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

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THE PERPETUITY OF THE LAW OF GOD

by C.H. Spurgeon

Editor's Note: In this day of Antinomianism -- when men cry out against the law of God, men have told us for so long that we are not under the law and that the law has been done away, that many have come to believe it - it will do us spiritual good to read this sermon. It is in the "old paths" of Baptist and Biblical truth. This was our forefather's position on the law. This is where I stand on this subject. Do I not stand in good company? not just Spurgeon, but the Bible writers, and a great host out of the past.

"For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled" (Matthew 5: 18).

It has been said that he who understands the two covenants is a theologian, and this is, no doubt, true. I may also say that the man who knows the relative positions of the law and of the

gospel has the keys of the situation in the matter of doctrine. The relationship of the law to myself, and how it condemns me: the relationship of the gospel to myself, and how if I be a believer it justified me -- these are two points which every Christian



C.H. Spurgeon

man should clearly understand. He should not "see men as trees walking" in this department, or else he may cause him-

self great sorrow, and fall into errors which will be grievous to his heart and injurious to his life. To form a mangle-mangle of law and gospel is to teach that which is neither law nor gospel, but the opposite of both. May the Spirit of God be our teacher, and the Word of God be our lesson-book, and then we shall not err.

Very great mistakes have been made about the law. Not long ago there were those about us who affirmed that the law is utterly abrogated and abolished, and they openly taught that believers were not bound to make the moral law the rule of their lives. What would have been sin in other men they counted to be no sin in themselves. From such Antinomianism as that may God deliver us. We are not under the law as the method of salvation, but we delight to see the law in the hand of Christ, and desire to obey the Lord in all things. Others have been met with who have

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BACK TO BETHEL

by Don Pennington

"AND God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother" (Gen. 35:1). Notice, beloved, God, Himself told Jacob to arise, go to Bethel and dwell there. We all have a Bethel in our life. It is not the same



Don Pennington

Bethel or the same place but we all have a Bethel. What is a Bethel? We will soon see that it is where Jacob met God. Our Bethel is where we got acquainted with God. There had been a lot of things happen to Jacob up until this time. Satan had been on him good and hard, but Satan can only drive us back to the place that we met God. There has been many a time in my life that old Satan has driven me backward, but he has never driven me any farther than the day I met God. It was so very

important when God said unto Jacob, "Arise, go up to Bethel and dwell there." We ought to go back to where we met God and dwell there.

Bethel was a country that is not any more than ten or fifteen hundred feet above sea level. It is a very poor country with scarcely a blade of grass in it. It is just a rough country that is strewn all over the place with boulders and rocks.

The name Bethel means "The House of God." How did it get that name? In order to find this out, we want to go back about thirty years. We find Jacob as a young man in his mother and father's house. Jacob was a twin brother to Esau, and we are told that there was a world of difference between them. They even fought together within their mother's womb before they were ever born. The Scripture tells us that their mother, Rebecca; loved Jacob, and their father, Isaac; loved Esau. I'm sure that every time Jacob got into a scrape or into trouble he ran to mama and she would hug him up and protect him and take care of him. He was always into something, and as he grew older, he grew worse. The first thing, you know, he had stolen the birthright from his brother Esau, and had deceived his blind father. Esau said that he would kill him. Jacob left home because his brother was going to kill him. As Jacob left his father's house he had a staff in his hand, which of course was just a stick. He had

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STUDIES IN ACTS

by Willard Willis

"And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul" (Acts 16:14).



Willard Willis

It was not by chance that a certain woman named Lydia heard the Word. She, as was true of the woman at the well in Samaria, had been ordained to hear and believe. It is as stated in the following scriptures:

"...and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." (Acts 13:48).

"According as He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself,

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DEGREES OF REWARD FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

by T.T. Martin

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish..." (John 10:28). "...lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven..." (Matt. 6:20). "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). "...every man shall receive

his own reward according to his own labor" (I Cor. 3:8). "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it because it shall be revealed

by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (I Cor. 3:11-15). "For whosoever will save his

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STUDIES IN JONAH

The Sacrifice
Jonah 1:15-17

by John M. Alber

"So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging. Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows. Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights" (Jonah 1:15-17).

Last week in our continued study of Jonah, we had noticed in particular the laboring of the mariners, and how that it brought to nothing their works; that the salvation of our God is a gift of



John Alber

grace to all that believe; understanding, of course, that only those whom God elected from before the foundation of the world will believe, and that it was the working of the Holy Spirit of God in their heart that brought

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

NOT APPOINTED TO WRATH, BUT TO SALVATION

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thess. 5:9).

I am an adamant Pre-tribulationist. I surely believe that the Lord will come to rapture all the previously saved before the Tribulation begins. I believe ardently and joyfully that, so far as we do, or can, know, Jesus could come at any moment of time and catch us up to be with Him forevermore. Oh, I love this truth. I rejoice in this truth. I consider this truth essential to any complete teaching on the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. I heard a very able preacher, who

is a Post-tribulationist, preach a sermon on the Second Coming of Christ. It was a great sermon, but something wonderful was missing. I told him that I enjoyed his sermon, but he had left the icing off of the cake. He knew what I meant.

However, I believe it is a misuse and a wrong interpretation of this text to apply it as a proof of a Pre-trib rapture. Many Pre-tribbers interpret this verse as meaning that the Lord will deliver the previously saved from the wrath of the Tribulation. I believe this truth, but I do not believe it is taught in this text. I believe that the "wrath" of this text is the eternal wrath of God in eternal

hell. I believe that the "Salvation" of this text is the eternal salvation of all of God's elect from the hell they deserve. I believe this is the true meaning of the verse, and that this is a far more wonderful and important truth than the "rapture" interpretation of this verse.

Let me say some things about the appointments of God. This is another way of referring to the decrees of God. Or we could refer to the predestination of God. All three words; appointments, decrees, predestination; refer to the same thing. We will here use the word "appointment" because my

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text uses this.

The appointments of God are from eternity. It would be very dishonoring to God to think or teach other wise. God does not make His appointments in time, though they do relate to the events that take place in time. God does not have to wait and see how some things develop before He can appoint other things. With one act of His infinite wisdom, God eternally appointed all things.

The appointments of God concern all things. Nothing is too big for God to totally appoint and control. Nothing is so small that it escapes His attention, or is not an object of His eternal appointment. His appointments include all the events in inanimate creation. The sun, moon, and stars all act according to His appointment. The softly blowing wind that cools, caresses, and blesses; the mighty storms that destroy and kill - these are all according to His eternal appointment.

The appointments of God concern all animate creation. Not a sparrow falls to the ground apart from His appointment. The lion kills the disobedient prophet, and lions cannot harm Daniel -- all according to His appointment. The great fish is at the right place, at the right time, swallows Jonah, discharges him at the right time and place - all according to God's eternal appointments.

The appointments of God include all the changes in the poli-

tics and history of this world. He controls in the kingdoms of men and setteth over each of them whom He will. He controls in all wars of all time, giving victory and defeat as it pleases Him. The battle is not to the strong, but is in the hands of the sovereign God of the Bible.

The appointments of God concern the eternal destinies of all



Joe Wilson

men. My text plainly says that some men are appointed to eternal salvation. Oh, the glorious doctrine of eternal and unconditional election. Some men are chosen of God to be the recipients of the saving grace of God. More later on.

My text certainly implies that there are some men who are not appointed to obtain salvation, but who are appointed to the eternal wrath of God in hell. I do not see how one can properly exegete this Scripture without setting this forth. Among the total of fallen mankind there are a reprobate people. God sovereignly passed these over in His making up the total of His elect people. God justly ordained these men to hell for their sins. If one should argue against this as contained in this text, though it surely is therein; let me give him some further Scriptures on this truth. "But Sihon king of Heshbon would not let us pass by him: for the LORD thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thy hand, as appeareth this day" (Deut. 2:30). "For it was of the LORD to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour, but that he might destroy them, as the LORD commanded Moses" (Josh. 11:20). "The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov. 16:4). "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth" (Rom. 9:18). "...the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded" (Rom. 11:7). "And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed" (1 Pet. 2:8). Many more Scriptures could be cited, but these should suffice to show that, in the eternal appointments of God, some are appointed to wrath for their sins.

The appointments of God are certain of accomplishment. No man or devil, or all of them together, can frustrate or defeat the eternally predestinated purposes of the Sovereign God of the Bible. "The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass: and as I

have purposed, so shall it stand" (Isa. 14:24). What a great verse is this relative to my statements in this paragraph. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. 46:10). God's appointments shall surely stand; His purposes will be brought to pass. This verse shows us the relationship between predestination and prophecy. God has predestinated all things that will ever come to pass. He foreknows what He has predestinated. His providence controls all things and works them according to His predestination. His prophecy is that part of His predestinated plan that He is pleased to reveal in His Word. If there is no predestination, there can be no prophecy.

Let us think awhile about the wrath of God. God's wrath is the necessary result of His holiness in opposition to the sin of men. God must exercise His wrath against sin or be untrue to Himself - to His infinite holiness.

The wrath of God is a deserved wrath. God does not mistreat any man. He does not unjustly punish any man. The wrath of God that men suffer in eternal hell is earned by a lifetime of sin. The wages of sin is death - even the second death which is eternal torment in an ever-burning hell. No man will ever be able to accuse God of being unfair to him or mistreating him. Sin must be paid for - by the substitution of Jesus Christ for His elect, or by the suffering in hell of the reprobate.

The wrath of God is a terrible wrath. "Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I deal with thee?" (Eze. 22:14). Oh, man will be unable to endure the torments of hell, and yet he will have to do so. "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments... for I am tormented in this flame" (Lk. 16:23-24). "...and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night..." (Rev. 14:10-11). There is no suffering on earth that can compare with the torments of hell. A man is suffering terrible agony. He dies. someone says, "He is out of his suffering now." That all depends. If he is saved, he is out of all suffering for ever. If he is not saved he is in the worst suffering he has ever had.

The wrath of God is an everlasting wrath. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46). Note that the punishment of hell is as long as the blessings of heaven - and both are eternal. "And beside all this, there is a great gulf fixed: for that which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence" (Lk. 16:26). When one is in hell, he is there forever.

According to my text, there are some who are not appointed to wrath. Praise God for this glorious truth. They deserve this wrath as much as others. They have sinned the same as those in

hell, some more than some in hell. If left to themselves, they would experience the same terrible wrath of God as others do. The Arminian doctrine that, "It is all up to man" is a horrible doctrine that leaves all men without any hope of salvation. Oh, if God should provide salvation and leave it up to man whether or not he would accept it, as Arminians teach (How many times have you heard this?), then no one would ever be saved. God must not only provide salvation, He must also give the desire for it. This fact that some are not appointed to wrath is the only hope of any being saved from the deserved wrath of God. Those already saved are saved because of this.

Our hope for our loved ones is that it may be that God has not appointed them to wrath but unto salvation. If the unsaved man could see himself as he really is, he would realize that his only hope of ever being saved is in the sovereign appointment of the Lord - not appointed to wrath, but to salvation.

Those who are not appointed to wrath are appointed to obtain salvation. Read my text again. They are appointed to be saved from the wrath of God. They are appointed to obtain the many and wonderful blessings of the saving grace of God. Oh, it is joy unspeakable and full of joy to be

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FROM THE EDITOR

"...God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time" (1 Pet. 5:5-6).

There is a joke, I think, among preachers about the preacher who preached on "Humility And How I Got It." I have said of a certain preacher, "I know he is humble because he has told me so many times." I received a newsletter from this man recently, and again I learned about his humility and his humble writings.

So long as I am editor of this paper, you will never read phrases like this, "This humble editor," "In this humble article (by me)," "I will do my humble best," "In my humble opinion," or the like - you never have and you never will read such. Humility is a grace that shows of itself, or it does not exist. You do not have to tell people how humble you are. If they do not see humility showing itself in your life, they will not believe you have it no matter how much you tell them. Humility does not have to have flood lights shining upon it to show it up, it shines of its own inner light. Be truly humble, and you will never have to tell anyone how humble you are; and if you have to tell them--they will know it is not true.

No man is humble of himself. Pride is a sin that is common to all of mankind. Pride is a sin with which all men have to battle. Humility is a grace given by God. It is a fruit of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer. Every true believer can be humble if he will yield to the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, and be filled with the Spirit.

Humility is very, very important. It is the handmaid to prayer, as Spurgeon so wonderfully preached it. Humility is necessary to revival as II Chronicles 7:14 tells us. Humility is necessary in order to be a blessing to others. God will not bless and use the proud man. You will not have an effective witness to the man who knows that you are a proud person.

Humility is a grace that gives all the glory to God, taking no credit at all to itself. This is one reason why humility is so important; God will not give His glory to another. Humility knows that it is nothing, and that God is everything.

It is not humility to praise your humility. It is not humility to thank God that you are so humble. I knew a man who, every time he prayed, would tell God, "We are coming to you as humble as we know how." If you are praying in humility, God knows it. If you have to tell Him, you are not doing it.

It is not humility to say that which sounds humble, but really is not true. The woman, says, "My house is a mess" when this is not true. She says, "This meal is not much" when she has slaved over it, and it is a wonderful meal. She says, "I look a mess" when she looks her usual beautiful self. The singer says, "Aw, it was not much of a song," when it was beautiful and a blessing. The preacher says, "That was a poor excuse of a sermon," when really it was a very fine sermon and a great blessing. They live in a fine, beautiful, expensive home. You say, "My you have a lovely home." They say, "Oh, it is just a shack."

One does not have to tell untruths to be humble.

It is not humility to deny the talents, possessions, and abilities God has given you. The preacher, preaching before many preachers, says, "I know any of these preachers here could do a better job," when he does not even believe such a thing. I have advised young preachers again and again, "Do not praise or criticize your own sermon as you preach it; just do the best God will help you to do, and leave praise and criticism to your hearers." Preachers and singers: Don't build yourself up; don't put yourself down. Leave that to the Lord and to your hearers.

True humility consists (at least) of the following: 1. To truly know and feel that you, of yourself, are nothing, and can do nothing. 2. To give God all the glory for all you are, have, and can do. Do your best for God, and then give Him all the glory. Do not deny what God has given you as to talent and ability, but use it for His glory and give Him all the praise - this is humility.

God makes much of humility. God delights in humility. God blesses the humble. God uses the humble. God lifts up the humble. God hates pride. God resists the proud man. God will put pride down. Pride is a chief sin; humility is a chief grace and virtue.

