of it as

soon as you get through reading it. The biggest part that you will remember is the part that you have gotten mad over. You will forget the most of it though.

I suspect that the majority of you have a list of things written down that you are going to do this week. You know I carry top priority things in my pocket and I have a list written down that I plan to do tomorrow, and the next day, and all week. Why? Because I am so prone to forget.

Beloved, the God of the Apostle Paul is not a God to forget. He is a God who remembers your work and your labor of love. You have never done a thing that God has ever forgotten about except sin. He has blotted those out. Everything that you have done in His name since you were saved God has never forgotten. It is all written down. I don't know of anything that ought to cause a child of God to bow lower before Him than to know He is keeping a book of the deeds of your life every day.

I know God is keeping a record of this life. I certainly wouldn't want to be a member of the average Baptist church today where the God that is preached is not the God of the Apostle Paul. Beloved, I would want my life to count in a church that was trying to stand for the teachings of the Word of God in every particular. Why? Because He doesn't forget. He is keeping a record. He knows all about us. I want Him to keep a record, the right kind of record of my life, and the only way that He can keep it, is by me making the right kind of a record for Him to keep. I certainly wouldn't want to come into His presence without scriptural baptism. I wouldn't want to come into His presence without even having taken the Lord's Supper in a scriptural manner. I wouldn't want to come into His presence with the realization that I hadn't been a member of a true church of Jesus Christ. I wouldn't want to come into His presence with the realization that I had failed to be a member of a church that was trying to stand for the truth. Beloved, I thank God that the God of the Apostle Paul is a God who doesn't forget.

This is an encouragement to me and it ought to be a warning to that man or woman whose life isn't counting for the Lord like it should, who is in a false church, who is helping to support a false church. It ought to be a warning to you to get into a fellowship where the God of the Apostle Paul may keep the right kind of a record of you, the kind of a record that you would want to have had kept when you stand in His presence after awhile.

VI. The God of the Apostle Paul is a God that gives the increase. We read: "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase" (1 Cor. 3:6).

My business is to preach the Word, and to the best of my ability I have tried to do so every time I stand before a congregation. But when I have done that, I have done everything I can do. God must give the increase.

Sometimes the preacher comes down the aisle and buttonholes an individual and pulls him out and gets a profession out of him. Just about like some man takes a corkscrew and runs it down into a "Fifth" and pulls the stopper out and there is usually a "pop" when the stopper comes out, so when a preacher pulls an individual into

the church like that, about all you get is the "pop." It takes God to really give an increase.

I can become pastor of a church, and fill that church to overflowing in a few months time with ecclesiastical corpses, but God doesn't work that fast. If God gives the increase, things usually go slower than most preachers do.

I know a preacher who moved into Texas and bought some lumber on credit to put up some benches for a tent, and by the time the bill came due, which was thirty days later, he had started a church and had a membership of 800 in that church. But, beloved, the next whirlwind that came to town just scattered them. The next fellow that came to town, that had something new and exciting to offer, enticed them and they went along with him.

Beloved, the kind that God saves is the kind that will last. There is something about the man God saves that causes him to "stick." It is God that gives the increase.

You go out in the spring of the year and plant some peas and some onions and some potatoes. You watch them sprout, and it looks like it takes them forever to grow. You get so hungry for some of those green things in the early spring and you decide to help them along. You take hold of that onion and pull just a little, and you get hold of that pea plant and you pull a little, and you get hold of that potato and pull a little so that they will grow a little faster. You do that for two or three days, and what do you have? You have some dead plants.

Whenever you pull them into the church, that is exactly what you will get. God has to give the increase. The God of the Apostle Paul is a God that gives the increase.

I am perfectly content to wait on God. I am perfectly content to wait until He moves. I like to see people saved, and I like to see saved people added to the church. I like to see professions, and I like to see people come forward and profess faith in Jesus Christ and ask for believer's baptism. I love to see it, but I am perfectly willing to wait until God gives the increase, and when God does it, it is mighty well done.

VII. The God of the Apostle Paul is a God that lives forever.

We read: "...Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever..." (Heb. 1:8). Yes, beloved, the God of the Apostle Paul is a God that will live forever. The god of lots of church members isn't going to live forever, but the God of the Apostle Paul will live forever.

We are living in a day whereby we have seen a lot of changes as to government. Thrones have changed. Governments have changed throughout the whole world. You and I have lived to see kings moved off their thrones and new governments set up. Beloved, that will never take place so far as the throne of God is concerned.

