

## DISCOURAGEMENTS AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM

by Don Pennington

The apostle Paul in writing to the church at Philippi says, "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord." Philippians 3:1. I want you to notice that he leaves them with the thought of rejoicing in the Lord. Now, beloved, we don't have the market cornered on discouragements and depression. They had these things back in those days also. The people became depressed and dis-



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couraged, even years before this was written. But the advice was "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord."

The word "discouraged" means to take away courage, the loss of incentive. Beloved, when they take away our courage, or we lose our incentive to do something it causes us to be discouraged. People who are discouraged are

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## "GOD'S OUTSTRETCHED ARM"

By Waldo Whiddon

"Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son" (Gen. 18:14). Now, the statement, or question; "Is anything too hard



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for the Lord?" I say no. There is no power greater than His. Our God is able! Jeremiah prayed to the Lord in this manner: "Ah Lord God! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee" (Jer. 32:17).

I am sure that we all have gotten ourselves into situations that looked too hard, with seemingly no way out. In man's ability there truly is no way out. But man is fortunate to have God on his side, those who trust Him that is, for God has stated in His infallible Word that there is

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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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## STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF PAUL - PART 10

by John R. Gilpin

"To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (I Cor. 9:22).

In definite contrast to this text, we find that the Lord Jesus Christ has been made something to us, for we read: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (I Cor. 1:30).

There are four things that Christ is made to us, and in contrast I want to show you a few things that we are made to Christ.

I. Temples. Each of us who are saved is made a temple unto the Lord. Listen: "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work

shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work



shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of

God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are" (I Cor. 3:12-17).

You will notice that Paul refers to each of us as a building of the Lord. The Lord Jesus Christ put in the foundation. In fact, He is the foundation, for we read: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 3:11).

This is the foundation on which you and I are building our temple every day. We have six different kinds of materials from which to build. Three of them are good, and three of them are poor. There is gold, silver and precious stone, also there is wood, hay and stubble. You and I every day are building upon the foundation of the Lord Jesus Christ a temple unto the Lord, and out of those six materials our life's temple is being constructed. (Continued on Page 9, Col. 4)

## A TEACHER, A SOLDIER, AN ATHLETE, AND A FARMER

by H.C. McSwain

"THOU therefore my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if

a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things." (II Tim. 1-7).

Paul, in writing to his son in the faith, Timothy, gives him some instructions on being strong in his Christian experience and faith. The foundation of that strength is the grace of God. It cannot be in ourselves.

He gives four different types of people to illustrate a person who is strong in grace: the teacher, the soldier, the athlete, and the farmer. Most of us can identify with at least one of these types. I can identify with the teacher, the soldier, and the athlete.

He also emphasizes one or more particular thing with which the type is associated.

I. The Teacher

"...And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faith- (Continued on Page 12, Col. 1)

## STUDIES IN ACTS

by Willard Willis

"Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still." (Acts 15:34).

Judas returned to Jerusalem, but Silas was led by God the Spirit to remain in Antioch. Silas, in fact, had been appointed by the Spirit to go on a missionary journey with Paul. We, in Chapter 16, will read of the conversion of the Philippian jailor on the night in which Paul and Silas were in the jail which he guarded.

"Paul also and Barnabas



Willard Willis

continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also" (Acts 15:35).

It was important that Paul and Barnabas continue in the area of Antioch, but that which was most important was that they

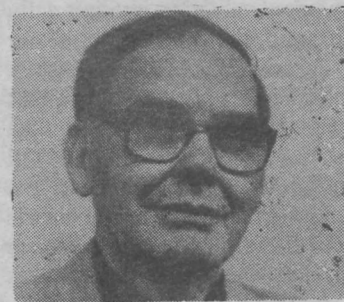
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## STUDIES IN PHILIPPIANS 3:9-16

by C.T. Everman

"And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Phil. 3:9).

In verse 8 Paul had stated that although he had lost all things



## The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

## PROGRESSIVE SANCTIFICATION, PART II

I suggest that you read part one of this subject in the last issue to refresh your mind on this subject. I will not review that, but continue on with the subject. My last point in the previous article was that the Holy Spirit is the agent in sanctification. I now proceed to say that the Holy Spirit does not just automatically and sovereignly and unconditionally perform this work in the believer, but that we have a part in progressive sanctification that we must perform. We will not progress in sanctification unless we put forth strenuous and continued efforts thereunto. Crucify me if you will, call me a works preacher if you will; I am a

works preacher, and I do preach that our works play a part in progressive sanctification.

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live" (Rom. 8:13). Oh, the doctrine of mortification! When have you heard a sermon on this subject? When have you preached a sermon on this subject? Woe is me, for I have never done this. The old preachers used to preach about mortification. The Bible teaches about mortification. Why don't we preach it? I am waiting for an answer from myself, and from my preacher brethren. The

deeds of the body are to be mortified - that means "put to death." There can be no progressive sanctification without this. In fact, this is a very vital part of progressive sanctification. Progressive sanctification is growing in separation to God and from sin. Separation from sin involves the mortifying of the deeds of the body. Now, only the Holy Spirit can accomplish this work. But please note the word "ye" in Romans 8:13. The Holy Spirit will not do this unconditionally and altogether of Himself. We must, through the Spirit do this work of mortification.

"...work out your own (Continued on Page 2, Col. 1)

for the sake of Christ, yet he counted "them but dung, that I may win Christ." What he is saying is, all that he had depended upon for salvation was nothing but waste and all had to be cast aside when he placed his faith in Christ Jesus. He now begins to tell what it means to "gain Christ." His great desire is to "be found in him." By this he did not just desire to be found in Christ at His coming, but at the present time to have that union. Above all things Paul wanted a definite personal relationship with his living Lord. With that union comes a new and true righteousness, "not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law." (Continued on Page 8, Col. 2)



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## PROGRESSIVE

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salvation with fear and trembling" (Php.2:12). Here is a work for the believer to do. He is commanded by the Word of God to do it. He is to do it with fear and trembling. I know that the following verse says "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do his good pleasure." I know that God works into us salvation of His own sovereign will and power. But I also know that we are commanded to work out that in-worked salvation into our daily lives, and this working out of our salvation is progressive sanctification. Yes, there is a part that we can do, and that we must do. If we do not do this, we will prove that God has not yet worked salvation into our hearts and lives. No progressive sanctification, no salvation - it is as simple as that.

Let me pause to bring in a Scripture that just came to me on this matter and which I do not have in my notes. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb.12:14). This is not the imputed righteousness of Christ that all believers have. It is a dangerous heresy to so teach. This is the holiness of progressive sanctification. We are to follow this all the days of our lives. We are to earnestly pursue this and diligently strive to attain it. If we do not attain to a personal, inner and outward holiness - a holiness in desire, thought, speech, and life;

we will never see the Lord in peace and salvation. Progressive sanctification is the diligent pursuit of holiness, and without this no man shall see the Lord. Oh, my friend, my subject is a most important one.

The chief means whereby we progress in sanctification are two: prayer and the Word of God. There are others such as faithfulness in and to the church, witnessing to others, and serving the Lord; but I confine my message to these two for this present article. Prayer is one of the chief means in progressive sanctification. I believe that any and all true praying will play a part in this matter. But I wish to



Joe Wilson

emphasize a special part of prayer in this matter. Since progressive sanctification deals with increasing separation from sin and increasing purity of life; I think we ought to deal with that part of our prayer lives at this time. We need to do much definite, specific, and detailed praying relative to our sins - we need to face our sins in our prayer lives.

Many of the saints of yesteryear used to make lists of their sins and of their major temptations to sin, and pray over those things. Men used to set aside a time each month - a long time - and pray about the matter of their sins. Oh, I suspect we would be shockingly surprised if we would sit down in seriousness, under the eye of God, and make a list of our sins. I doubt that any of us now have the least idea of what a long list this would involve.

We need to go over our lives as to the matter of sin (while we are in sincere prayer to God). We need to sincerely confess our sins to God and thus obtain forgiveness and cleansing. Then we need to most definitely pray for victory over these sins. We likely will need to pray long, and hard, and repeatedly; but victory can be obtained. We can, by the Spirit, mortify that deed of the body and obtain victory over that sin. We can so deal with that sin as to obtain ever increasing, if not permanent, victory over that sin. Oh, let us begin a prayer war against our sins. Let us pick out our sins and deal with them one by one. Let us mortify them by the Spirit. Let us pray and pray and pray, and obtain victory over our sins.

Do not think that I am preaching the possibility of sinless perfection. You and I have so many sins that we could get complete victory over many of them and still be a long ways from sinless perfection. No, I am not preaching sinless perfection, but I am preaching progressive sanctification and that involves increasing victory over sin, which will mean increasing separation from sin and increasing purity of life, which will include victory over many a sin that is now causing much trouble in our Christian lives. I am saying that we should

prayerfully face sin in our lives. I am saying that we can obtain ever increasing victory over sin. I am saying that we can grow in holiness and in purity. I am saying that there is such a thing as progressive sanctification.

Again, prayer is a means unto progressive sanctification. And that part of prayer that will do most to promote this is that part that honestly deals with sin in our lives.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psa.139:23-24). This is the kind of praying that will promote progressive sanctification. Face your life in prayer while God turns the light on. Read that again. Our eyesight is so poor that we cannot always see our sins. Let us pray that the Lord will show them to us.

Look at the model prayer as to this matter. Note these petitions: "...forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil..." (Matt. 6:12-13). Let us re-arrange these petitions. Pray that the Lord, so far as He sees fit, will not even allow us to be tempted. Pray that when we are tempted, the Lord will give us the victory. Pray that when we do sin, the Lord will forgive us. My friend, praying like this daily will promote progressive sanctification.

A second major means of progressive sanctification that we are to use is the Word of God. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee" (Psa.119:11). "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa.119:105). "...by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer" (Psa.17:4). Scriptures could be multiplied on this subject. The Word of God will keep us from sin and from the paths of the devil. The Word of God will shine upon our path and show us the way in which we are to walk. God's Word will direct us as to the virtues we are to practice, and show us the sins from which we are to abstain.

I believe that every part of the Word has a sanctifying effect (or could and should have) upon the believer who diligently and prayerfully studies it. Its doctrines, promises, and its histories will all have a sanctifying effect. But I say as to this as I said concerning prayer; since progressive sanctification is in part a separation from sin, I believe that we should especially deal with those parts of the Word which show us the things we are to do and the things we are not to do. I believe that in progressive sanctification we need to especially deal with the precepts of the Bible. We need to apply these parts of the Bible to our own lives. We need to soak our souls in these portions of the Word.

Study the Ten Commandments. They are a compendium of Biblical teaching as to the moral behaviour which God requires of man. There is scarcely a required virtue that is not covered by a full and complete exposition of the Ten Commandments. The same thing can be said about sin. We need to bring these commandments to bear on our lives. We need to examine ourselves as

to how we stand in comparison thereto. A sincere, honest, and faithful application of these commandments to our lives would do wonders for progressive sanctification therein. Beware of the modern antinomian attitude towards the Ten Commandments. Beware of the false teaching that we have nothing to do with these commandments. Of course, we are not under the law for salvation - no one ever was. But all

men of all time are always under the law of God as to responsibility and as a rule for godly moral conduct.

In using the Word of God to promote progressive sanctification, it would be well to prayerfully study the virtues commanded and commended in the Bible, and to apply these to our lives - to seek forgiveness for our failures and to seek strength and

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## FROM THE EDITOR

"...Daniel purposed in his heart..." (Dan.1:8). Some people are opposed to making resolutions. There is nothing wrong with doing this. The wrong is in breaking them - if they are good ones. I would not know the difference between "Daniel purposed" and "Daniel resolved," would you?

Last issue, I dealt with examining ourselves relative to the past year. This should come out in our first issue of 1991. Maybe examining ourselves has given us some matters to think about as to some resolutions for this year.

I praise God that I have assurance of salvation; but still I am going to obey II Corinthians 13:5 and examine the evidences of salvation, and seek to strengthen and increase my assurance of salvation. Many are deceived on this matter. It behooves us all to be absolutely certain on this - and, praise God, we can know that we are saved.

I desire and purpose, by God's grace and power, to live a better, cleaner, more holy life this year than ever before. I am going to pick out some sins that give me much trouble and I am going to declare special war on them. I am going to declare a prayer war on them. I am going to seek to, through the Spirit, mortify (put to death) these sins. I am going to seek to obtain total victory over these sins during this year. In addition to making a real effort against certain sins, I am going to strive to live better in every aspect of my Christian life. I am going to pick out some virtues that I am deficient in, and endeavor to cultivate them in my life this year. Of course, I will seek to do this in the power of the Spirit. I believe this can be done. I believe I can be a better Christian than I have ever been. I am going to really try for this, this year.

I am going to endeavor to pray more, very much more, this year than I ever have during any year of my life. Oh, how I have failed in prayer. I plan to pray for more people and more things. I plan to have more prayers answered. God answers prayer, you know. I purpose to spend more time in prayer, and to improve my prayer life in many ways: to pray more in faith, to pray more earnestly, to pray more specifically. I plan to watch more for answers to prayer. I plan to be more thankful for the privilege of prayer and for answers to prayer. I plan to pray more for unsaved people than ever before.

I have read the Bible a good bit, but I know that there is room for improvement in this area. I more than read the Bible through each year, but I am going to spend more time reading and especially more time studying the Bible this year. God has taught me much about the Bible, praise His name: but there is much more for me to learn. I plan to, God willing, know more about the Bible when this year is over. Then, I plan to apply the Bible more to my life as I read and study it. I plan to enjoy its blessings more. I plan to apply its precepts more to my own life. I desire that my life will be more conformed to the Bible this year - and oh, there is so much room for this. I plan to apply the promises of the Bible to myself more than heretofore. I read the Bible, but I read too much in other books (mostly about the Bible) compared to how much I read the Bible itself. I plan to work on this a good bit this year. I love to read books, but I must not let them take too much of my time compared to the time I put in the Bible.

Of course, being a pastor, I am faithful in church attendance. I guess that we pastors cannot take as much credit for this as our members can in their faithfulness. We might miss some too, if we were not pastors. But, I can still do more (church-wise) this year than heretofore. I plan to have my church more at heart this year, and to seek to be a better pastor to every member. I guess I am a better pastor to some than to others; I hope to be a good pastor to each member. I can put more time into my work as pastor of this church, and surely can greatly improve as to my relationship to the church.