Let us strive against pride; let us pray against pride; let us repent of pride and seek victory over it. Let us seek for humility; let us pray for humility. I might suggest here that humility will come when we really face the truth about ourselves. We are nothing in and of ourselves. We are totally depraved sinners. There is in us, that is in our flesh, no good thing. Anything that we have that is worthwhile, that is good, is given us by God. When we truly believe, truly face up to, truly apply to our hearts and lives the doctrines of Total Depravity and God's Sovereignty; then we will be truly humble. God will bless and use the humble man; strive earnestly for humility. God bless you all.

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

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saved. No joy on earth can compare with this joy. They are appointed to obtain all the wonderful blessings of eternal heaven. They will obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing will forever flee away. They will be free from sin, sickness, suffering, and sorrow. They will be with the Triune God, the holy angels, and the innumerable company of the redeemed. Only glory, only glory by and by.

How is this salvation obtained? How can one know that he is appointed not to wrath, but to obtain salvation? How did the Thessalonians obtain this salvation? Let us look a little at chapter one of I Thessalonians and see what it tells us about this matter. Their salvation began with the election of God, "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God" (V. 4). Our salvation originated in the heart, mind, and will of God. We must give Him all the glory. Believers were appointed to salvation before the foundation of the world.

It came through the gospel of Jesus Christ, "For our gospel came not unto you in word only..." (v. 5). But it did come to them in word. Here is another verse, one of a multitude, that is a Hardshell killer. It teaches us that salvation comes through the gospel - that the gospel is used therein. I know that some men foolishly divide between quickening or regeneration and salvation. They have men on earth who are quickened with spiritual life, some of them have these men as born again children of God, but these men have not yet repented and believed; they are not yet saved. Oh, what folly men commit when they stray from the clear teaching of God's Word. A quickened impenitent unbeliever - what a strange creature is this! The quickened are saved repentant believers. It is all simultaneous. The gospel is used by the Spirit in doing this work.

Their salvation was wrought by the power of the Holy Spirit, "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost..." (v. 5). The Holy Spirit uses the gospel in salvation. Men call me a "gospel regenerationist," but they lie, and they know they lie. I am a "gospel and Spirit" regenerationist. I believe that the Holy Spirit performs the work of salvation (including quickening, regeneration, the new birth, and salvation). I believe that the Holy Spirit uses the gospel in performing this work. I stand in the old paths of our Baptist forefathers. I stand in the old paths of the Word of God. The one who obtains this appointed salvation is conscious of the supernatural power of God enabling and causing him to believe the saving gospel of Jesus Christ.

This salvation can and should be with much assurance, "...and in much assurance..." (v. 5). One who is saved can and should know that this is true. I believe that one can be saved who does not have this blessed assurance. I believe that truly saved people can have doubts about salvation. I believe that some Hardshells, who say one cannot know he is saved, are truly saved. But it is the precious privilege (and should I say "duty"?) of every believer to have blessed assurance of eternal

salvation.

This salvation is accompanied with much joy, "...with joy of the Holy Ghost" (v. 6). I have already said that there is no joy on earth that can compare with the joy of salvation.

The obtaining of this salvation is the only evidence that one was appointed thereto. God appointed some unto salvation before the foundation of the world. No man can know if he is one of these appointed ones until he has obtained the appointed salvation through Holy Spirit wrought repentance and faith in Christ and His gospel. The experience of salvation is the one and only evidence of the eternal appointment thereto. Spirit wrought repentance and faith are the identifying marks of the elect. God knows from eternity who His elect are, but man can only know by the experience of salvation in time.

This salvation is, "...by our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thess. 5:9), (my text). Jesus Christ is God. He was born of a virgin. He lived a sinless life. He died a substitutionary death for the appointed ones. He arose from the dead after three days and three nights in the grave. The gospel is all about Jesus Christ: who He is, and what He did. One is saved by this person and this gospel. It is not what we do that saves us, it is what Jesus Christ did. Our faith is in Him. We do not believe in works or ritual; we believe in Jesus Christ. May the Lord richly bless you all.

BETHEL

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nothing but what little bit he could carry with him. He had no household furnishings, very few clothes and beloved, he had not a friend in the world with him. You might say that he was a pilgrim that had been exiled from home. As he heads toward Padanaram, he came upon Bethel. It was a terrible sight to look at. When Jacob walked up there, it was beginning to get dark and there was nothing around but bare ground and boulders. I'm sure as the wind whistled through those boulders it made some very shrill and very scary sounds and Jacob was all alone. As Jacob looked around, the very best he could do was to find him a boulder to lay his head on, and he lay down on the ground to go to sleep. Jacob hadn't much more than gone to sleep until he fell into a dream. In his dream he saw these boulders as they just seemed to pile up on top of each other and made a ladder that reached into heaven. Now as Jacob lay there and dreamed about the ladder that went into heaven, a strange sight occurred. Not only the ladder itself was strange, the bottom stood on earth and the top reached into heaven, but he saw angels ascending and descending on the ladder. As Jacob lay there dreaming about this and having this vision he saw angels ascending into heaven carrying his prayers unto God. And beloved, he saw them descending from heaven bringing blessings from almighty God to shower upon him. What a strange sight indeed that Jacob saw! Suddenly the sun lit up the sky, it was daylight, the vision was gone, and Jacob awoke out of his sleep. The first thing he said was "The Lord was in this place and I knew it not." The Lord had visited Jacob that night and he made an impression on Jacob. In fact,

beloved, the Lord saved Jacob that night. Jacob made a vow, "As long as I live, He will be my God and I will be his servant."

Now beloved, let us think back for just a moment. Let us think back to the time we were out in our sins. How lonely we were and how we sought to please satan and this world and its works. And like Jacob, we were rascals. We were rebellious against God and all things holy. Then there came that time when we were alone with God, although there was a crowd. We can be in a crowd and still be alone with God if God is troubling us. I have seen many a time that I have been in a crowd of people when I was lost and all I knew was that I was on my road to hell and there was nothing, except God, that could do anything about it. Then, we had a Bethel in our life. We had a time when we met God and He spoke peace to our heart. I dare say as lonely and dreadful as it was, that when God came on the scene we, just like Jacob, said, "God was here and I knew it not." It helps us to remember these things, it is good for God to allow Satan to drive us all the way back to the day He spoke peace to our heart. It refreshes our memory of what we were before, and how God saved our souls even though we deserved to be destroyed. I've heard people say "I know exactly when the Lord spoke peace to my heart." Beloved, all I know was that when God spoke peace to my heart, I was lost. I knew I was on my road to hell and it just seemed like I was already there. Then the Lord reached down and yanked me out of it. Beloved, that is the wonderful thing that the Lord did for us.

Now notice beloved, the next day. There is always a next day. The Lord greatly blesses us on Sunday and we feel so good and we're renewed in spirit, we're ready to go out and face the week, but there is always the next day when we have to go back out into this world one more time. It was a pleasant thing for Jacob. He got up, he got ready and beloved, he headed for Padanaram with a spring in his steps. Jacob had something that he had never had before in his entire life, he had the Lord as his Saviour. I'm sure that he had a song in his heart, whether he had it on his lips or not as he left Bethel and headed toward Padanaram where the Lord gave him one of the best blessings of his life, other than his salvation. He met Rachel. Jacob loved Rachel the first time he ever laid his eyes on her. This was indeed a match made in heaven. God had planned for the two to be together, but satan had some plans, too. He worked through Uncle Laban, and Laban was a big schemer. There's a law of sowing and reaping in the Word of God and Jacob reaped what he sowed through Uncle Laban. God used Uncle Laban for Jacob to reap what he had sown all his life. Jacob met Rachel, Laban's daughter, he loved Rachel and wanted her for his bride. Laban said, "work seven years for me and she is yours." Jacob would have worked any amount of time to have Rachel. He worked the seven years, nothing was said and he thought Rachel was his. He went to bed that night, he thought with Rachel, woke up the next morning and found it to be Leah, her sister, in bed with him. Jacob said, "What happened?" Laban said, "I forgot

to tell you, it is not lawful for the younger girl to marry before the older one does." Jacob said "I'll work another seven years for Rachel", and he did. Then he worked another six years for cattle, sheep, oxen, and other possessions, making a total of twenty years that he worked for Laban and it was hard work, but it seemed like just a few days to Jacob because he had Rachel by his side all the time.

Now, beloved, he ran into some problems. Seems like life was full of problems way back then just the same as it is now. Now the Lord began to bless Jacob and he had twelve sons and one daughter. One day the Lord told Jacob to go home. Take your family and "go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother." Jacob take your family out of this mess you are in. Get somewhere that you can teach them about God and the ways of the Lord and the ways of your people." Well, as you remember, Jacob had a little difficulty in leaving. Laban didn't want to see either one of his daughters or his grandchildren leave, and most of all Laban didn't want to see possessions leave, because he was a man that loved wealth. But, the angel of the Lord interceded and led Jacob and his family away from Laban even though Jacob had done some terrible things while in Laban's employ. He didn't deserve the leadership, but God gave it to him anyway and they left. Jacob, his two wives, their servants, his children and all the possessions headed back to Bethel. Jacob had been blessed and he was very wealthy, not only in children but in all possessions. He had oxen, asses, sheep, goats, and he was very well blessed in everything.

Jacob came to a place called Jabbok. We all have a Jabbok in our life as well as we have a Bethel. Jacob had lived an undesirable life for the Lord. He hadn't kept his promise whatsoever. He had gone astray and had done many things that he shouldn't have done. He had lied to Laban and had stolen from him. But notice beloved, there came a time when the Lord told Jacob that it was time he started living for Him and serving Him, time to fulfill that vow he made. Beloved, there is a time when God calls all of us to service. I believe God not only calls us to salvation, he calls us to service. "Jacob, it is time for you to leave all of this craftiness behind you and serve." Jacob didn't want to do that, that wasn't popular, and it's costly and Jacob wasn't willing to make the sacrifice, but he came to Jabbok. We want to picture the scenes here. We have the stars shining overhead, we have the waters of Jabbok rushing down to the Jordan river, and we have the bushes and brush overhanging the river. Rachel, his beloved wife, Leah, the children, the servants, the flocks, and the herds had all gone ahead and only Jacob was left there alone. But beloved, Jacob wasn't left alone very long. He had a visitor. All God did was separate the family, separate the belongings and left Jacob there by himself, got him ready for his visitor. "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And

when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed" (Genesis 32:24-28). Jacob had a visitor. It tells us that Jacob was left alone and there wrestled a man with him. I want you to notice the way it says that, "there wrestled a man with him." The arminians tell us that Jacob wrestled the man and wouldn't let him go until he blessed him. The Scripture says the man wrestled Jacob. He told Jacob "it is time for you to quit this foolishness of yours and serve God. It's time for you to keep that vow that you would be God's servant until the day that you died." Jacob wasn't willing to do this, so they wrestled. Beloved, Jacob stood his ground and he agonized and he struggled and he did all he could do but the angel prevailed. So they wrestled all night, but the angel touched the hollow of his thigh and it came out of joint. Then Jacob surrendered. I picture in my mind Jacob hanging onto the angel because he couldn't help himself. He was helpless. I surrender, but bless me before you leave. Jacob said, "I'm in a terrible condition, I need blessed." The angel did bless him and told him that the Lord had a great work for him to do. Can we remember the time that the Lord called us to service? Can we remember the time that the Lord said, "I have a special job for you?" No one else, just for you. I can remember that time beloved. I can remember well, when I was standing in a factory looking for a job and the Lord spoke to me and called me into the ministry. My first reaction was "I can't do that," but when I found out that didn't satisfy God, I said, "Give me time to study. Give me time to prepare and then I'll tell the church what you have done." He gave me lots of time and I wasted most of it. But, there came a time that the angel wrestled me and I had to go to the church and confess it. The angel said unto Jacob "What is thy name? And he said, Jacob." Beloved, Jacob means supplanter. It means a cheat, somebody that is mean, a crafty person. It just means a no-good rascal. But notice, the angel looked at Jacob and he said, "not any more. That's what you used to be Jacob, but not anymore." "And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God, and with me, and hast prevailed." He said, "You're not going to be Jacob anymore, you are going to be a prince unto God." Beloved, when the Lord gives you a job to do, He gives you wherewith to get that job done, whatever that might be. He gives you the ability to do the job. He called Jacob to be a

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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

Where do so-called pre-historic animals fit into Bible history?

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"For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:" (II Peter 3:5, 6).

By "pre-historic", I would assume that the inquirer is referring to "dinosaurs." Some Christians attempt to fit these giant land and water animals into the supposed multiple million year days of creation according to the theistic evolutionist. Still others relegate dinosaurs to the supposed former creation during the supposed "gap" between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. Both ideas are wrong.

Having been bathed with evolutionary theory during the formative education, many people simply assume dinosaurs are from millions and millions of years ago, because they have been told so. I will not presume to correct paleontologic dating, or its intricacies, but I will point out that when discrepancies, or inconsistencies arise, those things in question are dismissed rather than a sound investigation being introduced.

Of those who believe that dinosaurs existed along with men before the great flood of Noah (of which I am one), there are some who say that the dinosaurs were not taken on the ark so that they could be destroyed as their extinction was planned by God then. I believe that "dinosaurs", which I use as a broad term for all pre-historic animals, existed with men before the flood and after. In Rhodesia are pictures painted in cave dwellings by bushmen who painted what they saw; in this case a brontosaurus. There are other places in Africa and North America with similar drawings, or paintings. A young pair of these animals could easily have been included in the ark's manifest. I believe they were, for there appears to be evidence of their existence after the flood. There are dinosaur footprints located in the same strata as men's footprints in Glen Rose, Texas.

The legends and references to "dragons", "monsters," and other such creatures in centuries after the flood probably refer to so-called pre-historic animals. I personally believe that God is speaking of land and marine dinosaurs in Job 40:15-24 (behemoth-land) and Job 41:1-34 (leviathan-marine). I realize that

modern commentators tell us these great creations of God are elephants, hippos, and crocodiles, but read and study God's description in these two passages carefully. I believe most dinosaurs became extinct at various times after the flood for various reasons space will not allow me to describe. I realize that nothing excites the agnostics more, or causes Christians to tremble than saying what I have just said about dinosaurs. Forget the evolutionary table, believe God, approach the subject with an open mind, and do not try to explain, or help God in these areas with human reasoning, or "scientific reasoning" and apologies.

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Read Job 40: 15-24 and Job 41: 1-10.

