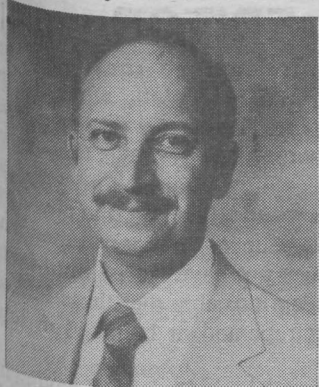


## AMAZING GRACE

by John Pruitt

There are many ways in the Scriptures in which God describes the depraved state of man. The Bible says that man in his natural state before the holy and righteous God is dead, blind, sick, deaf, deceitful, wicked, and undone. Furthermore, there is none that seeks after God's righteousness. Oh, how totally depraved is man!

There is no doubt in my mind that David knew full well about the depravity of the human race,



John Pruitt

including himself. But dear friends, there is great power in the Almighty! He is able to save the sin-saturated soul of man. He does this by bringing us to the Rock of all ages and setting our feet thereupon. Once the saved sinner has been planted on that solid Rock, God will then establish his goings. Then dearly car-

(Continued on Page 5, Col. 5)

## STUDIES IN ACTS

by Willard Willis

"And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the Centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and undemanded?" (Acts 22:25).

The Centurion was obviously standing by and observing as those who were under him began to bind Paul. Paul looked toward the Centurion and asked him a question which caused him to go immediately to the chief captain. The act of unjustly punishing a Roman citizen was deemed to have been an offense to the majesty of the Roman people. Those who carried out such actions were subject to death and the confiscation of their property.

"When the Centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain,



Willard Willis

saying, Take heed what thou doest; for this man is a Roman" (Acts 22:26).

The chief captain had given his orders and then gone about his business. Perhaps he sat down to eat and drink. He, however, immediately stopped whatever he was doing when it was learned

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The damned in Hell pray.

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# The Baptist Examiner

Baptist Is Our Middle Name

Paid Circulation in All States and in Many Foreign Countries

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

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WHOLE NUMBER 2623

## 10 REASONS WHY CHRISTMAS IS UNSCRIPTURAL

REASON NO. 1 --

"Christmas" is a word unknown in the Bible. It is no private interpretation, it is no prophecy of the Scriptures "...holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (II Pet. 1:20, 21). "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." (II Tim. 3:16). Christmas is excluded from the all Scriptures.

"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" (Gal. 1:8).

Christmas belongs to that "other gospel," for Paul did not know of a gospel called Christmas, -- and what does John say about adding to the Scriptures? (Rev. 22:18).

REASON No. 2 --

Historical records in encyclopedias, which are available in any city library, and are noted for their authenticity and reliability, give us these facts that Christmas is of heathen origin. It is traced back to sun worshippers and observed among the pagan nations. Many such pagan leaders birthdays were celebrated by the ancient Babylonians. All these pagan festivals originated in heathendom.

Centuries later the birth of Christ was blended into this -- called Christmas. We are warned by the Scriptures to "Learn not the way of the heathen." (Jer. 10:2). But through ignorance, the church has learned it.

REASON NO. 3 --

Various records show us that the blending of Christ's birth

with Christmas came about through Catholicism. The Catholic Church claims authorship of choosing the name "Christ" to connect with their "mass."

Here we see that Christmas is of human invention, therefore not Scriptural nor spiritual. Why will Christians follow the path of Catholicism? This church is portrayed in Revelation 17:5 where it says: "Upon her forehead was the name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

God brands this church as a mother of harlots.

Will Christians follow such examples?

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 3)

## DO YOU REMEMBER TO PRAY FOR YOUR PASTOR?

by Dan Johnson

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you." (Hebrews 13:7,17)

Do we actually remember those

who have the rule over us, those whom our Lord God has called to "feed His sheep"? Do we spend more than a few cursory moments asking God to bless the pastor and his family or to bless his messages on the Lord's day or on Wednesday night? Have we ever really gotten down to the place where our pastor lives, where the rubber meets the road in a manner of speaking, and prayed for our pastor as he could pray for us; as he watches for our souls? I'm afraid most of us don't, else we would have much more compassion and love for our pastors. As the Scripture

above states, we would "obey them that have the rule" over us or that guide us in the study of God's Word. Of course, this is an obeying that follows the truth as given in the Bible and not a blind or grudging obeisance to a dictator who would command we follow his will. Remember, the pastor is one "that must give account."

How many hours a week do we pray about the services of the Lord's church? Do we pray specifically for ourselves, for the other members, and for the others, both saved and lost, that sit

(Continued on Page 10, Col. 5)

## The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

## I AM NOT GOING TO OBSERVE CHRISTMAS

"Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with ham-

mers, that it move not" (Jer. 10:2-4) (Read on through v.6).

At this time of the year, we receive many calls in our book store asking about Christmas books and music. People are surprised when they learn that we do not sell any special Christmas material of any kind. They are even more surprised when I inform them (as I often do) that we do not believe in observing Christmas in any way. I am not

going to observe Christmas. I am not going to send out any cards or give any gifts. I will not preach a Christmas message in our church, unless I preach against it, as I often do. We will not sing any Christmas songs in our services at this time of the year, though we do sing a few such at other times. None of our teachers will teach their classes any sort of Christmas lesson

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## A POSITIVE WORD FOR PERILOUS TIMES

by Ray Waugh, Sr.

Text: Timothy 1:6-14.

When I left Midland the other day and made my journey to South Texas, I did not make any plans to be preaching on this beautiful Sunday morning here just a few miles from a place that I have visited many times across the years, Corpus Christi, Texas. Needless to say, however, I am



Ray Waugh, Sr.

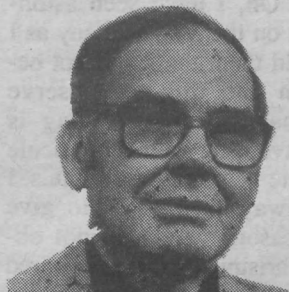
very delighted to be here and to be able to fellowship with another group of our God's wonderful people. My heart has been made to be glad that my son, Ray, Jr., is doing as well as he is after his miraculous and technologically-wonderful gall bladder

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## STUDIES IN JOSHUA

by C.T. Everman

"But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate. And before they were laid down, she came up unto them upon the roof; And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you" (Josh. 2:6-9).



Clyde Everman

Before the men from the king came looking for the two spies, Rahab had hidden the spies on the roof of her house under some stalks of flax. After sending the pursuers on a wild goose chase, she climbed to the roof to talk to the spies. She gave them some very important information. First, she declared that she believed that the Lord, the God of Israel, had given the land of

(Continued on Page 11, Col. 3)



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## I AM

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(they better not). There will be no exchanging of gifts in the church or Sunday school classes as such. As to what the individual members may or may not do in their homes, I do not know nor try to find out. As a church, however, we do not observe Christmas in any way at all. My church does not give me a Christmas present; I would consider it an insult to me and to my preaching if they did.