I plan to do much more work for the Lord this year than any previous year of my life, God willing. I plan to do more in every way that can be considered serving the Lord.

I especially purpose to do more, very much more, as to soul winning this year. I plan to witness to many more than I have. I plan to make this a larger part of my total work for the Lord than it has been. I purpose to pray much more for the salvation of lost souls than I have been doing. I do a good bit of evangelistic preaching. I don't know that I will start doing a great deal more, but I am going to pray about it and seek wisdom from the Lord as to this. I do plan to make a much stronger effort to reach the unsaved this year.

I hope I will not make any new enemies this year. I hope I can make some new friends this year. I would delight to make up with some enemies this year. I will pray about this.

Well, I could go on and on, for there is so much room for improvement in my life and in my ministry. I hope this will do me some good. I hope my readers will apply all this to themselves, and that it will do them some good. We do not know what this year holds. The rapture may take place, oh, glad and glad day. Likely, if this does not occur, some of us will go to be with the Lord this year. I will most definitely say this: whatever this year holds, we can all, during the portion of it that God gives us - we can all greatly improve in our Christian lives. I do not know everything about every Christian who reads this paper, but I do know that each one of them has room for improvement in spiritual matters. Yours for a good year for the Lord.



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the power of the Holy Spirit to have these in our lives. Read carefully and repeatedly I Corinthians 13. Examine your life as to how you measure up to the things set forth there. Ask the Spirit to produce these things in and through your life. Read Galatians 5:22-23 about the fruit of the Spirit. Examine your life as to your fruit bearing in this respect. Confess your failures and ask the Lord that the Holy Spirit might produce more and more such fruit through you. Oh, we need to face our lives as compared and contrasted with the Word of God. We need to apply the Word of God to our lives in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Then, we need to examine our lives by the sins that are mentioned in the Word of God. As you read the Bible look for sins that are mentioned or sins in the lives of some Bible characters. Then, examine your life as to those sins. Read Ephesians 4:25-32 and 5:3-4. Are you guilty of any of the sins mentioned there? Be honest with yourself and with God. Face the Word of God head on. Confess any sins you are guilty of, and then pray earnestly for victory over those sins. Cleansing and victory can be had. I believe that we can obtain victory over sins in our lives. I do not believe that the believer has to be a continual slave to some sin. Understand that I am not preaching sinless perfection. We can get victory; total, complete, and lasting victory, over many sins and still be a long ways from sinless perfection. You can get victory over lust. You can get victory over a bad temper. You can get victory over an unruly tongue. You can get victory over a hateful disposition. You can get victory over lying. I could go on and on. Again, I do not believe a believer has to be a slave to some sin in his life. I believe he can get the victory. Again, no matter how many sins one gets victory over, there will still be sin in his life.

I realize that the above is, or can be, a hotly disputed point: I invite questions, comments, and criticisms as to this matter. I would be happy to have the opinions of others, especially preachers, on this point. This surely fits into my saying that progressive sanctification is increasing separation to God (more and closer fellowship with Him), increasing separation from sin, and increasing purity of life.

Now, let us look at my text which headed part one of this subject and should have headed this part as well. Here it is. "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor.3:18). Surely, this verse teaches progressive sanctification. If it does not, please tell me what it does teach. Progressive sanctification is accomplished as we behold as in a glass (the Word of God, James 1:23,25) the glory of the Lord. We see His glory in the possession and exercise of all the virtues taught in the Word of God, and His complete freedom from any and all sins taught therein. His sinless perfection is a major part of His glory. As we gaze upon Him in all His glory,

we desire to be more like Him. We examine our lives by His glory. We see our failures. We confess our sins, and pray to be more like Him.

As we do these things, we are changed into the same image. But our change is not immediate; neither is it total and complete in this life. It is from glory to glory. Each change that makes us more like Him is a glorious change. Growing in grace is a glory growth. This glory growth - this being changed from glory to glory is by the Spirit of the Lord. I have said that the Holy Spirit is the agent in progressive sanctification. Please look at this verse carefully. It contains the subject that I am preaching on in these two articles - Progressive Sanctification.

I state two important matters. Progressive Sanctification is a proof of regeneration. If you are not the subject of progressive sanctification, you have not yet been born again. Secondly, Progressive Sanctification is a prophecy and pledge of glorification. As surely as you are now the subject of progressive sanctification, so surely will you eventually be glorified totally and completely - even conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

Let me state some things that may clear up some difficulties that some of my readers may have. Progressive sanctification varies in individuals. Some have progressed further than others. Progressive sanctification varies from time to time in the same individual. One does not always progress at the same speed. There are periods of backsliding when one is not, for the moment, progressing at all. Progressive sanctification does not apply to every moment in the believer's life, but to the over all picture thereof.

Well, I come to a close. How is it with you in the matter of progressive sanctification? Do you know that the Lord is working in your life day by day in this matter? Can you take the long look at your life, not every moment, and see progressive sanctification being accomplished? Oh, my friend, give much thought to this matter. Much is at stake therein. What will you do about the matter of progressive sanctification. Remember that the Spirit is the agent in this matter. Also remember that we have a part therein that we must perform. May the Lord cause that these two articles have a prayerful and serious reading, and heart application. Comments, questions, and criticisms are welcomed and will be prayerfully pondered. God bless you. Yours for progress in sanctification towards the predestinated goal of glorification.

## DISCOURAGEMENTS

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often depressed. One of the greatest problems in our day is that of discouragement and depression. The doctors tell us that their office is full of people who are discouraged and depressed over the condition the world is in. And, beloved, any time that we take our eyes off God and look at the world round about us or look at our circumstances round about us we get discouraged and depressed. When we look at God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the things that we read about in the Word of God, we find that we have no reason to be depressed or discouraged whatsoever. Every time we

get to the end of the line it should be encouragement to look up rather than down. We always want to look down, we want to look around, but we need to look up to the Lord Jesus Christ and then we find room for rejoicing and encouragement. Instead of people today rejoicing in the blessings of the Lord upon them, they are continually discouraged and in a state of depression. And, beloved, it is nothing new for God's people to be discouraged. Elijah was so discouraged that he prayed that God might let him die. "But he himself went a days journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, it is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers." (I Kings 19:4). Elijah had become so discouraged that he just wanted to die.

Job was a man that none of us could measure up to, but because he had taken his eyes off God, he became discouraged, and so downhearted that he wished that he had never been born. Job 3:1-3 says, "AFTER this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day, And Job spake, and said, Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived." He said, "Lord just reach in there and take my birthday off the calendar, let that entire day perish wherein I was born."

David, a man after God's own heart became very discouraged. He says in Psalm 42:6, "O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar." Beloved, he was very discouraged. When any child of God gets his eyes off the Lord and begins to look at circumstances around him, he will begin to get depressed and discouraged. As God's people we should not worry, nor should we be discouraged because we are told that God wants his people to be a happy people. We have things to be happy about. "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." Phillipians 4:4. "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." I John 1:4. God commands us in His Word not to worry, be careful for nothing but in spite of what God tells us we still allow ourselves to be bothered by the circumstances surrounding us. "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Phillipians 4:6. When something comes up in your life, don't worry about it; pray about it. That is the key to it all. Anxiety is a killer, the number one killer in the world today. People worrying and fretting and becoming depressed and discouraged over circumstances in their lives. Don't worry about it, but pray about it. "But in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

Now we want to take notice of some of the things that can discourage a Christian, and what we

should do when the discouragements come to our door. To be sure, just as sure as you are sitting there breathing God's air, discouragements are going to come. We find that we can be discouraged by our walk in this life. Each and every one of us have a place in this life and in our place there are discouragements along the way. Beloved, we must be in the state and standing that the Lord has placed us and realize there will be times that we are discouraged. In Numbers 21:4 we find out that Israel had a lot to be thankful for. "And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way." Israel had much to be thankful for. God had set them free. They were slaves to Egypt and God had set them free. We were slaves to sin and God has set us free. Now, it doesn't make any difference how discouraged or depressed I get, that fact doesn't change. I am free from the law of sin and death. Beloved, I should rejoice in that above all things. I am a free man when it comes to sin. Jesus has set me free from the penalty of death because of my sin. Israel, as I say, had much to be thankful for; we have much more to be thankful for.

God was with them and leading them. They didn't have to find their way from Egypt to Canaan but God was leading them every day. God is leading me and you every day by the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the same way He led them. The difference is He leads us internally, where He lives within us. He was leading them externally, where they could see the cloud and pillar of fire by their natural eyesight. Beloved, they were going to the promised land. So are you and I. We're going to the promised land, we're going to heaven itself. Going to a place where there will be no crying, no more death or pain, or any of these things for the former things are passed away. They had food from heaven, so do we. This is our cupboard, our lunch bucket, whatever you want to call it, this is our source of food. Our Bible, the Word of God, and it never runs dry. Sometimes I take a notion for a certain thing and I go look in every cabinet of the house and can't find it. There is something there, but it isn't what I wanted. Beloved, I couldn't want anything that is not in the Bible. It is an abundant supply of food for us. He gave them water from a rock and we have the living water springing up within us unto everlasting life. Notice beloved, the way was hard and they became discouraged. They had to go around Edom because they wouldn't let them pass through it. It was rough terrain, rough country, rough territory and they became discouraged because of the way. It's not easy to live in this world today. We hear every day people blaspheming the name of our God. We hear them telling us how wrong we are and how ignorant we are to trust in a God that they can't see with their natural eye. But, we are free from our sin, we're on our way to glory. Beloved, all these things are incentives to us.

We must suffer persecution. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." II Tim. 3:12. Why must we suffer perse-

cution? You know what we are, we're sinful, but God says we will be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Now, that is a great big change from what we are and what we're going to be. That change takes place because of persecution. Persecution worketh patience in the heart, we're told. If we're to be changed and conformed in the image of Jesus Christ, we must suffer persecution in order to make that transition. We are living in the enemy's camp in this world. The world hates Christ, hates everything He stands for, His people and His church. When you're living in the enemy camp, you are going to suffer persecution. We were once a servant of the devil and a good one. We served him well and he isn't going to turn us loose very easily. He is going to hang on just as long as he possibly can and cause us to indeed suffer persecution.

We get discouraged because the way is hard. No, we shouldn't but we do. It seems to be human nature to take your eyes off Jesus and take your eye off God's promises and look around us in this world, and every time we do, we get discouraged. Look at Peter when he was walking on the water. As long as he looked at Christ, he was all right, but he took his eyes off Him and he began to sink. Beloved, keep your eyes on the Lord Jesus Christ and remember we have every right in the world to be happy, to be jubilant, to rejoice. If I die this very moment Heaven is my home. Many people can't say that. Millions and millions of people cannot say that, but yet these people tell me that they are better off than I am. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, we have much to be thankful for. People become discouraged because of other people. Numbers 32:7 tells us, "And wherefore discourage ye the heart of the children of Israel from going over into the land which the LORD hath given them?" We look at others with their houses and their lands and riches, and everything just seems to be rosy for them, and we think what I could do if I had that, and we get discouraged. We shouldn't do that. The tribes of Reuben and Gad had expressed a desire not to enter into the land of Canaan. They wanted to remain on the East side of Jordan. They had gone as far as they wanted to go. They said this is good land and we don't want to go any farther. Moses tells them that they have a bad attitude and their attitude is a discouragement to other people. Their attitude had discouraged the other ten tribes. There are many things that we can do that will be discouragement to other people and we should be very careful not to do that. I think God will hold us accountable when we discourage other people. The Scripture speaks of people that will not go in themselves but stand in the way of those that will enter in. Moses told them that their attitude had harmed the work of the Lord. Non-attendance. People that just won't attend church services. That is a discouragement to people that are watching them. One person doesn't attend church services because someone else

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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

*If our prayer is answered, how can we know it is really sent from God and not just the fulfilling of a fleshly desire?*

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There are two very important things that must be considered in being able to distinguish whether you are fulfilling the desires of the flesh or having your prayer answered.

First, your request and the result must agree with the Word of God. John 5:14,15 says, "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him." In short, we can know for sure that our prayers are heard and answered when we pray according to His will. How do you pray according to His will? By being resolved to whatsoever His will is, and according to His Word. The Arminian slogan is, "prayer changes things." I should hope so! "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much..." according to James 5:16. But you must understand that prayer never changes God's mind or will. His Word is forever settled in heaven; He works all things after the counsel of His own will; and His counsel shall stand. He will do all that pleases Himself. Prayer, when effectual and fervent, will change your attitude and it will change your desires. An effectual fervent prayer will be according to the Word of God, thus according to the will of God.

Secondly, your prayer and the would-be answer must be something that glorifies God and not the flesh. If you ask God for something, examine very closely your motive for such. If your prayer is out of a selfish, self-seeking motive; and you pray long enough and hard enough you can eventually make it happen; you can get just about anything you want. How many of my prayers have "come true" in this fashion? I fear, more than I would like to admit. It is very easy to justify a selfish request when you see it materialize. It is then very easy to conclude that it must have been an answer from God. On the other hand, when we pray according to His will and Word, out of a pure heart, with the flesh crucified; then we know that the answer is sent from God. At the same time, we will always get what we want, because what

want is God's will to be done. Thank you for your question.

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I. John 5:14: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us."

This is a very difficult question to answer. I am not at all sure that the answer might not be different for different people. I do believe that perhaps there are some guidelines we might use to help us in this question. It is indeed difficult at times to know and to fully understand the will of God. It is also difficult to know what to pray for and how to go about it. Even the disciples did not understand this and asked Christ to "teach us to pray." Let me point out a few things that might help in this matter.

First, I think it is important to know that sometimes things are worked out by Satan rather than God. I had a young man who was going to move away from Gladwin to where there was not a church he could attend. I warned him against this. He said "the Lord just worked everything out." He had reference to his getting the job and being able to find a place to live right away. My reply was; "the Lord is not the only one who works things out." Satan is the "prince of this world". He has been given by God the liberty to work things out. It is very important that we know it is God who is working things out and not Satan or our flesh. In order to know that this answered prayer is of God and not a filling of some fleshly desire, we need to be sure we pray according to the "will of God". Our requests should be uttered with a "Lord willing" attached to them. We need to cultivate such a relationship with Christ that we get used to praying according to His will and not our own. How we need to desire God's will for our life. I believe another way of knowing our prayer answers are from God and not just a fulfilling of the flesh is that we should pray in the Spirit. We so often pray from the head and not from the heart. We do not have the relationship with the Holy Spirit we should have, and thus we neglect a great source of prayer-power. If we only pray in the Spirit our prayers will only be answered in the Spirit. I also believe we should be careful about our motives in prayer. Are we praying with godly intentions in mind? Let us ask ourselves why we are seeking certain things?