In the above passages we have two animals mentioned. The behemoth and the leviathan. Some believe these are poetic creatures; I personally believe they were real. I believe they can certainly compare with what we know as dinosaurs and dragons. I will comment more on that later.

Let me state from the beginning that I grow weary of people trying to disprove God's Word and its account of creation. Let us always remember that it is science that must coincide with the Bible, and not the Bible that must coincide with science. If there are disagreements between science and the Bible, then science is wrong. I also want to mention that I do not hold to the gap theory. I do not think that is necessary in order to explain the so-called age of the earth and creatures such as dinosaurs. There cannot be such a thing as a pre-historic animal. History as we know it, began with creation. There was no earthly history or earthly creatures before that time. I feel no need to vent a gap theory in order to appease science. Let me now try to answer this question.

I repeat, that pre-historic animals not only did not exist, but they most assuredly would not fit into the Bible, for the Bible does not teach animals existing before Genesis one. First, I mention that there are many scientist who would argue that some forms of dinosaurs might still exist in remote parts of our earth. Secondly, if they do not, it does not in any way discredit the Bible. These animals could have once existed, and now be extinct. There are many animals that once existed that are now extinct. We know that there are many others who are on the verge of extinction even now.

I will assure you that there is no fossil dating back before

Adam fell,

This would be impossible, for it is by sin that death entered into the world. I recognize that the question arises about science saying these animals are millions of years old. I would urge you to get a copy of Henry Morris's book on Job and read it. He is much better at explaining the science side of this than I am. I ask you to understand that much of scientific data is based on the theory of evolution; that alone makes their data false. There are only a few paleontologists in the world. Surely these few could be deceived by Satan and led by him to make erroneous guesses. It is a fact that many things that were once claimed to be very old have later been proven not be "pre-historic." In closing, let me say this, these animals did exist. They may or may not be totally extinct at this time. They were not "pre-historic", but were created by God on the sixth day. May God bless you all.

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"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1).

This creation took place in six days as is recorded in the remainder of chapter one. It is told what was created on each of the six days. Man was created on the sixth day. As we have an account of events even from the first day of creation there can be no pre-history, therefore, no pre-historic animals. The so-called pre-historic animals of which there have been found fossils must have lived before the flood.

There is ample evidence that conditions on the earth before the flood were much different from what they are today. The evidence indicates that the earth's climate did not have the extremes which we have today, but a mild, mist climate, with even uniform, spring like temperatures in all parts of the earth, even at the poles. What caused the change we can only guess. There are several theories as to how this came about, but I will not go into that.

It would seem that the conditions before the flood must have been ideal for the growth and long life of men, animals and plants. The fossils found in all parts of the earth reveal that before the flood there were animals and plants; as to shape, size, and variety that are not found now.

The question may be raised why do we not have these animals today as two of every kind of animal went into the ark. First, there must have been then as now, many varieties of the same species such as the dog, the cat, cattle, etc, it can be assumed all varieties of the same species

were not taken on board. Secondly, it is possible that the change in the climate of the earth made it such that these varieties could not survive, therefore they became extinct.

BETHEL

(Continued from Page 3)

prince with the power of God and with men and He gave him the tools to do it with.

The next day came again. Jacob went forward and he met Esau face to face. Esau had threatened to kill Jacob if he ever saw him again, but he didn't. They got along exceptionally well. Esau got ready to leave and said, "why don't you just come and go with me?" Why don't we just combine ourselves together and travel together and just be brothers again?" But Jacob has some excuse that he couldn't do that. "And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me; and if men should overdrive them one day all the flock will die" (Genesis 33:13). He used the excuse that the children were young and the flocks have calves and you can't overdrive them. As soon as Esau was out of sight, Jacob headed for Shechem just as fast as he could get there. This was a wicked city, it was a city of heathen people. Jacob looked around and decided this was a good place to live, and a good place to trade with people and make a lot of money. Maybe Rachel had some influence on this as a place for the children to learn a little culture and learn other ways so they would be more prepared to face the world when they got older. So, beloved, they traded with them for a long time, several years. But then Dinah, the only daughter Jacob had, began to look at the boys and girls in the city and they were a temptation to her. She wanted to be like them. "And Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her". (Genesis 34:1, 2). She got herself in a mess. If Jacob had minded the Lord it wouldn't have happened. Her brothers and her father heard about it and they were very upset. Shechem wanted to do the honorable thing. He and his father talked to Jacob and asked for her hand in marriage. He said he loved Dinah. The brothers devised a plan. They lied, they had learned well from Jacob how to lie. They said it's not lawful because you aren't circumcised. If all the young men in your tribe, every one in your city were circumcised; then we would agree to let her be your bride. He loved her so much that he talked to them all and they decided yes, we will do that. They were all circumcised and on the third day, the Scripture tells us, while they were still sore, so sore they could hardly get around, they swooped down and killed every one of them. Because of this, Jacob had to move on. Finally he made it to Bethel, back to where the Lord had saved him, and beloved, he became a great servant for God

the rest of his life. Beloved, we look over Jacob's life and we think how much better it could have been. We get a lot of lessons from that. We look at our young sometimes and we think why, oh why, don't they serve the Lord. But we look back over our own lives and see that we could have done a better job when we were younger also and can also do a better job now. So many things that we can learn from the life of Jacob. Let us remember the vow, most probably we vowed the same one that Jacob did. As long as I live you shall be my God and I shall be your servant. Let us abide by that.

JONAH

(Continued from Page 1)

them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

These mariners had opposed the God of heaven by receiving Jonah into their midst and, by their own efforts to save themselves. They were by nature religious people and so, very much amazed by Jonah's failure to obey the God that he served. Jehovah God was known by the heathen of Jonah's day and, hence, these mariners could not understand how Jonah thought he could escape his God by this flight! Sometimes the heathen have a better comprehension of God than the professed believers. At least in this case, these mariners were somewhat marveled at Jonah's inconsistency.

"Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous. 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" (Jonah 1:11-12).

The mariners had previously refused to obey these simple words, but attempted to save Jonah at any cost! Thus, the sea still raged, and it was a testimony to the anger of almighty God. Does not the light of nature and the dictates of conscience teach us something; and it did those sailors, simply this: the Law and the history of Jonah's nation showed that Jehovah God was a just God, and that He must be totally satisfied. Has our God changed any? No! He is still the same today!

Jonah was that sacrifice that pictured the Lord of glory!

For the past twenty years now, I have been preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. There has never been any doubt on my part that Jonah was a type of the Lord Jesus! But I have long argued that Jonah was alive in the belly of that fish that God had prepared to swallow up Jonah. It was not until a few weeks ago that I changed my mind on this one issue. Jonah, the Lord Jesus told us, was to be a type of His death, burial and resurrection. "There shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of

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The Baptist Examiner Forum II

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

What do you believe about the KJV and other versions, especially the NIV?

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"The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it" (Ps. 68:11). When God gave His Word to be proclaimed by men, it was given for the purpose of telling the good news of His Son, Jesus Christ. This Word was not given in its entirety at one time, but was, over a period of 1600 years, spoken and recorded by men. The men that recorded the Words of God were inspired by Him to do this great work. They wrote the Words, but the Words were given by God. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Pet. 1:21). There were thirty men that are credited with the writings of the Old Testament, while eight are given that distinction in the New Testament. Their writings, although hundreds of years apart, fit harmoniously together in reference and support. The writings were in Hebrew (Aramaic) and Greek. To my knowledge, they were never assembled together in the form of a book. They are, however, kept in their complete form by God. "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (Ps. 119:89).

Since the time of their writings, men, at various times have made copies of these writings. These copies began to appear about the third or fourth century. The copies were used to bring all the writings together to form the book we call the Bible. It is from the copies of the originals that man began to translate into other languages so that the common man might be able to read and have the Words of God. They used the copies to translate because the originals were either lost or destroyed. Only God knows what happened, but He provided a way for His word to be known to man through the copies that existed and by the translations that have been made.

One of those translations is the King James Version. It was completed in the year 1611, and has for over three hundred years been used as the "Authorized Version" of the Bible. The basis for the KJV was the Bishops Bible of 1568 along with Hebrew and Greek texts. The men that were responsible for the KJV state that they were making a translation when they wrote this version. In The Epistle Dedicatory, they state that they were desirous of "one more exact translation of the holy Scriptures" being put into the English language. It is impossible to

translate from one language to another in exact terms because of the structure of the diverse languages. Words will not always have the exact meaning. This version has been proved by usage for hundreds of years. Other versions have not stood the test of time.

I believe that the King James Version of the Bible is the most exact and the most representative version of the Word of God that we can have. It has existed when others have failed. It has been used as the standard for other translations, but those other translations have omissions relative to key portions of the Word. Many of the newer translations have omitted references to the virgin birth, to the blood of Christ, and some have even omitted reference to Christ. God, in my opinion, cannot be pleased with a book that excludes reference to His Son. This is not the case with the King James Version.

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I believe the King James Version to be the best translation that we can own. It has meant a lot to me since my Lord saved me over thirty five years ago. It is the only Book that I can read and depend on being truthful. Reading this dear Book feeds my soul and keeps me going.

According to my information there were 47 scholars chosen to translate the KJV. They chose the best manuscripts, they chose the Textus Receptus, therefore the greatest Bible this side of the original was born in 1611. It is now over 300 years old and has been used of God to lead multiplied millions to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Any born again person can read it and get understanding from it. The Holy Spirit is the teacher, and by reading it and studying it you will be led into all truth.

What do I believe about the NIV? I don't need it, Christians don't need it or any other new translation. Today, we have many translations floating around, we have the Amplified Bible, the Paraphrased, and others and I will have to admit that some of these have some good revisions in them, but they also have some bad. Some have left verses out, others have added two, and changed the meaning of some verses. Beloved, with all these new Bibles people read them and get confused to the extent that they ask, "Which Bible is right?" They do not know which one to trust. In my opinion Satan has led in all these new Bibles to get

people confused so that they will not read any Bible. If we, God's people, would stop buying these new Bibles they would soon quit printing them.

As for me and my house, we will stick with the good King James Version. Why not join us?

JONAH

(Continued from Page 4)

the earth" (Matt. 12:39, 40). A preacher was talking about all of this on the radio one day, and he pointed out to a skeptic who could not believe that Jonah had lived for three days and three nights in the belly of a fish. He simply said, "Where do you find that he lived?" The Bible declares that Jonah was a type of the Lord! Did He not die? Was He not buried for three days? Did He not come back from among the dead after His burial? Of course, He did, for the record of the Scriptures is clear. Well then, if Jonah is to be a type of Jesus, he must have died in that fish's belly. But let's not stop there! Jonah is also a type of the sinner that is saved by the grace of our God. The sinner, the Bible tells us, is dead in his sins according to Ephesians 2:1, and it takes the Holy Spirit of God to awaken him from the state of spiritual death. Jonah prayed unto the Lord while in that fish's belly, and we know from the Lord's words that "God heareth not sinners" (John 9:31). So, we must conclude that God's Spirit had already done a work in his heart! Then, as Jonah is also a type of the nation of Israel that forsook God in their sins and have been placed on a shelf for a season; this picture would not be complete as such unless Jonah had died. Why? Because, the nation of Israel committed sin by rejecting their Messiah, and were as such, placed by God in the masses of humanity until such a time as when He shall resurrect them from among the families of the world. Today, Israel the nation possesses no spiritual light whatsoever. They are lost in their sins without hope and without the truth!

God Almighty Required A Sacrifice!

The sacrifice means that one has taken the place of another! Jonah had taken the place of mariners so that they might live! Oh beloved, is that not what Jesus did for us. These men were all saved because of that sacrifice! God Almighty was satisfied! That means, beloved, that our God accepted it as a sufficient offering for those for whom it was given. When Jesus Christ died on the cross of Calvary, He died for His own; those beloved, that God the Father had given to Him! And just as Jonah's sacrifice was sufficient and saved all those that it was intended for, so our Lord's sacrifice on the cross of Calvary was sufficient to take care of all those that God had given to Him! Jesus did not die in vain! All

those for whom Christ died will be saved! We are not talking about a universal salvation; for Christ did not die for every man born of woman. How do I know that? Good question, indeed. You see, when Christ died on the cross of Calvary, millions of souls were already in hell! Now, if Jesus had died for them, God's law would have required that they be released as soon as the Father had accepted that sacrifice; but beloved, that did not take place. They are still in hell to this day! Why? Because our Lord's sacrifice was not made for them. God's mercy and justice would have required their release if He had died for them. Jesus Christ was that sacrifice that God had required for His own.

God had previously pointed out that He was that Sacrifice

God had promised the woman, Eve, that her seed would bruise the head of Satan. Thus, in the fulness of time, "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman" (Gal. 4:4). Abraham told his son, Isaac, "My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering" (Gen. 22:8). Jacob had proclaimed on his death bed that, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be" (Gen. 49:10). Thus, when Jesus arrived on the scene two thousand years ago, and when asked who He was on many occasions, He told us this: "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). "I am the door of the sheep" (John 10:7), "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:14), "I am the resurrection, and the life" (John 11:25), and "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

The Final Question: Is Jesus Your Lord?

Oh beloved, we have been talking about a great sacrifice; this sacrifice that God Almighty requires, He, Himself became in the person of Jesus Christ for His own, the elect. Thus, the God of heaven has accepted this sacrifice in behalf of those elect! We do not know who these folk are; nor is it our business to make disciples of sinners! But it is our business to share the good news with all, for God the Holy Spirit uses the preaching of the gospel to save those that God has chosen from before the foundation of the world. So, we ask the question, an important question, is Jesus Christ your Lord? If He is, then, the Bible teaches us that you need to identify with the Lord's church and to submit to believer's baptism. Are you obedient? Have you obeyed the Lord? The One that died for you! May God give you the insight to not only see this, but to obey Him in all things. May God Bless!

ACTS

(Continued from Page 1)

according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Ephesians 1:4-6).

The name of the "certain woman" was Lydia. Lydia, according to the record of that time in history, was a very common name among the Greeks and the

Romans. Her name even blended in with the name of the country. She, in fact, was a Lydian by birth since Thyatira was a city of Lydia.

We are informed that the occupation of Lydia was that of being a "seller of purple." She, in other words, was a business woman. She, however, did not allow her business to keep her from worshipping God. This was true even though she was not a regenerated person. She and Nicodemus were both religious, but lost.

We are informed that Lydia's native home was Thyatira, which means that she was quite a distance from home. Thyatira was famous for its purple dye -- a dye made from the secretions from the root of the Madder plant. The Madder plant is also called Turkey Red. It has a long, fleshy root.