I am not going to observe Christmas. This is a very strange statement, a very strange attitude, as the world would look at it. What a strange statement, the world (even the religious world) would think. They would think it even more strange for me to make this statement when they learn that I am a Christian, and even more strange when they learn that I am a preacher. "What!" they will say, "Don't you even believe in the birth of Jesus?" Oh, I have seen astonishment on the face of many as I have told them that I did not believe in and did not observe Christmas. A strange thing is that I have suffered much ridicule and some persecution over this. I have always been able to give good reasons why I do not observe Christmas. I have answered any arguments anyone might make in favor of Christmas; no one has ever been able to answer the reasons I give for not observing Christmas; but still, many have persecuted and ridiculed me, even calling me names, because of my teaching about Christmas. Nevertheless, I am not going to observe Christmas. When a man takes such a strange and unusual

position, he should have some good reasons therefor. Let me give you some of the reasons I am not going to observe Christmas.

I am not going to observe Christmas because I am not a heathen. Where did Christmas come from? It came from heathenism. Anyone who denies this or argues against it, simply shows his ignorance in the matter. We do not know the date of Christ's birth. I ask you why, since we do not know the date of His birth, do we celebrate De-



Joe Wilson

cember 25th and say we are celebrating Christ's birthday? If you will answer the question as to why we celebrate this day, you will have one of the major reasons why no one should observe Christmas.

Christmas comes from the sun worship of the heathen. Hundreds of years before Christ was born, the heathen sun worshippers had a religious festival around December 25th, when the days started getting longer, to celebrate the birth of the sun, or of some god they worshipped which represented the sun to them. This is simply so, and there is really no room for argument as to this fact.

Many of the customs that people observe today at Christmas came directly from heathenism. The burning of the Yule log was an old heathen custom. We can see from my text that the Christmas tree came from heathenism. The evergreen tree represented eternal life to the heathen; they worshipped this tree. I do not see how anyone can read my text and not see the exact correspondence to the Christmas tree of today. Houses were decorated with mistletoe to ward off evil spirits. Kissing under the mistletoe was a symbol of being reconciled to their false god. If one is not a heathen, he should not observe the heathen holiday of Christmas.

I am not going to observe Christmas because I am not a Roman Catholic. I have long since learned to beware of anything that bears the label, "Made in Rome," and Christmas surely came into professed Christendom through Roman Catholicism. It wears in its very name the evidence of its Roman Catholic ancestry. I have often said that Christmas and Easter are twin babies with a heathen daddy and a Roman Catholic mother; and that they have been adopted by Protestants, but that Baptists should have nothing to do with these holidays.

Why is this day called Christ-mass? The mass is a heathen and unbiblical and unchristian ceremony. Jesus Christ has nothing to do with this wicked thing. Why is His holy name connected with this false and wicked and blasphemous religious observance?

How did this heathen holiday,

this celebration of the birth of the sun, become a professedly Christian holiday? When the heathen hordes around Rome overran the Roman empire, the Catholic church was afraid of being destroyed. The Catholic church adopted many, very many, of the ceremonies of heathenism, giving them so-called Christian names; and thus brought heathenism into professed Christianity.

I am not going to observe Christmas because I am not a Protestant. Understand that I am a protestor. I protest against the doctrines and practices that are contrary to the Word of God. I protest against the false churches in the world today - and everything except true Baptist churches are false churches. I protest against the sins and wickedness of this awful day in which we live. Yes, I am a protestor, but I am not a Protestant. Protestant churches are those man-made groups which came out of Roman Catholicism in protest against some of the heretical doctrines and practices thereof. Of course, they did not come far enough out; they brought many of the heresies of Rome with them, but they did protest some of the things of Roman Catholicism. Now, since Baptists were never a part of the Roman Catholic church, and since Baptists were here hundreds of years before there was a Roman Catholic church, it is impossible for a Baptist to be a Protestant. The Catholics are not the first church; Baptists are. Baptist churches were started by Jesus Christ in the days of His earthly ministry, were promised perpetuity by Him (which perpetuity He has accomplished), and they are the only true churches there are. Protestant churches brought the heathen holidays of Christmas and Easter out of Roman Catholicism and continued practicing them, along with many other Catholic doctrines and practices.

Let me mention some of the things Protestants brought with them out of Catholicism which they certainly did not learn from the Bible. 1. The persecution of Baptists. 2. Church organization and government. 3. Many forms and rituals of their religious practice. 4. The word "reverend" as applied to men. 5. Sprinkling for baptism and baby sprinkling - two wicked and dangerous heresies. 6. Christmas and Easter. There are many more that could be stated, but I forbear.

I am not going to observe Christmas because I am a Baptist. This may sound strange since so many so-called Baptists, and many who are true Baptists, observe this heathen holiday. I admit this fact, but I declare that, in this point, they are not true Baptists; they are not following their Baptist forefathers in the matter of Christmas and Easter. There was a time when Baptists would die before they would observe these heathen holidays. Oh, that Baptists of today had the courage to stand for the truth that their forefathers had. Oh, that Baptist preachers of today would tell their congregations the truth about these heathen holidays. Many, very many, of the Baptist pastors of today know the heathen and Catholic truth about Christmas, but do not have the courage to preach this truth to their congregations. Baptist preacher, a reckoning day is coming. You must yet stand before the judgment seat of Christ. What will you then say as to

your wicked compromise with the world, the Catholics, the heathen, and the Protestants about heathen holidays?

I am not going to observe Christmas because I am not a liar. Oh, you ask if I am going to accuse all Christmas observors of lying; yes, I am. When you say that Christmas is the birthday of Jesus, you lie. When you tell your children about Satan Claws (Santa Claus) you lie. Parents will lie to their children on December 25th, and whip them for lying on December 26th. If you tell your children these Christmas lies, you should cease to punish them for lying. Some will say that they do not tell these lies to their children; that is good, but

does not your joining in this celebration that is said to be the birthday of Jesus, does not leave a lying impression. Listen, you can tell a lie by the impression you leave the same as by deliberately stating a lie.

I am not going to observe Christmas because I am not going to teach children to worship an idol god - a fat man in a red suit. I am not an idolator. You say that you do not teach your children this - yes, you do. When you take them to see Santa Claus and tell him what they want for Christmas, when you encourage them to write letters to Santa Claus and tell him what they want; you are teaching them

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## FROM THE EDITOR

"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 Jn.5:12). Well, what do Hardshell heretics do with this Scripture? What do the time-lapse heretics do with this Scripture? These men say that one is regenerated without the gospel. They say that one has life without the gospel of Jesus Christ. They say that later on this regenerated one (the new shells) will hear the gospel, repent, and believe. Of course, they (I would surely think) say that one does not have Christ until he receives Christ by faith. It would not seem possible that these heretics could believe that one who has never repented or believed in Jesus Christ could have Christ.

