

## FAILURE'S HALL OF FAME

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"For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief" (Prov. 24:16).

Why have failures happened to me? What is the reason why Christians are still prone to failures? Why does God permit us to fail? We have observed through experience that when



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things go wrong we will always go wrong. At times our effort to provide a flawless activity suddenly becomes a failure. Despite the fact that we had covered all ways and means, planned enough in advance, delegated responsibilities, and followed up properly, things had gone wrong. The fact is that we are all subject

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## FOUR GREAT THINGS FROM GOD

by H.C. McSwain

"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (I Cor. 1:30-31).

I wish to speak on the subject of, four great things from God. Our text is clear in that it says unequivocally these four things are from God. They come as a result of Christ's death on the cross, and our exercising faith in Him as our sin bearer.

What are they? They are listed in verse 30, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. First, these are not things that can be necessarily seen with the naked eye. However, that does not negate the fact that we can very well see the results of these things in our every day lives.

I can imagine that many people would count their children, wife, husband, church, pastor, even their country as greater than the above named things. One reason for this is that husband, church, pastor, even these above named things are of a spiritual nature. One cannot find any of these things with a microscope or hear them with a stethoscope. Yet, they are just as real as if they were of a material nature.

Even though they are of a gift from God, this does not mean we

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

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## WILL KATHY EVER BE SAVED?

by Chris Burke  
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"And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will" (II Tim. 2:24-26).

Kathy is a humanist. She is against God and against His Christ. How she would desire to silence the tongues of God's children. How she despises the gentle sheep of God's pasture. Oh, Kathy, will you ever be saved?

Kathy is a real person, and she is alive today. We have painted

an awful picture of her, a picture in which most people who know her would say is a terrible mistake. She actually is a very nice woman, who would not intentionally harm a flea, judging by human standards. But, sad to



Chris Burke

say, Kathy's heart is hardened towards God. She was raised a Catholic and her parents died a tragic death. Rather than coming to God for comfort and security, she turned bitter in her heart

against God,

A friend of mine has a burden for Kathy's salvation. He claims that God has promised him that Kathy will be saved. Now Kathy has moved away, but his burden is just as strong. He keeps in touch with her by letters; he is not going to give up on Kathy; though her heart is as hard as ever. I would like to analyze this situation, and see what hope there is for Kathy, and for my friend.

Kathy represents a multitude of hardened sinners in the world today. Hers is no rare case. Kathy blames her tragic, sorrow-filled life on God. In her mind God is to be blamed for her parents death. She reasons that if God was able to prevent it, then He should have. To her, God is a tyrant, who takes pleasure in human suffering. How often is the natural response to human tragedy one of hostility towards God!

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## STUDIES IN ACTS

by Willard Willis

The fact that the people thought that the gods had come down shows that the people were idolaters. It shows that they needed Paul and Barnabas badly. It also shows that only God the Spirit could be effective with such a people. The same, of course, is true of all people; but it is pointed out more in the case before us.

Paul and Barnabas had visited a very dark place, and the extent of that darkness is seen by the action of the people. We know that "as a man thinketh, so is he."

The people were sure that Paul and Barnabas were gods who had come down to them in the



Willard Willis

likeness of men. The Spirit, in fact, who performed the healing,

had come down to them. He, of course, was not a god, but the God of heaven and earth.

I understand that it was not unusual for the people in the region of Lycaonia to believe that their gods had come down. I understand that the poems of Homer and Virgil are filled with accounts of such appearances. They believed their gods had to take on a human body before they could understand their needs.

"And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker." (Acts 14:12).

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## JONAH'S FLIGHT FROM DUTY Jonah 1:3

by John M. Alber, Pastor  
(This article is out of sequence.  
See earlier issues)

Last week we considered "The Great Commission" that Almighty God had given to Jonah. Thus, we had noticed four things in that study:

1. That God's Call is Always Sovereign
  2. That God's Call Often Presents Great Danger
  3. That God's Call is very Clear
  4. The Reason for Jonah's Call
- Now, tonight, let's turn our attention to Jonah's Disgraceful Flight!



John Alber

Jonah might be somewhat influenced by fear, indolence, and unbelief. But the chief reason for his flight seems to be intense love for his own, and deep hatred

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## REDEMPTION

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"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him" (John 17:2).

Of all the doctrines of grace or the system of theology known as the five points of Calvinism, I believe the last one to be received or believed is our subject, "Particular Redemption." This was true in my own personal experience, and it is true with the majority of those who classify themselves as Calvinists. There are those whom we believe are inconsistent that classify themselves as 4-point Calvinists. They will believe in man's total depravity, they believe in unconditional election, they believe in God's irresistible Grace, and they most assuredly believe in the Perseverance of the saints, but they cannot bring themselves to believe that God died just for the elect, for a remnant of the world's total population.

Why is this? If Particular Redemption is the last of the doctrines to be accepted although it is usually listed right in the midst of the five statements of the Calvinistic creed, there has to be a reason or reasons for it. I believe the most important reason is because the Bible itself uses some universal terms in connection with the atonement which if not studied in the light of the whole scope of revelation, gives the defender of Universal Redemption his so-

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## The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

## PRAYER HELPS A WHOLE LOT

"Ye also helping together by prayer for us...."

On August 7th I had an emergency appendectomy. My appendix had ruptured three days earlier. On September 2nd I had a second related surgery. On September 15th, after thirty nine days in the hospital, I came home. Oh, it was a time of weeping, rejoicing, and praising God. On September 23rd, I took the pulpit again. I preached the following sermon.

Paul had suffered much at Ephesus. He had faced many dangers. The Lord had delivered him

from them all. He states in my text that the people of Corinth had helped by their prayers.

I usually prepare my sermons a few to several days ahead of time. On August 5th, I did not have my evening sermon prepared. I was sick in the morning, but able to preach. I got worse during the day and called a brother in to preach for me. I was planning to preach this sermon that night. Now I feel that I know more about it and can preach it better than I could have at that time. I give God all the glory for bringing me through my sickness,

bringing me home, and bringing me back to my pulpit; but I also believe that prayer had much to do with it.

The Lord gives us many commands to pray. We sin when we do not pray. The Lord gives so many precious promises to prayer. The Lord gives many examples of what prayer has done for others. Brother and sister, if prayer did not help, if it was of no benefit, I am sure that the Lord would not have said so much about it in His precious Word.

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## PRAYER

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Prayer helped Bible characters a whole lot in Bible days. Jacob was returning home. He learned that Esau was coming to meet him with four hundred men. I am sure that Esau meant nothing good by coming with so many men. Jacob told the Lord, "I am afraid of him."

Jacob prayed all night to the Lord. The Lord told him that his name would now be called Israel, for he had power with God and men. The next day Esau met Jacob, embraced him, fell on his neck, and kissed him. Men's hearts are in the hands of our sovereign God and He turneth them whichever way He will. Oh, surely prayer helped Jacob a whole lot in this matter.

Did not prayer help Daniel when he was cast into the lion's den? What about the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace? Surely, we believe that prayer had something to do with these things.

In Matthew 8, a centurion came to Jesus in prayer for his servant. Jesus healed the servant. Prayer helped a whole lot. In John 4 a nobleman came to Jesus praying for his son who was very sick. Jesus spoke the word and the son was healed. Prayer surely helped a whole lot. In Matthew 15, a Syrophenician woman came to Jesus praying for her daughter who was grievously injured by a demon. Jesus seemed (not really) to turn her away saying that He

was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The woman, in deep humility and determined perseverance, stated that she was willing to be like the little dog who ate the crumbs that fell from the children's table. Her humility and perseverance in prayer brought deliverance to her daughter. Surely, prayer helped a whole lot.

Prayer helps the pray-er. How could it be otherwise. Can a child of God enter into His heavenly Father's presence, spend time there in communion, and not be helped? Communion is a vital (but often much neglected) part of prayer. I fear that we often hurry to the part of our prayer where we ask things for ourselves and others and do not take much of our prayer time for communion



Joe Wilson

with God. This ought not to be. We ought to take a proper proportion of our prayer time for sweet and blessed communion with our God. We will surely be helped thereby. If there were never received an answer to prayer, if no request we made were ever granted; we would still profit much from communion with God in prayer.

But requests are granted, and there are many things the pray-er might receive from God in answer to prayer. There is the forgiveness of sin, cleansing from that sin, and restored fellowship. Oh, we sin; we all sin. There are pretenders, deceived and deceivers, liars; but there are no sinless Christians. We all do, and should know, that we sin. This is a burden to our souls. We lose fellowship with the Lord and the joy of our salvation. Praise God, this does not have to long continue. There is forgiveness with God for His erring and sinning children. Oh, this is a great blessing the pray-er can receive.

The pray-er can receive strength in living for the Lord. Living for the Lord is a very important matter. Much depends on this for one's self, and for one's testimony before the world. Living for the Lord is a difficult thing. One cannot do this in his own strength. But strength can be obtained from the Lord for this. In answer to prayer one can be strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man, and can be strong in the Lord and the power of His might.

We will never in this life be sinless, but in answer to prayer one can surely obtain more and more victory over more and more sins. Let us declare a "prayer war" against the sins that bother us greatly in our life. In this way we can obtain more victory. I think it will be found difficult, if not impossible, to be defeated by a sin at the very time that we are praying against it - praying for God-given victory over it.

What pygmies we are compared to the giants we ought to be - we who have been saved a long time. Oh, had we been more faithful in prayer, surely we had grown

greatly by now. Babes in Christ are great blessings, but one should not remain such. One should grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord. Though other things will enter into this, it will be largely accomplished by much prayer.

Prayer can help the pray-er in the matter of knowledge and understanding of God's Word. We should ask the Lord to open our eyes that we might behold wonderful things in His Word. By prayer we can obtain knowledge of the promises and apply them to the circumstances of our lives. By prayer we can obtain knowledge of the precepts of God's Word and seek grace to obey them. By prayer we can come to know the deep things of God, the great doctrines of the Bible. I suggest that men believe heresy (saved men) because they have not truly prayed for understanding as to that matter. Can one be honest, be very desirous of knowing the truth, be willing to believe and obey the truth, pray earnestly for God to give knowledge of the truth, and still be in error? I think not. Yes, prayer can help the pray-er a whole lot.

Prayer helps the one prayed for a whole lot. We pray much for things for ourselves. This is proper. This is petitionary prayer. Then, surely most of us pray much for others. This is called intercessory prayer. Does this do any good? I am here to tell you that it does. So many prayed for me during my illness. I give God all the glory for what He did. I also believe that prayer had much to do with it. I would like to have a computer print-out on the prayers that went before the throne of grace with my name upon them during that time. Oh, it would be in the thousands. I thank God for every one of them.

I do not know how many friends called and told me they would pray for me. I finally had to have Katie unplug the phone when she left, as answering it became quite a burden. I received so very many cards from people assuring me of their prayers. I cannot tell you how many individuals, and whole churches were praying for me during that time. Does prayer help a whole lot? Well, I am here, feeling wonderful, back at work, back in the pulpit, rejoicing in the Lord - prayer, the prayers of a multitude of friends, surely helped me a whole lot. One preacher told me that he had prayed for me every day, and on at least two days had prayed all day. Brothers and sisters who were not preachers called and assured me of their prayers.

Joe asked me early in my sickness if I wanted him to mention it again to his church or keep it in the family. I told him that if he found a black holyroller who could reach the throne of grace, and who would pray for me, tell him to do it. Prayer is restricted to born again children of God - but thank God any and all of them can pray. I detest the doctrine of the "Priesthood men" (I am ready to deny them a legitimate right to the "Baptist" name) who say only Baptists can pray. Not so, beloved, not so. I yield to no man in my love for a Baptist church. I believe that every saved person should be a Baptist; but when one says that only Baptists can pray, that one is a non-Baptist heretic. All of God's children have the privilege of prayer. A church of God preacher prayed for me. A Methodist

preacher prayed for me and put me on the prayer list at his church. A Lutheran preacher prayed for me. SBC preachers prayed for me and put me on their church's prayer list. I do most sincerely thank God (and the individuals) for every prayer that went before the throne of grace on my behalf, and I witness that prayer helps a whole lot, helps the one prayed for.

Prayer helps in the salvation of the one prayed for. I do not know that I can prove it, but I believe it is true (at least in the vast majority of cases) that no one was

ever saved that someone had not prayed for. Oh, we who are saved do know that others prayed for us and witnessed to us (we are not Hardshells, and no one has ever been saved in the Hardshell way of not hearing the gospel). Yes, others were concerned about us and interested in our salvation, and doubtless many people prayed many prayers before we were saved and doubtless their prayers had a part in our salvation. Yes, I do believe in sovereign, saving grace. I believe in prayer also.

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Let me write some about what I consider to be the two most dangerous heresies of our day. You know that I believe the Universal Invisible Church to be a great heresy, but I speak not of that. You know that I believe Arminianism to be a great heresy, but I speak not of that. I do not know what order to place these two in as to which is the most dangerous so I will just number them as I write.

I believe Antinomianism to be one of these two most dangerous heresies of our day. I am in constant controversy with these heretics on this subject. These people are against the Ten Commandments of God. They teach that believers have nothing to do with these commandments; that they are in no wise under these commandments. Oh, our forefathers did not speak like this. They frequently preached on these commandments. They spoke of men as Sabbath breakers and commandment breakers.

Men are constantly telling me that we are not under the law. My standing answer to this is, "Which one can we break?" They usually begin stammering and stuttering at this point. If I ask, "Can I commit adultery?" They say no, but then tell me that I am not under the seventh Commandment. Well, I can but wonder at what can possibly be meant when I am told that I am not under a commandment, but I cannot do what that commandment forbids; and I wonder even more at the spiritual mentality of one who will say these things.

I can go through the Ten Commandments, asking if I can do these forbidden things. With only one exception I am told that I cannot, and yet I am told repeatedly that I am not under this law. The one exception is the Fourth Commandment. Most of these Antinomians will tell me that it is all right to break this one. This makes me wonder if the whole of Antinomianism is not an attack on the Fourth Commandment.

These men will tell me again and again that the Bible says we are not under law but under grace. This is true if you are talking about salvation; but then no one was ever under the law for salvation. This statement is untrue if you are talking about man's responsibility and accountability, or about the believer's rule of life. All men of all time, including men today, are as much under the Ten Commandments as were the Israelites of old.