When John and Charles Wesley were organizing their work a man said to Mr. Whitfield, "What do you plan to do to perpetuate your work?" He said, "I don't plan to do anything. John Wesley and Charles Wesley may organize churches if they wish to perpetuate their name, but not me. Let

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PAUL

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my name perish. Let the name of my work perish. Let the name of statesmen perish. Let the name of kings perish. Let the name of our God live forever."

CONCLUSION

How can you honor this God of the Apostle Paul? Only through His Son, Jesus Christ. Listen: "He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him" (John 5:23).

If you are going to honor God the Father, you are going to have to honor Him through His Son, Jesus Christ. May this truth burn itself into your heart and soul, and may you see Jesus as your Saviour. May you bow at His feet. May you have trusted Him as a Saviour, come out on God's side and publicly profess your faith in Him, and ask for believer's baptism at the hands of a New Testament church. May the God of the Apostle Paul thrill your soul tomorrow and all the tomorrows to come is my prayer in Jesus' name.

May God bless you!

PHILIPPIANS

(Continued from Page 1)

the girl was a fortune teller, had Paul and Silas arrested, beaten, and thrown into prison. At midnight, while Paul and Silas were praying and singing praises unto God, God sent an earthquake that opened the prison doors and freed all the prisoners. The jailer, thinking all the prisoners had escaped was ready to take his own life when "Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." As a result of this the jailer asked the most important question that man could ask,

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?". They answered him, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." The jailer and his whole household believed and were baptized that same night.

The first converts at Philippi were Lydia, the slave girl, the jailer and his household. They became charter members of the church at Philippi. The members of this church became very dear to Paul. There was a very close bond between them. It would seem from other passages of Scripture that this church had supported Paul from time to time as he traveled on his missionary journeys. It was while Paul was a prisoner at Rome that they sent support to him by a dear and faithful member of the church, a man by the name of Epaphroditus. While at Rome Epaphroditus became very sick, but upon his recovery he returned to Philippi with this letter from Paul.

This letter was written while Paul was a prisoner, not knowing what the outcome of the trial facing him would be, yet it was a letter of joy, a letter of cheer. It was a letter placing Christ as the center of everything. We might say the theme of the letter is summed up in "Christ is all." In each of the four chapters Christ is set forth in a different way. In chapter one He is presented as our Life, "for me to live is Christ" (v. 21). In chapter two He is presented as our Example, "Let this mind be in you, which was also

in Christ" (2:5). In Chapter three He is presented as our Object, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection" (3:10). In chapter four He is presented as our Saviour and supplier for all our needs, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (4:6).

Unlike many of the other churches, Paul found very little wrong (two women were not getting along, 4:2) with the church, therefore he did not have to spend time in correcting errors as he did in some of his letters to the other churches. As we study this letter verse by verse we will see it to teach some very important practical lessons for us to heed as we travel through life. With this brief introduction we will now begin a study of this letter.

"Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:" (Phil. 1:1).

Paul begins this letter by introducing himself and Timotheus as servants of Jesus Christ. The word servants means bond-slaves, slaves who had been bought. Paul does not state that he is an apostle as he did in some of his letters to other churches because he did not have to defend his right to the ministry to which God had called him, to this church. Paul and Timothy were servants because they had been bought, and as bondslaves they belonged entirely to Him who bought them. They were acknowledging Jesus Christ as their Lord and Master. It is true of every child of God that he had been purchased by Jesus Christ and belongs to Him. The price He paid was His own precious blood, and because of this He is our Master. To acknowledge that we are bondservants of Jesus Christ denotes dependence, obedience, and ownership.

This letter is addressed, "to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and the deacons." The word "saints" was the common term used in Paul's day for believers or the brethren. The term was used for those who had been set aside for a sacred use. It implies that they live lives that portray the image of Christ. It means that they have been chosen by God and set apart for His service. The term, "in Christ Jesus," tells us they are saints only as they are "in Christ Jesus". Paul uses the term "in Christ" or "in Christ Jesus" over and over in his letters to show the relationship of Christ to the believer. He uses this expression eight times in this letter. In all his letters he uses "in Christ" thirty-seven times, "in Christ Jesus" forty-one times, "in the Lord" forty-three times.