Are they that God might be honored, or that we might prosper? Make sure your motives are right, and you will not have to worry about this question. We might also ask ourselves when prayers are answered; does this honor or help me in my quest to honor my God?

If it does not, then this answer is not from God. God does not answer prayers that would in any way detract us from our service to God. Let me illustrate this. God would not instruct a saved, Landmark, Sovereign Grace, Missionary Baptist to take a better paying job, with great benefits in a place where that saint could not be faithful in his service to God. You can only be faithful in your service to God as you are faithful in God's House. God does not answer prayer in a way that would excuse one from any Biblical obligations.

May God help us in our prayer lives. May we pray according to His will. May we examine our motives and the results of prayers. May our prayer life be used of God to bring us into perfect harmony with the will of God. You pray for me and I will pray for you. May God bless you all.

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In answer to this question let us look at the events recorded in Acts 12:1-19. James, the brother of John, had been put to death by Herod the king. This pleased the Jews so much that he had Peter put into prison intending to have him put to death, "Peter, therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him" (v. 5). The night before he was to be executed an angel of the Lord removed his chains, opened the prison doors, and brought him out. After Peter's release he went to the house of Mary, "where many were gathered together praying" (v. 12). When it was told them that Peter was at the door they could not believe it. They had been praying "without ceasing" that God would deliver Peter from prison and death, yet "when they had opened the door, and saw him, they were astonished" (v. 16). Although they were astonished that their prayers had been answered, I doubt that any one of them questioned the deliverance as to it being an answer from God or was it just because of their great desire to see him set free.

In Hebrews 12:6, we are told, "But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God

must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him".

While faith of the church group in Mary's house was weak, yet God answered their prayer. Many times we pray with the same weak faith, yet if we receive an answer, there should be no question but that it came from God. Everything that comes to pass is by the will of God, either by His directive will or by His permissive will.

## DISCOURAGEMENTS

(Continued from Page 3)

doesn't, so we should attend church services every opportunity we get. We get our encouragement to face this old world by attending services.

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Hebrews 10:24,25. The word exhort means to encourage. Beloved, we are living in the last days, and we need all the encouragement we can get. And remember, so does everyone else. We need to encourage our brothers and sisters; encourage them to fight on. Help someone else and you will find that you don't have time to become depressed and discouraged.

Another way that people are discouraged to day is lack of results. We are living in the last days and there is a lack of results that we can see with the natural eye. We can almost hear a note of disappointment in the voice of Peter in Luke 5:5, "And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net."

Beloved, Peter was discouraged, he was disappointed for lack of results. But he said, "If you say let down the net again I'll do it". We hear stories of the past about the great revival meeting they had, and souls being saved; and sometimes we measure ourselves by that and we become discouraged. Beloved, we have got to get to the place that we remember, that was then and this is now. We must continue faithful and be not discouraged over lack of results. God will send in results as He sees fit. "And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Gal. 6:9.

Keep busy at the task that God has given you. In due time we will reap if we faint not. You are never a failure until you quit trying. We need to work and work, and not be weary in well doing. Don't ever become discouraged because of lack of results, you may be having more results than you realize. That is in the hands of God. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." I Corinthians 15:58. Don't ever say we're laboring in vain. The Lord may not pay off when you think He ought to, but He will pay off. When the Lord comes He will have His reward with Him, He

will pay when the time comes, but that payday is up to the Lord.

Now we want to take a look at what to do when discouragements do come, and they will come. Many people turn the wrong way when discouragements come. They turn to drinking, drugs, laying out of church or some other means of serving the devil. That settles nothing. All it does is just drive the wedge a little bit deeper between you and the problem that you might have. The only place to receive joy and happiness is in the Lord. If we don't receive it there, we're not going to receive it.

As Christians, we can find encouragement by occupying ourselves with the Lord. Occupying ourselves with God and God's Word. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. O my God, my soul is cast down within me: therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar." Psalm 42:5,6. When we remember the Lord and that all things are under His control, then beloved, why should we not go to Him for help when we're discouraged? Go to Him for help, beloved, prayer is a wonderful help in the time of troubles. God is in control, so what better source can we go to for help than the person that is in control? If we needed a loan we would go to the bank and say I need money, I want to talk to the person in control. I don't want to talk to the guard, and I don't want to talk to the janitor, I want to talk to the person that controls this. Beloved, God is in control of everything. He's the one that we need to go talk to. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Hebrew 4:15. We can't go through anything, we can't experience anything that the Lord doesn't know about. He was touched with the feelings of our infirmities. He knows about it more than we ourselves know about it. What more encouragement could there be than Psalm 23:1, "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want." What wonderful, wonderful words. I like to think of David when he had grown old, old in years and was sitting out on the barren mountain there with the sheep. He got to thinking about what he had done for the sheep, how he led them to food and water, protected them, cared for them, loved them and was responsible for them and he said, "The LORD is my shepherd," the Lord feeds me, he waters me, He protects me, He watches over me, He loves me, He cares for me "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Beloved, before we can ever say I shall not want, we must first say the Lord is my shepherd. Take your discouragements to the Lord, He is the only one that can give you any satisfaction for them. Take them to God. We are all well acquainted with problems. There is not a one of us that is immune from them. Don't worry about them, just take them to the Lord and let Him take care of them.



# The Baptist Examiner Forum II

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

What does it mean to deny one's self? Luke 9:23.

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There is a variety of definitions for the term self denial. Some are used in a good sense, and some are employed in a negative sense. In a good sense, self denial is described as doing without desired things. It also means to abstain from, to repudiate, and to deny oneself by the disregarding of one's own interests by putting the interests of another first.

There are also a number of reasons that some people practice self denial. Some do it for physical reasons to bring their bodies into shape, some as a part of their philosophy of life, and there are those that use self denial in a religious sense, hoping to gain, although mistakenly, a peace with God. The verse in question brings light to both the definition and the practice.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). These words were spoken by Jesus to His disciples concerning those that would be desirous of following Him. The teaching, in general, concerns the matter of service. For those that would follow Him and serve Him, it would be necessary for them to have special qualifications and be able to meet special requirements.

In the first instance, He speaks of those that will come after Him. In this we see the act of coming to Christ as a prerequisite to any other type of activity in service to Him. Coming to Christ is something that man cannot, of himself, will to do. This is why those that practice self denial without Christ will never achieve the object of their practice. Man is able to come to Christ only through the work of the Word and the Spirit. When that work has been effective in his life, then he can and will begin to practice self denial in its true sense.

What does it mean to deny one's self? Well, if that first step has been taken, it means to disregard one's own interests and to put the interests of another first. In this case, it has reference to following Christ. Christ, and the causes of Christ will take first place in the life and the loves of that one that truly practices self denial. One that practices self denial in this manner will deliberately and willingly enter into a path of obedience to God and service for God.

There are some costs involved in this type of self denial. There may be a loss of possessions, of

friends, or those who were believed to be friends, the enduring of hardships and difficult times, even sickness. One other thing that self denial may bring is self abnegation. In today's world we hear much about rights, both civil and personal. Self denial in the cause of Christ may mean a giving up of those rights and opportunities that men, by nature, crave.

To some, these positives may be negatives. There will be those that will not want to suffer in this manner. When we deny ourselves and put the interests of Christ first, we receive the gain, maybe not in the eyes of man, but in the eyes of God. "As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (II Cor. 6:9-10).

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Living the Christian life is a daily task. We cannot be an on-again off-again type of Christian and please the Lord. The Christian life is something that we must keep at. We must persevere in the faith if we would please the Lord with our service and our work.

There are many who wear the name of Christ but do not bear his reproach. There are many that serve the Lord one day a week and then not in every service. There are those who are satisfied with just part time service. This is not the teaching of God's Word. Our service and our work is a continuing one.

Many are the Scriptures which teach that our service is one of full and complete dedication. Let us take notice of Romans 12:1-2, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" This Scripture teaches that our service belongs to God and not to ourselves. The very wording of these two verses teach that our service to God is one for life. This being so, then there must be a denial of self.

To deny ourselves means that we are to live for God and His

glory and not for our own glory. We must put on the armour of God for the service that we have entered.

When Christ made the call for the heavy laden to come to Him, whose yoke did He say to take upon themselves? His, not ours. Whose burden did He say to take? His, not ours. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:28-30). Taking Christ's yoke and bearing His burden is of service to Him and the denying of ourselves. It is doing His work and not ours. To wear Christ's yoke and to bear His burden is denying ourselves, and tends towards the glory of God and of Christ. We are to lose our life for Christ. When we do this we will find our life in Christ. If we serve ourselves we will lose our life and never find it at all, so far as serving the Lord is concerned. There will be no rewarding, but we will be saved so as by fire. If one should gain the whole world and not have Christ, he has gained nothing that will last.

Let us hear what the great apostle Paul has to say on this matter. "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ." (Philippians 3:7-8). Was not this a denial of himself when Paul did such for His Lord?

Christ said, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). This surely teaches a denial of one's self. Would this not be a denial of ourselves and giving of all to Christ? We would be giving our love; our allegiance, our faithfulness, and our all above anyone or anything to Christ. This would surely be a denial of our own pleasure and satisfaction.

To give anything less than our all is not enough. However Christ did not mean that we were not to see that our loved ones had the necessary things for their well being, but that we are not to serve and care for our own loved ones to the forsaking of Christ and our love and service to Him.

We are to set our affection on things above and not on things in this world. If we do this we will be denying ourselves and serving the Lord.

If we are willing to face persecution and sorrow and all kinds of rebuke and affliction that this world may put upon us for the sake of Christ, then in this we would be denying ourselves. If we are afraid of sorrow and trouble and disappointment and liked to be spared from these that we may have an easy life then we are not denying ourselves. If we suffer with Christ and for Him we will reign with Him. If we deny Christ He will deny us. If we deny ourselves, Christ will own us.

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The Apostle Paul said... "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit the things of the spirit." (Rom. 8:5)

The passage in Luke is calling for temperance. For those that are disciples of Christ have a higher calling than just to fulfill the desires of the body. They have a greater cause to promote than their own interest. As our Saviour has shown by His example in that He came not to do His own will but the will of His Father. You are not your own if you are a blood bought believer. Christ paid a dear price for you. You are to glorify God in your bodies. The flesh wars against the Spirit so that you cannot do the things you should. The more you give in to the fleshly nature the less spiritual power you'll have. Your testimony for the gospel will weaken and eventually become of no effect. Even people that do not trust Christ as their Saviour know that God is holy, and they expect believers to be holy. To deny one's self is to deny the fleshly desires that dishonor God and the cause of the gospel.

Paul said it this way. "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." (I Cor. 9:27)

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This is a very good question. We need to know just what it means, and take heed to it in order to be a devout Christian. It means to say no to self, when self gets in the way of striving God. Too many times self interferes with our being faithful to God and church. Too many people seem to be floating along in this world without purpose, I'm speaking of so-called Christians. There seems to be no love for God, the church, or their fellow men.

The lesson taught here in our text is that we must deny ourselves and follow Jesus, and to follow Jesus is to follow a crucified Jesus. Beloved, Jesus suffered through His life so that you and I might have eternal life. He was tempted in all points as we are,

yet He did not yield to temptation. I Peter 2:21 says, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." Beloved, we in our day have never suffered in order to worship and serve our God. But there are countries where the saints of God have suffered even unto death. If the Liberals have their way, we in this country may have to suffer for the cause of Christ.

Christians today count it suffering if they have to miss their favorite T.V. program and go to church. Some would not dare go to church if their favorite ball club was showing on T.V. Some count it more important to visit relatives on Sunday, and miss church, than to be obedient to God's command in Hebrews 10:25 "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." If Jesus were here, He would be found in church on Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening as was His custom while He was here. Christians, I mean many, will find an excuse to stay home even though the church doors are open. Not to attend these meetings, they are missing a blessing and losing rewards by doing this. These are good people, but lazy concerning serving our blessed Lord.

What does it mean to deny one's self? It means then, to put self aside and serve the Lord regardless of what self wants to do. If you are a Christian there's more pleasure in serving the Lord than there is in satisfying the flesh. Christian, take heed to these things, Jesus has spoken in our text.

## OUTSTRETCHED

(Continued from Page 1)

nothing too hard for Him. Beloved, we all have problems of one sort or another. We worry about the condition of our nation, the greatest nation on the face of the earth, even with its problems. We worry about family matters, health, etc. There seems to be no end to the worries of man, yet there is One who is able to handle all the problems that face man daily. We have a God who loves His children, and there is nothing too hard for Him to cope with. Have you trusted Him? Are you one of His children? Yes, He is able to handle our personal problems, too. Man will always be overcome with personal problems to cope with during his earthly life time. What a beautiful outlook we are rewarded with when we look to Him as our Father. He is able to remove all obstacles that hinder us as we sojourn here in this sin cursed earth. "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (II Chron. 7:14).

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## OUTSTRETCHED

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We are His people, called by His name. If we meet those conditions He will hear and bless us because He is able with that powerful outstretched arm. God's holy majestic power is one of the greatest assets awarded to man after he is saved and sealed until the day of redemption by the seal of promise, the Holy Spirit. We are His children, and we must humble ourselves. Turn away from our sins, repent, and seek His face if we expect to please Him. That applies also to the unsaved man or woman who will seek Him when the Spirit calls. God is a God of love, a God of grace, and God's love and grace are inexhaustible. He gave His love to us while we were yet sinners. He did not wait for us to become good people because that would not be acceptable in His sight. **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"** (Rom. 5:8). He loved us when we were bound by sin and helpless. Yet, with His outstretched arm He was not only able, but did grant us eternal salvation and mercy. Oh, that mercy!

I believe that we have at least three points of sin, or better yet, styles of sin that we need to bring forth before His outstretched arm. First, the sin of prayerlessness is running unchecked among too many of us today. I find that time has elapsed from time to time when I should have taken time out for special prayer. Oh, yes, we pray constantly as we go about our daily tasks, but beloved, there is such a thing as the old proverbial "closet praying." Get alone more often pouring our heart out to God about our daily walk, our loved ones, our church, and its activities. Pray for our brethren along with our close walk with them in our daily activities concerning our church fellowship at home in our own assembly. That is one way to exercise a closer walk with God as we enjoy the power of His outstretched arm. And we will enjoy it as we cuddle closer to Him in constant prayer. The closer unity in your church among the brethren, the stronger the church where you are a member. Many people refuse to pray. God would like to supply our material needs. He desires to bless us, His children, abundantly. But we need to pray.