Many preachers today advise sinners to open their hearts and let Jesus in. Our text, however, points out that the Lord "opened" Lydia's heart. There is no way a sinner can open his own heart, since he is spiritually dead. A sinner, if he could open his own heart, would be taking a step toward God through the energy of the flesh. We know, however, from John 6:44 that no person can open his own heart, or come to God on his own. The passage reads:

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

We also read the following from John 6:63:

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

We, today, are accustomed to opening the door to our home, the door to our car, etc. We, however, must never think that we can open the door to our heart. Our hearts, according to Jeremiah 17:9, are "...deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked..." An unregenerated person, if he or she opened his or her own heart, would be performing a spiritual function. We, however, know from I Corinthians 2:14 that "...the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." They, in fact, are "foolishness unto him."

It all boils down to the fact that "salvation is of the Lord." This fact means that the Gospel must not be in word only, but in the power of the Holy Spirit (I Thessalonians 1:5, Romans 1:16).

Our text informs us that Lydia, after the Lord had opened her heart, "attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." She, in other words, devoted her attention to the word of God which Paul preached. The word of God declares that "He that is of God heareth God's Word." Lydia, then, by attending to the things preached by Paul, proved that she was a born-again believer -- a child of God.

"And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, if ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide

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STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF PAUL PART 12

by John R. Gilpin, Sr.

"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (II Tim. 1:13).

This isn't the only passage in the writings of the Apostle Paul wherein he urges us to hold fast to sound words. However, to me it is one of those unmistakably clear passages, which indicates to us, that if we are to be servants of our Lord to please Him, we must be sure that we hold fast to sound words.

As I say, this isn't the only passage that teaches us that we are to be sure that our message and our ministry and our testimony is a sound one. I want to read two or three other verses which would indicate the same thing.

"As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine. Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do" (I Tim. 1:3, 4).

Here Paul is writing to Timothy, and he says, "Timothy, when I went to Macedonia, I left you at Ephesus for one purpose, that you might charge those folk at Ephesus that they teach no other doctrine." And thus, he warns in this message to Timothy relative to fables and endless genealogies and things that do not amount to anything.

There are lots of things that we might get interested in that are meaningless so far as godly edifying is concerned. We are to be cautious, and we are to be sure, that our preaching is of sound words -- the kind that enables people to be edified in the faith.

Paul also gives us an exhortation for sound preaching, for he says: **"But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some" (II Tim. 2:16-18).**

Here the Apostle Paul is reminding Timothy that there are certain profane and vain babblings that he must stay away from. Now the word "profane" doesn't mean cursing, as we ordinarily think of it today, but the word "profane" comes from a compound Latin word: "fanus," which means "temple," and "pro," which means "outside." So when you talk about anything being profane, you are literally talking about something being outside of the temple, or the realm of religion. Therefore, when he says that we are to shun profane and vain babblings, he means that we are to shun and stay away from those things that are of the world.

Paul gives us a good example of this, for he speaks of Hymenaeus and Philetus -- two young

preachers who got mixed up with the things of the world, and the result was they overthrew the faith of some, in that they erred relative to the Word of God. In other words, he is saying to us that we ought to be mighty certain that we have at all times sound words so far as God's people are concerned.

Then when he wrote to Titus he said the same thing, for we read: **"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1).**

In other words, beloved friends, you and I are not, at anytime, to give ourselves over to unsound doctrines, to vain babblings, or to profane and secular things, but rather we are to be sure that our message always is a message of sound doctrine.

I have said repeatedly in my ministry through the years that so far as the church of which I was pastor was concerned, I wanted it to be known for one thing - that it stood for sound doctrine. I don't want our church ever to be recognized for any other purpose, or for anything else except that we stand for sound doctrine. Not only do I mean that from the pulpit, but I mean as a church we are not to support, and won't have fellowship with anything other than sound doctrine.

Now I have read to you these Scriptures, all of which tell us that our message is to be a sound message, and that it is to be supported by sound words, and I have done that as a basis or a background for my message.

I. Rheumatism.

As I was preparing this message, I was reminded of the preacher who was delivering a message in which he was telling about all the evils in the world today, and he said, "You know these evils, and every one of them ends with an ism." He said, "There is modernism, and there is feminism, and there is unionism, and there is Arminianism." One old fellow in the back spoke up and said, "Don't forget rheumatism, for it sure bothers me."

Well, I don't know that I could prove that Paul was suffering from rheumatism, but I can prove to you that the Apostle Paul was a great physical sufferer.

He suffered with a weak physical body. Listen: **"That I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters. For his letters, say they, are weighty and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible" (II Cor. 10:9, 10).**

This would indicate that the Apostle Paul was anything else but a nice looking, affable, pulpit orator. He admits that his enemies said his bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible.

In another place (Gal. 6:11), when the Apostle Paul wrote, he indicated that he had written with large letters, simply because his eyes were so poor that he couldn't write to them with normal writing. Therefore he had to write to them with exceeding large letters.

I think I could prove to you also, that the Apostle Paul was a sufferer, doubtlessly, of a bad stomach condition, or at least he was a sufferer of a stomach ailment, for when he wrote to Timothy, he said: **"Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stom-**

ach's sake, and thine often infirmities" (I Tim. 5:23).

Now when he says **"Drink no longer water,"** what he literally says in the Greek is, "Don't drink only water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities."

Then, beloved, there is another Scripture that comes to my mind that makes me think the Apostle Paul was getting old, and that he not only was a sufferer from a weak bodily presence, and a sufferer from bad eye sight, and a sufferer so far as his stomach was concerned, but I am inclined to believe that there was a little touch of rheumatism in Paul's body. When he wrote his second letter to Timothy, he wrote it from a jail, and he said: **"The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments" (II Tim. 4:13).**

I wouldn't be a bit surprised but what it was getting cold in that jail. Those stones that surrounded him certainly were not conducive to warmth for his body. Winter was coming on, and he said, "When you come to see me, bring the cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus." Beloved, I imagine that his bones were beginning to ache there within this jail from whence he was writing to young Timothy.

When I speak of Paul's rheumatism, I speak only by implication. However, I am glad that I have taken time to read to you these few verses which would indicate a little as to Paul's physical condition. Now, the balance of these "isms" that I am talking about are right here in the Word of God, and I want you to prick up your ears and listen carefully.

II

I think all of you recognize and know that I am definitely opposed to any unionistic endeavor. I believe I am scriptural, and I believe I am following the Apostle Paul in this respect when I tell you that I have no place for an unionistic program of any kind in my ministry. We read: **"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Rom. 16:17).**

Not only does he say to mark off the man who is an heretic, but Paul tells us that we are to avoid that individual. If you live in the light of this Scripture, you are going to find that as the days pass by, there are going to be less and less, and fewer and fewer individuals that you can seek to have fellowship with.

I was thinking of recent date of two or three individuals who are fairly sound on some things, and yet they are not sound on other things, to the extent that I would actually be afraid for them to preach while visiting the church. Therefore, beloved, it has become increasingly necessary as time passes by that we **"mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them"**.

Now that doesn't mean just the Methodists and the Campbellites and the Catholics and the Holiness. That doesn't mean just the Presbyterians and the Seventh

Day Adventists and the Russelites. That doesn't mean just the modern sects that we know about, and the isms and the schisms, but it means every Baptist who doesn't stand for the Word of God.

I was reading in the paper the other day about a certain young preacher who has gone for the summer to do mission work in a foreign country. As I read this, I was thinking, what he actually needs is that someone from this country, or maybe even from a foreign country, come to his town and teach him something of the Word of God. Beloved, I cannot, because he is a Baptist preacher, invite him to have fellowship with us, or invite him to preach for us, because there would be no basis for fellowship in any wise at all. I am saying to you, beloved friends, we are to mark them which are not sound, and we are to avoid them just the same as you avoid a plague.

I'll go further and say this: I would sooner run you into a home where there was smallpox if you were not vaccinated. I would sooner put you into a home where there was cholera if you had not been vaccinated against it. I would sooner put you into a pest house where there diseases of all kinds that you would be susceptible to. I would sooner do these things than to put a preacher before you who doesn't preach the Word of God, even though he might be called a Baptist preacher. I say to you, we are to avoid false doctrine.

Notice again: **"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed" (II Thess. 3:6, 14).**

Beloved, this isn't saying that these individuals may not be saved. This isn't saying that they are not saved preachers. It just literally says that if men don't preach the Word of God, then have no company with them, that they be ashamed. I tell you, beloved, there just isn't any place for any unionistic program on the part of a man who wants to live in the light of the Word of God.

When I say a unionistic program, beloved, I not only speak from the standpoint of preaching, but I would say I wouldn't want to have any unionism even so far as singing is concerned. I often think of some of these quartets who sing these -- religious jazz songs. I couldn't have any fellowship with them first of all, for the simple reason that those individuals are unionistic. They will come and sing for me today, they will sing for some heretical church tomorrow, and they will go next Sunday and sing for still another group of heretics. It doesn't make any difference where they are invited, they will go to sing. Long ago I cut off these visiting quartets from that standpoint.

I will go further and say this, there is lots of so-called missionary work that we have to avoid because it is of an unionistic nature. I remember several years ago that Jacob Gartenhaus, who (as he says), is a missionary to the Jews, and who is the head of the mission board that directs its work primarily to the Jews,

came to our town and preached for us in a Bible Conference. After the Conference was over, I sent him, as a result of contributions that were given to me, a check for a little better than \$800. Now the Conference closed on Thanksgiving Day at noon-time, and along in the afternoon he left. Would you believe me, the next day I read in the Huntington paper how that he was preaching for the Cross Tabernacle in Huntington on Thursday and for the balance of the week. Now everybody knows that the Cross Tabernacle that existed in Huntington at that time was anything else but a place of soundness. Here was a man who came to our Conference and boosted me to the skies, and bragged on Baptists, and about sound doctrine, who, as soon as he got away from us, fellowshipped with individuals who believed in falling from grace, who denied the doctrine of election, and who denied practically everything that we stood for, especially in that they were not a Baptist church, but were an undenominational organization. Well, I learned from that, that we ought to be mighty careful lest we are guilty of unionism even in missionary endeavor.

I suppose there is not a month goes by but that some missionary contacts me, in hopes that we might be of service to him from a financial point of view, through The Baptist Examiner. The majority of those letters I merely file in the wastebasket, for the simple reason that I cannot participate in an unionistic missionary program.

Notice again: **"Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (II John 1:9-11).**

Suppose that a man comes into the community where you live who is not a Baptist who does not preach the truth. Suppose he comes to your home and as a matter of courtesy you invite him to come in that he might talk with you. I tell you, beloved, you are violating the Word of God when you allow such an individual to enter your house, for this Scripture says, **"For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds."**

Now the words, "bidding him God speed," has to do with handshaking. Did you ever know where handshaking began, and how it began? Well, once upon a time every man that you met was considered your enemy, and the first thing that an individual would do when he met someone was to grab his sword and come with his sword in his hand. As time passed, he would see some individual approaching, and instead of grasping his sword, he would hold out his hand to show that he didn't have a sword. By and by, maybe the other fellow would come up with his hand outstretched, and pretty soon they got to the place that they clasped hands, or shook hands. That is how handshaking developed; that is how handshaking began. In
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other words, handshaking is showing a man you don't have a sword in your hands, that you are not his enemy -- and that you are bidding him God speed.

Now the Word of God says that when you do that you are bidding a man God speed, and the Apostle Paul says you are not even to shake hands with that individual or to invite that individual in your house, who preaches false doctrine, for if you do, you will be a partaker of his evil deeds.

I have another passage relative to unionism to show you why we are not to unite with other denominations. Listen: "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (I Tim. 3:5).

There are lots of people that have a form of godliness. The Methodists have it, the Campbellites have it, the Holiness have it, the Presbyterians have it. All individuals have a form of godliness, but most of them deny the power of God. What does Paul say to do? "From such turn away." You cannot have fellowship, or seek to have fellowship, with individuals who do not believe the Word of God.

Listen again: "Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself" (I Tim. 6:5).

Notice, you are to withdraw yourself from individuals who offer perverse disputing when they are destitute of the truth.

I heard a fellow briefly over the radio who was definitely destitute of the truth. I didn't hear him but just a few minutes, and I certainly say that that man was destitute of the truth. I was thinking of it in terms of this text, and I thought, if a man is destitute so far as clothing is concerned, that man's clothing is worn out. Then I thought that if a man is destitute so far as food is concerned, that means that he didn't have anything in his cupboard; his cupboard is bare. Then I thought if a man is destitute so far as friends are concerned, that means he doesn't have any friends. He has lost all of his friends and nobody cares anything about him. I kept thinking about this passage which speaks about being destitute of the truth. Bad as it is for a man to be destitute so far as food and friends are concerned, it is much worse for a man to be destitute of the truth, and Paul says, "...from such withdraw thyself."

III. Feminism

We read: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law" (I Cor. 14:34).

"I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (I Tim. 2:8, 11, 12).

You can't read these verses without realizing that so far as the feminine gender is concerned, the Apostle Paul says that the

woman's place in a New Testament church is a place of silence -- silence from the standpoint of speaking out, silence from the standpoint of the asking of questions, silence from the standpoint of preaching, silence from the standpoint of teaching so far as the presence of men are concerned, and silence from the standpoint of praying when men are present, for the Word of God says, "I will therefore that men pray every where..." In other words, the public praying is to be done by the males.

I say, beloved, you can't read these verses without realizing that these prohibitions are definitely here concerning the women of our churches, yet excuse after excuse is offered by those who believe that it is perfectly all right for the women to speak.

For example, of recent date at the General Association of Kentucky Baptists, a man made a motion that the women be unbridled, and that they do as they please in the session. He said, "This is the twentieth century."

Now, beloved, that was an intelligent statement, wasn't it? Didn't that show intelligence when he said, "This is the twentieth century," as if to say, "This is not in Paul's day. This is not in the day when the Bible was written. This is the twentieth century."

Beloved, I say he was at least an intelligent man. He at least had observed the calendar. He knew what date it was. I give him credit for that much intelligence, but I certainly do not agree with him when he made the assertion that since this is the twentieth century, we are to forget about what the Apostle Paul wrote in the first century.