Please notice that the above text makes having Christ and having to be simultaneous. Therefore, these men who say that one can be quickened, and then there is a lapse of time before that one repents and believes - such men are heretics on this subject and do not believe in the Bible on this matter. The text is very clear that, "he that hath the Son of God hath not life." If one has not received Jesus Christ by saving faith, that one does not have life.

The older I get in the service of the Lord, the more amazed I am at heretics and heresy. Men, whom I feel sure are saved men; men who are very sound on most things, can just get some heresy in their minds and they will go seemingly to any lengths in twisting and perverting Scripture in the effort to justify that heresy. So it is with the "Time-lapse" men and the "Regeneration without the gospel" men.

The above Scripture also destroys the "regeneration or quickening without the gospel" heresy. Let us see how it does this. We see that according to this Scripture (When will Hardshell heretics, new and old, start believing the Bible?) that one who has Jesus Christ has life, and one who does not have Jesus does not have life. Well, how does one receive Jesus Christ? One receives Jesus by faith - this is a promise in the teaching of the Bible (surely no heretic would believe that one can have Jesus who has not received Him by faith). Well, what does receiving Jesus by faith involve? It involves hearing about Him in the blessed and precious gospel. "...how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" (Rom.10:14). One who has not heard about Jesus cannot believe in Him. (Don't you Hardshells believe in the Bible? I know you don't). One who has not believed in Jesus does not have Him, for He is received by faith. One who does not have Jesus does not have life. Come on, you Hardshells, try your hand at this problem. What will you do with this Scripture and its absolute and undeniable truth?

No individual understands and believes 1 John 5:12 who does not believe that one must hear the gospel and receive the Jesus of that gospel by faith, or that one does not have life. Come on, you Hardshells, what will you do with this Scripture? Will you believe it and give up your heresies, or will you seek some sinful and absurd way to pervert it and get around its true meaning? Shall I prophesy what you will do? Well, you won't do this, but I do greatly fear that you are so wrapped up in your heresy that you will absolutely refuse to receive the truth of 1 John 5:12. If any of you think you can answer my arguments from this Scripture, give it your best shot. If any of you will humbly bow to the truth of this Scripture, give up your heresy, and believe the truth, you would be delighted to hear from you. Dear friend, if you believe something, you should be able to prove it from Scripture and to answer the Scriptures that others use against it. If you can't do this, you should give up that false doctrine you believe and receive the truth.

I have a problem. Will someone kindly help me with it? It is this: When the Bible is so very clear that the gospel is used in regeneration and that there is no time lapse between regeneration and the exercise of repentance and faith; why do many men absolutely refuse to receive and believe the Biblical truth and labor so desperately to get around it? Why? Why? Why?

I call on the brethren who wear our "Missionary Baptist name" to quit your dabbling in Hardshell heresy. I call on you to receive the truth of 1 John 5:12. I call on you who are fooling around with "regeneration without the gospel" to cease therefrom. I call on those of you who have adopted this and have added to it the theory that there is or can be a lapse of time between regeneration and the exercise of repentance and faith which lands you right in the middle of the camp of Hardshell heresy - I call on you to come back to the truth that true Missionary Baptists believe. If you will not do this, if you insist on continuing in your Hardshell heresy, I call on you to quit troubling our camp, to be honest in the matter, and to go and openly and publicly join with the Hardshells where your heart now is and where you belong. Let the true Missionary Baptists be real and true Missionary Baptists, and let the Hardshells be honest enough to be openly what they are. Comments were welcomed, even challenged.



# I AM

(Continued from Page 2)

way to Santa Claus. Surely, prayer is a form of worship. All those who teach about Santa Claus are liars and idolaters. I am not going to observe Christmas because I am not a drunkard and I do not approve of drunkenness. I dare say that more liquor and other strong drinks are consumed at the Christmas season than during any other part of the year of similar duration. Here is a group of people, half or wholly intoxicated, who lift their glasses of strong drink and say "Merry Christmas," pretending to be celebrating the birthday of the holy Lord Jesus Christ. How horrible. It is a wonder of His suffering that He does not strike them dead immediately. Can you think of anything more blasphemous and wicked than this? Yet it is done thousands of times during the Christmas season. You will say that you do not do this. Good, but tell me why you participate in the observance of that which millions observe in this way. Christmas is one of the most sinful seasons of the year. The office Christmas party is often a party of sex sin and strong drink sin. Is this not true?

I am not going to observe Christmas because of its sinful commercialism. Why will a Jew, who does not believe in Jesus Christ, sell that to a Gentile which is for the so-called celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ? To make money, that is why. And is not money the true motive of the Christmas season? Of course it is. What is Christmas all about? It is about making money, and it is about much more. Why should Christian people join in the celebration of a season which is mostly dedicated to commercialism and sin? Tell me that. People often ask, "Do you have the Christmas spirit yet?" What is the Christmas spirit? It is two-fold: 1. Much of it comes in a bottle, and you know what kind of bottle. 2. What am I going to do? These are the things that Christmas is about, not the birth of Jesus Christ.

I am not going to observe Christmas because I believe the Bible. You might ask me if people who celebrate Christmas do not believe the Bible. Well, I say this most adamantly: people who observe Christmas do not (I tell you, do not) believe the Bible on this matter. The Bible does not tell us: 1. When Christ was born. 2. That we should celebrate His birthday. 3. How we should celebrate it. Now surely, if the Lord wanted us to observe His birthday He would have told us to do it, and would have told us when it was. How many times have your

children told you when their birthday was going to be and what they wanted for it? Why is it that Jesus does not do this?

Men do many foolish things. Suppose that John has a birthday, and I give Bill a present for John's birthday. You would say that that would be foolish. Well, why do you give so many others presents, and then pretend that you are observing the birthday of Jesus Christ. Can't you see how foolish this Christmas masquerade is? It is blasphemy and mockery of the worst kind.

Our life, worship, and service is to be according to the Word of God. The Bible gives us directions as to these things. Will someone please tell me where the Bible gives directions as to the observance of Christmas. I will gladly give you five hundred dollars for this information. Why don't you do this? Then you could have this much more money for your Christmas. Really now, I do want to obey the Word of God. If Christmas is Biblical, I want to know it and do it. Please tell me what you can find in the Bible as to when and if and how to observe the birth of Jesus Christ. I do desire to order my life, worship, and service by the Word of God, and if Christmas is part of the Bible, I want to obey that part. Will someone who observes Christmas please tell me where you get it in the Bible so that I can find it and start practicing it. My, my, it would surely be strange, when the Bible tells us so much as to what we are to do and how to do it, if God wanted us to observe Christmas and then told us nothing about it.

Men will go all out for Christmas. They will ridicule those who do not observe it. They will even get very angry with those who speak against Christmas. Yet, these same men will not pay any attention to what the Bible does plainly teach that they ought to do. Oh, how the world will go all out for Christmas, but what do these same people do about the Lord's Day which is clearly taught in the Bible? Do they go all out to observe the Lord's Day? No, they do not. Why they will spend hours on the Lord's Day sinfully shopping for gifts to honor ??? the Lord on His birthday??? If Christmas comes on the Lord's Day, look out; you will be way down in attendance on that day. People will be staying away from the Lord's house to celebrate His birthday - strange and absurd, isn't it?