Prayer is an outstanding thing in the sight of God. It is a form of worship of Him. We do not pray, yet we grumble because our land is not healed, and our needs are not met.

He said humble ourselves and pray. George Mueller, a great faithful man of God, kept five orphan homes alive and active for God by constantly praying. George Muller was known as the most prayerful preacher that ever lived. It seemed that God listened to those prayers and blessed him on every turn. Jesus encouraged us to pray in His teachings also. **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that**

**seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened"** (Matt. 7:7-8). Prayerlessness keeps God from doing what He otherwise would do if we would worship Him by asking of Him in humble prayer. Beloved, prayerlessness is powerlessness.

Secondly, let us look at the sin of faithlessness. Oh, the poverty of faithlessness. The Bible says that God is a faithful creator and a faithful judge. The Bible also says that we are to be faithful in all things that He told us to do. We are not to be prayer warriors only, but faithful prayer warriors. Faithful witnesses, faithful tithers, and especially faithful church goers. Keep the body strong. The church represents the body of Christ; beloved, we are that body. We should be very careful as to how we abuse our church attendance record. Be there. Yes, the missing ingredient in the lives of Christians, that is, most Christians, is faithfulness. We are always on the watch for excuses not to do those things that would count for faithfulness. The most common is: "I don't have to do it if I don't want to!" Just remember, God is not short on blessings. He is able with that stretched out arm! We must have faith. The Bible says; **"...With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible."** (Mark 10:27).

Thirdly, we want to look at the sin of disobedience. We do not like to admit it; but beloved, there are times that we refuse to obey God! Too often we have made up our minds that we're going to live the way we want to, regardless of the consequences. What a shame! I had a certain pastor at another church not long ago, where I was asked to supply for him while he was on vacation, to tell me about a lady that called upon him to do some counselling with her and her husband. She said that her husband was domineering, and she was refusing to accept him as head of the household. He quoted her thusly; "My husband is not going to tell me what to do! I will run my life the way I want to run it, and it is none of his business what I do, neither when, or how I do it!" There was no way that he could change her attitude, so, courteously, he said to her "Good day," and was on his way. This sort of thing may be ironed out, or brought to some satisfactory conclusion, but how about our disobedience to God? This woman was not only disobeying her husband, but was also disobeying God. She is subject to the husband according to the Bible. She had made up her mind to disobey God by rebellion against her husband.

My beloved, disobedience to God is sin. **"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me; But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer"** (Ps. 66:18-19). Notice, he said, "In my heart." Brethren, he did not say I had to go out and steal something! He did not say to profane the Word of God to be in sin! Nor to commit some immoral act with my body in some ungodly way! No, he said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart!" That the Lord will not hear me! It is no wonder that God does not bless us like we think sometime that He should. It is not the sin in our lives that is anchoring us, rather; beloved,

it is sin in our hearts. We need to spend more time alone with God on bended knees. Oh, what a joy to feel that "Outstretched Arm," cradled about your confessing heart.

When Adam and Eve, our parents, fell in the Garden; they turned paradise into a desert, a suffocating, consuming, completely destroying desert, a desert that brought on nothing but more death. The second Adam, our Lord Jesus came upon the scene with that outstretched arm, and with that everlasting loving, giving ability, turned that wicked desert back into paradise for those who will believe in the power of that loving outstretched arm. Adam was not deceived, he came down upon Eve's level because he loved her more than anything in the whole entire creation that he had ever seen. Christ came down on our level, sinless, but with that outstanding love to raise us back into the good graces with God the Father that we had fallen from. He is able, He is forgiving with His love, mercy and grace. One of the greatest blessings to man while we are still upon the earth is the fact that He is long-suffering. He will let us drift such a long way, and then with His loving mercy, He will forgive us again, and again, for our daily short comings that befall all men.

Dear friend, whoever and wherever you are, have you trusted that loving strong outstretched arm? Please don't face eternity without that marvelous gift that is free to all. That loving, merciful, able stretched arm that is readily available to all those who will trust it for eternity. He will save you. It is all by faith, nothing you can do to help, except repent and believe; and if you repent, beloved, you will believe. Man can believe on nothing greater than the finished work on Calvary's cross by that One with that great outstretched arm who paid it all and loves us so very much. Amen.

## ACTS

(Continued from Page 1)

taught and preached the "word of the Lord." There are so few who preach the Word of the Lord today. I often recall the days when T. P. Simmons was my pastor and how fortunate I was to have a pastor who taught the "Word of the Lord." Those today who have pastors who teach the Word of the Lord are far more fortunate than they can comprehend.

It was not only Paul and Barnabas who taught the Word of the Lord, but so did many others. I would be so happy if the same could be said regarding the town in which I live.

**"And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do."** (Acts 15:36).

Paul and Barnabas, in Acts 15:26, had been referred to as those who had "hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." The passage before us shows that Paul, even though he had been stoned, still was willing to risk or hazard his life for the name of his Savior. That name to Paul was far more important than his own name. The apostle, in going back into the areas where he had previously

preached, was entering the lion's den. Such shows that he did not consider his own life dear to himself. The record set forth in II Corinthians 11:24-33 shows the extent to which Paul hazarded his life for the Lord Jesus Christ.

**"And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark."** (Acts 15:37).

John, whose surname was Mark, had gone with Paul and Barnabas on a previous missionary journey. He, however, had left them and gone home. He, it appears, had not been able to persevere when the going became very difficult.

John, or Mark, according to Colossians 4:10, was the nephew of Barnabas. This, it is likely, is why Barnabas was "determined" to have him as a companion again.

**"But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work."** (Acts 15:38).

This Scripture shows that it was not a personal matter with Paul, but it was the work which concerned him. Paul was determined that nothing or no one was going to place a drag on the work which was set before him. He needed someone who would hang in there when the stones began to fly in their direction. He needed someone who was willing to hazard his life for the work, or not to count his life dear unto himself.

**"And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus; And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God."** (Acts 15:39,40).

Paul and Barnabas were great friends. They were also brethren in Christ Jesus. They were soldiers who had fought side by side. Paul, however, would not allow any of these things to interfere with the work. The cause of His Lord was far greater than any earthly bond. The contention, therefore, between him and Barnabas was "sharp" because he would accept no person who

would not hazard his life for the work.

Barnabas was also fully dedicated to the work, but the fact that Mark was his sister's son may have clouded his thinking to some degree. We, however, must not overlook the fact that Barnabas, according to Acts 4:37, sold all that he had and laid the receipts at the feet of the apostles. Let us also remember that Paul and Barnabas, according to I Corinthians 9:6, became traveling companions again. We also know from II Timothy 4:11 that John Mark became profitable to Paul's ministry.

We can be sure that God the Spirit separated Paul and Barnabas for a definite purpose. We have, in fact, two great soldiers for Christ going in two separate directions. The Spirit, through this separation would reach those areas where it had been appointed that the Word should be preached. The separation would not hurt the work but would help it since God the Spirit would be with both Paul and Barnabas.

Paul chose Silas as his helper. Silas had already proven himself to the church in Jerusalem. The church, in fact, had chosen him as one of those who would convey their message to the church at Antioch.

We are informed that Paul and Silas were "recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God." The brethren, in other words, said, "God be with you until we meet again." "May God favor you by supplying all your needs."

**"And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches."** (Acts 15:41).

Syria and Cilicia were areas in which Paul and Barnabas had already witnessed. One can be sure that the saints in those areas rejoiced with joy unspeakable when they saw Paul's face again. We can also be sure that only the power of the Spirit kept Paul's enemies in these areas away from his throat.

**"THEN came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father**

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## ELECTION

You were predestinated before you were conceived.

I knew on Whom you would believe.

Since I chose you from beginning to end,

Only on Me do you depend.

To say you chose Me in your own way,

Is blasphemous for you to say.

The effectual calling will draw you to Me.

My gift to you is completely free.

I alone hold your fate.

On your own will you do not wait.

If it wasn't for My precious grace,

The pits of hell is what you'd face.

I say, Whosoever will believe

And believe Me, My elect will receive,

A home in Heaven with the saints above.

For I say I am love.

Patty Sutherland  
Sanford, Florida



## ACTS

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was a Greek" (Acts 16:1).

I'm sure the missionary journey taken by Barnabas and Mark was a very interesting one too. Luke, however, under the guidance of God the Spirit, has only given an account of Paul's missionary journey. The reason, no doubt, is because Paul was an apostle. He, in fact, was God's apostle to the Gentiles.

Verse 40 of the previous chapter records the fact that the church at Antioch recommended Paul and Silas "unto the grace of God." It appears, however, that they did not do the same for Barnabas and Mark. On the other hand, it may be that they did recommend them but that it was not recorded. The fact that their missionary journey was not recorded makes it likely that the good wishes of the church were not recorded either.

Paul and Silas, when arriving at Derbe and Lystra--places Paul and Barnabas had previously visited, were introduced to a man who, through God the Spirit, was to make a great and lasting impact upon the Lord's work. His name was Timontheus. Special mention is made by the Spirit about Timothy's mother, since she was God's channel in making him an outstanding believer. Paul, in the following scripture, remembers Timothy's mother and grandmother.

**"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also"** (II Timothy 1:5).

The fact that Timothy's mother was a Jew and his father a Greek fits perfectly with that which we have been reading. I see in Timothy a joining link between the Jews and Gentiles. God through Timothy, said to the Jews and Gentiles that the middle wall of division had been torn down. Timothy, during his life, would do much in seeing that the middle wall stayed down. He would point both Jews and Gentiles to the Lord Jesus Christ as the only way to heaven. God made Timothy spiritually taller than most other men because of the need of that particular time in history. The events that surrounded the birth and life of Timothy were ordained by the Almighty.

Paul, in Acts 15:36, had suggested to Barnabas that they make

another visit to the places where they had previously witnessed. Paul, of course, when making his suggestion, had no idea that he would find a man like Timothy in the area of Derbe and Lystra. Perhaps Paul and Barnabas had preached to Timothy's mother when they had been there before. One, in fact, can be nearly positive that they did witness to her and Timothy's grandmother, too. May we learn from Paul's example to never grow weary in well doing. May we also learn from Eunice and Lois the secret of bringing up a child. It is by training them to know, respect, and believe the holy Scriptures. It is as stated in the following scripture:

**"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."** (II Timothy 3:15).

Paul recognized immediately that Timothy's mother, through the power of the Spirit, had built a foundation for Timothy--a foundation which he would continue to build upon. Paul saw in Timothy the potential for that which Timothy later became. T. P. Simmons saw this quality in me when I was a young man. He proceeded to encourage me to study the Word. Later on, when he was away on speaking engagements, he would assign me to speak in his place. God's ministers today should be alert for men to whom God has given superior knowledge, wisdom, and talents. They are those that God has chosen to carry on His work.

I'm sure that Timothy's mother will be rewarded, not only for training Timothy, but she will also be rewarded for the result of Timothy's work. Mothers today will do themselves a great favor if they will follow the examples of Lois and Eunice. They do themselves a disfavor if they don't follow their examples. The best a mother can give her child is not material things but spiritual things. Timothy's mother would have made a grave mistake if she had left him with a babysitter just so she could have purchased more material things for him. Some mothers, of course, are required to work outside the home. They have no choice in the matter. Let every mother keep in mind, however, that in God's eyes, a poor boy who knows the Scriptures is far superior to a rich boy or well-clothed boy who is ignorant of

Scripture. There were times when I was a boy that I didn't have shoes, but I always had my mother at home. My mother, being at home, was far more important to me than shoes. There are many today who say that they want to give their children those things which they did not have. This kind of thinking could be very bad for the children, since the parents, in most cases, have material things in mind. Let me add that the godly babysitter, in some cases, may do more for a child than his or her parents. You, therefore, who perform the role of a babysitter should weigh well the responsibility which is yours. You have the potential for a great reward from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

**"Which was well reported of by the brethren which were at Lystra and Iconium"** (Acts 16:2).

It speaks highly of the "brethren" that they recognized godly talent. They, in speaking highly of Timothy, spoke highly of themselves. Most people, in fact, wouldn't recognize a sound preacher if they heard one. There are also those who praise ignorant preachers and have no regard for sound preachers.

**"Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek"** (Acts 16:3).

It had already been agreed by all concerned that circumcision added nothing to salvation. Paul, then, did not circumcise Timothy in order for his salvation, but only so as to give him a greater acceptance among the many Jews he was to encounter. Other believing Gentiles were not circumcised. Paul, however, wanted nothing, no, not even circumcision, to turn people off even before Timothy could say one word to them. Timothy, in fact, by being circumcised, would be more effective in teaching others why circumcision was not necessary to salvation. We, so long as it is not evil, must become all things to all people so that we can get their attention.

**"And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem"** (Acts 16:4).

The letter which the church at Jerusalem had written to the Gentiles was not only to be read in Antioch; but, according to Acts 15:23, it was to be read in Syria and Cilicia, too. The "decrees," then, which Paul and Silas were delivering, related to the letter which the church at Jerusalem had written. The letter said that it was not necessary to be circumcised and keep the law in order to be saved. The letter, however, did suggest to the Gentile churches that they follow the same procedure which the Jews followed--the procedure which Moses had prescribed, that procedure being as follows:

**"That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well"** (Acts 15:29).

Those who followed this advice would find themselves in the same boat as those who don't

observe Christmas. They would be out of step with their society and thus marked by their society. These practices, after all, were common practices among all the Gentiles. They, by following the "decrees," would, as the song states, "Stand up for Jesus." Many, no doubt, lost their jobs, etc., because of their stand against heathenism.

**"And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily"** (Acts 16:5).

God the Spirit, by way of the letter from the church at Jerusalem, separated the believers from the heathen. He caused them to stop walking hand in hand with them. These separated people were then ready for membership in the Lord's church. His Bride, in fact, is a chaste virgin--a chaste virgin that must not eat meats sacrificed to idols, etc. One can see how God the Spirit got a lot of mileage out of the question of whether or not one must keep the law in order to be saved. The result, in fact, was the letter which was used to make a separated people for the Lord.

The Lord's churches were "established in the faith," rather than some heathen doctrine. The Lord's churches were pillars of truth rather than pillars of error--pillars which held up the truth for all to see. They were and are lights in a very dark world.