I say to you, all kinds of excuses are offered. They say, "Well, a woman gives her money; why can't she speak?" They say, "In Christ there is neither male nor female; we are all one in Christ." They say that it is old-fashioned. They say that the Apostle Paul was "down" on the women. All kinds of excuses are offered as to why women should be given permission to speak publicly, and to take a public part in the services. However, the fact remains, the Word of God still says it, and as I have often said, if God didn't mean what He said, why didn't God say what He meant?

I am ready to grant that there have been a lot of changes. I have lived to see a lot of changes even in my lifetime. I can remember when I was a boy that a woman's dress allowed about a six-inch step. I can remember what some of you can't remember -- the hobble skirt -- when women walked just exactly like a horse that has been hobbled.

I have seen the styles as to women's dresses go high, and I have seen them go low. I have seen them go when it seemed like the sky was the limit, and I have seen them virtually drag the ground.

Yes, beloved, things have changed. I just cite this as one example as to the change that has taken place in the realm of women's dresses, but how about coming over the realm of housekeeping? How many of you can remember when you used to get up in the morning and cut wood for the kitchen stove in order to get breakfast? Today, you just turn a little gadget and fire comes out immediately, and you are on the way.

Sometime ago I saw one of those ovens where you put the food in and then virtually immediately reach in and take it out; it is done that quickly. As I looked through the oven door I saw cupcakes just mushroom up, potatoes bake in four minutes and bacon fried in thirty seconds.

I tell you, beloved, things have changed, but this old Book hasn't changed. You mark it down, there have been changes so far as clothing is concerned, there have been changes so far as housekeeping is concerned, and there have been changes in every field, but the old Book remains the same. You can say all you want to about the Apostle Paul. You can say all you want to about the changes of time, I will still remind you that Paul said, "Let the women keep silence in the churches." It is just as important and imperative that we listen to it today as it was in the days of the Apostle Paul.

IV. Arminianism

The Apostle Paul certainly did not favor Arminianism any more than he would favor unionism or feminism. The Apostle Paul was very, very definitely opposed to anything that savoured to the works of man. For example, when he wrote to the churches of Galatia, he said: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:6-9).

What is back of this? On the day that Jesus died the veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom as though the unseen hand of God reached down and tore that veil in two, signifying that henceforth everyone of us is free to approach God for himself. Prior to that, an individual had to have a priest to come to God in his behalf, but when the veil of the temple was rent in twain, this signified that Jesus Christ had become our High Priest -- that everyone of us are believer-priests under Him, and that not one of us needs a priest to come between him and God. Rather we go to God for ourselves directly through our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you know that some of those old Jews were not satisfied with that veil being rent in twain? They were not satisfied with what God had done. They were not satisfied with what had taken place, so they patched up the veil. Paul wrote the book of Galatians to correct the evil of the patched-up veil -- trying to put man back under the law, trying to put man back under the ceremonies of the Old Testament. Paul said that there were individuals who were preaching a different gospel to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and he said, "If a man does so, let him be accursed. Let the man go to hell who preaches any other gospel than the gospel that I have preached to these people at Galatia."

Now, beloved, that is pretty

strong language, but it is language that we need to study. It is language that we need to accept. It is language that we need to live by. I tell you, beloved, we have no business bowing to any kind of an Arminian program. If a man denies the doctrine of election, if he denies justification by faith, if he denies the security of the saved, if he denies that Jesus Christ is our great High Priest and that everything so far as our salvation is concerned is wholly and totally dependent upon Him -- if a man denies this, I say to you, we are not to listen to that individual, but, like the Apostle Paul, we are to believe that man is a troubler of the Word of God, and a perverter of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and therefore, "let him be accursed."

CONCLUSION

If the Apostle Paul were to come back to this town today, he would have the same message as he had two thousand years ago, and if he were to come back, he would say to us, "Stay away from that man who has an Arminian message. Stay away from the man who is a Feminist. Stay away from the man who is an Unionist. Stay away, and hold fast to the form of sound words."

May God help you to seek by the grace of God to always stand and contend for sound words on the matter of unionism, and Arminianism, and all the balance of the isms as well.

May God bless you!

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there. And she constrained us." (Acts 16:15).

Paul, in his vision, had seen a man of Macedonia, who had requested that he come to Macedonia and help them. Paul had now arrived in Macedonia and found that God the Spirit had gone before him and arranged for him to meet Lydia. God had also made arrangements for Paul and the brethren to stay and work from the home of Lydia. May we train ourselves to watch for the hand of God in our lives, too? He has also assigned people for us to witness, and places for us to abide or fellowship with others. God is a very active participant in the affairs of this life rather than a far distant spectator.

Lydia was baptized and said by this action that when the Messiah died, she died; when He was buried, she was buried; and when He arose, she arose. Now that He lived, she lived. Baptism also said that she was a follower of Him. One who joins the Navy puts on a Navy uniform. Lydia's uniform was that of baptism -- baptism by which she joined the Lord's church where she could be a faithful participant for Jesus Christ. Her first act after being baptized was to house and feed

the Lord's preachers. She, by doing such for the brethren, was doing the same for her Lord. Those, in fact, who give a drink of water to the brethren do the same for the Lord. The brethren, after all, represent their Lord.

We are informed that Lydia's entire household was baptized. This kind of household, of course, was a great blessing to Paul and the brethren. It, in fact, was a school where Paul and the brethren could train the new believers. They, no doubt, spent hours late into the night talking about the Scriptures.

Some have tried to prove infant

baptism from the fact that Lydia's entire household was baptized. Let those who try to prove such a theory consider what Philip said to the eunuch in Acts 8:37. The eunuch asked if he could be baptized and Philip replied, "...If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." There is absolutely no reason to think that Paul would have taken exception to this rule. Infants, of course, don't have the ability to believe. Those, therefore, in Lydia's household were all, through the power of God the Spirit, capable of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.

"And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying;" (Acts 16:16).

This scripture confirms the fact that Satan is walking up and down in the earth while seeking whom he may devour. He is opposed to every work of God and makes every effort within his power to destroy the works of God. Those, in fact, who are working for the Lord should not consider it strange when they encounter all sorts of obstacles. This fact is clearly shown by all the obstacles which Paul encountered. The "certain damsel" in the scripture before us was just one of many of Satan's efforts to stop the apostle Paul from preaching God's word and moving in on what Satan considered as being his territory. Those, in fact, who encounter a nest of hornets are likely to be stung of them.

The obstacle which Satan threw up before Paul and the brethren was a "certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination," or one who was able to foretell future events. People, no doubt, paid her well for advising them as to what the future held, such as the number of children they would have, etc. We are not informed as to the accuracy of her predictions, but we do know that she was possessed with a spirit of divination so that it was an outside force that had entered her body -- an outside force had power and knowledge far beyond that of mortal man. She, in other words, was being used by Satan. She was no longer her own person, but she was controlled by another.

The "certain damsel" was not only used by Satan, but some businessmen found that they could use her, too, in making a quick dollar. We, today, must be cautious so that our income is not obtained from businesses which Satan has set up.

"The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation" (Acts 16:17).

The demons, you will recall, knew who Jesus Christ was when He was here in person. He, however, would not allow them to reveal who He was. Their motive, in fact, was evil since they could do no good. The Lord Jesus didn't need this kind of advertisement. He didn't need it in Paul's day, and He doesn't need it today. God the Holy Spirit will reveal

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the Son to those of God's choosing.

The evil spirit within the "certain damsel" had an ulterior motive for saying that "These men are the servants of the most high God." The evil spirit, in fact, by recognizing God's workers, hoped to exalt the "certain damsel." The evil spirit hoped to show the greatness of the damsel in that nothing was hidden from her. They, therefore, could put their utmost trust in her.

"And this she did many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour" (Acts 16:18).

Paul, through the knowledge given him by God the Spirit, knew that the damsel was not at fault. It was the evil spirit that had taken up his residence within her that was harassing Paul. Paul, therefore, commanded the evil spirit to come out of the damsel. He did so in the name of Jesus Christ, or by the authority of Jesus Christ. The result was that the evil spirit departed within the same hour that Paul gave his command. Jesus Christ, of course, received all the credit, since Paul appealed to His authority in routing the evil spirit. It was not a battle between flesh and blood. Paul, therefore, in his own strength, would have been completely defeated. It was as Jesus has said, **"Without me ye can do nothing."** May we remind ourselves that there is no problem too difficult for our Lord to solve.

"And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers." (Acts 16:19).

Here is proof that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. A miracle from heaven had just been performed by Paul. The evil spirit was cast out of the damsel. One would think that her masters would have rejoiced, but they did not rejoice, since they had been using the damsel or taking advantage of her. She was their slave and meal ticket. They, no doubt, because of her, had built themselves homes to live in and obtained the better things of life. They, through the damsel, had gained much respect from the people. Paul, however, by casting the evil spirit out of the damsel, had cut off their source of wealth. They, in fact, would now need to find a new source of income.

The men in the passage before us, sought to make Paul and Silas pay a price for what they had done. They therefore **"drew them into the marketplace, unto the rulers."**

There are numerous people today who would react in the same manner as the men before us if the followers of Jesus were to threaten their business by preaching the Word. This world is all that the natural man will enable him or her to see. They, therefore, will fight against spiritual things that threaten their lifestyle.

Those in the Scripture before us took the matter to the court, or to the magistrates. The magistrates, whose court or forum was held in the marketplace, gave an ear as the masters of the damsel laid the following charge against Paul and Silas:

"and brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans" (Acts 16:20, 21).

The magistrates were military rulers. Philippi, after all, was a Roman "colony" -- a colony of Roman citizens. The citizens, in the main, were made up of retired Roman soldiers and their families. It was that society in which Paul and Silas were accused of disturbing the peace -- the peace which was of man and not of God. Peace from God, in fact, according to James 3:17, has to be based on purity. A peace that is not based on purity, or God's Word, is a false peace. One can disturb the peace of a false church by simply preaching one Scriptural message from God's Word. I know from experience.

It should be pointed out that the damsel and her masters were satisfied with what Paul and Silas preached so long as it could be used by them to make money. There are multitudes today who fall into the same category.

The following quotation from Cicero shows the "customs" which the Romans of Philippi were not at liberty to receive:

"No person shall have any separate gods, or new ones; nor shall he privately worship any strange gods, unless they be publicly allowed."

"and the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes and commanded to beat them." (Acts 16:22).

Those who had said that they wanted law and order showed clearly that they had no regard for the law. Paul, in fact, in verse thirty-seven, puts their feet to the fire regarding the error which they had made. They, in fact, broke the Roman law when they beat him.

All the clothes of Paul and Silas were stripped from them before being beaten. This was the customary procedure before beating a person. They, in their naked condition, were then beaten with rods. Paul, in II Corinthians 11:25, refers to this beating. Let me add that the victim was also bound before being beaten. The beating was done with rods in the hand of an lictor -- a man whose job it was to carry out the sentence of the court.

"And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:" (Acts 16:23).

The Jewish law limited the number of stripes to be inflicted to forty. They usually inflicted thirty-nine. The Roman law, on the other hand, had no restriction built into it. This is probably what Paul refers to in II Corinthians 11:23 when he refers to "stripes above measure," that is, beyond the Jewish measure of forty.

Many people, no doubt, observed as Paul and Silas were beaten, since such took place in the marketplace. The first lash of the rod, no doubt, brought forth a deep bruise, broken skin, and

blood. One can only imagine their condition after the last was inflicted.

That which made their condition worse was that no one cared. All were glad that they had been beaten. A person found in such a condition today would be taken by an ambulance to a hospital. Paul and Silas, on the other hand, were cast into jail where the jailor was to continue as the others had done, that is, show no mercy. The next Scripture, in fact, shows that the jailor had no mercy on them.

"Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks" (Acts 16:24).

Those who perform good deeds for the Lord's saints, perform good deeds for the Lord. Those, on the other hand, who beat the Lord's saints, beat their Lord. He, after all, is the one who sends them. It is His message and His work that is their objective. They also, in placing Paul and Silas in the inner prison and placing their feet in the stocks, were doing the same to their Lord.

It is likely that Paul and Silas had to lie on the cold, dirty floor while their feet were bound in the stocks. This, of course, greatly increased their suffering.

"And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them" (Acts 16:25).

The magistrates thought that they had gotten the best of Paul and Silas. They felt that they had brought them to the point where, as we say, they were willing to say "uncle," or I give up. The beating, however, had not affected Paul and Silas in the least. The outer pain had not penetrated their minds or caused any change of mind and heart. We know, of course, as the Scripture teaches, that "as a man thinketh, so is he." Their thoughts were to glorify their Lord no matter what the cost was to themselves.

It is not likely that Paul and Silas could have slept even if they had tried to. They, after all, had been severely beaten and were in much pain. Their feet were in stocks which would have been another reason for their not being able to sleep. They, however, did something which was more important than sleep; and that was to praise God. It is to be carefully noted that they did not blame God for their problems, but they praised Him for them.

Our text informs us that the other prisoners heard them as they prayed and sang. They, no doubt, were astonished when they heard them, since it is very uncommon for a prisoner to praise God. It may not be uncommon for prisoners to pray, but it is uncommon for them to praise God for their incarceration. This fact proves that the believer has a source of comfort within himself -- a source which God has placed there. He has a peace within his heart which the world did not give and cannot take away by way of a beating with rods.

They had bound the bodies of Paul and Silas, but they could not bind their spirits. God's grace proved to be more than sufficient.

"And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's hands were loosed." (Acts 16:26).

It is interesting and encouraging to observe that God had complete control of this earthquake. He, in fact, controlled the great earthquake so that it did the delicate work of loosing the bonds from each prisoner. It did such without causing harm to any of them. Let me add that our God is so great that He could use a tornado to pluck one eyelash from our eye. The earthquake became the gentle hand of God in opening each of the prison doors. May we all say regarding our God, as the song states, **"How Great Thou Art."**

The prisoners had heard Paul and Silas praying and praising God. Now they are all privileged to hear and see God's response. They should have realized that it pays to serve Jesus.

"And the keeper of the prison awakening out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled." (Acts 16:27).

The act of committing suicide under such conditions was common among the Greeks and the Romans. It was even approved by the state. Brutus and Cassius and many of their friends, in fact, killed themselves in Philippi -- the very city which is before us. Thus, the great men approved suicide and committed it themselves. It is no wonder, then, that the jailor was about to do the same to himself.

It was customary to hold the jailor entirely responsible for the safekeeping of prisoners. He, in fact, if they escaped, was to be subjected to whatever punishment that had been assigned to the prisoners.

"But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here" (Acts 16:28).