These saints to whom Paul was writing were not some holy ones who had died, as the term is often used to day, but they were living saints; including a woman who sold purple, a slave girl, a jailer and his household. These were all "in Christ Jesus". The church at Philippi was made up of saints. Paul includes the "bishops and deacons" in addressing the church. The word "bishops" simply means "elders" or "pastors" as used in other

places in the Scripture. It does not mean a ruling body of men as some of the false churches claim. The word "deacon" means servant or one who serves. In Acts six it became necessary for the church to choose seven men to oversee the feeding of the poor widows of the church. We refer to these seven as deacons.

It would seem from the Scripture that the deacons were to oversee the financial affairs of the church, not to rule the church as is sometimes practiced. The qualifications for the deacon is very much the same as that of the bishop or pastor as given in I Timothy 3:8-13. Does not the fact that the bishops and the deacons are listed after "all the saints" suggest that instead of being lords or masters, they are servants of the church?

Paul addresses the church in the form of a prayer, "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:2).

It was a common Hebrew greeting to say, "Peace be with you", much as our expression today, "Have a good day." Paul is using this greeting as it relates with God the Father and God the Son. That peace of which he speaks comes only through the grace of God. Peace must always follow grace. There can be no peace apart from the grace of God, "THEREFORE being justified by faith, we have peace through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). It is peace with God, peace with the brethren, and peace within one's own soul. Paul lets us know that the source of that peace comes from God the Father and from His Son. The phrase, "the Lord Jesus Christ," has a very rich and important meaning to the child of God. The word "Jesus" is His human name, the name of the Saviour. "Christ" is His official title, the "Anointed One," The One who atoned for the sins of His people. The word "Lord" is the title which denotes that He is to be recognized as being divine and is to be obeyed and worshiped as the eternal Son of God.

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you" (Phil. 1:3).

What a close and sweet relationship Paul had with this church. Every time he thought of the church at Philippi he thanked God for them. Although he had suffered greatly while in Philippi, yet in thinking of the saints there and the close fellowship he had with them and how they had stood behind him in their sacrificial support of him, brought back a feeling of joy for them. From Paul's letters to some of the other churches it would seem that his enemies had turned many of them from Paul and much of the truth of which he had taught them. Not so with this church. It was a church that any pastor would love to work with. Note that Paul said "my God" which indicates his close relationship with the God to Whom he belonged and the One he served.

"Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy" (Phil. 1:4). "Always" - Not once in a while, but in every prayer Paul prayed, he prayed "for you all," the whole church. As Paul's thoughts went back to the church at Philippi, as he recalled each member of that church it was thoughts of joy for each one. I

wonder if your pastor or my pastor or former pastors can recall us with joy. The word "joy" is used by Paul over and over in this letter, joy even though in prison, joy even when suffering, joy even when facing death. Why did he think of them with joy? It was "For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now" (Phil. 1:5).

We use the word "fellowship" very loosely today. When friends get together and talk about every thing under the sun, we say they are having fellowship. But the fellowship of which Paul is talking about is "fellowship in the gospel." What does it mean to have fellowship in the gospel? Fellowship in the gospel means sharing the things of Christ, working together for Christ. It means talking about the Scripture, reading and studying the Word together. When we work together for the cause of Christ that is true fellowship "in the gospel." I recall an aunt of mine telling of a camp retreat which she had attended. She told of how people from all denominations, yes, even some so-called Baptists were there. She said they all left their doctrines at home and what sweet fellowship they had. They may have had what the world calls fellowship, but it certainly was not "fellowship in the gospel." "From the first day until now." The fellowship of which Paul writes is the fellowship that started by the river side where Paul preached the Word and the heart of Lydia was opened by the Lord. That fellowship had lasted through the years "until now."

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6).

Being confident means being fully and firmly convinced. It means Paul was entirely sure of this. The good work to which he refers is that which the Holy Spirit had worked in the hearts of the saints at Philippi. In John 6:29 this is called, "the work of God." It is called "the work of the Lord" in I Corinthians 15:58 and "the work of Christ" in Philippians 2:30. He is saying that this work was begun by God, and he had a firm conviction that He would continue that work until "the day of Jesus Christ." His confidence was based upon the fact that this work was begun by God. Had it been by man there could be no hope of it lasting, for that which is started by man - there is no certainty that he will do the same thing tomorrow. "will perform it" means to finish it, to carry it forward to completion. God will never leave it unfinished. "until the day of Jesus Christ," the day when Christ returns for all his saints, that day when we "meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thess. 4:17). "Salvation is of the LORD" (Jonah 2:9). It is a work of God and Him alone. How thankful I am that my salvation is not left to weak, changeable me, but is in the hands of the all powerful, unchangeable God!

"Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and

confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace" (Phil. 1:7).

Paul is saying there is a reason why I think of you all. It is "because I have you in my heart." It means because of his great close love for them. In verse three he states they were in his mind; here he states they were in his heart. This church had stood with him every step of the way. They had stood with him in, "my bonds," when he was a prisoner, and "in defense and confirmation of the gospel." When he stood and defended himself of the charges made against him, they were behind him. The meaning of, "ye all are partakers of my grace," is, they had shared in the defense of the gospel. They had shared in all his troubles and trials, they were partakers of the same grace. They were fellow-workers with him in the cause of Christ. Is it any wonder that he had them in his mind and in his heart?

"For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:8).

"God is my record," my witness, how I long to see you, how much I desire your welfare. The word "bowels" as used here means the region of the heart and lungs. It was the region of the body that was regarded as the seat of sympathy and compassion, much as we regard the heart. What Paul is telling the members of the Philippian Church is that the same kind of love and concern that Jesus Christ has for them is the same kind of love and concern he has for them. The apostle Paul, a prisoner in Rome, facing possible death, recalls to memory his friends in far off Philippi... He thinks of them from the first day of their acquaintance, how they had labored and sacrificed with him in order to bring the gospel to the lost, What a joy it was for Paul to think of these dearly loved ones. What a close relationship Paul had with this church! Paul's joy, as he thought of these dear ones, was much greater than the suffering which he was undergoing. How we need that kind of love today for one another, the kind of love Paul had for his Philippian brethren, and they for him. That kind of love is "the tie that binds." Love is one of the evidences of salvation, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (I John 3:14). Love produces joy. Both are produced by the Holy Spirit, The fruit of the spirit is love, joy... (Gal. 5:22). Do we have that love? The closest bonds of friendship are those which come about by fellowship in Christian service. There may be other bonds which bring friends, yet it is service in the Lord's work which binds the hearts in Christian love. Paul, the prisoner in Rome, calls God as his witness of his great love for his friends in far off Philippi, who from the first day of their acquaintance had worked and sacrificed with him in all his efforts to serve Christ.

--To be continued.

"It is not great talents or great learning or great preachers that God needs, but men great in holiness."

-E.M. Bounds

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HOW TO

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would eliminate a lot of problems for us; more love for Christ Lord, increase our love for you. If we love Christ more then we are going to love His church more. The need is there. Love Christ; then love His church. A great need today! Then we need to love one another. Oh, let us love one another as Christ loves us.

Then we notice our text says we need faith. Most definitely we need faith. Doesn't the Scripture say that it is impossible to please God without faith? How can we expect to please Him if we don't recognize our need of more faith or we may say the better ability to express what faith we have. The apostles had faith but they wanted it to be better expressed. Read Hebrews chapter 11 to see the need of faith.

Then we need patience. Patience is also a virtue that seems to be lacking many times. If we are going to be better Baptists we need patience. We've got to be able to recognize the need of hanging on, never giving up; so hard to do sometimes. Oh, the shape things would have been in had Christ given up on us. No salvation from hell, no going to heaven. Thank the Lord He had patience. Notice II Peter 1:5-8. **"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."**

Now if we have recognized our needs there are three things we must do that will help us to be a better Baptist. We must conceive, believe, and achieve. We must have a great desire to be a better Baptist. We must have it ever present on our mind, in our prayers, and in our conversation. This is where our love comes in for the Lord. His church and His people. If we want to be a better Baptist, then we're on the right track. Next we must believe that we can be a better Baptist. If we don't believe we can be a better Baptist then we probably can't. This is where our faith comes in. Trust God to make us better. Once we have made up our mind and believe we can, then we must set out to achieve that desire.

How do we achieve that desire. We must be committed to it. Commitment is necessary for success. You may want to be a better Baptist. You may believe you can be a better Baptist, but without commitment we will never achieve it. We must do whatever it takes to accomplish that desire. Our whole being must be committed to achieving the result of being a better Baptist. We must be committed to God, to Christ, to His church, to His people.

Commitment requires sacrifice. It may not be easy to accomplish but it can be accomplished. We can become better Baptists. The saying goes something like this,

"The bigger the advertisy, the bigger the victory." Problems and difficulties will come. It will take a struggle, but the rewards will far outweigh the struggle. If we are ready to be better Baptists then there are certain things we must put into practice.