It is great to know that those early churches "increased in number daily." There, in fact, was a daily movement from darkness to light.

**"And when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia"** (Acts 16:6).

Phrygia was the largest province or district in Asia Minor. It had Bithynia, north; Pisidia and Lycia, south; Galatia and Cappadocia, east; and Lydia and Mysia, west. Our text states, **"when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia..."** They, in other words, sowed precious seeds, or preached the Word in a large area. They were shining the light from heaven in a very dark land. Their battle was not against flesh and blood, but against powers and principalities in high places. They, therefore, would have failed without God the Holy Spirit. Their preaching without God the Spirit would have been like beating the air with their fists. The Holy Spirit, then, was their power, influence, and guide. He, in fact, according to the Scripture before us, would not allow them to preach the Word in Asia.

This raises the question regarding why it was that the Spirit would not allow them to preach in Asia. The answer is that it was God's plan, at that time in history, to extend the gospel into Greece and on into Europe. We, in fact, in the next chapter, will find Paul "in the midst of Mars' Hill" in Athens, Greece. It was in this area that God, through Paul, made a great impact upon the people there and His people, including us, all down through history.

Asia was to hear God's Word at a later date. Asia, in fact, is where Ephesus was located. It was also the location of Smyrna, Thyatira, Philadelphia, etc.--the homes of the seven churches in Asia which we read about in the book of The Revelation.

**"After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not"** (Acts 16:7).

It is important for us to always be aware of the fact that God the Spirit not only influences the words we speak for the Lord, but He regulates where we speak them. God has a reason for our living and witnessing in the location we are in. There are many, in fact, who would like to move from their present location; but they find it impossible to do so. May we learn to be content where we are located until God opens up other areas for us. He, after all, according to His Word, has appointed the bounds, or the boundary lines, of our habitation.

**"And they passing by Mysia came down to Troas"** (Acts 16:8).

The ancient city of Troy, which no longer exists, was at one time the center of the region known as Troas. You may recall that Troy was made famous by the Trojan War. The Greeks, in fact, for nine years ravaged the countryside and cities that surrounded Troy; but Troy was too well fortified for the Greeks to break through. They, however, built a hollow wooden horse and hid a few soldiers inside. The people of Troy took the horse into their city. The rest of the Greeks appeared to sail away only to return and enter the city after the men hidden in the hollow wooden horse opened the gates to the city. This was called the Trojan War. It is said that the war began after the Trojan prince Paris abducted Helen, wife of Menelaus of Sparta.

**"And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us"** (Acts 16:9).

The "vision" was God's way of revealing His will to Paul. This, of course, was not the first time God revealed His will by way of a vision. He, in fact, used a vision to reveal His will to Cornelius (Acts 10:3). Peter was also given a vision.

God, by way of the "vision" given to Paul, left no room for any indecision on Paul's part. It's a good feeling when we are convinced that we are not only preaching the truth, but that we are in the place which God has assigned to us. We can begin to pack our clothes for travel once we are sure as to where God has assigned us. Jonah is an example of one who did not immediately follow God's revealed will as to where he had been assigned.

The area to which Paul was assigned to preach the Word was called Macedonia. It was the extensive country of Greece. This area, as far as we know, was the first area in Europe where the gospel was preached.

This man in the vision was standing, as if ready to enter or continue the work; but he requested help -- help from the apostle Paul -- the apostle Paul who was very well trained and who had the influence and power of God the Spirit. Paul, of course, without God the Spirit, would have been of no value in Macedonia. We only beat the air

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## BOOK REVIEW

We have a new book in our book store. It is a commentary on Matthew by I.K. Cross. This is a commentary by a Landmark Baptist. He is also a Premillennialist. These are two good qualifications. It is a simple, small, concise, and clear commentary. It is not an indepth study. There are many photographs of places where the events of Matthew took place. This adds to the book. This is a paper back book of nearly 250 pages. It sells for \$14.95. Order from our book store where the profit goes into the book ministry.

We have a new book in our book store. It is "Lectures To My Students" by C.H. Spurgeon. It is new in that it combines four related volumes in one. It is a large hard back book of well over 700 pages. Saying that it is by Spurgeon should make at least every preacher want it. I have personally been greatly blessed by the single volume. The price is \$29.95. Order from our book store. The profit goes into the book ministry of our church.

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I have been greatly blessed the last few weeks reading in "Baptist Doctrines." It is a book of sermons and articles by different men on this subject. The sermon on baptism by H.H. Tucker is the greatest I have ever read. It was a real blessing to my soul. I would especially urge every Baptist preacher to obtain this book and hurriedly read it through. Since starting it, I have regretted that I let it lie unopened on my book shelf for so long. It is a large hard back book of over 600 pages. It sells for \$24.95. Order from our book store.



## ACTS

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with our fists if God the Spirit does not make our messages effective.

The Macedonia's, to which we go to help today, could be Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Virginia, etc. It may even be a place close at hand.

The man from Macedonia in the vision needed help because his country was a heathen land. Those therefore who worked there would encounter severe problems that only faith could subdue. Paul and Silas did not consider the dangers involved but only that it was God's will for them to go. Their own lives were secondary in their thinking. They, in essence, said, "May God be glorified no matter what the cost may be to me."

"And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them" (Acts 16:10).

The pronoun "we" shows that Luke had joined Paul and Silas. There were now four Spirit-filled men that God had assigned to an area in Europe -- an area called Macedonia. These four men, once they knew where God wanted them to preach, set out "immediately" to the work. People who have no purpose in life never do anything immediately. May we all know what God has assigned to us and do it immediately.

"Therefore loosing from Troas, we came with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis" (Acts 16:11).

The island of Samothracia, which belongs to Greece, has a population today of about 3,800 people. The island, which is about 20 miles in circumference, rises to a height of 5,905 feet in the center and is largely mountainous. It was to this island that Paul, Silas, Timothy, and Luke sailed with a "straight course" from Troas.

I'm sure that God the Spirit used the word "immediately" in the previous verse and the words "straight course" in the verse before us so as to show that the four preachers, once they knew God's will for their lives, made no delay in getting to the work.

It is said in the Scripture before us that God's four preachers, after arriving in Samothracia, sailed on the very "next day" to Neapolis. It is obvious that they were so determined to get to Macedonia that they would have left Samothracia the very day they arrived had there been a ship leaving for Neapolis.

The name "Neapolis" was the name of many cities of ancient Greece and Roman times. The most important city by this name is the present day Naples, Italy.

"And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days" (Acts 16:12).

God's four preachers had now set their feet in the country of Macedonia. They had arrived for work and now they must wait for

God the Spirit to set the work before them. They had been highly trained for the Lord's work. Paul, in particular, had seen the Lord Jesus and had received a direct message from Him.

The first place they visited after arriving in Macedonia, was "Philippi" -- the "chief city of that part of Macedonia."

Philippi was named after Philip, the father of Alexander the Great. Philippi, as is true of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, was famous for having been the place where several battles were fought during the civil wars of the Romans. It was also the place where the decisive battle was fought between Brutus and Anthony. Brutus, in fact, killed himself at Philippi. Paul, you will recall, at a later date, wrote a letter to the Lord's church which had been established at Philippi.

The passage before us states that Philippi was a "colony." It, in fact, was a Roman colony, or a city occupied by Roman citizens. The Roman citizens were, in the main, discharged Roman soldiers. The city therefore was a stronghold for defense on the frontiers.

"And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither" (Acts 16:13).

This Scripture shows that there were also Jews living in the city of Philippi -- Jews who, on the sabbath day, went to the riverside to worship God. They obviously had no synagogue in Philippi so they went to the river so they could attend to the rites of purification. There, of course, was no running water in the city itself -- running water needed for the convenience of the numerous washings before and during the Jews' religious services. The river to which they resorted was, no doubt, the Ganges, since it is only one mile from the city.

The places of worship which the Jews had by streams of water, were called "oratories of prayer." These generally consisted of elevated stone walls without a roof. There were obviously seats there since we know from the verse before us that they "sat down."

Paul's vision of this place showed a man asking for help, but the first people to have been witnessed to were women. The women, of course, and the men are of equal importance to God. The lost soul of a man or a woman, a Jew or an Gentile, is of equal loss.

## PHILIPPIANS

(Continued from Page 1)

This was the righteousness Paul had before he met the Lord, his own righteousness. It was the righteousness that he was attempting to obtain by keeping the law. But when he came to Christ he realized that righteousness is only as "filthy rags" in the sight of God. Paul is saying that to be found in Christ is to lose one's own righteousness and gain the righteousness of Christ. In Romans 4:1-8 this righteousness is called "imputed righteousness." The word "imputed" means "it has been put to one's account." Paul is looking back over his own record and he saw nothing on his own

account, in fact, what he thought he had in his account was worth nothing, it was less than nothing, but when he trusted Christ, God put Christ's righteousness to Paul's account. Paul said, "...Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Rom. 4:3). Of David it is said, "...unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works" (Rom. 4:6).

This imputed righteousness is "That which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith". The righteousness Paul, as well as every believer, now possesses comes from the grace of God and has been received by faith and faith alone,

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

"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made comformable unto his death;" (Phil. 3:10).

Another benefit in gaining Christ is the coming into a fuller knowledge of Christ. To "know Christ" means to have a personal relationship with Him through faith. Christ, in His prayer for His own said, "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast

sent" (John 17:3). It is only as we know Him that we have eternal life. Note it does not say, "know about him." Many people know about Christ, yet do not "know him." We know about many people who lived long ago, yet we did not know them. We did not have a personal relationship with them. When it is said that God predestinated those whom He foreknew, to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. 8:29), that foreknowledge was a personal relationship, not a foreknowledge about them and what they would do, which He certainly did know. When Christ tells some people, "...I never knew you: depart from me,

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## LABOUR IN VAIN JONAH 1:12, 13

by John Alber

Introduction.

"And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you. Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them" (Jonah 1:12, 13).

The Storm - last's weeks message three lessons considered. 1. The storm and its lessons. 2. The storm and its effects. 3. The storm and God's salvation.

These Mariners are Found Labouring in Vain

These two verses give to us a lesson; a spiritual illustration of man's experience and action with regard to Christ and His gospel. We have here a beautiful picture of what most men do before they resort to God's remedy; that remedy is fairly imaged in the deliverance of the ship's company by the sacrifice of one on their behalf.

I. When sinners are tossed upon the sea of conviction, they make desperate efforts to save themselves.

These mariners rowed hard, strained every sinew, and labored by violence. No language can express the earnest action with which awakened sinners unlawfully struggle to obtain eternal life.

Sinners will try moral reformation before they turn to almighty God! This can be seen every day of our lives as man seeks after such. To reform simply means: (1). To make better by removing abuses; (2). To make better morally; persuade or educate from a sinful to a moral life; (3). To put an end to; stop; (4). To give up sin or error; become better.

Let's illustrate that: (1). Sinners will give up certain bad habits believing that if they do, surely, that will influence God for their good; (2). Sinners will perform good deeds of charity towards others less fortunate because they believe that will put them in good standing with God; (3). Sinners will join the church, give money, donate time and talent because they believe that God will be pleased; (4). Sinners will enter the ministry and go without the finer things of life because they believe this will appeal to God for them.

Others will add to their reformation a superstitious regard to the outward things of religion. These mariners row hard to get the ship to land by a national belief in orthodox doctrine. How many there are today that study the Bible and have all of their i's and T's correct in their theology, but lack the most important ingredient, personal faith in the Son of God. Religion is big business! It was in the days of our Lord and it still is big business. Don't let anybody tell you any different! There are many that believe heaven is theirs because they attend a certain religious church. The Roman Catholic person holds to his superstitious ways believing that all of their sacraments will guarantee him heaven. The Cults (Mormons, I.W.'s, S.D.A., Christian Science and many more) have built their empires with superstitious feelings and have convinced their followers that God will accept them because they were part of an elite group.

Others are resting upon their own incessant prayers. Beads on chains help some and prayer cloths help others, but the Bible still tells us that God does not hear the prayers of sinners.

Then, others are toiling by a sort of mental torture; they go without or suffer great pain with regards to their faith. The Catholic Church down through the years has used this and prayers to suggest that God would be pleased.

II. Like these mariners, the fleshy efforts of an awakened sinner must inevitably fail.

"They could not" (Jonah 1:13). Oh beloved, with all men's rowing after mercy and salvation, he can never find it by his own efforts. Oh, if it were possible! But it is not. The Bible tells us that the works and efforts of men are as filthy rags and unacceptable to God. Just as these men tried to save the ship and their lives by their actions and failed, so all the works and efforts of men will fail. It is contrary to God's law for a sinner to get comfort by anything he can do for and by himself. This is because in what man does, he is insulting the God of heaven. He is also in the way of the curse.

III. The soul's sorrow will continue to increase so long as it relies upon its own efforts.

It may be overruled for good, but the effect of all that the creature does before it believes is mischievous. The good effect lies

in this: the more a man strives to save himself, the more convinced will he become of his own inability. Again, another good result follows, that a man striving to save himself by law finds out the spirituality of the law, a spirituality which he never saw before. You see, much of this toiling is nothing more than mischievous. It makes unbelief take on a firmer grip.

The greater the despair will only make things worse; why? Because man can not escape, his life is full of bones, relics of his own past life of sin; and all that he may attempt will only come to nought. Many sinners will make excuses for themselves; and that, out of their own despair and anguish, and let their doubts and fears grow till they cast shadows of dismay over themselves.

The Bible is full of examples of men and women who attempted to please the God of heaven by their own efforts. Cain, perhaps the first, wanted to please God his own way. When the God of heaven refused to accept his sacrifice, Cain slew his brother Abel in a fit of rage. God marked him so that the rest of the world would know his sin. Nimrod, that mighty hunter before the Lord refused God's way and established his own religious system in the plains of Shinar. His religious convictions have become that of many persons today, and yet, they have only brought about a certain amount of doubt and certain fear upon its followers. Why? Because nothing is for certain! It is based upon the works of the flesh and no man in his own efforts can please the God of heaven. That is why there is a certain amount of uncertainty in religion. Religion apart from the intervening work of the Spirit of God only produces a form of godliness; godliness that denies the power of a just and holy God.