God is not in the business of breaking lawbreakers out of prison. He, therefore, worked out the miracle before us so that no one escaped even though all the doors were open. Men, no doubt, even though under the penalty of death, did not try to escape. May we see that no man can resist the will of God. Our God will do all of His pleasure.

The fact that Paul cried to the jailor with a loud voice, shows that the jailor was ready to plunge the sword into his own heart. The sword was obviously in a position for immediate entrance into the jailor's heart.

The fact that the jailor would kill himself without even checking the prison cells shows that, humanly speaking, every prisoner would have escaped the moment the doors swung open. We, however, are not dealing with the human but with the divine.

"Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas." (Acts 16:29).

Emotions must be at a peak before one will contemplate suicide. The jailor was acting under peak emotions. He, in fact, had a peak of mixed emotions. These mixed emotions were those of fear, desperation, appreciation to Paul, amazement, etc.

The jailor, after Paul said, "We are all here," called for a light. He obviously called to his attendants who rushed a torch to him. He, after receiving the torch, "sprang in" to the prisoner area. He did not "spring in" in a fit of temper, but in a "trembling" condition. God's miracle had not only

opened the prison door and loosed the prisoner's bonds, but it also caused the jailor to exercise great respect toward the Almighty God. The jailor knew that Paul and Silas were intimate friends with the Almighty or He would not have done that which He did for them. The jailor knew too, that further action against Paul and Silas would be futile. He therefore fell before them since they represented the God who had acted in their behalf. Others, if they would look around themselves, would see this same God in the rising sun, the thunder and lightning, or the hurricane. He, in fact, is continually revealing Himself in His creation.

"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30).

Paul had wanted to go into Asia, but God the Spirit had directed him to Macedonia. Paul, in a vision had seen a man from Macedonia asking for help. Help had arrived by way of the Almighty, through Paul and the brethren. Soon, in fact, the Lord was to establish His church in Philippi. The Philippian jailor, no doubt, was a member of that church.

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taught that Jesus mitigated and softened down the law, and they have in effect said that the perfect law of God was too hard for imperfect beings, and therefore God has given us a milder and easier rule. These tread dangerously upon the verge of terrible error, although we believe that they are little aware of it. Alas, we have met with authors who have gone much further than this, and have railed at the law. Oh, the hard words that I have sometimes read against the holy law of God! How very unlike those which the apostle used when he said, "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." How different from the reverent spirit which made him say, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." You know how David loved the law of God, and sang its praises all through the longest of the Psalms. The heart of every real Christian is most reverent towards the law of the Lord. It is perfect, nay, it is perfection itself. We believe that we shall never have reached perfection till we are perfectly conformed to it. A sanctification which stops short of perfect conformity to the law cannot truthfully be called perfect sanctification, for every want of exact conformity to the perfect law is sin. May the Spirit of God help us while, in imitation of our Lord Jesus, we endeavour to magnify the law.

I gather from our text two things upon which I shall speak at this time. The first is that the law of God is perpetual: "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." The meaning is that even in the least point it must abide till all be fulfilled. Secondly, we perceive that the law must be fulfilled: Not "one jot or one tittle shall pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." He who came to bring in the gospel dispensation here asserts that He has not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it.

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I. First: The Law of God must be perpetual. There is no abrogation of it, nor amendment of it. It is not to be toned down or adjusted to our fallen condition; but every one of the Lord's righteous judgments abideth for ever. I would urge three reasons which will establish this teaching.

In the first place our Lord Jesus declares that He did not come to abolish it. His words are most express: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." And Paul tells us with regard to the gospel, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (Rom. 3. 31). The gospel is the means of the firm establishment and vindication of the law of God.

Jesus did not come to change the law, but he came to explain it, and that very fact shows that it remains, for there is no need to explain that which is abrogated. Upon one particular point in which there happened to be a little ceremonialism involved, namely, the keeping of the Sabbath, our Lord enlarged, and showed that the Jewish idea was not the true one. The Pharisees forbade even the doing of works of necessity and mercy, such as rubbing ears of corn to satisfy hunger, and healing the sick. Our Lord Jesus showed that it was not at all according to the mind of God to forbid these things. In straining over the letter, and carrying an outward observance to excess, they had missed the spirit of the Sabbath law, which suggested works of piety such as truly hallow the day. He showed that Sabbatic rest was not mere inaction, and he said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." He pointed to the priests who laboured hard at offering sacrifices, and said of them "the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless." They were doing divine service, and were within the law. To meet the popular error he took care to do some of his grandest miracles upon the Sabbath-day; and though this excited great wrath against him, as though he were a law-breaker, yet he did it on purpose that they might see that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath, and that it is meant to be a day for doing that which honours God and blesses men. O that men knew how to keep the spiritual Sabbath by a ceasing from all servile work, and from all work done for self. The rest of faith is the true Sabbath, and the service of God is the most acceptable hallowing of the day. O that the day were wholly spent in serving God and doing good! The sum of our Lord's teaching was that works of necessity, works of mercy, and works of piety are lawful on the Sabbath. He did explain the law in that point and in others, yet that explanation did not alter the command, but only removed the rust of tradition which had settled upon it. By thus explaining the law he confirmed it; he could not have meant to abolish it or he would not have needed to expound it.

In addition to explaining it the Master went further: He pointed out its spiritual character. This the Jews had not observed. They thought, for instance, that the command "Thou shalt not kill" simply forbade murder and

manslaughter: but the Saviour showed that anger without causes violates the law, and that hard words and cursing, and all other displays of enmity and malice, are forbidden by the commandment. They knew that they might not commit adultery, but it did not enter into their minds that a lascivious desire would be an offence against the precept till the Saviour said, "He that looketh upon a woman to lust after her committeth adultery with her already in his heart." He showed that the thought of evil is sin, that an unclean imagination pollutes the heart, that a wanton wish is guilt in the eyes of the Most High. Assuredly this was no abrogation of law: it was a wonderful exhibition of its far-reaching sovereignty and of its searching character. The Pharisees fancied that if they kept their hands, and their feet, and their tongues, all was done, but Jesus showed that thought, imagination, desire, memory, everything, must be brought into subjection to the will of God, or else the law was not fulfilled. What a searching and humbling doctrine is this! If the law of the Lord reaches to the inward parts; who among us can by nature abide its judgment? Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults. The ten commands are full of meaning -- meaning which many seem to ignore. For instance, many a man will allow in and around his house inattention to the rules of health and sanitary precaution, but it does not occur to him that he is trampling on the command, -- "Thou shalt not kill," yet this rule forbids our doing anything which may cause injury to our neighbour's health, and so deprive him of life. Many a deadly manufactured article, many an ill-ventilated shop, many a business with hours of excessive length, is a standing breach of this command. Shall I say less of drinks, which lead so speedily to disease and death, and crowd our cemeteries with untimely graves? So, too, in reference to another precept: some persons will repeat songs and stories which are suggestive of uncleanness; -- I wish that this were not so common as it is. Do they not know that an unchaste word, a double meaning, a sly hint of lust all come under the command, "Thou shalt not commit adultery"? It is so according to the teaching of our Lord Jesus. Oh, talk not to me about our Lord's having brought in a milder law because man could not keep the Decalogue, for he has done nothing of the kind. "His fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor." "Who may abide the day of his coming? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap." Let us not dare to dream that God had given us a perfect law which we poor creatures could not keep, and that therefore he has corrected his legislature, and sent his Son to put us under a relaxed discipline. Nothing of the sort. The Lord Jesus Christ has, on the contrary, shown how intimately the law surrounds and enters into our inward parts, so as to convict us of sin within even if we seem clear without. Ah me, this law is high; I cannot attain to it. It everywhere surrounds me; it tracks me to my bed and my board; it follows my steps and marks my ways wherever I may be. No moment does it cease to govern and demand obedience. O God, I am everywhere condemned, for everywhere thy law reveals to me

my serious deviations form the way of righteousness and shows me how far short I come of thy glory. Have thou pity on thy servant, for I fly to the gospel which has done for me what the law could never do.

"To see the law by Christ fulfilled,

And hear his pardoning voice,
Changes a slave into a child,
And duty into choice."

Our Lord Jesus Christ, in addition to explaining the law and pointing out its spiritual character, also unveiled its living essence, for when one asked him "Which is the great commandment in the law?" he said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." In other words, he has told us, "All the law is fulfilled in this: thou shalt love." There is the pith and marrow of it. Does any man say to me, "You see, then, instead of the ten commandments, we have received the two commandments, and these are much easier." I answer that this reading of the law is not in the least easier. Such a remark implies a want of thought and experience. Those two precepts comprehend the ten at their fullest extent, and cannot be regarded as the erasure of a jot or tittle of them. Whatever difficulties surround the ten commands are equally found in the two, which are their sum and substance. If you love God with all your heart you must keep the first table; and if you love your neighbour as yourself you must keep the second table. If any suppose that the law of love is an adaptation of the moral law to man's fallen condition they greatly err. I can only say that the supposed adaptation is no more adapted to us than the original law. If there could be conceived to be any difference in difficulty it might be easier to keep the ten than the two; for if we go no deeper than the letter, the two are the more exacting, since they deal with the heart, and soul, and mind. The ten commands mean all that the two express; but if we forget this, and only look at the wording of them, I say, it is harder for a man to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength, and his neighbour as himself than it would be merely to abstain from killing, stealing, and false witness. Christ has not, therefore, abrogated or at all moderated the law to meet our helplessness; he has left it in all its sublime perfection, as it always must be left, and he has pointed out how deep are its foundations, how elevated are its heights, how measureless are its length and breadth. Like the laws of the Medes and Persians, God's commands cannot be altered; we are saved by another method.

To show that he never meant to abrogate the law, our Lord Jesus has embodied all its commands in his own life. In his own person there was a nature which was perfectly conformed to the law of God; and as was his nature such was his life. He could say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" and again "I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love." I may not say that he was scrupulously careful to keep the law: I will not put it so, for there was no ten-

dency in him to do otherwise: he was so perfect and pure, so infinitely good, and so complete in his agreement and communion with the Father, that he in all things carried out the Father's will. The Father said of him, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Point out, if you possibly can, any way in which Christ has violated the law or left it unfulfilled. There was never an unclean thought or rebellious desire in his soul; he had nothing to regret or to retrace: it could not be that he should err. He was thrice-tempted in the wilderness, and the enemy had the impertinence even to suggest idolatry, but he instantly overthrew the adversary. The prince of this world came to him, but he found nothing in him.

"My dear Redeemer and my Lord,

I read my duty in thy Word;
But in thy life the law appears
Drawn out in living characters."

Now, if that law had been too high and too hard, Christ would not have exhibited it in his life, but as our exemplar he would have set forth that milder form of law which it is supposed by some theologians he came to introduce. Inasmuch as our Leader and Exemplar has exhibited to us in his life a perfect obedience to the sacred commands in their undiminished grandeur, I gather that he means it to be the model of our conversation. Our Lord has not taken off a single point or pinnacle from that up-towering alp of perfection. He said at the first, "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart," and well has he justified the writing of the volume of the book. "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law"; and being for our sakes under the law he obeyed it to the full, so that now "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth."

Once more, that the Master did not come to alter the law is clear, because after having embodied it in his life he willingly gave himself up to bear its penalty, though he had never broken it, bearing the penalty for us, even as it is written, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." "All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." If the law had demanded more of us than it ought to have done, would the Lord Jesus have rendered to it the penalty which resulted from its too severe demands? I am sure he would not. But because the law asked only what it ought to ask -- namely perfect obedience; and exacted of the transgressor only what it ought to exact, namely, death, as the penalty for sin, -- death under divine wrath, therefore the Saviour went to the tree, and there bore our sins and purged them once for all. He was crushed beneath the load of our guilt, and cried, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," and at last when He had borne --

"All that incarnate God could bear,

With strength enough, but none to spare,"

He bowed his head and said, "It is finished." Our Lord Jesus Christ gave a greater vindication to the law by dying, because it had been broken, than all the lost in hell can ever give by their

miseries, for their suffering is never complete, their debt is never paid; but He has born all that was due from His people, and the law is defrauded of nothing. By His death He has vindicated the honour of God's moral government, and made it just for Him to be merciful. When the lawgiver Himself submits to the law, when the sovereign Himself bears the extreme penalty of that law, then is the justice of God set upon such a glorious high throne that all admiring worlds must wonder at it. If therefore it is clearly proven that Jesus was obedient to the law, even to the extent of death, He certainly did not come to abolish or abrogate it; and if He did not remove it, who can do so? If he declares that he came to establish it, who shall overthrow it?

But, secondly, the law of God must be perpetual from its very nature, for does it not strike you the moment you think of it that right must always be right, truth must always be true, and purity must always be purity? Before the ten commandments were published at Sinai there was still that same law of right and wrong laid upon men by the necessity of their being God's creatures. Right was always right before a single command had been committed to words. When Adam was in the garden it was always right that he should love his Maker, and it would always have been wrong that he should have been at cross-purposes with his God; and it does not matter what happens in this world, or what changes take place in the universe, it never can be right to lie, or to commit adultery, or murder, or theft, or to worship an idol God. I will not say that the principles of right and wrong are as absolutely self-existent as God, but I do say that I cannot grasp the idea of God Himself as existing apart from His being always holy and always true; so that the very idea of right and wrong seems to me to be necessarily permanent, and cannot possibly be shifted. You cannot bring right down to a lower level; it must be where it always is: right is right eternally, and cannot be wrong. You cannot lift up wrong and make it somewhat right; it must be wrong while the world standeth. Heaven and earth may pass away, but not the smallest letter or accent of the moral law can possibly change. In spirit the law is eternal.

Suppose for a moment that it were possible to temper and tone down the law, wherein would it be? I confess I do not know and cannot imagine. If it be perfectly holy, how can it be altered except by being made imperfect. Would you wish for that? Could you worship the God of an imperfect law? Can it ever be true that God, by way of favouring us, has put us under an imperfect law? Would that be a blessing or a curse? It is said by some that man cannot keep a perfect law, and God does not demand that he should. Certain modern theologians have taught this, I hope, by inadvertence. Has God issued an imperfect law? It is the first imperfect thing I ever heard of his making. Does it come to this, that after all the gospel is a proclamation that God is going to be satisfied with obedience to a mutilated

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law? God forbid. I say; better that we perish than that his perfect law perish. Terrible as it is; it lies at the foundation of the peace of the universe, and must be honoured at all hazards. That gone, all goes. When the power of the Holy Ghost convinced me of sin, I felt such a solemn awe of the law of God that I remember well when I lay crushed beneath it as a condemned sinner. I yet admired and glorified the law. I could not have wished that perfect law to be altered for me. Rather did I feel that, if my soul were sent to the lowest hell, yet God was to be extolled for his justice, and his law held in honour for its perfectness. I would not have had it altered even to save my soul. Brethren, the law of the Lord must stand, for it is perfect, and therefore has in it no element of decay or change.