Dispensationalism is responsible for much of this Antinomianism. A strange sovereign grace (?) mentality is the other parent of this wicked heresy. Somehow some men think that it dishonors the grace of God to teach that people saved by grace are yet under the law of God. The truth is that Antinomianism disgraces the grace of God and brings it into wicked misrepresentation.

I suspect that the old nature's love of sin is the real reason for all this cry of not being under the law. It is the old cry, "We will not have this Man rule over us." This is a dangerous heresy. I can but wonder at the genuine spirituality of men who take this position. Whatever that might be, they are dangerous heretics and are doing much to dishonor the grace of God and the cause of Jesus Christ.

The second of these most dangerous heresies is the Anti-Lordship Salvation of our day. These heretics teach that you can accept (I don't like that word) Jesus Christ as your Saviour. He will then save you eternally. You may live as bad or worse as you did before, but you are still eternally secure (I don't like that language as much as I used to). Our forefathers spoke of perseverance. They say that you can later on, if you want to, receive Jesus as Lord of your life. You don't have to do this. You are saved forever without it, but if you do you will have a happier Christian life and earn more rewards.

Oh, what a wicked heresy is this! No wonder those who believe this ignore, do away with, or re-define repentance until it has nothing to do with sin. Repenting of one's sin is a lost doctrine in the theology of these men. One can go on loving sin and living in sin, just so he accepted Jesus as his saviour.

One writer in this heretical camp tells us that repentance is just to change your mind about Jesus being the Messiah. Another tells us that one can be eternally saved with the dead faith of James 2: 14-26. Another tells us that the drunkards, adulterers, etc., of I Corinthians 6:9,10 are really in the kingdom of God. Oh, how far men will go in perverting, denying, and corrupting Scripture to uphold their vile and wicked heresies.

My friend, you must throw down your arms of rebellion, submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, or burn in hell forever and forever. Christ will not save rebels. One must cease his rebellion and bow to king Jesus or be lost forever.

I do not know which of these heresies is the worst, but I do verily believe that they are the two most dangerous heresies of our day. I verily believe that they are blinding multiplied millions and leading them to hell, even while they think they are eternally secure and sure for heaven. I warn all my readers against these heresies. Beware of them as you would beware of a wild animal, of the devil, and of the flames of hell. If you value your soul, flee from these heresies and from the heretics who teach them. May the Lord bless you.



*Poor indeed is the palace, where the Bible, with its stores of unsearchable riches, is not the grand treasure, and where the oil of gladness, while it pours out richly, is not the choicest comfort.*

## PRAYER

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Let us pray for the salvation of others.

Prayer helps in the spiritual blessings and needs of others. Oh, let us pray much for our brothers and sisters in Christ. Paul said, in my text, that the prayers of the Corinthians had helped him in his ministry. Let us pray much for others that God will supply their spiritual needs and give them many wonderful spiritual blessings.

Prayer also helps in physical blessings and needs. Let us pray for God's physical and material blessings on others. God is able, and prayer is an appointed way of obtaining things from God. Keep on praying. This is often, even usually, the greatest thing you can do for others. Sometimes it is the only thing you can do.

Why and how does prayer help? It is not in the prayer itself. There is no magic in the words we utter in prayer. The Catholic may say his beads, many may utter words thinking that they will be heard for their much speaking; but there is no special power in the prayer itself.

It is not in the pray-er. Why his very praying is a confession of his need and helplessness. Let no man consider himself as mighty in prayer. Let man be humble, realize his helplessness, and cry to God out of this realization.

Prayer helps a whole lot because it reaches the helper. God is the helper. Oh, He is a kind, merciful, loving gracious helper. He is always willing to listen to a sincere prayer. He is concerned about His children. We do not pray to One who does not care. We pray to One who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

God is a strong and powerful helper. His arm of power is able to do anything His heart of love and mind of wisdom moves and leads Him to do. His love is never frustrated (as ours often is) by a lack of power to do what He desires for the objects of His great love. He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think. We could never even imagine a prayer that God could not answer. He is all powerful; He is the Almighty God. Prayer helps a whole lot because it reaches this loving and powerful Helper.

What is the conclusion to my sermon? What other conclusion can there be than that I will pray more and more and more. If prayer helps a whole lot, and it surely does, then I will seek to pray more, receive more help for myself, and more help for others. I will pray more and more; I will have, by God's grace, more of the help that comes in answer to prayer.

Some words to the unsaved. My friend, prayer as such is not for you. You do not have the promise of the help that comes from prayer. I am not as adamant as probably most of our brethren are against any praying by the unsaved. I am not at all against the sinner expressing his desire for salvation to the Lord in prayer. I am totally against the mourner's bench. There is no need in one carrying on in weeping and praying for a long time at such a place. I do think that it is often easier and makes the matter

matter more real and definite for the sinner to express His faith in Christ in a word of prayer to the Lord.

I know that if one truly asks for salvation, he must truly have believed, and believing is already saved; but I will not split such hairs in this matter. The publican cried for mercy from God. I know about the word "propitiation." I know that the publican was trusting in the blood. Still he uttered this faith in a cry to God. What is wrong with others doing this today? I will not debate against the Scripture which tells one that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord will be saved. If this be heresy, crucify me for it. But, lost friend, still know that prayer is not for you, and that apart from repentance and faith you will never have the help that comes from prayer.

PRAYER HELPS A WHOLE LOT!

## FAILURE'S

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to failures. This is our very nature. It's a fact of life and one of the consequences of the fall of man. If man were not separated from his Creator, failure wouldn't exist. It's always the case that when failures happen we always blame someone. There are many folks to use as scapegoats and the Devil gets more credit than he deserves. When Adam failed, he blamed the woman God gave to him. When Eve was summoned, she blamed God because of the serpent in the garden of Eden.

Who hasn't failed? Failure alone is not the issue. The issue is what one does after his failure. Others are afraid of failure. But, we must accept failure and we must expect failure. When things go wrong, it often helps to look at the situation objectively. Failures could be a lesson for us and our stepping stone of growth towards maturity.

Not one of us is seeking to fail. But when our sincere effort fails, all things work together and God works in it to accomplish His purpose. I felt led to preach this message, with prayer the Lord will use this article to be a blessing to the readers.

First of all, great men in the Bible have failed. The life of Abraham and his faith in God became the file leader of the great spiritual host. Yet he has failed the Lord. His great mistake was to consent to Sarah's plan to aid the sovereign plan of God. Yet, through his failure his faith was remarkable. At the test of God he was willing to offer his only son. Abraham was known to be a father of faith. Moses, which describes his eminent personality of the Old Testament; as the great leader of God's people. He was known to be the meekest man on earth but the Lord was grieved when Moses disobeyed God's command. Yes, he failed God, but Moses attained greatness reached by none other on record. He became one of the heroes of faith. Jacob failed when he deceived his father Isaac and even to do obeisance to Esau, his brother, whom he had supplanted in the time of God's blessing. But on that dark night in the desert plains, he wrestled with an angel of the Lord until the breaking of the day. All the patriarch could do was to cling to

him and beg of the angel that he would bless him. God blessed him and Jacob was changed into Israel which means the prince of God. What about David? He is one of the most prominent figures in the history of the world; a mountain peak among Bible characters. His life was filled with noble deeds, fine aspirations and splendid accomplishments, yet he failed God. He took Bathsheba and killed his general, Uriah, which was the husband of Bathsheba. His failure was the stain of gross sin against God. Through his failure, David learned that one cannot hide from God. David's heart was repentant and he was mentioned as a man after God's own heart. Men in the Bible have failed. Paul failed. Peter failed the Lord many times. When Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit, God used him mightily. Who hasn't failed? Brother, you are not alone in failure. You and I have failed. You and I are under Romans 3:23. Only by the grace of God that enables us to rise above failure and by His grace we are what we are now.

Then secondly, God wants to teach us a lesson through failures. He wants us to know that He is a sovereign God and that failures will make us realize that we are nothing in God's sight. It is a lesson for us not to trust ourselves. But we murmur against God through afflictions and losses. We complain when we are deprived of those things upon which we have set our hearts. We are apt to regard our possessions as ours unconditionally. We feel that when we have prosecuted our plans with prudence and diligence that we are entitled to success; that by dint of hard work we have accumulated a competence we deserve to keep and enjoy; that when we are surrounded by a happy family, no power may lawfully enter the charmed circle and strike down a loved one; and if any case of disappointment, bankruptcy, or death actually comes, the perverted instinct of the human heart is to cry out against God. But the one who, by grace, has recognized God's sovereignty will be silent and bow to His will and acknowledge Him the right to do with us as seemeth Him good. If He chooses us to losses and failure even while the heart is bleeding at every pore, it will say "the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away."

spirit of our age is essentially that of boasting and glorying in the flesh. The achievement of man, his progress, his greatness and self sufficiency are the shrine at which the world worships today. But for a Christian who acknowledges God's sovereignty even when failures happen will make him humble and to the Lord's will he must bow. It is for him to determine under what circumstances a Christian shall live, whether in the midst of wealth and poverty; in health or sickness; in success or in failure. To really learn this lesson is by grace, to attain a high form in the school of the Holy Spirit. Failures are for our own good. "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28). God permits us to fail that He will work within us the shaping of our character. If you are hemmed

in by bad circumstances don't give into despair, self pity or bitterness. Trust God for the strength. Thousands can testify that their bad times changed their lives for the good. Yes, for a child of God, failures can be a stepping stone to produce good results. To Christians the difficulties of life are intended to make us better, not bitter. Failures are the lesson God wants us to learn and even when we think we have learned it, we discover again and again that we have to relearn it.

Then thirdly, failure is our growth in Christ. Experience in failure will make us wise in our decisions. It will clear our defined goals in life. "To what do you attribute your success?" asked the young executive as he dined with the elderly company president. "Two words," the president responded. "Good decisions." "But how do you learn to make good decisions?" the young man continued. "One word, experience." "But how did you get experience?" "Two words, bad decisions." Yes, good decisions will lead us from failure. To the worldly, failure doesn't make sense. But God allowed His children to fail so that in spite of failures we arise with a goal that is growth to spiritual maturity in making wise decisions. God will give us wisdom to keep moving on through failures. To take failure as final is to indeed be a failure. To see failure in the school of the Holy Spirit is to let failure bring growth in Christ. Nothing is clearer in the Bible than the guarantee of divine guidance to anyone who seeks and strives to get moving on for the growth. "...but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before" (Phil. 3:13). Brothers, keep moving on! God has led us and He will lead us in spite of failures. The Christian life must be marked by growth. We should resolve to keep making spiritual strides forward. By His grace we grow to build good habits and to overcome the bad ones. God allowed us to fail that He may fulfill His good plans for us. Through failure we can see in ourselves that we are unreliable to lean upon and we come to our Sovereign Lord whom we can trust. The Holy Spirit is shaping our lives to grow through failures that we may be softened, mature, gentle, thoughtful, courteous and attractive. Through failures, Christians accept God's discipline rather than resenting and rebelling against them. Spiritual maturity is seen in our reaction and not our action. How do we react when sorrows come? How do we react when our hopes are dashed? Do we get offended with God? Or do we use these experiences of losses and failures as our stepping stone?

And now lastly, if we fail go to God, He never fails. Your failures are under the blood of Jesus Christ. Yes, they are all covered by the sufficient, shed blood of Jesus Christ. Our sins, weaknesses and failures cannot separate us from the love of God. We learn that through failures we come to Him for forgiveness. Yes, we fail but God will never fail. "if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself" (II Tim. 2:13). The greatest saints have failed at times, but God's

unchanging faithfulness strengthens their flagging confidence. Even when we have our weak moments, the God of grace undergirds us. God remains faithful. God never fails. Who hasn't failed? There's only one - Jesus Christ! In His perfection He laid down His life to cover the failure of us all. May God bless you. Amen.

## FOUR

(Continued from Page 1)

are not obligated to take them seriously and to work at developing them to a more perfect state. For example, even though we are counted as righteous in God's eyes for Christ's sake, we are accountable as to how we live our daily lives. To put it in other words, this does not give us a license to sin. In recent times, there has been a lot of discussion of our relationship to the law of Moses. Some say we are obligated to keep the moral code, while others say not so.

Certainly we are not to keep the law of Moses for salvation but to say we are not governed by the moral rules of the law seems tantamount to saying we have no obligation to keep the moral code, and looks a little self defeating to me. Perhaps it is mostly a matter of semantics.

Also, we need to keep in mind that we have a conferred righteousness and a practical righteousness which is seen in our every day lives by our conduct. The conferred righteousness, along with the other three things already mentioned, is what our text is talking about. Upon exercising faith in Christ, God confers His righteousness on us. It is a gift. It will never change. However, the practical righteousness is changing constantly. Paul speaks of working out our own salvation with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12). God gives us salvation and it begins to work in our lives. Failure to distinguish between the two different aspects of salvation has caused a lot of confusion. This is also true in regards to righteousness. It is something like when a baby is born, that is only the beginning, it begins to grow and develop.

### I. WISDOM

The first thing mentioned here is wisdom. Our text says He is made wisdom unto us. He becomes our wisdom. Well, does this mean that the moment I am saved I suddenly become the smartest person in town? Yes, and no. Yes, in that my faith has been firmly placed in Christ and His substitutionary death on the cross, and this sets me apart from the ordinary of the world. God no longer sees me as the fool that I once was. And no, in the sense that I am now able to make a lot of money, speak several languages, solve all my and other's problems, etc. As one writer puts it: there is a positional and practical side to this wisdom.

On the other hand, I now need to pray for the practical wisdom of God to be gradually given to me as I need it. In fact, James instructs those who lack this wis-

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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

### Explain Mark 13:32?

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Mark 13:32: "But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Well, Daddy has done it to me again. He has sent a question back to me that I sent to him. I have called him and told him not to ever do this again, but I doubt he will listen. I am just so happy that he is doing better and is home from the hospital that right now he can do anything he wants. Please continue to pray for his complete recovery. Now, I guess I had better try and give an answer to this question.