I am not going to observe Christmas because I desire above all else to honor and glorify the Lord, and I do not at all believe that the Lord is honored by men observing Christmas. Whatever Christmas might be, it most surely is not the honoring of the

Lord. Is anyone so foolish as to think that the sin, wickedness, lies, and commercialism of Christmas honor the Lord? The way to honor the Lord during the Christmas season is to not observe it. The way to honor the Lord during this season is to stand against Christmas. It will cost you to do this. It will bring upon you ridicule and persecution. It may well cost you in loved ones and friends. I will just tell it like it is; many people know that Christmas is wrong, but just do not have the courage to pay the price it would cost them to stand for their convictions.

We should, of course, take our strong stand against Christmas in a proper and loving spirit. I warn you that no matter how good your spirit is, when you oppose Christmas you will be hated, ridiculed, and persecuted. Still, let us always seek to have as much love as God will give us.

Let us be sure that we always seek to honor our Lord. Let our strong stand against Christmas be for the purpose of properly honoring our Lord. Let us seek to love Him more, to honor His precious Word, and to serve Him better.

One who is not saved should immediately repent of sin, turn to Christ, and trust Him for salvation. We should love Him, serve Him, and worship Him on every day of the Year. We should be a member of His true Baptist church. We should be faithful in serving Him every day of the year. We should especially honor, worship, and serve Him on the Lord's Day, that one and only special day set forth in the New

Testament.

We thank God that He was born, lived, died for our sins, and rose from the dead; but we will not promote or observe lies about Him as set forth in the Christmas observance. Lie about your mother's birthday if you want to. Give someone else gifts to celebrate your mother's birthday if you want to. Get drunk to celebrate your mother's birthday if you want to. But do not do these things and then pretend you are celebrating the birthday of Jesus Christ. Of course, you know that I am only making a point here.

Well, I have given you several good reasons why I am not going to observe Christmas. Can you answer them? Will you tell me that they are not good reasons? Will you now give me as many good reasons why you do observe Christmas? In fact, will you give me one good reason for this? If you are going to do something and say that you are honoring the Lord in it, you should be able to give some Bible reasons for doing it. Can you give me one good Bible reason for observing Christmas? I await your doing this.

I am not going to observe Christmas, but I am going to love Jesus Christ and seek to honor, serve, and glorify Him. I would that all of my readers would do the same thing. Are you going to observe Christmas this year? Why? Be honest in your answer. If you will give an honest answer to this question, it will tell you something about yourself, or it will cause you to cease this unholy, wicked, and unchristian observance. May God bless you all.

**now henceforth know we him no more" (II Cor. 5:16).** We understand Paul to mean that we are to know Christ spiritually and not according to the letter, or after the flesh, or as an infant, for this is of no value to us as spiritual life.

But notice -- we are commanded to remember Him in his death, but no special day of the year is specified for this. He said: "Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19 I Cor. 11:24).

To commemorate His death is Scriptural, any day of the year will do -- to commemorate his birth is non-scriptural whether you choose any day or the day December 25th.

Paul the apostle says: "God forbid that I should glory, in anything except in the cross (not the birth) of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Gal. 6:14). (Weymouth Trans). We find no salvation in the birth of our Lord, for salvation was only made possible through His death. Our faith is in His death on the cross, not in the birth.

**REASON NO. 6**

The fact that there are only two incidents of birthday celebrations recorded in the Bible is evidently given for our warning and our learning, that we may know that the Lord has no pleasure in birthday celebrations or anniversaries.

One of these was Pharaoh's big ado and the final results were the chief baker got hung. Thus ended the tragedy of a big special day. (Gen. 40:20, 22).

The other incident was a big day for Herod and his celebration ended up in the beheading of John the Baptist. (Mark 6:21-27).

And now for centuries this modern special day, called Christmas, is a similar day with numerous fatalities which usually ends the day in thousands of homes with untold misery, sorrow and grief.

**REASON NO. 7**

By searching the Word of God we find that the birth of Christ, the shepherds, and the wise men have no connection with the day called Christmas whatever. Christmas is human invention, but Christ came into the world to save sinners. It has no comparison.

The wise men from the East came and gave their gifts to Jesus, or rather to His mother for Him, not to one another as is being done by the unwise of this day. And this gift giving was not even on His birthday, but a number of days afterwards. Also, not in the stable but in the house. It is often quoted Jesus was born in a manger. This is not true. He was born in a stable and laid in a manger. This story is so greatly misconstrued and a mass of conglomeration has accumulated in the minds of the people.

Annually the Yuletide season is overflowed with literature and greeting cards of untrue representations. We can observe pictures with the parents in the stable and three wise men in their presence giving gifts. The Bible is silent as to how many wise men there were. Then we also see these Yuletide cards with the shepherds out with their flocks and a star in the distance. Again the Bible has nothing to mention of a star among the shepherds.

Then again we see other scenes with snow to beautify the scenery and that mystical god, "The Santa Claus lie," connected with it, and thousands of people are confused by such false literature, simply because such cards and pictures are made to sell.

Let the children of God have nothing to do with it.

**REASON NO. 8**

Then we think of the untold sum of the Lord's money (Haggai 2:8) that is being spent for such foolishness of worthless and useless trinkets and toys of every description in connection with the eating and over-eating of nuts and candies, feasting on roast turkey and chicken, and all kinds of dainties. Much of it results in headaches and stomach disorders and other ailments which go with it. All this is outright heathendom and an insult to the Master and has no connection with the Scriptural story of the Saviour's birth.

**REASON NO. 9**

The partiality which is even exercised in the giving of gifts is another sign in failing to harmonize with Scriptural principles. We do not object to the spirit of giving gifts, but why wait until the traditional month of December, when often times other seasons of the year would be more practical. Also, too often the method of giving fails to reveal the spirit of charity. The major method of giving is to those whom we expect to receive again in return. This is also entirely beside the Scriptures, and all such already have their rewards. Listen: The greatest gift that ever was given to the world was Jesus Christ Himself. Not as a babe

(Continued on Page 4, Col. 5)

## WHENCE COMETH FAITH?

Faith is God's gift, bestowed by sovereign grace, in which no merit of man we can find a trace; When regeneration, a new nature imparts, Oh, how this subdues the proud will of man, And giveth glory to God's eternal plan. "Sola Gratia" 'tis heaven's precious jewel, And to the sons of Adam it brings God's renewal. Faith is that which is untouched by human hand, And ever operates within His sovereign plan. Remember, if you have faith, it came from God, And any other claim is with evil verily shod! Eternal alleluias to God must be ever shown, For we have been saved through His grace and faith alone!

by Alfred Smith, Flora, Indiana

## TEN

(Continued from Page 1)

### REASON NO. 4

We have no Scriptural record that the disciples ever celebrated the birth of Christ. So we wonder, why shall we?