The law of God is no more than God might most righteously ask of us. If God were about to give us a more tolerant law, it would be an admission on his part that he asked too much at first. Can that be supposed? Was there, after all, some justification for the statement of the wicked and slothful servant when he said, "I feared thee, because thou art an austere man?" It cannot be. For God to alter his law would be an admission that he made a mistake at first, that he put poor imperfect man (we are often hearing that said) under too rigorous a regime, and therefore he is now prepared to abate his claims, and make them more reasonable. It has been said that man's moral inability to keep the perfect law exempts him from the duty of doing so. This is very specious, but it is utterly false. Man's inability is not of the kind which removes responsibility: it is moral, not physical. Never fall into the error that moral inability will be an excuse for sin. What, when a man becomes such a liar that he cannot speak the truth, is he thereby exempted from the duty of truthfulness? If your servant owes you a day's labour, is he free from the duty because he has made himself so drunk that he cannot serve you? Is a man freed from a debt by the fact that he has squandered the money, and therefore cannot pay it? Is a lustful man free to indulge his passions because he cannot understand the beauty of chastity? This is dangerous doctrine. The law is a just one, and man is bound by it though his sin has rendered him incapable of doing so.

The law moreover demands no more than is good for us. There is not a single commandment of God's law but what is meant to be a kind of danger signal such as we put up upon the ice when it is too thin to bear. Each commandment does as it were say to us, "Dangerous." It is never for a man's good to do what God forbids him; it is never for man's real and ultimate happiness to leave undone anything that God commands him. The wisest directions for spiritual health, and for the avoidance of evil, are those directions which are given us concerning right and wrong in the law of God. Therefore it is not possible that there should be any alteration thereof, for it

would not be for our good.

I should like to say to any brother who thinks that God has put us under an altered rule: "Which particular part of the law is it that God has relaxed?" Which precept do you feel free to break? Are you delivered from the command which forbids stealing? My dear sir, you may be a capital theologian, but I should lock up my spoons when you call at my house. Is it the command about adultery which you think is removed? Then I could not recommend your being admitted into any decent society. Is the law as to killing softened down? Then I had rather have your room than your company. Which law is it that God has exempted you from? That law of worshipping him only? Do you purpose to have another God? Do you intend to make graven images? The fact is that when we come to detail we cannot afford to lose a single link of this wonderful golden chain, which is perfect in every part as well as perfect as a whole. The law is absolutely complete, and you can neither add to it nor take from it. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." If, then, no part of it can be taken down, it must stand, and stand for ever.

A third reason I will give why the law must be perpetual is that to suppose it altered is most dangerous. To take away from the law its perpetuity is first of all to take away from it its power to convince of sin. Is it so, that I, being an imperfect creature, am not expected to keep a perfect law? Then it follows that I do not sin when I break the law; and if all that is required of me is that I am to do according to the best of my knowledge and ability, then I have a very convenient rule indeed, and most men will take care to adjust it so as to give themselves as much latitude as possible. By removing the law you have done away with sin, for sin is the transgression of the law, and where there is no law there is no transgression. When you have done away with sin you may as well have done away with the Savior and with salvation, for they are by no means needful. When you have reduced sin to a minimum, what need is there of that great and glorious salvation which Jesus Christ has come to bring into the world? Brethren, we must have none of this: it is evidently a way of mischief.

By lowering the law you weaken its power in the hands of God as convincer of sin. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." It is the looking-glass which shows us our spots, and that is a most useful thing, though nothing but the gospel can wash them away.

"My hopes of heaven were firm and bright,

But since the precept came

With a convincing power and light,

I find how vile I am.

"My guilt appear'd but small before,

Till terribly I saw

How perfect, holy, just, and pure,

Was thine eternal law.

"Then felt my soul the heavy load,

My sins reviv'd again,

I had provok'd a dreadful God,
And all my hopes were slain."

It is only a pure and perfect law

that the Holy Spirit can use in order to show to us our depravity and sinfulness. Lower the law and you dim the light by which man perceives his guilt. This is a very serious loss to the sinner rather than a gain, for it lessens the likelihood of his conviction and conversion.

You have also taken away from the law its power to shut us up to the faith of Christ. What is the law of God for? For us to keep in order to be saved by it? Not at all. It is sent in order to show us that we cannot be saved by works, and to shut us up to be saved by grace; but if you make out that the law is lettered so that a man can keep it, you have left him his old legal hope, and he is sure to cling to it. You need a perfect law that shuts man right up to hopelessness apart from Jesus, puts him into an iron cage and locks him up, and offers him no escape but by faith in Jesus; then he begins to cry, "Lord, save me by grace, for I perceive that I cannot be saved by my own works." This is how Paul describes it to the Galatians: "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." I say you have deprived the gospel of its ablest auxiliary when you have set aside the law. You have taken away from it the schoolmaster that is to bring men to Christ. No, it must stand, and stand in all its terrors, to drive men away from self-righteousness and constrain them to fly to Christ. They will never accept grace till they tremble before a just and holy law; therefore the law serves a most necessary and blessed purpose, and it must not be removed from its place.

To alter the law is to leave us without any law at all. A sliding-scale of duty is an immoral invention, fatal to the principles of law. If each man is to be accepted because he does his best, we are all doing our best. Is there anybody that is not? If we take their words for it, all our fellow-men are doing as well as they can, considering their imperfect natures. Even the harlot in the streets has some righteousness, -- she is not quite so far gone as others. Have you never heard of the bandit who committed many murders, but who felt that he had been doing his best because he never killed anybody on a Friday? Self-righteousness builds itself a nest even in the worst character. This is the man's talk: -- "Really, if you knew me, you would say, I have been a good fellow to do as well as I have. Consider what a poor, fallen creature I am; what strong passions were born in me; what temptations to vice beset me, and you will not blame me much. After all, I dare say God is as satisfied with me as with many who are a great deal better, because I had so few advantages." Yes, you have shifted the standard, and every man will now do that which is right in his own eyes and claim to be doing his best. If you shift the standard pound weight or the bushel measure, you will certainly never get full weight or measurement again. There will be no standard to go by, and each man will do his best with his own pounds and bushels. If the standard be tam-

pered with you have taken away the foundation upon which trade is conducted; and it is the same in soul matters, -- abolish the best rule that ever can be, even God's own law, and there is no rule left worthy of the name. What a fine opening this leaves for vain glory. No wonder that men talk of perfect sanctification if the law has been lowered. There is nothing at all remarkable in our getting up to the rule if it is conveniently lowered for us. I believe I shall be perfectly sanctified when I keep God's law without omission or transgression, but not till then. If any man says that he is perfectly sanctified because he has come up to a modified law of his own, I am glad to know what he means, for I have no longer any discussion with him: I see nothing wonderful in his attainment. Sin is my want of conformity to the law of God, and until we are perfectly conformed to that law in all its spiritual length and breadth it is idle for us to talk about perfect sanctification: no man is perfectly clean till he accepts absolute purity as the standard by which he is to be judged. So long as there is in us any coming short of the perfect law we are not perfect. What a humbling truth this is! The law shall not pass away, but it must be fulfilled. This truth must be maintained, for if it goes, our tacklings are loose, we cannot well strengthen the mast; the ship goes all to pieces; she becomes a total wreck. The gospel itself would be destroyed could you destroy the law. To tamper with the law is to trifle with the gospel. "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

II. I come to show, secondly, that THE LAW MUST BE FULFILLED. I hope there are some in this place who are saying, "We cannot fulfil it." That is exactly where I want to bring you. Salvation by the works of the law must be felt to be impossible by every man who would be saved. We must learn that salvation is of grace through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord, and not by our own doings or feelings; but this is a doctrine no one will receive till he has learned the previous truth, that salvation by the works of the law can never come to any man of woman born. Yet the law must be fulfilled. Many will say with Nicodemus "How can these things be?" I answer, the law is fulfilled in Christ, and by faith we receive the fruit thereof.

First, as I have already said, the law is fulfilled in the matchless sacrifice of Jesus Christ. If a man has broken a law, what does the law do with him? It says, "I must be honoured. You have broken my command which was sanctioned by the penalty of death. Inasmuch as you did not honour me by obedience, but dishonoured me by transgression, you must die." Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the great covenant representative of his people, their second Adam, stood forward on the behalf of all who are in him, and presented himself as a victim to divine justice. Since his people were guilty of death, he, as their covenant head, came under death, in their place and stead. It was a glorious thing that such representative death was possible, and it was only so because of the original constitution of the race as springing from a common father, and placed under a single head. Inasmuch as our fall was by

one Adam, it was possible for us to be raised by another Adam. "As in Adam all died, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." It became possible for God, upon the principle of representation, to allow of substitution. Our first fall was not by our personal fault, but through the failure of our representative; and now in comes our second and grander representative, the Son of God, and he sets us free, not by our honouring the law, but by his doing so. He came under the law by his birth, and being found as a man loaded with the guilt of all his people, he was listed with its penalty. The law lifts its bloody axe, and it smites our glorious Head that we may go free. It is the Son of God that keeps the law by dying, the just for the unjust. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," -- there is death demanded, and in Christ death is presented. Life for life is rendered: an infinitely precious life instead of the poor lives of men. Jesus has died, and so the law has been fulfilled by the endurance of its penalty, and being fulfilled, its power to condemn and punish the believer has passed away.

Secondly, the law has been fulfilled again for us by Christ in his life. I have already gone over this, but I want to establish you in it. Jesus Christ as our head and representative came into the world for the double purpose of bearing the penalty and at the same time keeping the law. One of his main designs in coming to earth was "to bring in perfect righteousness." "As by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, so by the righteousness of one shall many be made righteous." The law requires a perfect life, and he that believeth in Jesus Christ presents to the law a perfect life, which he had made his own by faith. It is not his own life, but Christ is made of God unto us righteousness, even to us who are one with him. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." That which Jesus did is counted as though we did it, and because he was righteous, God sees us in him and counts us righteous upon the principle of substitution and representation. Oh, how blessed it is to put on this robe and to wear it, and so to stand before the Most High in a better righteousness than ever his law demanded, for that demanded the perfect righteousness of a creature, but we put on the absolute righteousness of the Creator himself, and what can the law ask me? It is written, "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely, and this is the name wherewith he shall be called -- The Lord our righteousness." "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake: He will magnify the law and make it honourable."

Ay, but that is not all. The law has to be fulfilled in us personally in a spiritual and gospel sense. "Well," say you, "but how can that be?" I reply in the words of our apostle: "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh," Christ has done and is doing by the Holy Spirit, "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Regeneration is a work by which the law is fulfilled; for when a man is born again there is placed in him a new nature, which loves the law of God and is perfectly conformed

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PERPETUITY

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thereto. The new nature which God implants in every believer at the time he is born again is incapable of sin: it cannot sin, for it is born of God. That new nature is the offspring of the eternal Father, and the Spirit of God dwells in it, and with it, and strengthens it. It is light, it is purity, it is according to the Scripture the "living and incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth for ever." If incorruptible, it is sinless, for sin is corruption, and corrupts everything that it touches. The apostle Paul, when describing his inward conflicts, showed that he himself, his real and best self, did keep the law, for he says, "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God." Romans 7. 25. He consented to the law that it was good, which showed that he was on the side of the law, and though sin that dwelt in his members led him into transgression, yet his new nature did not allow it, but hated and loathed it, and cried out against it as one in bondage. The newborn soul delights in the law of the Lord, and there is within it a quenchless life which aspired after absolute perfection, and will never rest till it pays to God perfect obedience and comes to be like God himself.

This which is begun in regeneration is continued and grows till it ultimately arrives at absolute perfection. That will be seen in the world to come; and oh, what a fulfillment of the law will be there! The law will admit no man to heaven till he is perfectly conformed to it, but every believer shall be in that perfect condition. Our nature shall be refined from all its dross and be as pure gold. It will be our delight in heaven to be holy. There will be nothing about us then to kick against a single commandment. We shall there know in our own hearts the glory and excellency of the divine will, and our will shall run in the same channel. We shall not imagine that the precepts are rigorous; they will be our own will as truly as they are God's will. Nothing which God has commanded, however much of self-denial it requires now, will require any self-denial from us then. Holiness will be our element, our delight. Our nature will be entirely conformed to the nature and mind of God as to holiness and goodness, and then the law will be fulfilled in us, and we shall stand before God, having washed our robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and at the same time being ourselves without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. Then shall the law of the Lord have eternal honour from our immortal being. Oh, how we shall rejoice in it! We delight in it after the inward man now, but then we shall delight in it as to our risen bodies which shall be charmed to be instruments of righteousness unto God for ever and ever. No appetite of those risen bodies, no want and no necessity of them shall then lead the soul astray, but our whole body, soul, and spirit shall be perfectly conformed unto the Divine mind. Let us long and pant for this. We shall never attain it except by believing in Jesus. Perfect holiness will never be reached by the works of the law, for works cannot change the nature, but by faith in Jesus, and the blessed work of His Holy Spirit, we

shall have it, and then I believe it will be among our songs of glory that heaven and earth pass away, but the word of God and the law of God shall stand fast for ever and ever. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Amen.

DEGREES

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life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Matt. 16:25-27). "and, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12).

The teaching of God's Word of degrees in future punishment ("...these shall receive greater damnation"-- Mark 12:40) according to heredity and environment ("...It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you... it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee" (Matthew 11:22, 24), and according to sin "...every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward" (Heb. 2:2), commends itself to the judgment, to the conscience, of every honest man.

The companion teaching to this in God's Word is there will be different degrees, or rewards, in heaven. Just as the degree of man's punishment in hell will be determined by his life here; so the degree of man's reward in heaven will be determined by his life here. The dividing line is redemption.

With many, salvation and rewards mean the same thing, but the Saviour made a clear distinction. "...I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish..." (John 10:28). "...He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John 6:47). "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven..." (Matt. 6:20).

Our salvation is a gift and depends upon the Saviour; our treasures in heaven must be laid up by ourselves. Paul makes the distinction equally clear: "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).

But by rewards for service God's Word does not mean God's blessings on the faithful Christians in this life. It means rewards beyond this life. Jesus said: "...When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense

thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:12-14).