I am sure we are in agreement that the "day" Christ had reference to, is the glorious day of His return for His elect. Oh, what a day that will be. The question is: How can Christ not know the day of His return since He is the omniscient God. My answer is: the same way in which He can increase in wisdom and knowledge. I would urge anyone who has a set of J. C. Ryles, Expository Thoughts on the Gospels to read him on this subject. He is brief, but I believe very helpful. He seems to concentrate on the fact that we, as mere humans, will never be able to fully understand the division in the person of Christ. Our minds cannot comprehend how He can be both the Son of Man and the Son of God. We cannot understand the division of those two natures. How God can learn, thirst, and suffer is beyond our comprehension. We know that He did much of this as a man. I would not attempt to try and explain this. I just know the Bible teaches this, and that is good enough for me. I have said all that to say this. I believe that Jesus is here speaking as a man. The human part of Christ did not know the hour. Christ, as the son of David, did not know the day. I do believe that Christ the Son of God did and does know the day, hour, minute and second of His return. This is the only answer that I can give that I think is consistent with the rest of the Bible and in particular consistent with the character of God. Jesus, here speaks from His human side, not His divine side. Again, I add that this is indeed a great mystery. Then again, our God is so much greater than we are, that we should not marvel at these mysteries.

In closing, just let me say that the main point of these words of

Christ is to prepare and warn His people to be watching and ready for His return. May God help us in doing this. May God bless you.

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"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." (Mark 13:32)

We need to note three things about Jesus at the time of this statement in answering this question. 1. Jesus was indeed divine. He was the second person of the Godhead. He was fully God and as such, had equal knowledge and participation in all things from eternity past. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:" (Philippians 2:6) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." (John 1:1-3) 2. Jesus had emptied Himself (made Himself of no reputation) as He came to earth when He veiled His glory and took on Himself a true, genuine, but sinless human nature. "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:" (Philippians 2:7) 3. Jesus practised a self-imposed limitation to His human knowledge from the divine, in that He knew and spoke only those things given Him from the Father. He lived to please the Father, speak and do those things given Him of the Father. "I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him." (John 8:26,28,29) Jesus spoke the words in Mark 13:32 as the Son of man approximately two days before the crucifixion on the Mount of Olives in response to the question from four of the disciples. He told them what God the Father had

revealed to His humanity through the Spirit. At that time, He did not humanly know the precise day of His (the Messiah's) return. After suffering in His humanity and finishing His work on earth, Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father. Jesus gave to the apostle John on Patmos, His revelation concerning the last days which John wrote down for the churches. John, "Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw." (Revelation 1:2) Jesus at this moment, I am sure, knows the day and the hour of His return. We do not. We are told, "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is." (Mark 13:33) It is difficult to believe that sleep is filling the eyes of many saints as we draw near to His coming. Let us not be among that sleepy number, but be found watching and praying.

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"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son but the Father" (Mark 13:32).

The phrase, "...neither the Son, but the Father..." gives us trouble until we realize that while Jesus Christ was the eternal Son of God, who was all wise, Who had all knowledge, yet He "...was made of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:3). This tells us that He became man, He "...took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself..." (Phil. 2:7, 8). As man He took on a human nature. In His human nature He, "...increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52). As man, He grew in knowledge, as a human His knowledge was limited in scope, as human knowledge is not unlimited. He spake as a man. As man, He drank, ate, slept, wept and walked. He became weary. As a man He was tempted (tested) in all points as we. In His human nature, He "...became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8).

As man, in His human nature, Christ Jesus did not know when this future event was to take place. Does it not seem strange that Christ, the Son of man, did not know "the day or the hour," yet we have men today that tell us they know the day, the hour, even the minute when this will take place? Do they

know more than Christ did in His human nature?

As the request is to explain Mark 13:32, it seems to me that what Christ is teaching here is that no one (not even the wise men of our day) know the day or the hour, we are told, "Watch ye, therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch" (Mark 13:35-37).

## FOUR

(Continued from Page 3)

dom, to pray for it, and God will give it liberally (James 1:5-6). This teaches there are several different kinds of divine wisdom. The instantaneous positional wisdom, the kind that is gained little by little for every day living, and a spiritual wisdom.

In regards to a practical spiritual wisdom, this comes by study of the Scriptures. The only reason you and I are not caught up in the common spiritual errors of the day is due to the fact we have studied and realized the wisdom of God as expressed in the Scriptures. I know that salvation is of grace and therefore wholly of God; I know that a N.T. church is local and not universal; I know that baptism and the Lord's supper are not meritorious, and many other things which are too numerous to discuss in detail here, and not properly a part of this discourse.

So we would have to conclude that being genuinely converted does not necessarily exclude one from falling into all sorts of hurtful errors due to the lack of practical spiritual wisdom. But when we think of all the millions who are caught up in these errors, we need to be very grateful to God for His wisdom that has been given to us. "but of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom..."

### II. RIGHTEOUSNESS

Righteousness is simply to be without sin of any kind. Only One was able to do that and that was Christ. On the other hand, we are anything but righteous. Seeing how demanding God is, how can man attain the righteousness required by God? Of course, the answer is in our text: He, that is Christ, is made (becomes) righteousness to us. Upon our expression of faith toward Christ as our Savior, this righteousness is conferred upon us. Now God sees us as pure and without sin. This is positional, not actual. My flesh is no better today (actually it is worse) than the day I was saved. Yet, I am declared righteous in God's sight. This is an astounding truth!

This is also referred to as imputed righteousness. In Romans 4:6, we read: "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." The word impute can also be translated as reckoned or counted. We could paraphrase it by saying there are certain people whom God reckons righteous, not on the basis of any righteous act on their part, but rather on the

act on their part, but rather on the basis of their faith in Christ.

Paul also states it negatively in Romans 4:8: "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Not only will God impute righteousness to certain people, but He refuses to impute sin to their account. Just reading that verse, we have to conclude there are certain people to whom God will not, under any circumstances, ever charge with sin. And who are those people? Earlier, in verse 3 of this same chapter, we are told that faith is counted for righteousness. Those who have exercised faith in Christ are those people.

To sum up: Once we have exercised saving faith in Christ, we are counted righteous in God's sight, never to have any more soul condemning sin charged to our account.

By example, we see this illustrated well in the account of the prodigal son. Certainly, this boy did not deserve any consideration at all after doing his father as he did, yet he was not only received with open arms by his father, but he was treated with great honour.

This can only be understood in the light of our previous discussion of imputed righteousness. It is important to note that he was uncommonly grateful to his father. No true believer can ever be any less than that.

However, there are righteous acts as opposed to self righteous acts. For example, Jesus referred to baptism as a righteous act. He says: "...Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15). The difference between a self-righteous act and one that God considers truly righteous, is our motive. Do we, for example submit to baptism to help ourselves on to God, or to follow in the steps of Christ? We could apply this same rule to any act done in the name of the Lord. Of course, one who serves the Lord out of a pure motive of obedience, and not one of self-aggrandizement, will be, according to the Scriptures, rewarded accordingly.

But even these rewards, given for righteous acts, will be "on loan," so as to speak, because we will all cast our crowns (representing rewards) at His feet, thus returning them to their rightful owner (Rev. 4:10). He not only saves us by grace, but graciously allows us to "earn" rewards that are based on righteous acts, motivated by the grace of God! In the final analysis, all will sing "Amazing Grace" in heaven and no one will be out of tune. I know a lot of folk who will have to change their theology soon if they intend to sing in that choir. I thank God for falling in with men who taught me about the true grace of God, and I have been singing that tune for many years and don't anticipate any problems integrating into that great throng. Do you? "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us... righteousness..."

### III. SANCTIFICATION

This is a word that seems to scare some people. It simply means to be set apart for some specific purpose, and in this passage, set apart for the use of God. This definition pertains both to animate and inanimate objects. It

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## The Baptist Examiner Forum II

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

What is it to worship God in spirit and in truth?

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"Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:22-24). Most people do not know what they worship, or even why, for that matter. I know that they will say that it is God they worship, but the form their worship takes will most emphatically deny what they say. Worship is defined as an act of homage or reverence to God. Is a methodical, repetitive, structured group of prewritten prayers and responsive readings classified as worship. Apply the definition to the popular religions of today. Everything that "churches" do today is usually based on tradition and custom and not on the word of God. Worship is approached as a ritual that follows a prescribed plan at all times. This is what Christ told the woman of Samaria. "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father" (verse 21). He was going to reveal to her what worship was and how it was to be carried out.

He said, "we know what we worship". This included those that were His followers at that time, and those that would follow Him in the future. Know speaks of a fullness of knowledge concerning the subject of worship. The subject and the direct object of His worship was His heavenly Father. Worship does not have to be in a specific place at a specific time to pay homage or reverence to God. There are times that it can be, but it must be by the proper method of worship. During the time of Christ the hour came, and now is when true worshippers must worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father seeks true worshippers to worship Him, but it must be His way, in spirit and in truth. These are the two essentials of true worship.

In Spirit: Worshipping in spirit refers to that which is inward. It is the point of contact between God and man. Worshipping in spirit deals with a communion with God on a one to one basis. It distinguishes between that which was referred

to as a place of worship, or a form of worship. True worship does not have to be in a form or in a place, it must be on a level of communication between the spirit of the inner man and the spirit of God. The spirit is the highest as well as the deepest part of our humanity. It is the spirit by which we receive the adoption, and the witness that we are the children of God. "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. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God" (Rom. 8:15-16).

In Truth: This deals with that which is outward. Truth helps us to distinguish between false concepts that are presented daily. Truth is the concept that will be used to judge all things. Truth provides assistance in gaining a spiritual sense with the object that is worshipped. Truth is that which provides a factual conception of who and what God is. Through the truth we can see the Father in Jesus. "Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" (John 14:8-9). Through the truth the Father is known in Jesus. "All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father: and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him" (Luke 10:22). There is no other way to worship.

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God is a Spirit, which means that He is not a material being. God, being a Spirit, is not seen and cannot be seen. We cannot worship God with our nature, for our nature is sinful. We cannot worship God with our eyes because we cannot see God, because He is a Spirit, or spiritual being. We do not worship God by sight, but by faith.

To worship God in spirit is to worship Him with our inner person, with our soul. We worship God with our soul and with that nature that God has given His children by regeneration.

To worship God in spirit is to worship Him with our hearts. The heart is the seat or center of

affection. Love comes from the heart. God has shed abroad His love in our hearts. To worship God in spirit is that adoration and praise of God which comes from the heart of His people wrapped up in that love wherewith He hath loved us.

God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit is the creator of heaven and earth and the Saviour of the souls of the elect of God and so He is deserving of our worship. To worship God in spirit is to worship Him in the truest sense with our souls.

God is our benefactor, He is our protector, our leader, our guide and our all. He is all truth and we must worship Him in truth. All true doctrine comes from Him. There is no way that one can worship God in truth except by and with the truth. No one can honor God with false teaching. That which is not the truth is a dishonor to God. To teach doctrines that are not according to God's Word is dishonoring to God, to His name, to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the Holy Spirit.

To worship God in spirit and in truth is to worship Him according to the Word of God. His Word is truth. We must teach the way of God in truth, (Matthew 22:16).

Pilate asked Jesus about the truth, "Pilate saith unto him, What is truth...?" (John 18:38). But Pilate turned away from Christ and never learned the truth while he was in this world.

To worship God in spirit and in truth is to worship Him in all of His attributes with all of our strength, our mind, our heart and our soul.

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First of all let us note some false ways to worship the Lord which is not worship at all. Many think that they worship the Lord by screaming and hollering with all kinds of movements, like running up and down the aisle, clapping the hands, raising the hands, even stomping the feet. I think I have witnessed them all. However, in all of this I did not feel the Spirit of God. I Corinthians 14:40 says, "Let all things be done decently and in order". We do not have any account where the members of the New Testament Church did any of these things.

Worship is not reading the so-called Apostles creed, or reading of prayers, or making the sign of the cross. Worship is not just going to church and sitting there looking around, or aggravating the one sitting next to you by whispering. This shows that you

did not come to worship at all. I Timothy 3:15 says, "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."

How should we worship God? In spirit and in truth. First, we must be saved in order to worship God in spirit, the Spirit of God does not indwell a lost person, therefore, he cannot worship the Lord. Paul tells us in Romans 8:8 that they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

We cannot worship God in truth unless we know the truth. Many today are trying to worship God who do not know the truth, they have a form of worship which satisfies the flesh, but misses true worship altogether. Worshipping God is to be saved and knowing the truth about God and His love and plan and purpose in your life and in this world. Going to church, a true church, taking part in the singing, listening to a good gospel message which magnifies God and places man down where he should be. Paul says, there is none good, no not one. God speaks through His Word, our souls are fed through reading and hearing preaching and teaching from His Word.

Beloved, this is worshipping God in spirit and in truth.

## FOUR

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has no "living without sin" connotation (can you imagine an inanimate object living without sin?). Though there has been a lot of confusion in the past on the meaning of sanctification, whatever meaning one ascribes to it, the simple fact is, our text says we have it reckoned to our account. The writer of the book of Hebrews expressed it thusly: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10:10).

On the other hand, it does put a responsibility on the individual that is reckoned sanctified. We are to live separated lives down here on this old earth. In our day, that seems to be a little too much to ask, but that is the clear teaching of the Scriptures. One example will suffice: "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (II Tim. 2:21). "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us... sanctification..."

### IV. REDEMPTION

This term might be better understood by the word delivered. We are reckoned as delivered by the death of Christ. That is, delivered from all condemnation. I don't have to worry about my future state (or for that matter, my present state). To put it another way, I am, by the death of Christ on the cross, and my divinely exercised faith in His death, guaranteed to be delivered into the presence of God at some time in the future. In these days, we hear a great deal about "futures" on the

stock market. These are contracts made to buy and sell some particular commodity, at some specific price in the future. God made a contract with His son and He agreed to deliver "futures" (that is you and me) at some time in the future, at a certain price, and what a terrible price! "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us... redemption:"

Often times I try to find one word that fairly sums up a whole discourse such as this. I would have to use two in summing up this message: "Complete" amply describes what He has done for us, but I can't resist adding "hallelujah!"

## JONAH

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to a heathen country. As already noted in a previous study he was reluctant to offer mercy to Nineveh, and desired its destruction as an enemy. Whatever leads to prejudice binds the mind, sours the temper, and degrades the man of God.