However history reveals that about the fourth century (A.D. 440) the church at Jerusalem commenced to celebrate this day - following Catholicism. When it also became more defiled with the pagan world, when this mother of harlots attached the name Christ to it and called it Christmas, and placed it in the month of December which has now for centuries been the traditional month of the year.

Adam Clark in his commentary writes: "We find that the sheep were kept out in the open country during the whole of the summer and as these shepherds had not yet brought home their flocks, it is a presumptive argument that October had not yet commenced and that consequently our Lord was not born on December 25th when no flocks were out in the fields; nor could He have been born later than September as the flocks were still in the fields by night. On this very ground the nativity in December should be given up."

Clark's reasoning on this subject sounds true and sensible.

**REASON NO. 5**

Nowhere in Scripture are we commanded to commemorate the birth of our Lord, and God the Father evidently deemed it unwise to make the date known. Hence it will always remain unknown and is not to be remembered and celebrated. Paul says "...though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet







No matter how lightly you may think of sin, "God will by no means spare the guilty"!

## The Baptist Examiner Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Is it Biblical to take up arms against a nation's enemy?

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It was with much fighting that the children of Israel took the land of Canaan. When Moses led the children of Israel to the promised land, it was by taking up arms that the Lord delivered the land to them on the East of Jordan. The tribe of Reuben and the tribe of Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh inherited the land on the East side of Jordan.

When the Lord led the Israelites across Jordan by the hand of Joshua to the city of Jericho, the walls of the city fell as Joshua and the children of Israel march around the city in obedience to the Lord. It was in this way that the Lord delivered Jericho to them. But, as Joshua led the Israelites further into the land of Canaan, many cities and towns were conquered by the men of Israel taking up arms to battle the enemy. This was done in obedience to the command of the Lord. There were many long and hard battles fought in conquering the land.

The Lord could have delivered the promised land to the children of Israel in other ways than taking up arms. He did this when Jericho was possessed. And other times the Lord drove the enemy out by sending hornets. When the two kings of the Amorites were driven out from before the children of Israel it was by the sword, not with sword or with bow (Joshua 24:12). God could have cleared all the land of Canaan without Israel lifting a single sword, but it was not His will or desire to do it that way. It was God's will for the children of Israel to take up arms to fight the enemy.

Pearl Harbor was attacked on December 7, 1941. Should our country have just sat back and let the Japanese have our country?

The Lord led the children of Israel into taking the land of Canaan, a land of idol worshipers. Would it not be right to take up arms in the defense of our country against our enemy?

It is true that we are to be peacemakers. We are to pray for peace. It is also true that Christ said, "And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet". (Matt. 24:6). And in the seventh verse of Matthew 24 Christ said, "...nation shall rise against nation..." Christ said wars would come and they shall come. Isn't it right when a nation rises up against our country, to take up arms in our

defense? Wasn't it right to win our freedom from Great Britain? How many people do we see celebrating July the 4th?

Yes, it is right to take up arms against a nation's enemy. Besides, the Bible teaches such. Titus 3:1. "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work." And again in Romans 13:1 "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."

We are not to despise dominion, especially when ordained of God. Nor are we to speak evil of dignities. Jude 8 "Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities."

We are to honor God first of all and then we are to honor our country. We can do this by taking up arms to defend her and so protect our precious freedom.

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In Christ's own words, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." (Mt. 22:21).

The teachings of God never oppose good government. Believers are to obey the laws of man unless they are in opposition to God's laws. Government is established by God and is intended for the good of all. By honoring authority you honor God. He has placed our leaders in power, and their heart is in His hand (Romans 13). Therefore the financial support and the defense of the nation is good and right. God's people are to pray for those in authority. Pray that we may live in peace. That we may be free to worship God with our families, that we may provide for our own and not be worse than infidels; provide for their basic needs, one of which is safety.

The freedom we enjoy was purchased at great cost. Men and women have given their lives to protect and keep it.

Yes, as individuals we are to suffer reproach and give place to wrath, but as citizens we are to watch after and defend the common good of all. If we are called upon to take up arms against our nation's enemies, under the authority of government, it is our duty to do so.

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God ordained human government. Adam was the first governor of the world. After the flood Noah was the governor, and all through the Bible we see that the government was put in the hands of men to rule. We may vote our choice for one to be our leader, but God, who is sovereign, places the man of the hour in office according to Ephesians 1:11. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will.

God placed Nebuchadnezzar on a throne and gave him a kingdom to protect and rule over and to be responsible for. Daniel 2:37-38, "Thou, O king not a king of Kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold." He went on to say that there would be other kingdoms. Now, the same hand that placed Nebuchadnezzar on the throne took him from that same throne. In Daniel 4:24-37 we have the account that God worked in such way that Nebuchadnezzar was driven from the throne and dwelt with the beast of the field and ate grass like the oxen. So you see, God places leaders and removes leaders and uses means to do it.

Nations were set up to divide people, this seemed good in God's sight, so He did it whether we like it or not. Look at Acts 17:26, "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." Need I say more? God has placed me in East Tennessee, a great part of America. In 1944 I took up arms and went to Germany to stop mad-man Hitler before he took over the world. I wanted to make sure America remained free.

You might say, but the Bible says, "Thou shalt not kill." This Scripture should have been translated, "Thou shalt do no murder." God ordered people killed in the Old Testament several times. In Deuteronomy 7:2-11 God ordered those sinful nations of the Canaanites to be destroyed. Moses wrote this as well as the 6th commandment and I'm sure he did not mean to contradict himself, so the 6th command-

ment should have been translated, "Thou shalt do no murder." There is a difference in murder and killing. The 6th commandment concerns the conduct of an individual with malice in his heart against another.

When we are fighting for our country or nation we are not angry at an individual, but we are protecting our country for freedom's sake. God gives us this right. So, all murder is killing, but all killing is not murder. Look up these Scriptures some time, Numbers 35-11, 16-18 and Exodus 22:2-3.

The Bible recognizes a man's right to defend his person, his property, his loved ones, and his country.

JAMES O. WILMOTH

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Unequivocally, yes. The taking up of arms to defend one's country is, in my opinion, taught in vivid terms throughout the Scriptures. One of the first accounts of taking up arms in the Bible, relates to Israel shortly after their exodus from Egypt. "Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand" (Ex. 17:8-9). The battle continues through to the end of the chapter with Amalek being discomfited (defeated). They were not defending their country at this time, but they were defending their people. The defense of their nation would come at a later time when they settled in the land that God had promised them.

Scripture continues to record in many other places the battles that Israel fought to defend their country. They were free, but there were many other nations that wanted to bring them into subjection, and with that subjection was also a hope that they could be destroyed. What their enemies did not seem to know or attempt to understand was that God was on their side, and He fought with them. The same is true until this present day. There were times when defeat was tasted and captivity was imposed, but through every trial, and every battle God has cared for his people.