IV. Safety for sinners is to be found in the sacrifice of another in their behalf.

Oh Beloved, if you leave out the fact that Jonah was a sinful man, he becomes an eminent type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Substitution saved the mariners! Substitution saves sinners today! Our Lord Jesus Christ died for us! Because of that substitution, There is a calm! Our conscience accuses no longer! Our safety is in Christ Jesus! Memory looks backwards with sorrow because of sin; but with this substitution there is no dread of penalty!



# PHILIPPIANS

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**ye that work iniquity**" (Matt. 7:23). He is saying, "I never had a personal relationship with you." Salvation is knowing Christ in a personal way. To know about Christ, how He was born, how He lived, how He died, how He rose from the grave, is not salvation. It is only as we **"know him"** by faith that we have eternal life. To know Him is life eternal.

Paul, already knowing Him, had a great desire to come into a fuller relationship with Him and to know more fully **"the power of his resurrection."** He had a great desire to come into a full knowledge of the power of Christ's resurrection. By believing the truth that Christ rose from the grave gives us a sure hope that we also will be raised, and knowing this will enable us to face any trials for His sake. All our hope is based upon the resurrection of Christ. Paul said, **"If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. -- And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins"** (I Cor. 15:14-17).

Paul not only wanted a closer relationship with his Lord and to know more of the power of His resurrection, but he also wanted to share in His suffering, **"the fellowship of his suffering."** He is saying, "I want to share in the same kind of suffering that He endured, I want to be identified with my Lord." Paul wanted to be like his Lord and Master. He did not want to just share in His honor and glory, but he also wanted as much as possible to share in His suffering. We all desire to share in the glory, in the incorruptible inheritance that is reserved in heaven for the children of God, yet are we willing to suffer with Him? The apostle Peter said, **"...rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings"** (I Pet. 4:13). The apostles, after they had been beaten, were **"...rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name"** (Acts 5:41). Paul added, **"being made conformable to his death"** Above all things Paul desired to be just like Christ, to live as He lived, to die as He died. He made it very clear that he regarded it as the highest honor to die for the cause of Christ. Paul summed up his life by saying, **"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me"** (Gal. 2:20). Not only was Paul willing to live for Christ, but also to die for Him. Should not we have the same desire?

**"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead"** (Phil. 3:11).

The word "if" used by Paul does not mean an uncertainty that he would not be in the rapture of the saints, but that he might with great joy take part in it. The apostle John said that we as children of God would react to Christ's return in one of two ways, **"And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before**

**him at his coming"** (I John 2:28). The only way to not be ashamed at His coming is to abide in Him. This includes turning from sin and a denial of self. It may include much hardship for the sake of Christ, for Paul it meant a martyr's death.

This knowledge for which Paul desires will one day be a complete knowledge. John expressed it, **"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is"** (I John 3:2). Like John, Paul is looking forward to the time when his knowledge of Christ, his relationship will be complete. This will take place at the return of our Lord.

**"Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus"** (Phil. 3:12).

Paul realized that he had not as yet obtained that which he most desired, **"Not as though I had already attained--"**. He knew that complete union with Christ, a full knowledge of His death and resurrection could not be obtained this side of the rapture. He was also fully aware that he had not reached perfection, **"either were already perfect."** But this did not keep him from seeking, striving for that which he knew could only be fully realized when the Lord returned for His own, **"but I follow after."** That is, he said that he would follow after, pursue it, strive for it, in order to win the prize. He states **"if that I may apprehend"** or that he might obtain that for which he was apprehended by Christ Jesus.

**"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus"** (Phil. 3:13, 14).

Here the Christian life is likened to a race in which there is a prize for the winner. Paul is saying his race is not yet over, he is still in the running. He said he would not look back to what he had done but he looks ahead, and **"press toward the mark for the prize"**. He would "press toward the mark," he would put out every effort, as a runner would put forth all he had to win the race. This race for Paul began when he was **"apprehended of Christ Jesus"** on the Damascus road. From that time forward his purpose in life was to obtain those things which he has listed in the previous verses. We need to remember that Paul is not talking about salvation. Only those who are already saved can run this race. In the Greek games to which Paul, no doubt, is comparing this race, those who ran must have been a citizen. He did not run in order to gain his citizenship. In verse 20 Paul tells us that our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven. We are already the children of God through faith in Christ, **"WHOSOEVER believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God"** (I John 5:1). **"Beloved, now are we the**

**sons of God.."** (I John 3:2). Being children of God makes us citizens of heaven and as such, we have the responsibility of running the race and winning the prize. If we run the race as God has laid out for us we receive a reward. If we fail in the race we lose the reward, but we do not lose our citizenship. **"If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire"** (I Cor. 3:15). **"Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded. God shall reveal even this unto you"** (Phil. 3:15).

The word "perfect" is used in a different sense from that used in verse 12 where Paul said he was not already perfect. Here he is talking to those who are "mature"; Christians who are "full grown" in contrast to those who are "babes" in Christ. A baby six months old may be perfect in health and mind for that age, but if that baby ceases to grow there is something seriously wrong. Paul is telling those who are maturing, growing spiritually, to **"be thus minded,"** to have the same spirit that he himself had, and to make the same effort which he himself was putting forth. He had just stated that he had not as yet reached the goal, that he was still pressing forward, striving for that perfection that is obtained only at the end of the race. He is telling others to have the same mind, to make the same effort, to be like-minded in their effort to win the prize. Now if there be any of **"ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you"** Evidently there were some in the Philippian church who needed this caution. They may have had the attitude of the Pharisee who prayed, **"God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men"** (Luke 18:11). I fear that we have many today who have the same attitude. If **"ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you"**. Those who are really sincere, yet do not agree with Paul in all that he has said about perfection and the need for continual spiritual growth, he stated that God will reveal, or give them light on the subject. He will reveal the truth unto them. But there is one condition that must be met. We must live up to the light we have. This condition is given in the next verse.

**"Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing"** (Phil. 3:16).

In any game of sports the players must abide by the rules. The lack of this and the result is noted in the case of Jim Thorpe, who in the 1912 Olympic games won several gold medals. But later it was discovered that he had played semi-professional baseball, therefore he could no longer be considered an amateur. As a result, the medals and his trophy were taken from him. Paul states in I Corinthians 9:24-27 that any man who enters a race must practice rigid self-control in training. If he breaks training he is disqualified. If he breaks the rules of the game he is disqualified. Paul is saying it is the same for the Christian's spiritual race; we must abide by the rules, or we will be

disqualified. One day, **"we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ"** (Rom. 14:10). In that day, **"every one of us shall give account of himself to God"** (Rom. 14:12). The apostle John said that when that time comes we will either stand before Him in confidence or in shame (I John 2:28). The only way to stand in confidence is to abide by the rules, **"...press toward the mark for the prize of the high (heavenly) calling of God in Christ Jesus."**

To "walk by the same rule", to "mind the same thing" tells us we should work together. There is a need for co-operation in the service of our Lord. There was a beginning of divisions in the Philippian church, therefore this warning was needed. Sad to say, this warning is greatly needed in many of our churches today. Often, members of churches are walking by their own rules instead of walking by God's rules. A church that walks by the same rule, the rule that God has set, that minds the same thing; is a church that is striving, pressing forward for the things of Christ.

To be continued.

## PAUL

(Continued from Page 1)

I rather imagine that no individual Christian ever builds entirely of gold, silver and precious stone, and I am sure that no individual Christian ever built entirely of wood, hay and stubble. I rather imagine that it is a patchwork house, at best, that you and I are building. I am rather of the opinion that there goes in a slab of gold or silver something good and worthwhile--then you lose your temper and you say or do something that you ought not to, and the result is that in goes some wood, hay or stubble.

Now what individual would ever build a house that he expected to live in, in that manner? You say, "Brother Gilpin, that is the most foolish thing in this world for a man to build a house using gold, silver, precious stone, wood, hay and stubble in the same house." I grant you, beloved, that it would certainly be a "hodge podge" so far as the building of an earthly structure is concerned. However, I am rather of the opinion that the majority of us are building our life's temple just about in that fashion. If I mistake not, the most of us once in a while get a slab of something that is worthwhile. We sometimes will put in gold, silver, and precious stones but the most of the time, I am afraid we build out of wood, hay and stubble. We have a good foundation on which to build, which is the Lord Jesus Christ, yet the most of us are putting up a mighty shoddy structure so far as our life's temple is concerned.

I remember years ago that on one Sunday night I preached from this text, and after the service was over a man came to me - a man whom I considered a godly individual - and he said, "Brother Gilpin, if I could, I'd like to tear down that shack that I have been building for the last 25 years, and I'd like to start all over building that temple for the Lord."

Well, I am wondering, beloved, if maybe that isn't true of every one of us. I wonder if you haven't been putting up a pretty sorry kind of a shack as your life temple. I know you can't tear

down what you have already built, but I do know that God wants you to put into that temple, gold, silver and precious stone. He wants you to build out of the right kind of material. Therefore, He says to us, **"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."**

May I remind you then, beloved friends, that while Jesus is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that you and I in turn are made unto God temples of the Lord, for Paul says:

**"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's"** (I Cor. 6:19, 20).

I insist, beloved, that you and I are building a temple every day, and we are admonished, and instructed, and warned that the temple we are building ought to be built with an eye single to the glory of God. He would remind us that we have been bought with a price, and the price that was paid for our redemption is the price of the blood-shedding of Jesus Christ. Therefore He says, **"Since you have been bought with a price, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are God's."**

We are made unto God a spiritual temple, and every day we are building, we are adding, we are completing, we are finishing, we are furnishing and making that temple a little more complete. Would to God that you might always build of gold, silver, and precious stones.

Paul tells us that we are likewise made unto Him laborers. Listen: **"For we are laborers together with God..."** (I Cor. 3:9).

When I was a boy, it was always a joy to me when they put me to work with the men. I never liked to be put off with the boys to work. I always liked the idea of being put to work with the men. It made me feel good to work with someone bigger than I and that is what I am doing today. We are laborers together with God.

Beloved, I am not laboring with man. To be sure, there is a sense whereby that you and I are laborers together, but after all is said and done, in our laboring, our work, our striving, the things that we do, primarily we are laborers together with God. Listen again: **"We then, as workers together with him..."** (II Cor. 6:1). **"Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad"** (II Cor. 5:9, 10).

Beloved, He has made us laborers with Him, and He says we are laboring with the thought in mind that some of these days we are going to stand in His

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## PAUL

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presence, maybe to be accepted of Him, and to receive our reward. He tells us then when we come to stand before the judgment seat of Christ, we will receive our reward for the things that we have done in the body, whether it be good or whether it be bad.

Now there is an underlying oriental imagery here in that it speaks about the judgment seat of Christ. The words "judgment seat" in the Greek language is the word "bema" and that has to do with the Olympic games. When a man would compete in the Olympic games and had proven to be of superior quality, he would then come before the "bema," or the judgment seat, and the ruler of the Olympic games would hand out the awards there. In other words, when he stood before the "bema," he got his reward for the labor that he had performed in the Olympic games.

Paul uses that figure of speech to say to us that you and I are going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ some of these days to get our rewards for our labors that we have produced in the Lord.

I am glad that I am a laborer in the Lord. My labor is mighty poor, and I recognize the fact that my work is of a very poor quality, yet I thank God for this fact, that some day we are going to stand before Him at the judgment seat to get our reward, our pay, for the labor that we have performed.

When I read this Scripture I am impressed by the fact that payday is coming for the Christian, someday. You know, the big thing in the minds of most people when they go to work, is payday. I often think when a man goes out to work in the morning that he isn't concerned particularly about the hours that he puts in; the thing that is in his mind is that payday is coming someday, and he is looking forward to payday. That is the thing that gives him the incentive for work.

Beloved, that ought to be true of every one of us, because payday is coming for all of the laborers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I remember, years ago, coming up by a car shop and seeing a woman standing there waiting to catch a bus, talking to a man. I stopped and asked them to ride, and she got in and waved goodbye, and said, "Bye, bye, Charlie, I'll see you next payday." The next payday I saw to it that I made it a point to come by there in the morning, and she was there again to collect. I picked her up and she said, "Bye, bye, Charlie, I'll see you next payday." Well, payday to her was the big day, when she came, and collected Charlie's wages, on payday.

Beloved, payday is a big day for the child of God. God made Jesus to be wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption to us, and in turn He makes us not only to be temples to the Lord, but to be laborers in His service.

III. Epistles. Then again, He has made us to be epistles, for we read: "Ye are our epistle

written in our hearts, known and read of all men" (II Cor. 3:2).

I ask, what is an epistle, and I might say, I'll not give to you the definition that was given by a little boy in school when the teacher asked the question, "What is an epistle?" He said, "That is an apostle's wife." Well, that just isn't quite true. I will remind you that an epistle is a letter, and Paul says that we are letters. You and I, as God's people, are letters that are known and read of all men.

Notice, beloved, Paul says that God has made us to be epistles. In other words you and I are being read every day by the world. I think it is true that every hour of every day there is somebody that looks at me and reads something of the Lord Jesus Christ that he sees or doesn't see, in my life. I am afraid the world doesn't read much of the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, but I am sure that the world reads a lot of the gospel according to you. I am positive that the world doesn't read much of the Acts of the Apostles, but the world reads a great deal of the acts of your life, in the service of Jesus Christ. I know the world doesn't read much of the epistles of Paul and Peter and the other New Testament writers, but the world does read the epistles according to you and me that is recorded within our lives. I'll say again, I don't think the world reads much of the Revelation that is recorded in the Bible, but the world reads the revelation of Jesus Christ as is recorded in you.

I ask you, do you realize that you are an epistle, known and read of all men and that the world is reading you every day to see what your life is for Jesus Christ? As the little poem goes:

"We are the only Bible this careless world will read,

We are the sinner's gospel, we are the scoffer's creed;

We are our Lord's last message, written in deed and word,

What if the print is crooked, what if the type is blurred?"

Don't you hate to pick up a paper or magazine and find in the middle of an article that it is blurred and you can't read it? It ruins or destroys the story that you have been reading. I am wondering if the world doesn't look at us and see something of that in our lives when we fail, when we absolutely do not stand up for Jesus like we should. I am wondering if the world doesn't see some mighty bad printing, so far as we are concerned. Surely, many times, the epistle that we are, proves to be a very poor presentation of the Lord Jesus Christ.

IV. Stewards. The Word of God tells us also that He hath made us to be stewards. Listen: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God" (I Cor. 4:1).

The mysteries of God refer to the Bible, the faith, the written Word of God. This text says we are stewards of the Word of God. We are stewards of the mysteries of faith. We are stewards of the truths recorded within the Book.