### I. The Flight from Duty is Not Departure from God's Control

Jonah believed in the Divine omnipresence of God, and yet, he did not cast off all regard for God for he knew what the Psalmist had said, "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee" (Psa. 139:7, 12). Furthermore, in his hatred for his enemy, the Ninevites, Jonah sought to relieve himself of this duty by quitting the land of light and religious ordinances. No doubt, Jonah did not expect to go where God was not, but he had hoped that God would leave him alone where he was going. His creed was far better than his conduct. Jonah was willing to leave the field of action and go to the place of retirement. How many there are today like Jonah; that is, the call of God upon their life and yet, they have chosen the finer things of life because the ministry was too painful for them. God help them!

How many there are today like Jonah that would rather flow with the crowd than stand for the truth of God's Word. They know about the truth of God's elective grace, the depravity of sinful man, the working ministry of the Holy Spirit of God within the elect, the particular redemption of God (Jesus Christ died for His own, the elect), and the preservation of the saints but because the world does not accept them, like Jonah, they just neglect them, or even preach the opposite to be accepted. But then, let's not stop there, for many of God's people have felt the call of God upon their life, and yes, like Jonah, re-

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## JONAH

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fused to answer that call. We speak about Jonah's flight from duty and condemn his actions as such, and yet we go on in the same contempt when we refuse to obey the Word of God.

Now, I can understand that, so far as the lost is concerned! The ungodly person feels miserable, shuns godly company, and stifles impressions by fleeing into business, worldly society, and amusements. He can not help himself nor does he have a desire to change. But the child of God that has been made alive by the quickening of the Spirit of God not only has been given life, but has been given by God the ability to serve the God of Heaven. Oh yes, that man still has his old depraved nature, but with the giving of life God has given man a new nature. The Bible clearly teaches us that. "...if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17).

Listen, the believer knows his duty, but will he perform that duty? God help us as His dear children to not only see the truth, but to obey His Word and especially, His call. Why? It should be pointed out that when fear gets hold of disobedient men, God meets them in the way, and therefore, it is impossible to escape the chastising hand of God. You see, beloved, the God of heaven is still in control of this old worlds affairs. You may not obey the Lord, but if you remember what John the Baptist had told the Pharisees and Sadducees, you would know that God will always have a voice. "...for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Matt. 3:9). But lets not stop there, for as God was able to stop Jonah in his tracks and send him on his way, so today, God is able to call and place those men that He calls where He wants them.

II. Favorable Circumstances in Department from God do not always lead to a Successful Issue.

Oh Beloved, circumstances favored Johan's design and gave him an opportunity of escape. "He found a ship going to Tarshish" (Jonah 1:3). As that vessel quickly sailed from port unto its destination Jonah thought he was leaving his trouble behind him. But all of that was in vain! The ready way is not always the right way. The book of Proverbs tells us, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Pro. 14:12). Do we not see here the "Man of God" in the greatest hurry of his life to get away from his responsibility? The worst plans may prosper for a short time, but such prosperity ends in storms and darkness. Oh beloved, talk not of God's divine providence in an evil course - say not when tempted that you are tempted of God. Many a person in life felt it far better to go their own way than to submit to the will of God. Then, when the is-

sues of life caught up with them, man blames God for their troubles. How foolish! Just as Jonah had no idea that his flight from duty and responsibility would land him in the belly of a great fish on the bottom of the sea, you and I have no idea where our rebellion might take us. Don't blame the outcome on God; rather, place it where it properly belongs, our sinful disobedience!

No doubt, Jonah in his mind could vision what this trip to Tarshish could do for him. He would not have to worry about the Ninevites, nor the people around him wondering why he had not obeyed the Lord, and perhaps, the Lord just might forget those wicked sinful heathen, and his duty. How many there are today that have been saved by the sure mercy of God and called into the Lord's service who have found some lame excuse not to obey that call.

III. Departure from God is more Expensive than Obedience to God

Oh beloved, Jonah paid the fare! He had no idea of the cost of that fare! What he thought and what he got was two different things! If only he had stopped and counted the cost, Jonah would not have found himself on the bottom of the sea in the fish's belly. But then, when we depart from God and His known will in our life, there is no telling where we just might end up. There are many ways in which we can depart from God's will in our life. Sin is always expensive, and beloved, it will draw upon our purse many times over. The Lord told the children of Israel through Moses that, "...behold, ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. 32:23). The Apostle Paul put it this way, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

Listen, whether we are lost sinners or sinners saved by God's grace, when we sin against God we will pay the fare! Mark it down, the God of Heaven keeps records and He will not permit sin to go unchecked. Oh yes, the Lord has forgiven us all our sins and nailed them on the cruel tree of Calvary where His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ died for the chosen elect of God. The believing sinner is on his way to heaven, but that does not and has never given the redeemed a license to sin; in fact, Paul tells us that God will chasten His own. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12:6). Paul informed the church at Rome, "WHAT shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein" (Rom. 6:1-2)?

## REDEMPTION

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called "proof texts" that Christ died for all men. The vast majority of those who believe in Universal Redemption have never made a study of the restrictive passages of the Word that informs us that Christ had a particular people in mind when He gave His life a ransom for many. It is easy for proponents of universal atonement as well as for those who believe in

particular redemption to make offhand appeals to a few texts, but this whole matter as to the extent of the atonement must rest upon what redemption or atonement really means. When we examine the Scriptures we find that the glory of the cross of Christ is bound up with the effectiveness of its accomplishments. Christ redeemed us to God by His blood, He gave himself a ransom that He might deliver us from all iniquity.

The second reason why this doctrine seems to be the last received is because of the other name by which it is known. Our message title is "particular Redemption," but most of the time this doctrine is called "Limited Atonement." Now, it is very easy to raise prejudice against a doctrine by attaching to it a disrespectful and misunderstood title. Whether the expression "Limited Atonement" is good or not, we must reckon with the fact that unless we believe in the final restoration of all men we cannot have an unlimited atonement. Everyone who professes to be a Christian believes in a limited atonement! Let me repeat -- everyone who says he or she is a Christian will limit the atonement! You will either limit the power of the atonement or the extent of the atonement and we will attempt to prove this in the course of our message. C. H. Spurgeon says something along the same line in his famous sermon on Particular Redemption. Listen to the famous Baptist preacher, "We are often told that we limit the atonement of Christ, because we say that Christ has not made a satisfaction for all men, or all men would be saved. Now, our reply to this is, that, on the other hand, our opponents limit it: we do not. The Arminians say, Christ died for all men. Ask them what they mean by it. Did Christ die so as to secure the salvation of all men? They say, 'No, certainly not.' We ask them the next question -- Did Christ die so as to secure the salvation of any man in particular? They answer, 'No.' They are obliged to admit this, if they are consistent. They say, 'No; Christ has died that any man may be saved if -- and then follow certain conditions of salvation. We say, then, we will go back to the old statement, Christ did not die so as beyond a doubt to secure the salvation of anybody, did He? You must say No; you are obliged to say so, for you believe that even after a man has been pardoned, he may yet fall from grace and perish. Now who is it that limits the death of Christ? Why, you. You say that Christ did not die so as to infallibly secure the salvation of anybody. We beg your pardon, when you say we limit Christ's death; we say, 'No, my dear sir, it is you that do it. We say that Christ so died that He infallibly secured the salvation of a multitude that no man can number -- who through Christ's death not only may be saved, but are saved, must be saved, and cannot by any possibility run the hazard of being anything but saved. You are welcome to your atonement; you may keep it. We will never renounce ours for the sake of it.' As usual Mr. Spurgeon was absolutely correct!

We wish to do three things with our subject. We attempt to show that (1) Particular Redemption Explains An Apparent Discrepancy; (2) Particular Redemption Honors Christ's Death, and (3) Particular Redemption Exalts The Plan and Purpose of God.

I. Particular Redemption

Explains An Apparent Discrepancy.

The casual reader of the Bible opens the Book and reads, I Timothy 2:4 "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth." I Timothy 2:6 says, "Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." Titus 2:11 informs us, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." Hebrews 2:9 states, "That He (Christ) by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." II Peter 3:9. "God is long suffering to upward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." John 1:29 reads, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 4:42, "We know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." II Cor. 5:19, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." I John 2:2, "And He (Christ) is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." There are some other verses but these will suffice to show that this casual reader of the Bible has come to the conclusion that Christ died for everyone, he classifies himself as a believer in Universal Redemption. But then on another occasion the same reader picks up the Bible and reads, "The Son of Man came to give His life a ransom for many". (Matthew 20:28). "So Christ was once offered to bear the sin of many." (Hebrews 9:28). John 10:11, "the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." "Christ died for us" and "God delivered Him up for us all" and the context certainly proves that in these and like passages the saints, the elect, the called of Christ Jesus are the ones addressed. "Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save His people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21). "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." (John 17:2). "I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me; for they are thine." (John 17:9). Now this casual reader of the Bible has changed his mind -- God must be speaking about dying and saving just a certain group, now he is not so sure universal redemption can be defended. What about this apparent discrepancy? Surely the Bible does not contradict itself.

We honestly believe the only way these two sets of Scripture can be understood is in the light of Particular Redemption. The apparent Universal terms can be explained within the framework of Limited Atonement, in other words, Christ died for all (the elect), Christ is the Saviour of the world (of believers), Christ tasted death for every (son) but the restrictive terms can never be fully explained away by those who hold to universal redemption. If a person approaches Holy Writ with

prejudice, his mind is closed against its teachings. Someone has rightly said, "Modern theology is largely based upon the sound rather than the sense of Scripture."

A. W. Pink wrote the truth when he said, "The enmity of the serpent against the Seed of the woman has been inveterate throughout the ages, and perhaps at no other point has he so persistently attacked the glory of Christ as in the doctrine of the atonement. While it is impossible for Satan to either undo the finished work of the Saviour, or to destroy any of its fruits, yet he is permitted to misrepresent it, and nowhere has his subtlety been more exercised and manifested than in the means employed here. He has indeed appeared as an "angel of light." His very attempts to discredit the atonement of Christ have been made under the guise of magnifying it, and that is why he has succeeded in getting many men reputed as "orthodox" to do some of his foul work for him.

Which seems to have greater tendency to exalt Christ: to say that He died because He desired and sought to make possible the salvation of all mankind or to say that He died only for God's elect, the "little flock"? Which seems to display the more His compassion for sinners? Which seems to bring out the more the value of His blood; to say that it avails only for the few? or to say that its merits are so infinite that every member of Adam's race would be redeemed did he or she put their trust in it? The very fact that everyone of us would answer the questions in the wrong way until we are taught aright from Scripture, not only evidences the worthlessness of carnal reasoning upon spiritual things, but also shows to what extent our minds can be duped by Satan.

It takes but little reasoning to come to the conclusion that if you believe that Christ died for all men then the success of God's costly undertaking hinges on the creature's will -- if a sinner will believe; but surely that can never be the measure of God's honor. Which exalts Christ the more? Which demonstrates the more the value and efficacy of His atonement: that which effectually secures the actual salvation of every one for whom it was made? or that which ends in the great majority of those for whom He shed His precious blood being eternally punished in hell? Can you not see it is Particular Redemption although spoken against that is more glorifying to the Redeemer?

But someone keeps insisting, "What about some of these universal terms such as 'all,' 'all men,' 'world' and 'whole world' that appear in connection with the atonement? If God did not die for everyone why did He use these words in connection with the atonement? God knows the carnal mind! If Primitive Baptists and Hyper-Calvinists have perverted the Scriptures the way they are written now, with hardly any missionary emphasis, just think what man would have done if God had used "sheep," "elect," "called" or "his people" every time the atonement was mentioned. I think these universal terms can be easily understood if you ask one simple question, "Do they mean all without exception or all without distinction?" Those who believe in Particular Redemption are not talking about a pious few, but a multitude that no man can number out of every kindred, tongue, peo-

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## REDEMPTION

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ple and nation. But this multitude will still be limited -- they will be exactly what our text in John 17:2 says -- those who have been given to the Son by the Father.

### II. Particular Redemption Honors Christ's Death

Right after I was saved there was a verse that bothered me. It was John 1:29 "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." This was before I knew anything about theology or any interpretation of the Greek word, "kosmos" for our English word world. I asked myself this question, "If Christ took away the sin of the world, why does anyone go to hell?" Now that verse has bothered a lot of people and some have attempted to answer the question thus. He merely took away the guilt which attaches itself to the world or human race through the sin of Adam. Emory Bancroft adopts this view and goes on to say, "no member of the human race is lost because of the guilt of Adam's sin, for that guilt was completely and perfectly removed by the death of Christ."

Hold on a minute! If this means "Adamic sin: and it was taken away by the Lamb of God so that no member of the human race is guilty of it, why does the Bible say that the Gentiles or nations are all under sin? Why is it that the believer is bidden not to continue in sin; nor to let sin reign in his body and that the wages of sin is death? If Christ took away the guilt of the Adamic sin what about our other sins? For it is a cinch that even believers still sin. Are these sins not the result of Adams first sin? Universal Redemptionists cannot bypass Romans 5 easily. The guilt and depravity of that first sin extends from root to branch to fruit. If the Adamic sin is removed, then so are all the consequences brought about by that sin. But if Christ only took away the Adamic sin, then how are our other sins atoned?

The only answer to John 1:29 is Particular Redemption. The Lord Jesus really took away the sin of the world, the sin of the world of believers. The Bible teaches there are two worlds. The world of the ungodly (II Peter 2:5) and the world of believers (II Corinthians 5:19; John 6:33). You see, Particular Redemption honors Christ's death. It says that the death of the Lord Jesus really saves. That Christ actually died in the believer's place! Since He died in our place and paid the penalty for our sins we are set free; for payment God will not twice demand; first at my bleeding Substitute's hand, and then again at mine. God is not going to charge for the bill twice. If Christ died for all men without exception, then all men are saved. How can anyone be lost and go to hell for his sins if Christ died for them, if He paid for them and put them away. But all men are not saved. (Christ said so). Now if you are under the opinion that this is not a good interpretation of John 1:29 let me ask you a question. Have you ever put John 1:29 right down beside John 9:41? If John 1:29 does not teach Particular Redemption and Christ took away the sins of everyone in the world, then He must have been mistaken when He said in John 9:41 -- "...Your sin remaineth."

When the atonement is made universal its inherent value is destroyed. If it is applied to all men, and if some are lost, the conclusion is that it makes salvation objectively possible for all, but that it does not actually save anybody. According to the Universal atonement theory, the atonement has simply made it possible for all men to cooperate with divine grace and thus save themselves, if they will. The nature of the atonement settles its extent! If it merely made salvation possible, it applies to all men. If it effectively secured salvation it has reference only to the elect. That is why Dr. Benjamin Warfield said, "The things we have to choose between are an atonement of high value or an atonement of wide extension. The two cannot go together." The work of Christ can be universalized only by evaporating its substance.