The same is true if we make the application to the United States. Our nation was founded with a belief and a trust in God. The founding fathers and those that followed after had a continual reliance upon God. They prayed, preached, and practiced the truths contained in the Bible and when other nations wanted to bring them into subjection, and even destroy them, they resisted by taking up arms to defend themselves. The same is true of our country unto this present time. Wars have been fought since our nation was founded. Wars will continue to be fought until the end of time because the Bible says that they will.

As long as a nation endures, it will have enemies; and as long as it has enemies, it has no other course of action but to defend itself. This truth is taught in the Word of God, so it is Biblical to take up arms against our nations enemies.

## TEN

(Continued from Page 4)

called Christ-mass? Christ had nothing to do with it. Paul had nothing to do with it, neither any of the Apostles.

The only record we have is the Catholic Church has done this, and let the Church of God be free from Catholicism.

Our chief text is: "Learn not the way of the heathen" (Jer. 10:2-3), but many Christians have learned it.

"But from the beginning it was not so" (Matt. 19:8). "Let the redeemed of the LORD say so." (Ps. 107:2).

## AMAZING

(Continued from Page 1)

ried by the Holy Spirit, there is a new song in their heart. And finally our lives become a testimony to the world as we let the light of the glorious gospel shine through us.

David describes his condition as desperate. He cried unto the Lord. Every sinner, whether aware of it or not is in a desperate condition. He is without God and without hope outside of God's divine saving grace. The thing that makes his condition even more desperate, other than the fact that he is a sinner against God's holiness, is that he is blind and cannot even see his need of salvation, unless the Holy Spirit reveals it to him. Friend, if you are without Christ in your life, you are in the most awful situation. You face eternity in a burning hell without God forever. It is my prayer this day that God would reveal Himself to you even as we speak.

See what God does for the sinner when he/she is brought to Christ! "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay..." It is indeed a horrible pit that the sinner is caught in. The pit is deep and the walls are steep. He is imbedded in miry clay that he cannot get out of. Have you ever sunk your feet into mud that you could not get out of? Maybe ending up pulling your shoe off? Have you ever seen an outside toilet moved? It is an awful, putrid sight and smell. How much lower can you get than human waste? Isaiah 1:6 describes man's condition as well as any other writer of the Bible.

As depraved as man is, we have a powerful savior: Notice what David says; "He brought me up." That is the most glorious news that any sinner ever heard. I remember the day that the Lord brought me up out of the miry clay. It was the most marvelous, amazing day of my life!

There is power enough in God to pull the sinner from the deep-

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## Extra Forum Question

*"Should a pastor and deacon go to the movies? If so, explain I Thess. 5:22. If not, should they be disciplined? Is there anything good in Hollywood movies?"*

JAMES CRACE

"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not, Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth" (I Cor. 10:23, 24).

When I received this question I wondered why it was directed toward the pastor's and the deacon's conduct. I realize they have the responsibility to be examples to the church, but church members have the same Bible as the pastor and deacon; there are no double standards. If something is wrong when a pastor does it, it is just as wrong for anyone to do it.

Should the pastor and deacon receive more severe discipline than any other church member? Would you discipline a member for going to the movies? Do you monitor the movies they watch on television, or the videos they rent? Do you inspect their reading material, or the music they listen to? It would be wrong for the pastor to rebuke someone for doing something he allows himself. This is the highest form of hypocrisy. It is just as hypocritical for a member to do something and then condemn the pastor or deacon for doing the same thing. Paul said all things are lawful but all things are not for the best. Consider your Lord, your brother or sister, the sinner; in everything you do. Do all to the glory of God.

I don't know of much good that ever came out of Hollywood. There are very few clean movies fit for a Christian to see. Most contain nudity, profanity, murder, violence, adultery, homosexuality, sexual misconduct of all sorts, drugs, and drinking, not to mention Satanism and occultism, things that appeal to the carnal mind. They do not portray the moral standards a child of God is to live up to. There are not many role models for us or our children to follow in the movies. Their influence is toward worldliness and carnality, not godliness.

But, if you do go to a movie, or sit down to watch a T.V. movie, or rent a video; ask yourself a few questions. Is it expedient? Will I be a stumbling block to some weaker believer? Will I harm my testimony to some unbeliever? Could I seek God's blessing in it? Is it to God's glory? Does it have the appearance of evil? If Christ were to return just now, I would be ashamed?

Paul instructed the Galatians in the law as he stated... "For all the law is fulfilled in one

word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." (Gal. 5:14-18)

I cannot give better instruction than his. Read chapter five and six of Galatians and study it. Pay particular attention to the fruit of the Spirit and the works of the flesh, and how Paul says to apply the teaching in your life and in the church.

DAVID S. WEST

Pastors are overseers. They are leaders. They are the undershepherds of Christ. Therefore they are representative persons. They are ambassadors for Christ. They have the highest position, as to office, that can be put upon a man. They watch for the souls of their people (Heb. 13:17).

Deacons are to see about the material welfare of the members of the church. They search out the needs of widows and orphans. They see about the other material needs of the church building. So they too are representative persons.

Based upon the forgoing statements, and other things not mentioned, pastors and deacons are people that are watched by other Christians. Pastors and deacons are to set examples for other Christians. Paul said concerning his office, I Corinthians 4:16, "Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me," And again in I Corinthians 11:1, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." Still further, notice in Philippians 3:17, "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensamples." Paul taught that the children of God should follow him as he followed Christ. Not that he himself was the head or that he was to lord it over God's heritage, but that he was an example unto the Philippians, as he was also to others.

Pastors as ensamples of the flock, are to live lives that become their profession. Pastors are to be followed in practice and in doctrine. Their doctrine is the doctrine of Christ and of God. Therefore, they should be followed in this as God's man.

Imagine Paul saying, "I'm going to a popular stage show tonight, put on by some of the good friends of Felix." Would you expect him to ask anyone to follow him.

Movies are not fit for a pastor or a deacon to attend. Especially in this evil time in which we

live. They are not fit for anyone to attend, let alone a pastor or a deacon or a Christian, for that matter. Movies are of the world. We are not to love the world. If a pastor or a deacon doesn't love them, why would he want to go see them? Would he want anyone else to follow him there? Christ said through the pen of John, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15).

The movies belong to the world. They are made up of worldly entertainers. These entertainers, for the most part are wicked. Some are sodomites according to their own profession. Such people cannot put on a good show. Jesus said, "...neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit" (Matthew 7:18).

All movies are evil or have the appearance of evil. God said to:

"Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thes. 5:22).

Movies are sinful and wicked and degrading. They are owned and operated and produced by money-mongers. They will come under the judgment of God.

Pastors and deacons should not attend the movies. If they do they should be disciplined.

DAN PHILLIPS

I Thessalonians 5:22 "Abstain from all appearance of evil."