Now what is a steward? He is one who looks after the property of somebody else. It tells us within the text that we are stewards of the Lord Jesus Christ in the sense that we are to look after His writings the mysteries of God.

Did you ever stop to think if you are a steward, then that means you are responsible unto Him who has saved you and has called you into His service? Did you ever stop to think that you are definitely a steward of the Lord? Do you have influence? Then you are a steward of that influence. Do you have time? Then you are a steward of that time, and that time ought not to be wasted, but it ought to be put into the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have come to this conclusion in life, that I just can't find enough time for the service of my Lord. I just don't have time to waste on the things of this world. I don't have enough time now for the service of the Son of God. I say we are stewards of our influence, and stewards of our time, and stewards of our talents, and stewards of our financial possessions. In every respect, ever thing about us works together to cause us to be a good steward of the mysteries of the Lord Jesus Christ.

V. Ambassadors. We read: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ..." (II Cor. 5:20).

An ambassador represents his government that sends him out. Suppose we send a man from the United States to the court of St. James. When that man gets to England he doesn't go there to represent himself. He doesn't go there for pecuniary gain for himself. He doesn't go there to take care of personal pleasures or personal affairs. Rather, he is there to represent his government. He is an ambassador for the United States in England.

Beloved, that is exactly what you and I are for Jesus Christ. We are His ambassadors here within this world, and it is our business to remember that we are here to represent Him. As the old song says:

"I am a stranger here within a foreign land,

My home is far away, upon a golden strand;

Ambassador to be, in realms beyond the sea,

I am here on business for my King."

I tell you, beloved, we need to realize this truth, that we are here as ambassadors for Jesus Christ. We are here on business for our King, the Son of God.

I think of the ambassador that leaves this country and goes to another country. That means that he has left his homeland - that his home is some place else different to the country in which he is living. This means that when a man goes to a country to be an ambassador to that country, then he is a stranger there, he is a pilgrim there, he is a sojourner there, he is a visitor there, for his home is somewhere else.

Beloved, I wish I could impress it upon you that our home isn't here within this world. We are just sojourners here. We are just ambassadors here in this world for the Son of God. Our home is yonder in heaven. As Paul said when he wrote to the church at Philippi: "Our conversation is in heaven..." (Phil. 3:20).

Thank God, you and I who are saved are not citizens of this world. Our citizenship is in heaven, and we are merely here in this world as ambassadors for the Lord Jesus Christ.

VI. Teachers.

The Word of God tells us that He has made us to be teachers. Listen: "And the things that

thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Tim. 2:2).

This text tells us that we are teachers of Him. We are to teach those we come in contact with, so that they in turn might be able to teach others too.

Do you realize that a teacher's lot is not the easiest lot in the world? A teacher has a peculiar job in that the teacher is to instruct, and teach, and help others, that they in turn might be able to help still others. As I say, it is a peculiar and rather difficult task that the teacher has.

One teacher sent a note home by a little boy and told his mother, "Johnny doesn't wash too well of a morning before he comes to school, and he doesn't smell too good either. I wish you would see to it that he washes a little bit more in the morning before he leaves home." The next day she got a note back from the mother which said, "Johnny ain't no rose. He is to be 'learned' and not smelled

Well, I think the teachers have somewhat of a little problem from the standpoint of teaching, and I am ready to say that it isn't the easiest thing in the world for a person to be a teacher. They have lots of problems.

Beloved, we need to remember this, though: our business is to teach. Our business is to take the things of God and teach them to others. It isn't the easiest thing in the world, but it is the task that He has laid out for us to do.

The Apostle Paul goes further in this respect as he writes to the Hebrew Christians, for he says: "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..." (Heb. 5:12).

In other words, he is saying to these Hebrew Christians. "You haven't grown like you ought to have grown. You are not capable of being a teacher. You have need that somebody teach you. Instead of you being able to teach others, you are still on a milk diet. You are still just a baby. You haven't grown up. You need somebody to further teach you."

Beloved, would to God that everyone of us might seek to grow so we would get beyond the baby stage, so we would get beyond the milk stage, so we would get beyond the stage of childishness - so we would come to the place that we might be teachers for the Lord Jesus Christ.

VI I. Soldiers. We also are to be soldiers, for we read: "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier" (II Tim. 2:3, 4).

There are no volunteers in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. Did you ever stop to think that a man may volunteer to be a soldier for his country, but a man never volunteers for the army of the Son of God? Every one of us who is a soldier of our Lord, is a chosen soldier. We have been chosen of the Lord. He says that if we have been chosen, then we are to seek to endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. As

the old song says:

"Am I a soldier of the cross?

A follower of the Lamb?

And shall I fear to own His cause,

Or blush to speak His name?"

Yes, beloved, I am afraid we sometimes do blush to speak His name. I am afraid sometimes we are ashamed to stand up for the Son of God like we should, I am afraid we forget that He has chosen us to be soldiers for Him.

This text goes further and tells us that if we have been chosen to be a soldier, we are not to entangle ourselves with the things of this world, but that we are to remember we have been chosen of Him. We are to be at His command. We are to be on duty for Him and ready to take orders from Him at all hours, for He said, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life...."

How many of us become entangled? How many of us get all twisted, and tied up with the things of this world, to the extent that we can't be good soldiers for the Son of God?

I remember years ago hearing a preacher say that he served in the Civil War. I remember him telling about the Battle of the Seven Pines near Richmond. He said that when they gave the command for the battle to begin one fellow said, "I can't do that; I can't fight. I have five watches in here that I promised to repair and have ready by Saturday night." Before this fellow had come to war he had been a watchmaker, and he had brought his watch-making tools along with him, and he was still doing a lucrative business on the side. Then when the command came to fight, he had forgotten about the fact that he was a soldier. He was thinking about the fact that he had promised to have five watches repaired by Saturday night.

Well, beloved, I am afraid too many times you and I are like that. We are entangled with the things of this world. We have forgotten about the fact that we are warring in the name of the Son of God. We have forgotten that we are soldiers of Jesus Christ.

VIII. Athletes. Paul tells us that we also have been made athletes, for he says: "And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully" (II Tim. 2:5).

Now the word for "strive" is best understood by looking at the oriental imagery that surrounds the word. It is an idea of an athletic contest and it declares that you have to strive lawfully, or else you will not be able to receive the crown.

I think in this respect of one outstanding individual - Jim Thorpe. Jim Thorpe was recognized for his athletic prowess. One thing was he kicked a football over the top of the administration building at the college where he attended, and he was the only man that was ever able to do so. No man has ever been able to do it since. Jim Thorpe went to the Olympic games and won several medals. After he had come back home some newspaper reporter began digging around, and found that Jim Thorpe had played professional baseball, or at least had played ball on Saturday afternoon for a little jerkwater place out in the west and had received a sum total of \$5.00 for playing

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## A LETTER AND ITS ANSWER

By the editor

Dear Brother Wilson: I receive your paper, "The Baptist Examiner" on a regular basis, but I have to admit that sometimes I get aggravated with some of the articles that stress the writer's views rather than the Holy Scriptures.

For example, in Sept. 15th issue the article on "The Atonement" by Dan Phillips, does he think that everyone is astray in doctrine but himself? I read his article through and found it very distasteful and not true to the Word. As do all Calvinists, he omitted on purpose the verses that teaches the opposite of what he believes.

The Bible knows of no such doctrine as "Limited Atonement." I have preached the Word for years, and have never seen this doctrine, but rather the opposite. He bases "Limited Atonement" on Isaiah 53:12. How could you build a doctrine on one verse of Scripture? Simply, read it in its contexts.

A lot of the verses that Dan uses, I am familiar with after 43 years in the Word...he fails on purpose to quote John 3:16, "God so loved the world" (the world of mankind). I would call that unlimited love, wouldn't you?

What about John 1:29, "the Lamb of God that (who) taketh away the sin of the world." I am sure that is not limited to a certain number, but all...

He did not quote I John 2:2, "And He is the propitiation (sacrifice or mercy seat) for our sins (the elect) and not for ours (the elect) only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Doesn't this teach just the opposite? My Bible teaches that Jesus "tasted death for every man." Not just the elect, but the non-elect. Therefore, unlimited atonement. I find the articles are so biased, so prejudiced without support of Scripture. Please print the letter!!!

The editor's answer. Dear Brother Ernest Nickerson of Canada, I will answer your letter briefly under the form of several points.

1. We do not call ourselves "Calvinists" as the doctrines of grace which we preach were preached by true Baptists (they still are by true Baptists) many years before Calvin was born. We did not get these doctrines from Calvin, but from the Word of God. We do not preach many things that Calvin did. We preach many things that he did not. Please do not refer to T.B.E. writers as Calvinists.

2. We always stress the Holy Scriptures, and prove our doctrines thereby. We never put our views ahead of the Bible.

3. Dan knows that there are many people who believe the same doctrines that he does, and so does not believe that everyone is astray but himself.

4. Dan did not omit on purpose (how do you know his purposes?) any Scriptures that teach opposite to a "Limited Atonement," for there are no such Scriptures.

5. Your preaching for years and your 43 years in the Word does not prove anything. I have been preaching for nearly 47 years, and I see "Limited Atonement" very clearly in the Bible. Why, Brother Nickerson, there are men who have been preaching for fifty

or more years who do not see Eternal Security, Immersion or Baptism, or Believer's Baptism; does that prove them right and those of us who believe these things wrong? The issue is not how long you have been preaching, but what does the Bible teach.

6. The man who does not believe in a limited atonement either does not believe or does not understand Isaiah 53. The whole chapter is a treatise on the limited and effectual atonement of Jesus Christ. Those for whose transgressions He was wounded are healed by His stripes. He did not bear the transgressions of those who are not healed (v.5). Men go to hell for sin. The Lord laid the sins of some men on Christ, and He paid for those sins. If a man's sins are not on himself, but on Christ; what could that man go to hell for? Do you believe that the thrice-holy God of the Bible is an unjust tyrant who demands double payment for sin (v.6)? He was stricken for the transgression, not of all men, but for "my people." (V.8) He shall see His seed, (v. 10), that is, He shall see all the seed for whom He died, saved. He shall see the travail of His soul and be satisfied - He shall see them all saved with an eternal salvation and be satisfied with the work He did at Calvary. He shall justify many, not all. He shall justify all those whose iniquities He bore (v. 11). He bore the sin of many and makes intercession for those whose sins He bore (v.12). My friend, a man whose mind is already made up about the extent of the atonement, who is determined to not see anything different from his pre-conceived opinion, who will force his own opinion on Scripture, will never understand Isaiah 53; for it surely is a treatise on the limited and effectual atonement of Jesus Christ. Your trouble is that you do not believe in an effectual and saving atonement; for if you did, you would have to believe in either a limited atonement or universal salvation. Further, your trouble is that you do not believe that the death of Christ is really and truly and atonement at all; for if you did, you would have to believe that it effectually atones for the sins of all those for whom He died; and consequently, they will all be saved.

7. You refer to the word "world" in John 3:16 and 1:29, but you do exactly what you accuse Dan of doing; you do not quote the many places where that word cannot (and you know it cannot) mean what you insist that it has to mean in those two verses. You interpret "world" in those verses as meaning everyone who ever has or ever will live. Why don't you apply that meaning to John 17:9? If you do you will have Christ not praying for anyone who ever has or will live, and thus all men would go to hell. Why don't you quote that verse which teaches contrary to what you believe? You won't quote John 12:19 and apply your definition of "world" to it, or you would teach that all men who ever have or will live go after Christ and thus will be saved. You won't apply your definition of "world" to John 14:17, or you would teach that no one who ever has or will live can receive the Spirit, and thus no one would be

saved. See how foolish and inconsistent you are? You demand that "world" in John 3:16 and 1:29 has a meaning that you will and must admit it does not have in other places. You accuse Dan of not quoting Scriptures that oppose his position (he does not for there are none), but you fail to quote Scriptures where "world" cannot mean what you try to make it mean in the Scriptures that Dan used. Come, on Brother Nickerson, be consistent. You have been in the Word for 43 years. I am sure you know what a concordance is and how to use it. Well, take it and look up all the uses of "world" in the Bible, and then tell us that it means what you say it does in John 3:16 and 1:29. Come on now, do this, and I will print the results of your studies on the Biblical uses of "world" in T.B.E.

8. You make a big deal out of "the whole world" in I John 2:2. You ignore the fact that there are two groups mentioned in the verse; therefore, the words "whole world" cannot include everyone who ever has or will live. If they do, why does this verse refer to another group called "ours"? Why would the Holy Spirit say "our sins" and then refer to the sins of the whole world as meaning everyone if the "ours" are included in the "whole world"? Now look at I John 5:19 and tell me that the words, "the whole world lieth in wickedness" means everyone who ever has or ever will live. The verse itself describes two groups: the "we who are of God" and the "whole world." Will you not admit that "whole world" in I John 5:19 does not mean every one? You would be very foolish not to. Then why do you insist that the same words in I John 2:2 mean everyone? Come on, Brother Nickerson, a little consistency of interpretation, please.

9. You talk about bias and prejudice. Yes, I read plenty of it; but it is in your letter and not in Dan's article.

10. You mention "every man" in Hebrews 2:9 (I suppose you mean that reference). Now, Brother Nickerson, a man of your ability, who has been in the Word for 43 years, (I am sure) knows that "man" is not in the original Greek of that verse. The context clearly tells us whom Christ tasted death for. It is for the many sons whom He will bring to glory. It is for those who are sanctified by His redemption. It is for His brethren. Come on now, Brother Nickerson, you have been in the Word for 43 years; you know or should know better how to study the Scripture than to use "man" here when it is not in the original, and when the context is so clear.

Well, I printed your letter. I wonder if you will print my answer in your paper. We will see. You have been in the Word for 43 years. Well, just take a few hours more, get into the Word without your preconceived bias and prejudice, and you will see the precious and glorious doctrine of a "Limited and Effective and Saving Atonement."

Yours by free grace,  
Joseph M. Wilson

### PAUL

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for that team on a Saturday afternoon. The newspaper reporter made a story about it, how that Jim Thorpe went to the Olympic games not as a man that was

qualified, but he went there after having played professional ball. In other words he went there as a professional. They began to dig into the matter and found that it was true, and as a result, Jim Thorpe's medals had to be returned to the Olympic board, because they said he had not been striving lawfully.