One of the great teachings of Christianity is the substitutionary death of Christ for the sinner. Did you ever realize that Particular Redemption is the only teaching of the atonement that truly makes the death of Christ substitutionary? If Christ died for one man as much as for another, which He must have done if He made salvation possible to all men, then He died for some that will suffer eternally in hell. How could His death then be substitutionary for them?

By the term "purchase" Scripture signifies that Christ procured for His people the actual bestowment upon them of all those good things which He earned for them, which may be summed up under "life," "Salvation" and "eternal inheritance." Now these blessings were not purchased for His people "conditionally," but absolutely, therefore we enjoy peace with God and the remission of sins.

Another term used in connection with the atonement is ransom. The best thing we could do here is to quote from a great man of God, Dr. John Owen, who was chaplain to Oliver Cromwell and vice-chancellor of Oxford University. "Redemption is the freeing of a man from miserly by the intervention of a ransom. Now when a ransom is paid for the liberty of a prisoner, does not justice demand that he should have and enjoy the liberty so purchased for him by a valuable consideration? If I should pay a thousand pounds for a man's deliverance from bondage to him that detains him, who hath power to set him free, and is contented with the price I give, were it not injurious to me and the poor prisoner that his deliverance be not accomplished? Can it possibly be conceived that there should be a redemption of men, and those men not redeemed? That a price should be paid, and the purchase not consummated? Yet all this must be made true, and innumerable other absurdities, if universal redemption be asserted. A price would be paid for all, yet few delivered; the redemption of all consummated, yet few of them redeemed; the judge satisfied, the jailer conquered, and yet the prisoners enthralled!"

### III. Particular Redemption Exalts The Plan And Purpose Of God.

Most church people have the idea that the atonement of our Lord is some kind of a gigantic universal, indiscriminate "grab-bag" from which men may pick a parcel of salvation if they so desire. They picture God parading up and down the streets of this world scattering His coins of salvation

to the left and to the right, where some of them will be caught and others will be lost. You even hear people say, "If the evangelist would have used a better illustration in closing his message, or if we would have sung another verse or two of the invitation hymn some sinner would have been saved." The Bible says just the opposite. We are told that God has a plan and an eternal purpose.

The blood of Christ is called precious in the Bible and rightly so. It was the highest price ever paid for anything in this world. Redemption cost the precious blood of God's only begotten Son. That blood was not spilled; it was shed for sinners. Not one drop of it can be wasted. I remember years ago in New York state hearing a family of American Indians singing a hymn that I was listening to for the first time, and the words went like this:

"And when the crimson flow,  
Fell to the earth below,  
It fell on me.  
My eyes were opened wide,  
I saw Him crucified, And  
Knew 'was for me He died  
On Calvary."

I do not know if the author of that hymn believed in Particular Redemption or not, but truth is surely in the hymn. Christ's blood was not shed in vain, it fell on all the elect, as our text says -- all that the Father has given to the Son. God gave His blood for the sheep and He sees to it that they get His redemption. John 6:37 informs us, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

If Christ's death was intended to save all men, then we must say that God was either unable or unwilling to carry out His plans. But since the work of God is always efficient, those for whom atonement was made and those who are actually saved must be the same people. No rational being who has the wisdom and power to carry out his plans, intends what he never accomplishes, or adopts plans for an end which is never attained. Much less would God whose wisdom and power are infinite, work in this manner. We can rest assured that if some men are lost God never purposed their salvation, and never devised and put into operation means designed to accomplish that end.

The Lord Jesus Himself limited the purpose of the atonement when He said, "I lay down my life for the sheep." If therefore, He laid down His life for the sheep, the atoning character of His work was not universal. On another occasion He said to the Pharisees, "Ye are not my sheep" and again, "Ye are of your father the devil." Will anyone maintain that He laid down His life for these, seeing that He so pointedly excludes them? Since the work of God is never in vain, those who are chosen by the Father, those who are redeemed by the Son, and those who are sanctified by the Holy Spirit, or in other words, election, redemption and sanctification must include the same persons. Christ declared that the elect and the redeemed were the same people when in the intercessory prayer in John 17:9 He says, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me." Surely you do not think He would die for those whom He would not pray for do you?

But someone still insists, the

Bible says, "Whosoever will may come." That's right and the Bible also says, "whosoever believeth shall have everlasting life," and "whosoever calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." There are many statements like that in the Scriptures. But they only confirm what the Lord Jesus said about the specific aim of His atonement. They do not contradict Him at all. Whosoever will, but only those whom God has chosen, and for whom Christ died are given the will to come and believe and be saved. Christ not only has the gift for them, He gives them the grace to receive it. That's why Christ said, "Many are called, but few are chosen."

Did you ever think that "whosoever will may come" is the way the Saviour finds and draws the elect out of the whole human race? His call is like a huge divine magnet: it draws only those who have been chosen; those who have been magnetized; those for whom Christ actually died. It is like a shaft of light which is beamed into a diamond mine; only the real diamonds will sparkle; everything else will be dead and dark.

### Conclusion

The Bible says in Matthew 26:28, "For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Are you one of the many? You say there is no need of my being concerned about my salvation, since you say that only those for whom Christ died will be saved." Friend, how do you know that you are not one of the many? How do you know that Jesus Christ did not pay a ransom for your forgiveness? Have you seen the Lamb's Book of Life? Do you know the secret purposes of God? As long as you are alive, as long as you have heard this gospel, as long as you are not confined to the pits of hell there is that possibility that He died for you! If you are hungry for righteousness I can direct you to Him! If you feel your danger, and the dread of the wrath of God, you may flee to Him. Christ came to call sinners to repentance! He is a friend of sinners and came to save them! What joy to know that sinners are going to be saved by Him and there is no possibility for a failure in His salvation. Let not Particular Redemption discourage you but rather encourage you to close with Christ, and trust Him alone as the only sufficient Saviour for sinners.

Still someone argues, "I just can't buy this teaching of Particular Redemption." Let me close with some words of warning from the pen of Alexander Carson, writer, pastor, theologian. "If there be anything plainly taught in Scripture, it is that the sacrifice of Christ was made for those only who shall eventually be saved by it. If the wisdom of men cannot reconcile this with their views of what is right, let them be prepared to dispute the matter with the Almighty in the day of Judgment."

## IMPRESSIONS OF CBC 1990 CONFERENCE

When good Baptist men expound the great truths of the faith...and when good Baptist people worship and fellowship as we did, then the journey and time are well spent.

Paul Tiber, Kirtland, Ohio

## SAVED

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### Her Blindness

Kathy is blind towards God. The god that she has learned about in her religious upbringing, is not the God of the Bible. All her thoughts and concepts of God's person are all wrong! The god of her imagination is a tyrant, but he is not the true God. She has not been taught the God of the Bible, Kathy cannot see the love, goodness, grace and mercy of the true God. She can't see His love for the fatherless and widow, nor His special concern for the despised outcasts of this world.

She is also blind to sin. She can't see that all men everywhere are sinners, rebels towards God, and that we all break God's law willfully. Kathy can't see that we all are worthy and deserving of God's righteous judgment because of our sin. She is also blind to the love of Christ. Oh, that she could see that "God so loved", that He sent His only begotten Son into the world to suffer death for the sins of all who believe on Him. No, Kathy, God is not a tyrant. Sin is the tyrant that destroys men. The devil is the one who takes pleasure in human suffering. The devil is the one who desires to destroy your soul. God allows suffering at times, He causes suffering, but I don't say that He takes pleasure in it.

Kathy is also blind to God's sovereignty. God is the creator, and owner of all. He has the right to do whatsoever He pleases with His creation. He not only has the right, but also the power to carry out all His good pleasure and purpose. He has the right to give life and to take it. Who are we to question Him. She is also blind to the eternal state of the soul. No one who truly understands the reality of an eternal hell, would so lightly and willfully desire to go there. The demons, who know their end, tremble at the thought. Furthermore, no one who knows the eternal blessedness of heaven would not desire to go there.

### Her Deafness

Kathy not only is blind, but she is deaf also. She cannot and will not, hear the message of God's grace. This letter would not cause her to weep over her state, but to become angry. Oh, Kathy, we love you, may God give you ears to hear. Don't stop your ears to the truth. Don't kick against the pricks!

### Her Hardness

Not only is Kathy blind and deaf spiritually, but her heart is hard. She would outlaw Christianity if she could, and forbid the spreading of the gospel of Christ. Kathy, we love you, and you've hated us without a cause. What have we done to hurt you?

### Can Kathy Be Saved?

Despite all the blasphemous thoughts and attitudes of Kathy, I do not believe that she is beyond the reach of God's grace. I do not believe that she's committed the "unpardonable sin", nor that she has "sinned away her day of grace" no, not as long as she has breath! God is well able to break the hardest of hearts, and to open

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## STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF PAUL - PART 7

by John R. Gilpin, Sr.

"And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said: Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ. And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him: But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket. And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him" (Acts 9:18-29).

As you may recall, on the roadway to Damascus, Paul met the Lord Jesus Christ face to face. A light shined out from heaven above the brightness of the noonday sun, and when that light had shined in Paul's face, he fell to the ground. Then ensued a remarkable experience, which I think resulted in the instantaneous conversion of Paul. Three days later in the city of Damascus he was baptized by Ananias. Immediately he began to preach, and by his preaching he proved that Jesus was the Christ. The Word of God tells us that the enemy, not liking the preaching of the Apostle Paul, went about to slay him, but in the providence of God, he made his escape over a wall in a basket. When he went to Jerusalem following this, he began to preach there, but the brethren at Jerusalem didn't believe he had had an experience of grace. They couldn't accept the fact that he was saved. Not believing he was a disciple, they caused trouble for Saul in Jerusalem. Brother Barnabas stood up and vouched for him and said, "He has had an experience of

grace, and I'll testify to the fact that he is a changed man." That, in brief, is the story of the first experiences of Paul after he was saved.

I am wondering if it isn't true that every individual learns a great deal very shortly after he has been saved. I am sure that no unsaved man realizes what he is



about to learn when he receives Jesus Christ as his Saviour. I am sure that no unsaved man has any idea at all as to what is in store for him, or what he is going to learn. I am sure that Paul didn't, yet immediately following his experience, Paul learned some remarkable things.

### I. Paul had a Sound Mind.

Paul didn't have a sound mind before he was saved. There is not a doubt but that Saul's mind was warped and twisted. He was in the business of persecuting Christians. He was in the business of holding the coats of men as they would persecute others in the name of Christ. He was actually on his way to Damascus when he was saved, going there for the purpose of finding all the Christians that he could and dragging them unto Jerusalem bound, that they might be persecuted. I say to you, beloved, this man Saul certainly wasn't in his right mind. His mind was all wrong so far as the church was concerned. His mind was all wrong as far as God was concerned. The Apostle Paul, before he was saved, was a mentally confused individual. He did not have a sound mind.

What I say concerning Saul, before he was saved, and became the great Apostle Paul, is just as true concerning every man outside the Lord Jesus Christ, for no man is a possessor of a sound mind. No man comes to the place that he has a sound mind until he comes to know Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour. Listen: "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Tim. 1:7).

This would tell us that nobody has a sound mind until he is saved. The man who is outside of Jesus Christ thinks he has a sound mind. He thinks he is a whole lot smarter than you are. He thinks he knows a whole lot more than God does. He thinks he knows much more than any Christian or all the Christians of the world. He thinks he is much more intelligent than all the preachers that ever lived, and they can tell preachers and Christians and churches what they ought to do, in that he knows more than they know. Will you believe me, that man when he comes to know Jesus Christ as his Saviour, will realize that everything he thought about prior to his conversion was twisted, warped and definitely contrary to the truth that he then believes.

Did you ever try to talk to a

man that was out of his mind -- an individual who actually had lost his mind? If you did, then you found that individual thought he was absolutely right, and that everybody around him was absolutely wrong. If he were talking to you, he thought that you were undoubtedly the craziest person in all the world. I tell you, every man outside of Jesus Christ is a spiritual lunatic, and as such, he knows not the things of God. He doesn't have a sound mind, and he never will have a sound mind until he comes to know Jesus Christ as his Saviour.

Do you remember the man we read about in Mark 5, the maniac of Gadara? The Word of God says that he had a legion of demons within him. When those demons were cast out of him they entered into a herd of hogs. Two thousand hogs ran down the hillside into the sea and choked themselves in the water. When this man was healed of his demon possession, he went home in his right mind. The Word of God says prior to that time he lived out in the cemetery in the tombs, making great noises, cutting himself, and going about naked. Now that he is saved and in his right mind, he puts on clothes, goes home, acts like a human being.

I say to you, after conversion, a man has a mind like he never had before. He can talk to Christians and get ideas relative to the things of God that he never thought about prior to salvation. He can read the Bible and see the truth of the Word of God that he never thought was in the Word of God. In fact, he is changed entirely. Why? Because he has a sound mind.

Beloved, listen, Saul now has a sound mind. He used to want to persecute Christians. Now he wants to praise the Lord with Christians. He used to go miles out of his way to Damascus to destroy churches. Now he seeks to build up churches, by associating and fellowshiping with the church at Damascus, and with the church at Jerusalem. It used to be that he hated the name of Christ. Now he straightway preaches Christ in the synagogue. He is a changed man not only in his outward approach, but he now has a sound mind, and every man who comes to know Jesus Christ experiences the same change.

### II. Paul Learned That He Had Two Natures.

I remember one brethren who, after being saved only a short time heard me preach on the two natures within the believer. After the service was over, he said, "Brother Gilpin, if I didn't know better, I would wear that somebody had 'peeked' on me, and had told you what my life had been in the last two weeks, because what you have talked about is exactly what I have found to be true." He said, "I began to think that probably I wasn't even saved. I knew there was a new nature there, but that old nature had such a hold on me. It kept pulling so hard that I was afraid I wasn't even saved."

Beloved, Paul didn't go very far until he found the same experience. Listen: "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I" (Rom. 7:15).

I ask you, beloved friends, isn't that your experience as a child of God? Isn't it true with you that you do things that you don't allow? Isn't it true that there are things that you do, that you hate?