To be a better Baptist we must do the right things. This is so very important to accomplish what we want to accomplish. Let us pay close attention to doing the right things. The question may be, "What are the right things?" I'm sure that all of us could think of many things that one could do to be a better Baptist, but we want to look at just a few which I believe are vital to becoming a better Baptist.

First, the right thing to do is read the Bible. You will never be the best you can be unless you read the Bible. Now, I don't mean just skip around from book to book or front to back without any idea of what to read. A very good thing to do is pick a subject that you would be interested in finding out more about. Pick a topic then search the Scriptures that relate to that topic. Another good thing that you can do is read the Bible everyday as much as possible beginning with the first book of the Bible. A good Baptist will read his Bible just as regularly as he would eat a meal or anything else that he might take an interest in. Imagine how much better Baptists we would be if we took as much interest in reading the Bible as we do eating, working on our jobs, keeping our yards clean, spending time with our hobbies, or watching television. Why, we would be the best Baptist one could find. Read the Bible and take it to heart.

Next, I think that a good habit to get is that of reading good books that relate to the Bible. Never, never, never put a book written by man above the Bible. If it comes between the Bible and that book as to what to believe you better always believe the Bible. But it will never hurt to get the thoughts of a writer about a particular subject in the Bible. A good concordance is always helpful in locating Scriptures. There are many good books on different subjects; such as Baptism, Lord's Supper, the Church, works, salvation, etc. You should ask your pastor or someone to help you find the right writers for those subjects. It is good to get a schedule or plan together for reading books such as, one a day or one each week. However you choose read a book and compare it with the Bible for soundness.

Thirdly, and this is very, very important; pray often. Prayer is one of the most mis-understood, mis-used and un-used things around. Our praying should not be selfish as the Pharisee's was. We should in our praying ask for forgiveness of our sins, and ask for blessings not only on ourselves but for others to be blessed by God. Praying for one another will make us better Baptists. Praying for our pastor will make us better Baptists. Praying for our missionaries will make us better Baptists. Praying for the salvation of souls will make us better Baptists. How often it would benefit us and those around us if, instead of complaining about what they do or don't do, we would pray for them. I'm sure that someone thinks we should or should not be doing the things

we do sometimes. Let us pray for one another. Christ says to do this. Paul says to do this. Many say to do this. Oh, how we need to pray for our pastors that they may be able to freely preach the word; that they may be able to carry out their work. Pray that God will lift them up. Pray that God may even give them (maybe you) helpers in the work of the church. The time is coming and I believe may have already come that we need to be on bended knees daily, even hourly, for our churches. Let us all pray for the increase of our churches spiritually, financially, and numerically. Yes, we need to pray for all these things. Pray that God will lift our spirits up looking to Him for all things because nothing is impossible with God. The Bible teaches us that all things are possible with God. Are we with God? If we are true Baptists, we are. We can be increased through prayer and faith in that prayer. What does James 5:16 say? **"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."**

Another right thing to do; and it is also very, very, very, important, is to attend church regularly. Well, one might ask, "What is regular?" If I said any less than every time the church doors are open I would be wrong. When I am talking about being regular I don't mean be regular on Sunday morning and on Sunday night, missing other services. I don't mean being regular on Sunday and missing on Wednesday night. If your church has appointed times to be at services, you as a member are expected to be there. If you want to be a better Baptist, you will be. The Bible teaches us to be obedient to the Lord. The Lord gave His church authority to establish worship times. If we do not go to those worship times as we ought, we are being disobedient to the Lord. Your pastor needs your support, and one way you can support him is be at the church services like a better Baptist is supposed to be. Right? Your church needs your support. One way you can better support your church is be there when the worship services are going on. Don't you want to be a better Baptist? Attend church regularly!

Another very important right thing to do is witness for the Lord. Uh! Oh! Is that too Arminian sounding? Yes I said witness for the Lord. Listen to the Lord, **"A true witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful witness speaketh lies"** (Prov. 14:25). **"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things"** (Luke 24:47-48). **"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: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen"** (Matthew 28:19-20).

Yes, we need to tell others about Jesus Christ and His salvation. Ask people if they are saved. Ask people do they attend

church anywhere. Ask anything that might open the door to discuss the way of salvation. If you had just a few weeks ago eaten at a very good restaurant and the conversation came about a good place to eat, would you hold your peace or tell where that good restaurant was? Better yet, if you had a certain item that you wanted to sell and you wanted to sell it badly, would you tell other people you had it for sale or would you wait and hope that they would ask you if you had that item for sale? No, you would never sell it if no one ever knew it was for sale. We must tell people about Christ. We must invite them to church to hear the gospel preached. Listen to this, **"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!"** Romans 10:13-15.