Every time I read this Scripture I think of Jim Thorpe with his medals, how he had to take them off and send them back to the Olympic committee. Why? Because he had not been striving lawfully. Paul says to us that we are to be athletes - we are to strive lawfully in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul also tells us how we are to treat our bodies if we are going to be athletes for the Lord, for he says: **"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway"** (I Cor. 9:24-27).

This would tell us that every man who is going to be an athlete must be temperate.

I can remember when I was in college that I used to run the mile, the two mile, and cross country, and the marathon. I can remember how I used to eat. Among other things, I used to eat raw eggs and drink orange juice. I can remember how I did everything I could to keep my body in condition.

Paul says that you and I are athletes for the Lord, and we ought to be temperate in all things. As an athlete will carefully watch his diet, and watch his hours of sleep and rest, so we as athletes for our Lord are to be temperate in all things.

Paul even goes far enough to say that he beats his body black and blue in order to make his body behave itself, so that he himself will be able to continue in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. Beloved, we have been made athletes in the service of the Lord.

IX. Students. He has made us to be students, for Paul says: **"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"** (II Tim. 2:15).

I remember one time when I attended a Hardshell Baptist Association and one of the brethren, in preaching, said that he was ignorant and proud of it. Another one prayed and said, "Lord, I want to be ignorant." Another one called out and said, "Yes, Lord, make us ignorant as a horse." You know, beloved, I have seen a lot of horses that I thought had a whole lot more sense than a lot of those fellows had.

I tell you, God doesn't want you to be ignorant. God wants you to be a student. He wants you to study to see what the Word of God teaches, so that we will be able to rightly divide the word of truth.

Did you ever try to carve a

chicken at the table when you had company? Did you have any difficulty with it? Did the knife go through every place you wanted it to? Were you able to handle it all right? I suspect you may have had some experience along the way like I have had in that respect. I remember the first time I ever tried to carve a chicken. It was all bones. There weren't any joints to it at all. I couldn't hit anything but a bone. I scooted it around and slopped gravy on first one side of the platter and then on the other. Why? Because I didn't know how to divide that chicken.

Let me tell you, beloved, you have to know how to divide a chicken to be an artist in the matter of carving at the table. You have to know where the joints are in order to divide it properly. Likewise, you have to know something about the Bible in order to be able to "dish" it out properly. Some of it was written for the Jews. Some of it was written for the Gentiles. Some of it was written to the church. Some of it was written to unsaved people. Therefore you have to be able to rightly divide the Word of God. If you don't know how to do so, do you know what is going to happen? You are going to splash spiritual gravy all over your audience, and you are going to come up with this result: people are going away feeling rather disgusted with what they have heard, and confused to say the least. Beloved, we are to be students of the Word of God.

X. Vessels. **"But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour"** (II Tim. 2:20).

I ask you, don't you have some vessels in your home that you use only when you have company? Don't you have some dishes that you just don't use ordinarily, but you just use them when you have company? Ordinarily, you have your everyday dishes that you use. Then you have some that you just use as ornaments. You don't even use them at all. In other words, they are nothing else but ornaments. Then you have a coal bucket. You wouldn't think of taking that coal bucket that is unto dishonour, and use it in any other wise. Some of your vessels are unto honour, and some of them are unto dishonour. However, every one has its place and purpose.

Paul says that God has made us vessels. Some of us are not even equal to an old rusty coal bucket in the service of the Lord, but He has made us to be vessels in His purpose.

Sometime ago I was in a home where the woman collects pitchers. I think she told me that there were something over 200 pitchers that she had as ornaments. I stood there and looked at them -- some very tiny, some larger, but none of them very big -- and I saw those vessels of various shapes and sizes and colors, and I thought about you and me. We differ in shape and size and color and disposition. We are different so far as we are concerned, but we are all vessels in the service of our Lord.

May God help us to be a vessel worthy of the Master's use. Whether we be a coal bucket or

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## PAUL

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whether we be a vessel for ornamentation, whether we be a Sunday vessel or a week-day vessel, may God help us to be a vessel that is meet or worthy of the Master's use.

### CONCLUSION

Yes, beloved, Jesus was made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. You and I have been made unto Him temples, laborers, epistles, stewards, ambassadors, teachers, soldiers, athletes, students, and vessels. May God help us to be true to Him until He comes.

Are you saved? Has Christ been made to you wisdom, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption? Is He all this to you? Then if He is, you ought to be a member of His church. You ought to seek to let your life count for Him. You ought to do your best to live for Him in the light of what He is to you.

May God bless you!

## TEACHER

(Continued from Page 1)

**ful men, who shall be able to teach others also."**

There is not one person here who is not a teacher of some sort. If you are a mother, they may be good or bad, or both, but you are teaching your children certain things. They may not be academic, they may be good or bad, or both, but you are teaching them every day of your life.

If you are a Sunday School teacher, you are teaching the children in your class spiritual truth. My brother taught a S.S. class many years ago in his home town. He had a certain young boy who attended for a while. After a time, he dropped out. He grew up and became involved in the liquor business. Several years afterwards, he found he had an inoperable tumor on his brain. Not too long after, he died. My brother told me he felt he had failed to influence that boy's life. Recently, while on a trip back to my home town in Florida, I found out that young man had indeed made a profession of faith before leaving this life. The truth is we don't know or can't see the immediate results of our efforts to teach others.

A father teaches his children, and most especially his sons, many things. If he uses tobacco, it is probable his children will use it. If he uses bad language, it is probable his children will use it. If he is ill mannered, his children will be so. The only way this will not happen, is for those children to have a more positive role model away from the influence of the father. The majority of us don't think of ourselves as teachers but we are.

We, as Christians, are also teaching those around us. It may be at random and in an abstract manner. These might be our own children, the neighbor's children, or someone at the job, or the people we have just casual contact with in our daily lives. Recently, I heard a well-known preacher on the radio tell of an experience he had along this line. He said he did not like telephone salespersons, but on one particular day, after

listening patiently to a sales pitch on the telephone, he courteously declined to buy his product. After that, the man confessed he was only testing him to see how he reacted to him and whether he wanted to go to church there or not.

If Christianity is anything, it is a teaching religion. For it's ongoing, it depends upon one person passing the things he or she has learned to others, who, will in turn, pass them on to others. It is our solemn obligation to the Lord to learn the truth and then to pass it along to others. The N.T. describes the N.T. church as the ground and pillar of the truth. Or to put it in our every day language, the church is the one institution that is responsible for the ongoing of the truth.

This concept presupposes certain truths. For one thing, people who don't know the truth can hardly pass it along to others. For another, people who refuse to learn can hardly be expected to pass it along. For yet another thing, there are those who feel no obligation to do pass it along to others.

Perhaps we don't get the full import of this statement. Paul is about ready to take the glory express to heaven. So, he is saying to Timothy that he is the link between him and future generations. We are the long range product of this link. The primary business of a teacher is to impart knowledge to others. A strong Christian will help to pass on knowledge.

Let's examine that little word "faithful." He is instructed to pass these truths on to faithful men. Are you and I the kind of people that Timothy and Paul could have trusted with these truths?

**"...And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witness, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."**

### II. A Soldier

3. **"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."**

The next figure he uses is that of a soldier. We have certainly seen plenty of them on TV, and in the newspaper in the last few weeks. There is not a person here that can't identify with this figure. One of our members, Rob Jansen, is in the Naval Service. My brother has one son in the Air Force. If there is any kind of actual conflict, I am sure some of our children will be involved.

What is the primary thing he connects with the soldier? His physical and mental toughness. The next thing he mentions is separation from the affairs of the world.

Endure hardness. When he takes basic training, the thing that is emphasized is that of how to become tough. He goes to bed early, gets up early, takes exercise before breakfast, eats early, is out on the drill field early, sweats a lot, hears a lot of commands that he wishes he did not have to hear, does not have many privileges, gets his hair cut in a fashion that he does not like, wears clothes that he does not like, eats food he does not like, stands in line for everything, is separated from all familiar surroundings, can't go home until he graduates from boot camp, and endures barracks and personal inspection almost every

speculation almost every day.

A really updated illustration of the soldier is our men in the Arabian desert. They have no bathroom facilities, no air conditioning, they are eating dried food, and live in tents. This is part of the toughness required for being a good soldier.

A good soldier does not shirk his duty, or run in the midst of battle. I read about a young soldier who was sent to the battle front right after boot camp. He was not ready for such a hard life. Upon arriving, seeing all the death, destruction, and hearing all the guns going off and hearing the shells landing in his proximity, he sat down and began to cry. The other men tried to get him up and on the move, but he continued to cry. Finally, they left him there, crying. Needless to say, he did not make a good soldier. We have a lot of this type today.

He does not become a traitor. Boy, is this a valid comparison today. Just recently, we had people leave us who had been members of this church for over 20 years, and gave the impression the truth of God's Word was of supreme importance. Then they joined with a church that does embrace some of the same things we believe, but repudiates many of the fundamental truths that used to be embraced by all real Baptists. One has to ask the question: Are people really loyal to the truth or is it just a sham? Surely, love for the truth has to be more important than anger, personalities, relatives, or any other consideration. If not, then we are only fooling ourselves into believing we are completely loyal to the Lord Jesus.

You want to be a Christian? It is designed to be a hard life. It is not for the faint hearted. It is like being a soldier. The only difference is it is a perennial boot camp. The hard part is never over until death.

He says he does not become entangled with the world. We are not to be involved with the world in the sense it entangles us. Don't get yourself strapped to the point you can't serve the Lord. (I know of a pastor near here who had a baby that suffered a great number of health problems. He finally quit his church and took on a second job to pay the bills. Far be it from me to know all the answers to either my or other's problems, but one has to wonder if a decision of this nature is wise or not.)

Don't take a job that does not give you time to serve the Lord. On the other hand, don't give all your time and effort to making money and the massing of material things, and then find no time left to serve the Lord. Don't read books that begin to turn your head. Don't get into a profession that you already know will detract from your serving the Lord, such as the entertainment business, selling liquor or beer, a grocery business that operates on Sunday and many others. A soldier, like a Christian, will endure all things, and be careful not to become entangled in worldly things.

And what is his motivation? To please Him that has chosen him to be a soldier.

### III. The Athlete

5. **"And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully."**

And what is the primary points he emphasizes here? He says at least three things here: If you want to be the champ, and if you want to wear the crown, then you must

keep the rules in trying for these honours.

We are promised a crown or crowns. There are several different ones promised. Some of which are the crown of life, the crown of glory, the crown of joy, an incorruptable crown. Will they be visible? I don't know, but probably so. However, we will return them to the Lord. But do you want one? Then you have to strive lawfully for it. It is not given for free. Being born a king's son may guarantee you a crown in the real world, but in the spiritual world it must be earned.

One basic thing all athletes have in common is a life of self denial. If you cannot discipline yourself, there is a strong possibility there will not be a crown for you.

What does it mean to strive lawfully, according to the rules. There are certain rules that are laid down and we must observe them or there will be no prize. The Greek athlete was subjected to a rigorous training schedule. He was in this preparatory training camp for 10 months before the contest, restricted to a very strict diet, and if he broke the rules, he was disqualified and became a castaway.

Sometime back, I read where a certain Olympic champion got drunk, got into a car and ran a poor pedestrian over and killed him. His life has been ruined. He is a castaway, and all because he broke the rules just once.

One of the primary rules is to do it through the Lord's church. Others will receive something for their labours no doubt, but it will be much reduced or perhaps nonexistent.

We have to be properly motivated, not for self glory. A strong Christian will be motivated to strive for a crown according to the

rules.

### IV. The Farmer

6. **"The husbandman that laboreth must be first partaker of the fruits."**

Two things are noted about the farmer: he labours and he is first to partake of the fruits of his labour.

The verb "labour" means to labour to the point of exhaustion. In Paul's day, it was a lot more labourous than today. But it is never easy. Some two years ago, my neighbor showed me how to plant a garden. He made rows, then dug holes along at different intervals in the rows, dropped in a seed or so and then covered them up. The next year another neighbor showed me how to plant in a much easier way. He had a little planter that dug the hole, planted the seed, and covered the hole, all in one operation. But regardless of how we do it, there is one principle here: if we don't plant, we don't reap.

The farmer is the first to partake of the fruits of his labour. Paul states in I Cor. 9, that we who have sown spiritual things are to reap of your carnal (material) things. Yet, there are Christians who seem to resent the fact that pastors are not, in all cases, required to work at secular tasks.

The strong Christian will be like a teacher, always looking to pass along the message; the strong Christian will be like a soldier, willing to endure hardship, and never becoming entangled with the world; the strong Christian will be like the Greek athlete, denying himself and striving for the crown of life; the strong Christian will be like the farmer, always working hard, serving the Lord, expecting to be partaker of the fruits of his labour.

## MY IMPRESSIONS

This is my first time to attend a Bible conference at Calvary Baptist Church. I thoroughly enjoyed it. The Bible messages, Brother Joslin's music and the fellowship were excellent. Your people were very friendly and made us feel welcome.

Richard Stevens, Omaha, Nebr.

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The messages were scriptural and much needed in these times as things wax worse and worse. God has used this conference to bring me up to the hilltop after going with me through the valley. We thank God for using the conference to bring glory to His blessed name through one of His churches. Thanks and praise to our blessed Saviour.

O. K. Sevy, Goshen, Ind.

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This is my first conference. I have really enjoyed myself. The

fellowship is wonderful, the food was great, the preaching was the best. I hope to come to many more.

Rudy Chandler, King, NC

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This is my second year at your conference. I didn't think this conference could be as good as my first one. I was wrong. This conference is special to me because my husband was saved in July 1989 and came with me...The food and fellowship was wonderful.

Cecilia Chandler, King, NC

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The conference this year was fantastic but it could have been longer. Thanks for the genuine hospitality.

Ruthie Pruitt, Griffin, Ga.

## SPECIAL SALE FOR JOHN GILL'S COMMENTARIES

The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc., has reprinted another edition of Dr. John Gill's - EXPOSITION OF THE OLD & NEW TESTAMENTS in 9 volumes and has found some cosmetically defective sets, i.e., the gold stamping on the spine did not print correctly in a spot about the size of a pencil eraser on Volumes III and IV. Most of these problems will hardly be noticed. If not satisfied they may be returned. There are 200 sets with these problems. These sets are offered for sale at 61% discount off the regular \$320 retail price as long as the supply lasts. Each of these sets is offered for sale for \$125 a set plus \$15 shipping, handling and insurance: TOTAL \$140. Payment must accompany order. Send order and payment to:

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