Isn't it true that there are things that you do that you know are wrong?

Notice again: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me" (Rom. 7:18-20).

In this Paul gives us his own experience, and he says, "Sin still dwells within." He says, "There is good that I want to do, but I can't do it. There is evil that I don't want to do, and that is the very thing that I do." This was Paul's experience after he was saved.

Listen again: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Gal. 5:17-23).

Beloved, isn't that your experience? Don't you have the flesh pulling at you on the one hand, and the Spirit of God pulling at you on the other? I tell you, Paul soon learned that he was a man of two natures.

You say, "Oh, no, Brother Gilpin, that isn't true of me. I don't have two natures. I have just one nature, and that one nature is just wide open for God." Do you know what I think about a person like that? It is either one of two things: such a one is either lying to keep up appearances, or else he never has been saved. Listen, beloved, the best man in all the world has ungodly thoughts pass through his mind. The most saintly, godly woman that ever walked the streets of any town has things pass through her mind that if she would stop to analyze, she would say, "Oh, God, why would I ever think of such a thing?" I tell you, this old nature of ours still hangs on even after we are saved. Paul learned that he had those two natures.

Those big steam engines that they used to have on the railroad taught me a tremendous lesson. Those steam engines had what they called a "port" on each side. One port opened and the other one closed. If the port on the left side opened, the port on the right side closed, or vice versa. It couldn't be otherwise. It had to be thus.

I say to you, beloved, that is exactly true so far as your life is concerned. You are either opening up toward God and closing up

toward the devil, or else you are opening up toward the devil and closing up toward God. Paul had two natures, and you have two natures. If you are not careful that old carnal nature will tell you that you are too tired to get up and go to church. That old carnal nature will tell you you had better stay home and rest. That old carnal nature will tell you, you haven't any business going to services. That old carnal nature will tell you, you ought to go visiting. That old carnal nature will tell you that you have so many relatives you must look after. That old carnal nature will tell you that you cannot afford to tithe -- that you have to spend your money for your family. When the preacher stands up and tells you that if you don't tithe then your family is going to suffer more and more and more, that old carnal nature will say, "I think I can get by anyway; I just don't believe what the preacher said."

Listen, beloved, Paul learned, and you'll learn, and everyone of us will learn sooner or later, that you have one nature that is mighty bad even after you are saved. You have two natures -- one that opens up to God, and one that is controlled by the Devil.

III. Paul Learned That Christians Should Grow. Paul found out after he was saved that he ought to grow a little. He also found out that there were some folk that didn't grow. Now, beloved, shouldn't Christians grow? Shouldn't churches grow? Certainly. The fact of the matter is, every child of God ought to be growing and developing in Christian service.

What would you think if you had a baby in your home and that baby just always remained a baby? You say, "Isn't it wonderful to have a baby, Brother Gilpin?" Yes, it is wonderful to have a baby, but would you want the baby to stay a baby all of its life? Would you want that baby that you love -- that baby that you fondle and care for and love so dearly, would you want him to stay a baby? "Oh, no, I want him to grow and develop." Well, beloved, that is what God wants us as Christians to do. He wants us to grow and develop as Christians should.

Now there were some folk in Paul's day that didn't grow and they stayed babies. The church at Corinth never got out of their baby clothes. We read: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" (I Cor. 3:1-3).

What was wrong with the church at Corinth? They were babes. They just hadn't grown. They were still babes in Christ. There is nothing sweeter than a baby, but prolonged babyhood is discouraging and grievous. There

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"And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." (Acts 5:42).



## STUDIES IN PHILIPPIANS 2:19-3:2

by C.T. Everman

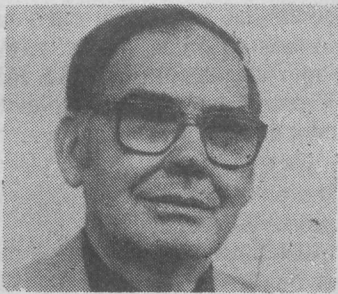
"But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state" (Phil. 2:19).

The apostle Paul had urged upon the members of the Philippian church the need for unselfish, humble service for God. He had given Jesus Christ as the supreme example for humble service. He had also stated that he, himself, would joyfully die in the service for them, "...if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy,--" (V. 17). Now he is most concerned as to their welfare as he had heard that they were facing trouble, not only within the church but also from without. Therefore he states that he hopes to send Timothy, a very close and most dear friend and companion, to Philippi to receive a report from the church. Timothy was a young man whose mother was a Jewish while his father was Greek. It would seem that Timothy had heard the gospel and was saved on Paul's first missionary journey. On his second missionary journey, when Paul came to Derbe and Lystra, he found that Timothy had grown in the faith for he was "...well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him;..." (Acts 16:1-3). From that time on Timothy seemed to have been Paul's faithful and constant companion. Paul often refers to him as his son when writing to the Corinthian church, "For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church" (I Cor. 4:17).

"But I trust in the Lord Jesus" wrote Paul, "to send Timotheus shortly unto you,..." Paul's hope, his trust, all his plans, his entire life was centered in Christ, as he had said, "For me to live is Christ." His hope to send Timothy would be fulfilled only if Christ permitted. Paul hoped that the report which Timothy would bring back would be one that would bring comfort to him, "...that I may be of good comfort, when I hear of your state".

Timothy was not only to carry the news of Paul's release from prison (v. 23) and bring back word of their state, but also he was to encourage, strengthen, and guide the church. As Paul could not come to them, he hopes to send Timothy, in whom he has the greatest confidence, "For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state" (Phil. 2:20). The word for "likeminded" means "similar in mind." As Paul's one mind was to serve Christ, so was Timothy's, for both to live was Christ. The thought is, there was no one with him who would take as deep an interest in their welfare as Timothy, "who will naturally care," who would have a most sincere interest in their welfare, one in whom they could trust to help and lead them in the truth.

"For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's" (Phil. 2:21). The others who were with Paul at this time did not have the mind (likeminded) as Paul. Paul, in his missionary journeys had other faithful companions and helpers, Luke and Titus, to name two. But it would seem they were not with him in Rome at this time. He had some who had traveled with him for a time, but did not continue with him. Not so with Timothy, he had faithfully stayed with Paul and aided him in the work, therefore, Paul could send him to Philippi as his representative.



"But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly" (Phil. 2:22-24).

"But ye know the proof of him," indicates that the Philippians knew of Timothy, evidently he had been with Paul when he was in Philippi. They had "proof" you know for a fact of his faithful service. They knew how he had served and helped Paul, "...as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel." Over and over Timothy is mentioned in Paul's letters to the churches, in some he is listed as the co-author of the letter (Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; I Thes. 1:1). What a close relationship Paul and Timothy must have had! Paul hopes to send Timothy to them as soon as he finds out what his sentence will be, "Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me" (Phil. 2:23).

"But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly" (Phil. 2:24). Paul, in chapter 1 had discussed his desire to die and be with Christ or to continue to live. He came to the conclusion, for their benefit, he should live on. Knowing that the matter is entirely in the hands of Christ, he trusts that He will permit him freedom to return to Philippi. But in the meantime he states that he supposes it is necessary to send them word of his present condition and this word of encouragement and warning. Therefore he is sending back to them another dear friend and companion, who will bring back this letter to them.

"Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labor, and fellow soldier, and he that ministered to my wants. For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been

sick. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrows" (Phil. 2:25-27).

Epaphroditus is not mentioned anywhere in the Word except in this letter. He was a member of the Philippian church, some think he was the pastor. He was sent to Rome by the church to take an offering to Paul. It would seem that he got very sick either on the way to or after his arrival in Rome. He now wants to go home, having heard that the church had received word of his sickness but not of his recovery, and knowing their concern for him, he wanted to relieve them of their worry. Therefore Paul is sending him home with this letter. Paul lets the church know that he considers this man as, "...my brother, and companion in labor, and fellow soldier, and he that ministered to my wants." Note how Paul places Epaphroditus along side himself.

He is saying he is my brother in the faith, he is my companion, my fellow-labourer in proclaiming the gospel, he is my fellow-soldier in the battle against the enemies of Christ. What he is saying is that the man is like Timothy, he is "likeminded," of the same mind, as himself. For the cause of Christ he risked his life. We are not told the nature of his illness or where it took place, only that it was a sickness and Paul was very much concerned about him, "...but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also..." God in His mercy restored Epaphroditus to health and in doing so relieved Paul of more sorrow.

"I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me" (Phil. 2:28-30).

"I sent him therefore the more carefully" or with more diligence, or with speed I am sending him back to you. The church at Philippi had heard of his sickness, "nigh unto death", but had not heard of his recovery. "Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness," means receive his recovery as a gift from God. We might note that it was through the mercy of God that he recovered, which is true of every sickness. We also need to note that it was because of "the work of Christ" that Epaphroditus was "nigh unto death", which tells us that all sickness is not the result of sin as many teach. Paul urges the church to receive their messenger upon his return with all gladness and joy, to receive him as one whom the Lord has returned to them. They were to give him the respect and honor due one who had served faithfully, giving his all for the work to which he had been assigned. Too often, I fear that we do not give honor to those who deserve honor for their faithful service until after their death.

In this chapter Paul has urged the saints at Philippi, and all of us to "let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." He urges all to work together in harmony and serving the Lord in humility, caring not for self but for one another. Christ is given as the supreme example of One, Who for others left all the glory and honor of heaven and became Man, "...he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Paul then tells the saints that he is ready, if necessary, to be "...offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith." Next, he tells them of Timothy who is "likeminded," or who has the same mind, one "...who will naturally care for your state." He trusts to send Timothy to them as soon as he finds out how things "will go with me." In the meantime he is sending back to them, Epaphroditus, their own, as well as Paul's dear and faithful brother, one who risked his own life to do the service of his Lord.

### Chapter Three

After Paul has urged the church at Philippi to serve the Lord in a faithful humble manner, having the mind of Christ, he now warns them against false teachers who were attempting to destroy their faith. There were two classes of those who were teaching errors. One class professed to have faith in Christ, yet they insisted one could not be saved unless he observed the laws of Moses. The other class, claiming Christian liberty, taught and practiced wickedness and lawlessness. Paul shows that both classes of teaching are errors, by giving his own experience. He tells of the joy which he has found in following Christ. In chapter one he stated, "To me to live is Christ..." In chapter two he stated that Christ is our example in submissive, obedience and humility. In chapter three he now gives Christ as the object of our faith, all our desires, and the hope for all blessings.

"FINALLY, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe" (Phil. 3:1).

"Finally, my brethren," does not mean that he is ending his letter, but means no doubt, "henceforth" or "further more." "Rejoice in the Lord," is one of Paul's favorite expressions, and over and over he repeats the expression. He emphasizes the fact that it is a joy to serve Christ. It is the duty of every Christian to rejoice in the Lord. Stop and think what condition we were in before salvation, "...dead in trespasses and in sins," "having no hope and without God in the world." "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved". Is that not enough to make the child of God rejoice? Not only are we saved by God's grace, but we are kept by His grace. Every one who has been redeemed by the blood of Christ has much for which to rejoice. It is the privilege for all Christians to rejoice.

"...to write the same things to you," would seem to mean that what he is writing

them, he has told them many times before, but because of the grave danger which confronts them it was needful to repeat over and over. The danger of falling into error by listening to false teachers cannot be over emphasized. Many have been led astray by listening to the many false teachers on radio and television. To the apostle Paul it was not grievous for him to keep repeating these warnings as it was for their good.

"Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision" (Phil. 3:2).

To whom did Paul refer? These were Jews who claimed to believe in Christ, yet depended upon keeping the laws and rites of Moses for salvation. These were called Judaizers. They tried to mix law and grace. They had followed Paul every where he went on his missionary journeys, dogging his steps, teaching these errors, claiming that the Gentiles who believed must also submit to the rite of circumcision in order to be saved, "AND certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1). Paul went to great detail in the book of Galatians to combat this false teaching.

Here he calls them "dogs", using the term the Jews used against the Gentiles. Paul is saying these are the real dogs. Dogs in those days were not the pampered household pets that they are today. They were looked upon as stray, dirty, selfish, bitter and cruel. Paul is saying these are like those stray dogs which followed his steps every where he went, growling, barking, snapping at his heels with their false doctrine. Not only are they "dogs" but they are "evil workers". These taught that the sinner is saved by faith plus good works, the works of the law. Paul is saying their "works" are nothing but "evil works." They are "evil workers" because they are teaching that something must be added to faith in order to be saved.

To be continued.

## PAUL

(Continued from Page 8)

is nothing more wonderful than a spiritual babe, but prolonged spiritual babyhood is disgusting and revolting. I tell you, beloved, a Christian ought to grow.

When Paul wrote to the Hebrew Christians, he said: "Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both

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## A SAD LETTER AND MY ANSWER

I received a very sad letter with no name on it. I quote therefrom. "Dear Brother Wilson, I am writing you in great distress. I am familiar with The Baptist Examiner...I also should tell you that I am a backslidden Christian. My purpose in writing is that I am in great torment. For most of my life I have been very unhappy. My life has been marred with many failed efforts. I am a failure in everything I do and always have been. No one understands me and I have no one to talk to. I am looked upon as a sluggard and even talked about as such... You see, Brother Wilson, I have contemplated suicide many times since a small child. Sadly, I must include my days as a strong Christian. I realize my question would put a preacher in an uncomfortable position, but I hope you understand. Is it possible for a Christian suicide to go to hell? I have always been able to resist this temptation, but I am very worried that in a moment of temporary overwhelming emotion I could lose control of myself and commit this horrible sin. This matter becomes more pressing to me as I grow older, and now occupies my mind most of my waking hours. I feel very guilty about having such thoughts, but I cannot help myself....If I ever did commit this sin could I still be forgiven?...I sincerely hope you will answer these questions for me in an upcoming issue of The Baptist Examiner."

My answer follows. Dear Brother or Sister, it is with great sadness of heart that I read your letter. I read it to my church, and we had a time of prayer for you. I do not understand your saying that you were once a strong Christian, and still that you were very sad and contemplated suicide even then. I do wonder if a really strong Christian would be in such a condition.

I do not question your claim to be a Christian, nor that you are now in a backslidden condition. You need to sincerely and prayerfully face up to your total situation.

You mention "sluggard." Is this true of you? You should know no matter what others say. If you are I surely urge you to cease this and become a very active person. I am sure that sluggardliness is a great sin and not productive of real happiness.