Well, after all this, you say you don't have time. I know three things you can do to have more time; one, skip a meal; two, get up earlier; three, go to bed a little later. If our boss says, "I need you to get to work an hour earlier tomorrow for a special meeting", if you wanted to be a good employee like you should you would be there, wouldn't you? No excuse for being late for church services. If there was a good movie on TV you wanted to watch it would be no problem staying up to watch it. Why not take some of the same time each night and pray and study the Bible. Yes, we all want to be better Baptists. Why? So that God will be glorified through us. May the Lord bless you is my prayer.

JONAH

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for whom Christ died. Thus, that call is clear and very urgent because it has pleased God to save His own.

IV. The Reason For Jonah's Call

"Cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me" (Jonah 1:2b). Oh beloved, great cities are more often than not, filled with great wickedness. Look around and see what I am talking about. The size of the city does not necessarily indicate the greatness of its sin. But it does seem to indicate that the greater number of people in a given area leads to more corruption. We look around today in our cities and what do we find? Drugs, ungodly living, unnatural affections, lust, envy and a whole host of sins that the apostle Paul would call the fruits of the flesh in Galatians five. The God of heaven sees the wickedness of these great cities. He has not changed any from Bible days. Just as God hated sin then, so today He hates sin and will judge sin for what it is. That is one of the reasons why our God has called His servants into His ministry that they might expose their wickedness.

Has our God changed any? No! In days gone by our God has seen fit to judge those that lived a sinful life, whether they were His chosen redeemed people or lost unsaved individuals. The wickedness of Nineveh was great, and our God told Jonah to cry against her because of that sin. He had judged and totally destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of their sin. When God sent Israel back into the promised land from Egypt, He told them to destroy the people because of their wickedness. Indeed, if Israel had obeyed the Lord in this one area they may not have experienced the chastisement of God's hand upon them many years later. Our God has not changed, for He still judges evil as in days gone by. As He told Jonah to cry against the wickedness of the Ninevites, today God's man should cry against wickedness of his day. Some are not going to understand that, and yet, it is still our duty to cry as did Jonah. Oh beloved, wickedness of every kind must and should be exposed by those that claim that they love the Lord.

Conclusion:

In our study today we have noted the call of Jonah by our Sovereign God. God's call is without repentance, and yet not everyone that is called has obeyed the voice of God. It should be pointed out that God does not call into His ministry those that do not know Him as Lord and Saviour. Many there are today who have entered the ministry because someone else called and sent them forth. My pastor, bless his heart, he is now in glory, once told me, "Johnny, if you can do anything else beside preach the gospel, do it." For years I did not understand what he meant. I use to think that he was trying to keep me out of the ministry, but the truth of the matter was, he knew that if God had called, I would not be happy doing anything else. The call of God is so very special; yes, unless you have had that call upon your life and have answered it, you will not completely understand what I am saying. The dangers that God's men face are minor compared to disobedience to that divine call. If God has called, don't turn away as did Jonah. You may go in the opposite direction and refuse to follow the Lord's direction, but you can never get away from God. If God has called, then, it is God that will place you where He wants and when. God's timing is always right. We do not comprehend that at times, please believe me. We get discouraged, and because of that, we some times run ahead of God. But if our God is sovereign and He is, then He will place us where He wants and when. May God bless you.

ANNOUNCEMENT

There will be a Bible Conference at the Landmark Baptist Church of Rt. 1, Walnut Cove, N.C. (near Winston Salem) August 31 - September 2nd. Services will begin at 7:00 P.M. on Friday and at 9:45 A.M. Saturday and Sunday, and continue through the day on these last two days. Noon and evening meals will be furnished by the church. Many men familiar to T.B.E. readers will be among those speaking. The building is located beside the South Stokes High School between Mountain View Rd. and N.C.8. If travelling on US 52, take the RJR Moore Rd. exit. (10 miles or so north of Winston Salem). Travel east on this. One will run into the Mountain View Rd. (seems to be the same road). The church building is located about 8 to 10 miles east of U.S. 52. For further information call pastor Danny Davis at 919 994 2384. One may also call Herbert Cole at 919 983 2730 or John Shelton at 919 593 2147. I would urge you to attend this conference. I am certain you will receive many blessings thereby.