The word "abstain" means to hold back from, stay away from. The question is should a pastor and deacon go to the movies? I do not go to the movies, there is nothing at the movies to feed the soul. This sort of entertainment only feeds the flesh. I can not understand why a pastor or deacon would be caught going to the movies. I'm sure if caught by their members, or even those who might be considering membership would cause them to be leery of your next move. I really think that God has put a curse on California for permitting Hollywood to make those movies portraying drinking, sex, and cursing. The truth is, Hollywood has nothing to offer to a Christian.

I said the movies only feed the flesh. Romans 8:8 says, "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."

There are other places that we as pastors and deacons should not go to, or take part in. If where you go or what you are a part of does not feed the soul or give you the opportunity to present Christ as Saviour, get out, or get away. Don't be like Lot and get caught up in or become a part of the world, or you will suffer the consequence.

Now, think of this, if pastors and deacons will withdraw themselves from ungodliness, they can lead others to do likewise.

JAMES WILMOTH

It would seem that the most obvious answer to this question would be very simple and uncomplicated. This is most untrue. It deals with individuals and the things that they do based on their feelings of what is right and what is wrong. It will be viewed and examined by people that feel that what they do and what they think is right or wrong. No matter what answer is given, it will be right to some and wrong to others. The question that has been asked pertains to a pastor and a deacon, but the answer will be applied to all Christians, therefore, the question should apply to all, not just a few.

The Word of God sets standards whereby the people of God should conduct their lives. These standards were established for guidance and remain unchanged unto this day. These standards have also grown into a "double standard"; one for pastors and deacons, and one for members. It is man that has changed down through the years. A hundred years ago this would not have been a problem because movies did not exist, but there were other things that caused problems.

Today, movies are one of many distractions that man faces, and it is necessary that attendance of movies be approached with much caution. It is not possible to single out movies alone as being acceptable or unacceptable. There are television, sporting events, all manner of things that we do for entertainment including amusement parks, plays, etc. The admonition "abstain from all appearance of evil" refers to all the things that we do that are contrary to Biblical standards, not just one.

Should a pastor and deacon go to the movies? If they watch movies on television, it is not any worse to go to the theatre. Do the members watch movies on television, soap operas? It is no more wrong than the pastor and deacon going. They should not be disciplined unless the members are disciplined for doing what they do. Just because people do not know some of the things we do, it does not make that which we do right. "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby they brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" (Rom. 14:22).

JOHN PRUITT

Let me begin answering your last question first. I am still waiting. So far I have seen very little good come out of Hollywood as far as any spiritual benefit. For the most part, the Hollywood crowd is corrupt. Most seem to be humanistic and very liberal in their moral conduct. However, I am sure that there are some individuals who are morally better than others. Most likely there are some that are saved.

Is it right or wrong for a pastor or deacon to go to the movies? No more or no less than any other church member. I have known of cases in which the membership, or I should say some individuals in a church ex-

pected more from the pastor and/or deacons than they were willing to do themselves. I have tried to use a rule of thumb to govern what I personally will look at, or watch, I will not watch anything that I would not allow my children to see. If it isn't decent enough for them, it isn't fit for me either. From time to time there are movies showing that are fit for my children, and I take them. However, I know folks who will condemn someone for everything possible, yet they themselves live in a glass house. In my view, it is not any better to watch certain things on TV than it is to watch them in the movies. Trash is trash. The only difference is, you can hide and do it at home, which makes that person a hypocrite of the worst kind.

Now I do not believe that a pastor or deacon should deliberately provoke the wrath of his church members by doing something that he knows will cause offence or hurt feelings. Nor do I feel that his life-style should go against the Word of God or the policies of his church. A pastor and deacon should live an exemplary life of holiness. Notwithstanding, before you judge the actions of your pastor and deacon be absolutely sure your life is at least as clean as you expect them to be. Thank you for your question.

JOE WILSON

I have decided to add my little bit to the answer to this question. Not that I do not have the utmost respect for the Forum writers, but I just wanted to get in on this.

I want to ask some questions of the questioner. Please understand that I do not mean these questions directed specifically to the one who sent this question, but I am just using this format to say what I want to say. I address these questions to anyone who has the question we are dealing with in his or her mind.

Why does this question refer only to pastor and deacon? Why does it not refer to every Christian? There is nothing that is wrong for a pastor or deacon to do that is not also wrong for any Christian. The pastor and deacon should realize the responsibilities of these positions and should endeavor to set a good example, but no member has any right to expect higher living from the pastor or deacon than from himself or herself.

Understand again, that I am referring to the single person who sent in this question, but am just using this way of getting my answer across. Do you go to movies? Do you have a TV? Do you watch TV? Do you watch things on TV that you would object to your pastor watching in a movie? If you go to the movies or watch things on TV you would object to your pastor watching in a movie, you have no right to ask this question.

My answer would be that a Christian; pastor, deacon, or otherwise should attend a movie. I really do not see how such could be harmonized with or justified in connection with I Thessalonians 5:22, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." Surely the total of the movie industry is evil. By attending a movie, one is supporting the movie industry. One is also associating with a crowd most of whom are evil.

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## Extra Forum

(Continued from Page 6)

Know that many other things we condemned by this Scripture. Let me quickly add that there is a vast difference in movies. Most movies are very, very wicked. No one, saved or unsaved, should attend and view such; certainly no Christian should attend such a movie. I would not think that anyone should ever view a movie other than a "G" rated one, and probably some of them are not fit to see. There are some movies that, in and of themselves, are all right to see - there would be no harm in a Christian viewing them - understand that these are very few.

I would certainly feel differently about a Christian viewing a movie that, in and of itself, had nothing wrong with it; or attending a movie that absolutely no one should see. No one, certainly no Christian, should ever attend a movie with any cursing, any partial nudity, or any sexual innuendo in it - and that leaves very few to see.

I would say that a Christian should not attend a movie even when the movie was totally all right to see. 1. It is supporting a most wicked industry. 2. Likely there will be previews of movies that are not fit to see. 3. One will be associating with a very worldly crowd. There are many other things that could come under these objections.

Now, as to watching things on TV instead of in the movie. There are many things that one should not watch anywhere. It is as wrong to listen to cursing, watch partial nudity, watch implied sexual sin, or listen to sexual innuendo on TV as it is in the movie. Most things that are on TV should not be watched by anyone, certainly not by Christians. Understand that watching and listening to these wicked things is sinful, whether it be on TV or in the movie.

I said before that there are some things that, in and of themselves, are totally all right. I do not think that a Christian should go to the movies to see these things. I do think that it is all right for a Christian to watch these things on TV. What I am saying is: 1. Don't go to the movies at all, to see something very wicked, or something all right. 2. Don't watch anything wrong and wicked on TV. 3. It is all right to watch some things on TV.