A true Christian cannot go to hell, no matter what he or she does. But I must in truthfulness warn you that it is possible to be deceived as to being a true Christian. A true Christian can commit terrible sins, but again in truthfulness I warn you that such a condition as you describe - especially your long continuance in such a condition - does not speak well of your professing to be a Christian. There is a joy to salvation that you seem to say you have never possessed. I would urge you to give much sincere thought to the question of whether or not you are a true Christian.

I will not say that it is impossible for a true Christian to contemplate, or even to commit suicide. I feel satisfied that some

few Christians have done this. If a true Christian does commit suicide, he or she certainly goes to heaven.

What concerns me about your case is not so much that you have contemplated suicide, but that you have continued in this frame of mind so long again, I must urge you to give much thought to whether or not you are truly saved. One can be deceived about this matter, and for such to commit suicide would be a tragic matter.

Your letter is postmarked "Ashland." I assume that you live in this area. Let me strongly urge you to come and see me and let us talk personally about this matter. I might ask you where you go to church, are you a member, and how regularly do you go? Your answers to these questions would go far towards helping me be a help to you in this matter. One will not be a joyful Christian who is not in a true church and a faithful member thereof.

Please get in touch with me. Let us meet face to face, talk and pray together. I most sincerely desire to be of help to you.

Yours by free grace,  
Joseph M. Wilson

## PAUL

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good and evil" (Heb. 5:11-14).

Paul says that there are a lot of folk who are still spiritual babies and he gives us an illustration of their spiritual babyhood. He says that those spiritual babies are on a milk diet and can't eat meat.

When a baby comes into your home, the first day it is born you wouldn't think of cooking a sirloin steak and giving it to that baby. You say, "Why, no. Brother Gilpin, we are supposed to give it milk." Beloved, are you going to keep that bottle in the baby's mouth the rest of its life? No, no. After a while we expect that baby to grow a little, and get to the place that he will like meat. I tell you, beloved, there is many a man who is walking around who is physically able to eat meat, and who is able to enjoy all the food of this life, that if you were to proportionately feed him spiritually, you would give him a nursing bottle, and he would go around sucking on a bottle. They have just never grown up. They are still babes in Christ.

Beloved, a babe in Christ can understand a few simple things. He can understand that Christ died for him. That is about all the believers can understand. A person can stay on that kind of food all of his life but he will never become a teacher of the Word of God. Paul says, "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again..."

I tell you, beloved, after Paul's conversion he found that he ought to grow, and you and I likewise have found that we ought to do some growing after we are saved. We read: "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph. 4:14).

Paul said, "Grow up. Don't

stay a baby. If you are a baby you are carried about by the cunning craftiness of men, and with every wind of doctrine. Don't be that kind of Christian, but grow up."

You know, it is interesting to me how a child will believe most anything you tell him. I remember some time ago I was holding a revival at a church in a nearby town, and there was a little lad there that just hung after me every place that I went. As I would be shaking hands with people at the door of the church, he would hold on my leg, along side of me, all of the time. One day he came into the room where I was studying and he saw some pictures that I had with me. One of them was Mrs. Gilpin. He began to ask a lot of questions about her. He wanted to know where I found her, and I spun him the nicest little story you ever heard in this world. On the spur of the moment, I told him how I had been running around the country, and I decided I was going to settle down. I said that I looked out the train window one day and there was a little girl standing there with a yellow sun bonnet and she had a green stocking on one leg and a red stocking on the other. I told him how she climbed a fence into a pasture and started picking blackberries. Then I told how another day I saw her driving a cow down Main Street with a cornstalk, hitting the cow first on the right leg and then on the left, as she was going along. I said, "Now that is the girl I want," and I told him how I even stopped the train and got off and got her. He said, "Did you?" I imagine to this day, he associates Mrs. Gilpin with corn stalks, blackberries, yellow sun bonnets and multi-colored stockings. I say children just believe everything.

Beloved, there are a lot of spiritual babes just exactly like that. They believe anything. That is why it is, whenever a Russellite comes along, a spiritual babe will listen and accept the doctrine that he hands out, whereas he ought to slam the door in his face and tell him to get away -- that he hasn't any time to have his house polluted by him. That is why it is that a babe in Christ will allow these heretics to come around his home and lead him astray. I tell you, beloved, a babe in Christ is wonderful, but he ought not stay that way. He ought to grow. Paul, after his conversion, found out that Christians ought to grow.

IV. Paul Learned That We Are To Starve The Old Nature. Paul wrote of his own experience and used it, I think, in order to teach us. He said: "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14).

Now what does he say for us to do? He says that we are not to make any provision for the flesh. Now if I don't make any provision for my body, I am going to lose weight, and I'll get to the place that I'll just completely wither away. Likewise, beloved, if I don't make provision for my fleshly nature, my fleshly nature is going to die too. The trouble with most of us is that we take mighty good care of our old fleshly nature.

You can go into the home of the majority of church members and you will find trashy magazines around. What are they there

for? They just help along the carnal nature. They keep the old nature alive.

Most of us have television in our home and we watch things on television that do nothing but keep our old nature alive. You say, "But, Brother Gilpin, I chaperone my television set. I monitor it." Well, I want to tell you that I just don't believe a word you have to say. That old fleshly nature of yours is alive. Paul says that we are to starve out that old nature, but most of us try to take care of it. I haven't heard of any funerals on the part of any member of a church when their old nature had died. There isn't a single member of any church who's old nature has died, so that they have had to have a funeral for it. I'll promise you this, beloved, if the time ever comes that you starve out your old nature, so that you get to the place you absolutely have that old nature killed out completely and it doesn't bother you anymore -- when you come to that place, I'll promise you the best so far as funerals are concerned.

Listen, beloved, Paul says that we ought to starve out the old nature and feed the new nature. The most of us just reverse the order. We continue to feed the old nature, and the majority of us starve the new nature.

V. Paul Learned That There Is Something Better In The Future For Us. When Paul wrote to the Hebrew Christians, he said: "But now they desire a better country..." (Heb. 11:16).

When Paul wrote to the church at Rome, he said: "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom. 8:30).

Thank God, beloved, there is something better out yonder in the future for us. We are going to be made to look like my Saviour. I am going to be glorified to look like Him. There is something better in the future for us.

Notice again, when Paul says: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:18-23).

Beloved, there is a great day coming for the child of God. This old world has been made subject to vanity, so much so that even the children of God, including you and me, find a lot of vanity in us now. We groan, and are travailing and paining, looking

forward to a time when things are going to be different.

A friend of mine said that even the bark of a dog is out of tune today. I used to fox hunt. I thought the hounds sounded mighty good. If you don't like to listen to fox hounds, I feel sorry for you. You surely don't have an ear for classical music. The last time I went fox hunting was years ago, but, beloved, it sounded good to me. It didn't sound to me like it was very much off key. I say this, if they were off key, I surely would have liked to have heard them before the creation was made subject to vanity -- that is if they sounded any better.

Listen, beloved, everything in this world has been made subject to vanity, but Paul says that there is a better day coming when we are going to have a redemption of the body and everything is going to be changed. The old song says, "It is better farther on."

"Sits upon the grave and sings it --

Sings it when we stand alone;  
Sings it as if God had taught it,

'It is better farther on.'  
'Farther on, how much farther?'

Count the milestones one by one.

No, no counting, only trusting.

'It is better farther on.'

Thank God, beloved, Paul learned that this old world held nothing for him, and that there was something better out yonder in the future for him, and, beloved, I have learned it too. This world can't satisfy. You can't satisfy a Christian with the things of this world. In fact, you and I have a triangular heart, and you can't fill a triangular heart with a round world. This heart will never be satisfied with the things of this world. It takes a triune God to satisfy a triangular heart, and nothing but God will ever satisfy. I thank God for this truth above everything else, that there is something better awaiting us after awhile.

CONCLUSION. I have talked about Paul's conversion and what took place after his conversion. Now I ask you, has this message gone for naught? Are you converted? Have you been saved? If there is one here who has not trusted Jesus Christ, may God help you to trust Him now and be saved. If you are saved, may you take your stand for the Lord and become a member of His church and let your life count for Him and grow as a child of God should!

May God bless you!

## SAVED

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the blindest of eyes.

The apostle Paul was this type of sinner. God not only broke him, but He made of him one of the greatest evangelists this world has ever known. Paul hated Jesus, and he hated the sheep of His pasture. He did all that was within him to stop their mouths. Oh, if God ever saved Kathy, what a witness she would be! I continuously thank God that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" hardened, vile, ugly, filthy, dead, deaf, blind sinners; just like I was! Yes, Kathy can be saved.

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## SAVED

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### Will Kathy Be Saved

That I do not know. How that I hope she will be saved. I do know that if she is to be saved it will take the power of the Holy Spirit and the gospel message of Jesus Christ. It is out of our hands. We cannot break her hardened heart or open her blinded eyes. All human effort won't be enough; only God can change her.

### Human Instrumentality

My friend can do some things that God may be pleased to use to bring about her salvation. He can pray for her salvation. This he can do and not give up! He can also share the gospel with her if and when the door of opportunity opens. This is so important. She cannot and will not be saved until she hears the gospel, "for it is the power of God unto salvation". Try once, twice, three times and perhaps the fourth time God will open her heart to attend unto the message. How often we give up on God! He also can show Christian kindness. Even after all her efforts to thwart his efforts, he still can show a genuine love for her soul. This will impress the hardened sinner more than anything else. God, many times uses such unconditional love and kindness to break hard hearted sinners. The main thing is- don't give up! God is pleased to use human effort.

### Unconditional Election

To be sure, if Kathy is one of God's chosen, then she will be saved. Maybe sooner, maybe later, but at some point and time she will heed the effectual call of God's grace. This is not an excuse to cease human effort, but an incentive to continue human efforts. We know that Kathy can't save herself, and that we can't save her. But God can save her, and He can use us in doing so. Why not be joint laborers together with God?

### As For My Friend

I admire his burden for Kathy's soul, and his love and compassion for her eternal need. Don't lose that burden! And don't stop with just Kathy, but add many more souls to your burden list. Keep up the good works, and may we all join your campaign for souls. Become all things to all men that by all means you might win some. The world needs more of your kind, who do, and not only talk.

As for your promise from God concerning Kathy's salvation, I do not believe you have Scriptural grounds. We can't trust in voices, visions and dreams. All these are deceiving. God is not pleased to identify His elect, but only to assure us that they're out there and that we need to seek their salvation. It could very well be, that someone we've prayed for, witnessed to, and shown continual, consistent kindness towards, might die in their sins, never acknowledging Christ as Savior. Leave this in God's hands. Never forget that He is God, and He saves whom He will. Trust that all His judgments and works are right.

### Conclusion

May we pray with my friend for Kathy. May we increase our prayer lists of lost, needy, hard hearted sinners. May we keep the gospel of Christ ever before them, and may we ever show them the kindness of our Savior.

Maybe you are like Kathy. Oh, may God break your hard heart. May He open your eyes, and unstop your ears to attend unto this message- it was written for you!

## ACTS

(Continued from Page 1)

Jupiter, I'm told, in the minds of the heathen, was the most powerful god of the ancients. He was represented as the Son of Saturn and Ops. It is said that he was educated in a cave on Mount Ida, in the island of Crete. Jupiter was not only the most powerful god of those in Lystra, but the worship of him was almost universal. He, in fact, was the Ammon of Africa, the Osiris of Egypt, and the Belus of Babylon. He was usually represented as sitting upon a golden or ivory throne, holding in one hand a thunderbolt, and a scepter of Cyprus in the other. His power, according to the ancients, extended over the other gods; and everything was subservient to his will except the Fates.

Barnabas, then, was all the above to the people of Lystra. He was the Ammon of Africa, the Osiris of Egypt, and the Belus of Babylon. He, to them, was capable of holding a thunderbolt in his hand. Barnabas, had he chosen to accept the honor bestowed upon him, could have been king of the people. He, however, sought no glory for himself, but only for his Lord.

Our text informs us that they called Paul "Mercurius." Mercury, I'm informed, was called Hermes by the Greeks. He was the celebrated god of antiquity (old times). There are no less than five by this name which are referred to by Cicero, the most celebrated, being the son of Jupiter and Maia. He, in fact, was supposed to have been the messenger of the gods and of Jupiter in particular. He was the patron or supporter of travellers, and shepherds. It was his responsibility to conduct the souls of the dead into the inferno.

Our text informs us that Paul was named "Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker." Keep in mind that Mercurius was supposed to have been the messenger of the gods.

"Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people." (Acts 14:13).

The priest of Jupiter was one whose responsibility it was to offer sacrifices in behalf of the god Jupiter. He was the one who conducted the worship services.

Jupiter, according to the scripture before us, was "before the city;" that is, the temple or image of Jupiter was before the city, or near the city gate. Jupiter was placed at the entrance of the city since he was the protector of the inhabitants of the city.

The sacrifice which was to have been made was that of oxen and garlands -- the garlands being ribbons and chaplets of flowers. These were used to decorate the oxen, or to make them more appealing to Jupiter.

The purpose of the oxen and garlands, in the case before us, was to make a sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas, since they were thought to be Jupiter and Mercurius incarnated in human form. The priest, therefore, with

the people, was preparing to worship Paul and Barnabas.

"Which, when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out" (Acts 14:14).

Barnabas was an apostle only in that he had been sent forth by the church at Antioch with a particular message.

Both Barnabas and Paul rent their clothing in order to get the attention of the people and to show their abhorrence relative to what the people were about to do. They had come to lift up Jesus Christ, and for themselves to have been lifted up was completely contrary to their mission. One can be sure that Satan had hoped that Paul and Barnabas would have accepted the worship of the people. Had they accepted the worship of the people, Paul and Barnabas, in essence, would have been bowing before Satan.

"And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein" (Acts 14:15).

The object of Paul and Barnabas was to remove the attention of the people from themselves to the living God -- the living God to whom all honor and praise is due. The people, in fact, in worshipping Paul and Barnabas, were worshipping the created rather than the Creator. They had set their sights much too low. They, in a sense of speaking, were walking in a very dark night. It was so dark that they could not see their nose in front of their face.