If "...every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor" (I Cor. 3:8), there will, then, be different rewards or degrees in heaven; for doubtless no two redeemed people ever served God in exactly the same degree of faithfulness.

Paul makes this distinction clear, as well as the difference between salvation and rewards. He uses the illustration of building houses out of different material. He has been speaking of preachers and their work, and then seems to turn and apply his teaching to everyone, for he says, "...let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon" (I Cor. 3:10).

Whether he is speaking only of preachers and their work, or applies it to every man; whether he is speaking of building in the lives of others by what we teach to do, or whether he makes a turn and applies it to every man and his building in his own life, he draws the clear distinction between the foundation on which the building rests and the building built thereupon, between salvation alone through Christ, and rewards for service, (I Cor. 3:11-15).

Why is he saved? Because he has been redeemed from the curse of the law, Christ having been made a curse for him; because he has been redeemed from all iniquity; because he has been redeemed from under the law; and God means His promise, "...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..." (Acts 16:31), and he means the promise of the Saviour, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

Losing Your Life

When the redeemed man's works shall be burned, though he himself shall be saved, he shall suffer loss, and the loss shall be irreparable, eternal, and so great that no human being in this age can fully realize it. Here the old translation, the King James Version, has misled us. The oft-quoted sentence, "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26), is a mistranslation.

The Revised Version translated it correctly: "What shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world and forfeit his life, or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?"

By noticing verse 25, and verse 27 the reader can see what the Saviour meant: "whosoever would save his life shall lose it," not his soul, but his life, "and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it" -- his life, not his soul; "whosoever shall lose his life for my sake," -- men do lose their lives for His sake, but no one loses his soul for the Saviour's sake. Following immediately He says, verse 26, "For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world and forfeit his life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?"

In verse 27 the Saviour makes

plain how a man who would save his life, loses it, and how the one who shall lose his life for the Saviour's sake shall find it -- in the rewards that he loses by trying to save his life, or gains by losing his life the Saviour's sake, "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he reward every man according to his works." What works? Works of losing his life for the Saviour's sake. For all eternity he will have no reward for the life he lived here -- he has lost his life.

Now, the Saviour says that if a man "shall gain the whole world," and in doing so shall "forfeit his life," -- shall have no reward in eternity as result of his life (the principle laid down by Paul, whether of preachers or of all, "...if any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved..." (I Corinthians 3:15), he has made a fearful mistake.

But if the one who "shall gain the whole world" and in doing so "shall forfeit his life," shall have no reward for it, makes a fearful mistake, how much greater mistake does the one make who forfeits his life to have no reward throughout eternity, in order to gain a very small part of the world, as so many are doing? But if the one who "shall forfeit his life," -- have no reward in eternity -- in order to gain but a very small part of the world, makes such a fearful, such a great mistake, far worse is the bargain made by the unredeemed man who loses not only his life but also loses his soul in order to gain a very small part of "the whole world"; and yet this is what the vast majority of men are doing.

We cannot grasp it, we cannot realize it, but Jesus says that the rewards (not salvation -- I Cor. 3:15) that men are losing are more than "the whole world."

A Wasted Life

A great American statesman was told by his physician that in a few days he must die. That afternoon a minister called to see the dying statesman and asked as to his hope beyond the grave. The dying statesman replied, "Mr. Blank, I am going to heaven when I die."

The minister asked the dying man on what he based his hope. He replied: "Mr. Blank, I am ashamed to say that I am a Christian; but now that the time has come, I must not deny my Saviour. When I am dead tell your people that days before I died, when my mind was calm and clear, I gave my dying testimony that I was going to heaven, redeemed by the blood of Christ."

The minister pressed the question, why he thought he was a Christian. The statesman said to the man who was nursing him, "Jack, go into my library and bring me my Bible."

Turning to the minister he said, "Mr. Blank, as I said to you, I am ashamed to say that I am a Christian, but now that the time has come, I must not deny my Saviour. Long years ago, back in the old red hills of Georgia, when I was a young man, one Sunday in an old country church I heard a Baptist preacher preach, and I understood him. He showed that God honestly loves this world, that Jesus Christ, God's Son, died for our sins, and that He died for all of our sins; and that every one who would repent and trust Christ to save him

was certain to go to heaven. Out there in that old country church in the red hills of Georgia I trusted Jesus Christ as my Redeemer and Saviour that Sunday morning, and trusted Him to save me. I came west and became overwhelmed in business and politics. I have wasted my life.

Just then the man returned and handed the Bible to the dying statesman. He turned the leaves and finally stopped, and turning to the minister he said, "Mr. Blank, I am ashamed to say it, but I don't know much about this book; but I do know that this is God's Word: and I do know that out in the old country church in the red hills of Georgia that Sunday morning when I heard and understood the country preacher, I did, as a guilty, lost, justly condemned sinner, trust Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Redeemer and relied on Him to save me. Listen, Mr. Blank: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." Mr. Blank, God says I have everlasting life, and I am going to heaven when I die."

And turning, the great statesman buried his face in his pillow and sobbed out his grief and remorse.

What Have You Got Up Yonder?

A rich banker in the west a few weeks before Christmas sent a check for three hundred and fifty dollars to his brother in the east, a poor country preacher, telling him to come and bring all of his family and spend Christmas with him. They had not seen each other since boyhood. The preacher and family arrived Christmas eve morning. That afternoon in carriages the two families drove over the bankers beautiful farm of a thousand acres of rich land. Coming in late in the afternoon, they came by the pasture and saw the beautiful herd of blooded cattle. After a sumptuous supper the bankers daughters gave them some splendid music and two families went upstairs to sleep. The two white-haired brothers, the banker and the poor country preacher, remained downstairs, and for hours talked of boyhood days in the old country in the east. At least the conversation, like the fire in the fireplace, had about died out.

Finally the banker turned and said, "Brother John, may I say something to you and you not get angry?"

Said the preacher, "Why, Brother James, you can say anything you wish to me and I will not get angry."

Said the banker, "Brother John, you and I were poor boys back in the old country home in the east and we agreed to be partners for life. One day you came to me and told me that you were called to preach. I told you then that you were a fool. What a fool you have been! Do you remember that rich farm of a thousand acres you saw this afternoon? Paid for with honest money, John. This comfortable home for my old age, paid for with honest money, John. The fifty thousand dollars I have in the bank in the city where I am president of the bank, every dollar of it honesty money,

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John. John, you could have had as much as I have. What a fool you have been? Why, I had to send you the three hundred and fifty dollars to bring you and your family that I might see them before I die."

"And look at your daughters: they are dressed in such a shabby way that I am ashamed for my neighbors to see my children's cousins. And look at you with your old seedy, worn suit and your patched shoes; I am ashamed to take you to town day after tomorrow and introduce you to my business associates. What a fool you have been!"

"Now, John, I am not saying this to wound your feelings; for I love you, John. But I don't want you to let any of your boys be such fools as you have been. You know you have been such a fool, John."

Then there was silence for some time. The tears were trickling down the cheeks of the old country preacher. At last he broke the silence, "Brother James, may I say something to you and you not get angry?"

"Why, certainly, John, I did not say what I did to make you angry, but to keep you from letting any of your boys be such fools as you have been, for you know you have been a fool, John."

"I know," replied the old preacher, "that it looks like I have been a fool from this end of the line, Brother James. But, Brother James, we are both old men and we must soon go. Don't be angry with me, Brother James, but what have you got up yonder?"

Again there was silence, which was suddenly broken by the banker sobbing, "Oh, John, I am a pauper at the judgment bar of God."

"So is he that layeth up treasures for himself and is not rich toward God." They are dying all over the world, men who are redeemed, going to heaven, but paupers. "...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).

But far better be a pauper, and saved without any reward, than be a rich man in hell: for they are dying all over the world who not only lived for this life, but from pride, or religious prejudice, or love of the world, or secret sin, would not repent and be redeemed from the curse of the law and be saved.

Faithfulness, Not "Success" Is What Counts.

With this teaching, that there are rewards in heaven, there is another most helpful teaching and blessed fact, that the poorest, most ignorant and obscure can have just as great rewards as the richest, most learned, most applauded. "...every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor" (I Cor. 3:8), not according to what he accomplishes. "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12); not according as his success shall be.

"And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury" (Mark 12:41-43).

The wealthy, the mighty, the renowned who serve faithfully after they were redeemed from the curse of the law, from all iniquity, shall receive their reward. But the poor, the weak, the obscure who serve faithfully after they are redeemed shall receive equally as great rewards; and if they have been more faithful, however their small sphere, they shall receive even greater rewards.

"...two mites, which make a farthing," but it was all she could do; "Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury" (Mark 12:42-43).

All over the world, by the multiplied millions, there are graves where lie sleeping the bodies of those who, down the ages, because they were redeemed, gave their lives in service. They went down to their graves, their praises unsung by the world. Many of them went down to their graves never realizing that there were rewards for them; simply rejoicing in their salvation through Him who loved them and gave Himself for them.

Riding along a lonely country road one Sunday afternoon, many years ago, returning from a country church, a young preacher was talking to his companion, a

young man eighteen years of age, telling him of God's love and of God's plan with men. The conversation had ended, and for some minutes they had been riding along in silence, when suddenly the young man spurred his horse up to the young preacher's horse, and seizing the reins, stopped both horses.

Dropping the reins, he threw both arms around the preacher's neck, and as he began sobbing said, "Oh, how good God is!"

How little men consider God's goodness. How good God is to have ever brought us into being! How good God is, though we have all sinned against Him "...that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believed in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26), to have provided complete redemption for us from all iniquity.

How good God is to have "...in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself..." (Eph. 1:4-5).

How good God is to chastise us in love instead of punishing us in hell for our sins after we become His children.

How good God is to place us where we will serve Him from love, and not from fear of punishment.

How good God is, in addition to our salvation, to provide rewards in heaven for the services we render here.

How good God is to provide that the poor, the ignorant, the obscure, can have just as great rewards as the more fortunate ones!

How good God is to say, "...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)!

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Faith Missionary Baptist Church of Danville, Ky. is without a pastor. They have a building and a parsonage. Anyone who is interested in this church should contact Kenneth C. Phelps at 627 East Main St., Danville, Ky. 40422; or call him at (606) 236-7121. This church believes the doctrines of grace and church truth as we teach them in The Baptist Examiner.

BOOK REVIEWS

We have three books of sermon outlines in our book store. They are by Charles R. Wood. I am not overly fond of sermon outline books. I have never been able to get much out of them. However, I have had some pastors call me (or come in) and especially ask for such books. One man told me that he got much help from such books, and ordered several of what we have. I suppose that such books can sometimes help one get some ideas and get started on a sermon. Also these may help set the direction to take on these sermons. And, of course, one must do much study on his own to fill in these outlines, for they will not give the whole sermon for a man. We have "Sermon Outlines on Women of the Bible" and "Sermon Outlines Men of the Bible. Again I make much of preaching on Bible characters. These two books may help one get some ideas for such preaching. We have "Sermon Outlines on Special Days and Occasions." Since I do not observe Christmas and Easter, or some of the other days mentioned in the book, I can not say much in its favor. But I am not opposed to some of the days and occasions given in the book. And many of the sermons listed for special days are good sermons in and of themselves, and do not have to involve the day. These books are all small paper backs of a little over sixty pages. They sell for \$2.95 each. Order from our book store where the profit goes into the book ministry.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The editor will be preaching in revival services at the Naples Park Baptist Church, 798 109th Avenue North, North Naples, Florida, starting on February 11 thru 17 at 7:30 nightly. For more information call the pastor Willard Pyle at (813) 267-8327.

MY IMPRESSIONS

As sheep of God's flock, we gathered together for spiritual food. Being well fed spiritually we departed and went our ways. The fellowship was divine. May God bless this sister church richly for all the work and preparations this took. The Baptist Examiner is a way of spreading God's truth. It is a blessing to many. May God bless all of you for this.

Bonnie Moore, Goshen, Ind.

The conference was very good and the food was delicious. I hope I can come next year. The people were very friendly and a lot of people were here. All of the preachers were very, very interesting and great especially were the Wilson preachers!!

Amanda Wilson, Gladwin, Mi.

I was impressed by seeing many old friends from different

parts of the country and making many new acquaintances. It was also impressive to see the goodly amount of love, fellowship and unity among the brethren. Thank you, Calvary Baptist Church, for a good conference.

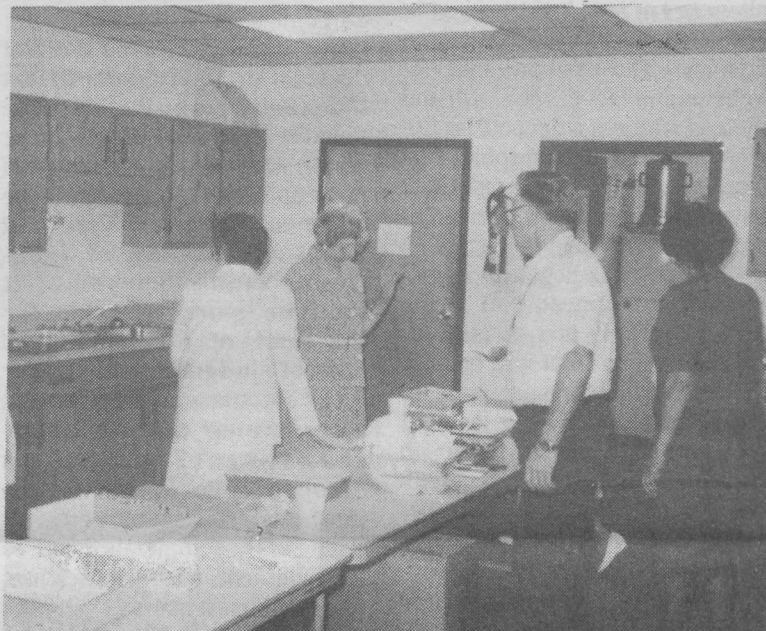
John Shelton, Westfield, NC.

The messages were good. There was much evidence of good warm fellowship among God's people. I plan to get in fulltime on next year's conference.

Wendell Furlong, Burnside, Ky.

I had a wonderful time. God blessed each and every message that was preached, let each and every one take a look back at each message and take each one and go forward to do what God would have us to do. Thank you Calvary Baptist Church.

Wanda Sheppard, Tampa, Fl.



Workers with the food. Thank God for them.



I don't know what John Gilpin is doing.



I don't know what John Pruitt is gesturing about, but he preached a fine sermon.