Paul and Barnabas, when saying, "Sirs," were, in the Greek, saying, "Men." Paul and Barnabas advised the people that they -- as far as "passions," that is, affections and common feelings -- were no different from them. They were of "like passions" with them. They, through Adam and Eve, had the same father and mother. It was their minds that made them different because "as a man thinketh, so is he." Paul and Barnabas, through God the Spirit, knew the Messiah as Savior and Lord. They knew the living God as their Father. They were different in these respects; but, humanly speaking, they had "like passions" with the people of Lystra. We also know from James 5:17 that "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are." He, in other words, was mortal.

Paul's message to the people of Lystra was that they should "turn from their vanities," or cease to worship idols, because such was vain. There was no benefit to it; or such worship was fruitless. Fruitless is what the word "vain" means. It is like planting a garden but never harvesting anything from it.

Paul's message to the people in Lystra was that they "turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein." The God of Paul and Barnabas was "living." He was the God of action and had proven "Himself to be so by creating heaven, earth, and the sea, and all things therein. Their

gods, on the other hand, were dead and thus had never done one thing. This was news to the people of Lystra. They had always been taught that there were many gods.

The witness of Paul and Barnabas, now that they had healed the man with the impotent feet, carried a lot of weight with the people. Paul and Barnabas, in other words, had really gotten their attention. God had set the stage, and placed Paul, Barnabas, and the man with the healed feet on the stage. He had caused all the people to listen. The fact that they were about to worship Paul and Barnabas was a door which gave them the opportunity to preach the truth to them.

"Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways" (Acts 14:16).

The reference to "all nations" is a reference to the Gentile nations. The nations which Israel faced when entering Canaan are a good example of how God had not compelled them to follow after truth. The Greeks and the Romans, who were more civilized than those in Canaan, were also suffered to live by their own rules; but the civilized and the uncivilized both fell into the same pit. Both proved in the "past times" that no man can come to God except God draw him to Himself.

Man's "own ways" are always contrary to God's ways. God, in fact, in Isaiah 55:8, said, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." God proceeds to say in Isaiah 55:9, "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

We are to see that man left to himself can never even begin to think like God. We are to see that man left to himself will never conform to God's ways. This same truth is taught in the following scripture:

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: Neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I Corinthians 2:14).

"Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." (Acts 14:17).

God, as Paul states, "suffered all nations to walk in their own ways." God did not reveal His will to them as He did to Israel. God, according to Paul, even though He did not manifest His ways to them, did witness to His existence by doing them good. One of the main ways He showed His goodness was by way of rain. Rain is only a four-letter word, but its value is beyond our ability to define. An earth, in fact, without rain would be uninhabitable. That which we eat, drink, and wear has resulted from rain. The earth, without rain, would never yield her increase.

God did not reveal His will to the heathen, but He did give them "fruitful seasons;" and He does give them fruitful seasons. We, in America, have been particularly blessed with fruitful

seasons. God, in fact, has been very good to America. He, in fact, as Paul states, has filled our "hearts with food and gladness."

I understand that the word for "hearts" here is used as a Hebraism and denotes the persons themselves. God, in other words, fills us with food and thus with gladness. May we never fail to thank God for every good and perfect gift, since He is the giver of them all. Let us especially thank Him for the gift of His Son. "And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them" (Acts 14:18).

Paul and Barnabas downgraded themselves and lifted up God. They advised the people of Lystra that they were men of "like passions" with them and therefore were not to be honored by the act of worship. They, after downgrading themselves, directed the attention of the people to the "living God" -- the God who made heaven, earth and sea -- the good God who had sent them rain and "fruitful seasons" -- the God who had filled them with food and gladness. Our text informs us that "with these sayings scarce restrained they the people."

The people were so convinced that Barnabas was Jupiter and Paul was Mercurius that it was nearly impossible to steer them away from their planned sacrifice to them.

"And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead" (Acts 14:19).

Some of the crowd which expelled Paul and Barnabas from Antioch (Acts 13:50) and some of those from Iconium who had planned to stone them (Acts 14:5), have now pursued them to Lystra. They, in a sense of speaking, have formed a posse in an effort to hunt them down and dispose of them.

The crowd from Antioch and Iconium were able to persuade the people in Lystra that Paul and Barnabas were imposters. They, out of hate for Paul and Barnabas, had travelled far. Hate had kept them going just as love will cause one to pursue a loved one. They were able to communicate their hate to the people of Lystra so that they now hated the very ones they had planned to worship. The oxen and the garlands with which they had planned to make a sacrifice were still there. What a striking example of the instability of the idolater!

Let each of us not rely on our popularity with humanity. Great ball players, for example, have proven that one can be praised one moment and despised the next. It is refreshing to serve the God who never changes -- the God who keeps His word -- the God who keeps all His promises.

Paul and Barnabas did not bow to popular opinion. They did not accept the honor and praise which was about to be bestowed upon them. We, of course, know that they chose wisely and well. Paul and Barnabas, rather than accepting the honor of being

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## ACTS

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Jupiter and Mercurius, said, "We also are men of like passions with you." May we never rise above this level either.

Paul, after being struck with stones, lay upon the ground and appeared to be dead. The people then "drew him out of the city." They drew him out of the city because they didn't want him to pollute their city. They considered him to be unworthy of a decent burial. It appears, in fact, that they drug him beyond the walls of the city and planned to leave him lay there. May we, when we are persecuted, remember Paul as he lay outside the city. Let us remember that God loved him with an everlasting love. God's love, however, did not prevent Paul from being persecuted.

"Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe" (Acts 14:22).

Paul and Barnabas, as far as the record shows, went into Lystra alone. Now, however, we read, "as the disciples stood round about him." One of these disciples, no doubt, was the man whose feet had been healed. It is likely, too, that his parents were on Paul's side. We know of course, as was true in Antioch, that "...as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48).

Our text informs us that Paul "...rose up, and came into the city..." It appears that he "rose up" without the aid of others. I'm sure, however, that those present were filled with joy as they observed Paul rise to his feet. It is likely that blood covered his body from the effect of the stones. He, after all, was human, or "of like passions" with the rest of us.

Paul, after rising to his feet, went back into the city. He, it is likely, went home with the disciples that had been made. One would suppose that he went home with the man whose feet he had healed. The man, after all, was a man who had faith (Acts 14:9).

It is not likely that Paul and the disciples, when going back into town, marched down Main Street. It is more likely that they went undetected to the home of a disciple where they spent the night and then left the next day. I'm convinced that Paul and Barnabas knew that they had done all that God required of them during their first visit to Lystra.

"And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch" (Acts 14:21).

Paul rose up from what appeared to be a state of death. He, in a sense of speaking, shook himself off, picked up his Bible, and began preaching again. He, in fact, left Lystra and set up a pulpit in Derbe. He proceeded, while in Derbe, to preach the gospel, or tell of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. He proceeded

to teach many, or apply the holy Scriptures to the man Jesus as the Messiah. He, no doubt, showed them how Isaiah Chapter 53 was a reference to Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

Paul and Barnabas, after finishing their witnessing in Derbe, "returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch." They returned to these places because there were people in these towns who needed their help -- people who had believed the gospel message. God had used Paul and Barnabas as means in converting these people. It was because of Paul and Barnabas that the people in Iconium were "divided" (Acts 14:4). They, therefore, returned to the divided towns for the purpose as it stated in the next Scripture of our study which reads:

"Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

What if Paul and Barnabas had not gone back to encourage the young disciples? One can be sure that the return of Paul and Barnabas made a lasting impression in the lives of every believer in the area. Paul and Barnabas considered the work of the Lord's church at Antioch to be far more important than their own lives. They, after all, had been sent out by the church at Antioch (Acts 13:2, 3).

Peter said in I Peter 4:12, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you;" and now Paul and Barnabas say, in essence, the same thing which they said: "that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

"And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed" (Acts 14:23).

The word "ordained," as used in the Scripture before us, occurs one other place in the New Testament. It is found in II Corinthians 8:19 where it is applied to Luke as having been chosen by the church, the meaning being that he was appointed by the church to travel with Paul.

The elders in the Scripture before us, were appointed as overseers of the young churches which had just been established. To have left the sheep without a shepherd would not have been good. God the Spirit, therefore, caused certain ones to be appointed as elders -- elders who would teach, admonish, and encourage. These young churches were not dealing with coldness and indifference, but with hatred. It, in fact, was not coldness or indifference which caused the stoning of Paul. It was hatred. Strong elders empowered by God the Spirit were the only way the Lord's church would survive and grow in the kind of environment they were in.

I'm sure that Paul and Barnabas did not appoint elders without first consulting the churches. We can be sure that their actions were approved by the Lord's churches.

Elders were appointed and then there was prayer and fasting. The

act of fasting said to God, "We want your will to be done. We are willing to sacrifice our worldly appetites and seek only that which is from above. We therefore set aside our own interests and seek by way of prayer that which you would have us say and do." It was, "thy will be done no matter what the cost may be to us."

Paul and Barnabas, after prayer and fasting, "commended them to the Lord, on

whom they believed." It was as the song states, "God be with you until we meet again." We have all experienced times when we commended someone to the Lord. It may, for example, have been a loved one who was going into the armed services.

"And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia." (Acts 14:24).

Paul and Barnabas had already been through Pisidia and

Pamphylia. Many in these areas had believed that Jesus Christ of Nazareth was the Messiah. They now returned through these areas and exhorted the believers as they did according to Acts 14:22, that is, "Confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith..." I'm sure they also advised them as they did others, "...that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

## CHURCH PEACEMAKERS GLOSS OVER SCRIPTURAL COMMANDS

by G. Russell Evans

One of the most glaring paradoxes for the religious pacifists is their near total disregard of the Scriptures to back up ideas for unilateral disarmament and arms freezes. However, there is a reason: The Bible does not support their panaceas for peace and surrender!

A case in point is the proposed Roman Catholic pastoral letter designed to convince the flock that all nuclear weapons are immoral, even for self-defense.

In 100 or so pages the Bishops deign no convincing Scriptures in support of their case and skip altogether any on the real issue of defense of families, homes, and native land. Nonetheless, at one point, the prelates do rise to a new height in declaring that nuclear arms "threaten the sovereignty of God." We call this blasphemy and say that God has His own plan for the earth and puny man will never challenge it.

Church leaders have many answers, of course, but none to disprove the Christian virtue of self-defense. A favorite of the pacifists is Jesus' admonition to Peter, "Put up again thy sword in his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Mt. 26:52). Peter had sliced off the ear of Malchus in a fit of rage when Jesus was about to be arrested and crucified. Jesus did not tell Peter to stop wearing a sword; this just happened not to be a time to use a sword.

Earlier Jesus had said, "...I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Mt. 10:34). Many call this the sword of righteousness for fighting evil, the very heart of Jesus' ministry. Indeed, this sword is within the context of the Beatitudes, "Blessed are the peacemakers..." (Mt. 5:9), because what greater guardians of peace than military power designed to deter aggression and enslavement? Indeed, the churches shy away from the Bible for one-way pacifism.

They cannot use the Commandment, "Thou Shalt Not Kill," because "kill" here really means "commit murder" - a pre-meditated killing for greed or revenge. So, many of the ecclesiastic elite use emotion and fear, the very passions that rob the mind of reasoning and good judgment. They promote their "theology of the unexpected" for some kind of nebulous openness to a "spirituality of liberation," but omit something very special: Scriptural guidance! The Old Testament is in many respects, a history of the national defense of the

Israelites against their enemies -- the Philistine, and others (I Sam. 27). In the New Testament, Jesus made clear His acceptance of Old Testament teachings, saying, "...I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Mt. 5:17). Let us further examine Biblical guidance on war and peace.

In the 14th century B.C., on the Plains of Moab, battleground of many ancient conflicts, Moses taught the children of Israel the "laws of warfare" saying, "When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest... a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the Lord thy God is with thee..." (Dt. 20:1). It was as if God were the Field Marshall, leading the faithful to victory. Indeed, this 20th chapter of Deuteronomy is a kind of war operations plan.

In the 10th century B.C., we find King David who began his military career by cutting off the head of Goliath with a sword, and then ruled Israel for 40 years as the beloved king and slayer of "10,000 enemies." Moreover, we should note, Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, came from the line of David. David was never deluded about war, nor was his son, Solomon, who told his people, "To every thing there is a season... a time of war, and a time of peace" (Eccl. 3:1, 8).

Moving on through the Old Testament, we come to the prophets Ezra and Nehemiah whose emphasis were on defense and obedience. Ezra rebuilt the temple; and Nehemiah fortified the walls of Jerusalem for defense against Israel's enemies, exhorting his countrymen: "...fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses" (Neh. 4:14).

The beating of "swords into

plowshares" (Isa. 2:4) is perhaps the most misused message in the Scriptures for unilateral disarmament. Actually, it is a part of Isaiah's vision of the coming Kingdom when wars shall be no more, a time not yet come. Later, the Prophet Joel had a vision about beating "plowshares into swords" (Joel 3:10), preparing for Armageddon. Pacifists skip this reference.

In the New Testament, Jesus reinforces the principle of defense, with no criticism of the military-industrial complex, saying, at one point, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's" (Mt. 22:21). Of course, Jesus' ministry focused on individual peace, the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding" (Phil. 4:7), the personal and inner peace that can heal the nations.

Jesus condemned neither the military nor defense. He ministered and healed the servant of the Roman centurion and marvelled at the faith of this soldier without lecturing him about his warlike ways. The Apostle Peter had a similar close contact with a warrior in the conversion of Cornelius and his entire family. God chose a soldier above all others for this distinction.

A great many passages support the "sword of righteousness, and Gideon's army became the "sword-of the Lord" when he led his 300 faithful in the cause of national defense against the Midianites (Jud. 7: 20). The fact remains: the church hierarchy promoting unilateral U.S. disarmament has not offered any substantial backing for its ideas. Indeed, many followers are far down a dangerous road. Do church peacemakers accept this tremendous responsibility?

## BACKSLIDER

Oh ye backslidden Christian,  
Where are you this day;  
To be walking without fellowship,  
Along this dreary way.

Oh ye backslidden country,  
How far shall you go;  
Away from God your maker,  
Who loved and saved you so.

Today we sit in much conceit,  
Ourselves alone to please;  
Who needs God our Maker,  
And seldom bend our knees.

But when that day approaches,  
And our eyes behold that scene;  
Off to judgment we must go,  
Where we'll answer for our deeds.

by: Sherry Baldwin