What should a church do if pastor and/or deacon attends the movies, the question asks. I give my opinion in the matter. If they attend movies that are bad, that have cursing, partial nudity, sexual innuendo, etc. the church should ask them to not do this. If they will not listen to the church, the church should exclude them. But, know this: the church should also deal in this way with any Christian who does the same thing. The Bible does not have a double standard as to morals; one for pastor and deacon, and one for other members. If they attend a movie that, in and of itself, is all right to see; I would not suggest the same as above. The church could ask them to not do this because of the example, but I would not think they could exclude one for this. This is my opinion, you have a right to yours.

I guess that we cannot do anything about pastor, deacon, or Christian who watch things on TV that they should not - I

guess.

No, there is nothing good that comes out of the movie industry, in Hollywood or elsewhere; and if there is, it is contaminated by association.

Christians, stay away from the movies. No good can come of this, and much harm may result therefrom. Most likely, you will see things you should not see. You are thereby supporting a very filthy industry - an industry that has no respect for your Lord and Saviour or for God's Word. You are associating usually with a wrong crowd (This can be true of very many things). You may be influencing others by your example. Most likely you will hurt your testimony for Jesus Christ. No matter what arguments you might give, it is safest and best for you to just stay away from the movies. Comments welcome.

### SAM WILSON

I don't like questions like this. No matter what I say, I will have someone upset with me, but so be it. The fact that this question is being asked is evidence that there are differences of opinion about it. I can only give my opinion.

I am concerned as to why this question mentions only the pastor and deacon. If these should not attend a movie, neither should any other church member. If these should be disciplined for going to a movie, so should every other member of the church who does this.

I am weary with people setting double standards. The Bible has one standard of moral conduct, only one, and that applies to every human being, and especially for every child of God. There is no such thing as a separate, and higher standard for the deacon or pastor. Anything that, is wrong for a pastor or deacon to do is also wrong for any other member of the church. Argue with that if you dare; I assure you that you cannot argue it from Scripture.

Should a pastor or deacon go to a movie? Again I ask, should a member of the church, or should a saved person go to the movies. "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thess. 5:22) might very well be used against going to most of the movies of our day. This Scripture can also be used against most of what one watches on television today. I imagine that the questioner has a television. Do you watch it? Do you watch things on it that you should not watch? Should you be disciplined by the church for this?

This Scripture could also be used against most of the music one listens to today. If the questioner listens to the wrong kind of music, should he or she be disciplined by the church? Is he or she violating I Thessalonians 5:22?

We surely could easily also apply this Scripture to attending ball games, especially where there is drinking and cursing and gambling. We could almost apply this Scripture to eating at a place where alcoholic beverages are sold, or even to shopping at a grocery store or some other store where such is sold. I could go on and on, but I think you get my point by now.

There are very few movies that a child of God (not just pastor and deacon) should go to see. However, there are a few, a very few, that I would not have any objection to at all. If I objected

to my pastor or deacon going, I would make very sure that I did not go; and I would not allow my children to go. I also would be sure that I did not watch movies on TV.

What kind of discipline does the questioner have in mind - a public rebuke, a public apology or exclusion? I think "discipline" is a very strong word to use without knowing more about the movie and the circumstances. God bless you all.

### JOHN LENEGAR

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thessalonians 5:21,22)

Pastors and deacons are to be examples not only to the church in which they serve, but also to those without. A pastor and deacon, indeed all Christians, are to be seeking spiritual edification. They are to be living a life that is not only pleasing to God, but one that promotes usefulness and true service to the Lord. A preacher and a deacon are to have a good spiritual reputation (I Timothy 3:7), and certainly movies do not enhance that image. More important, the content of films today, with very, very few exceptions, does nothing for the spiritual life of a believer except that it excites passions and the flesh to oppose all that a believer is to hold precious. I am of the opinion that pastors, deacons, and all believers should avoid movie theaters and their wares. I realize there are some films (nature, travel, biography ?) that might be acceptable in some instances, but I am not so sure that we should even consider spending time with them. There are several reasons why I am against "Hollywood" movies.

Among the strongest reasons I have are these: 1. With very rare exceptions, Hollywood motion pictures present perverted, or at best, modern humanistic morals. Disney is as guilty as anyone else as is evidenced by their productions of the last few years. 2. Hollywood films present those who are supposed to be God's people as odd, eccentric, or actually base and depraved. At best, they are portrayed as well-meaning, but silly, or naive people who are otherwise just like everyone else. 3. Hollywood films usually assume and promote an opposite stand to the Bible on any given subject. 4. Hollywood movies present sin as normal and the usual way of life which is acceptable to everyone. This is especially true of sex and perversion. 5. Hollywood movies provoke and promote lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. 6. Hollywood movies disguise the wicked, the Satanic, and evil by making them glamorous and desirable. 7. Hollywood films not only introduce millions to the six things I have just mentioned, but they influence untold numbers of the viewers in the spirit of anti-Christ and lawlessness which often manifests itself in the imitation of those things in real life, including murder, rape, etc. Movies today promote all the aspects of the wicked kosmos. Note the words of I John 2:15,16.

I must also add that it is no better to watch videos of like kind in the privacy of one's own home for the same reasons just stated. Those of us who work with computers have all heard the expression "garbage in, garbage

out". So it is with our minds. Believers are to be transformed by the renewing of their minds, not conformed to this wicked world system according to Romans 12:2. Hollywood movies promote the opposite. A discussion with pastors and deacons who attend movies should take place. Censure is possible, but I cannot imagine any pastor, or deacon who considers the question and prays about it, not forsaking Hollywood films.

### C.T. EVERMAN

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thes. 5:21, 22). The New American Standard has these two verses, "But examine everything carefully; hold not fast to that which is good; Abstain from every form of evil."

As movies are of some of "the all things," they are to be examined as to being good or evil. I believe that an examination of the movies being produced today will reveal that by far most of them are designed to appeal to "the lust of the flesh." In I John 2:15, 16 we find this to be the things of the world of which the Christian is commanded not to love. Therefore, it is very clear that the Christian, though it be the pastor, deacon, or any other member of the church, should "Abstain" from that evil.

The question may be asked, Are there any movies that are of the type which it would be all right for the Christian to attend? I believe there are a few, a very few, which are moral and clean entertainment, some may be educational. I believe that a Christian could attend such movies if he/she so desires.

As to the question on discipline of the pastor or deacon who attend movies, the same rule applies to them as any other member of the church. If the church has determined that one is in open rebellion to the teaching of the Scripture, that one is to be disciplined (I Cor. 5).

One way to solve the problem of movie going is for the church to go on record as to what is required of her members concerning this; and if any member, be it pastor, deacon, or any other member, will not abide by the decision of the church, he or she should remove him/her self from that church.

## AMAZING

(Continued from Page 5)

est pit, and from the thickest muck. No one else, not even yourself, can pull you up. You will keep sinking unless God pulls you out and sets you on that solid Rock. David said, "He brought me up... and set my feet upon a rock..." Can you imagine the relief of one found helplessly struggling in quicksand to feel some strong, powerful hand take hold of his hand and pull him to safety, setting him on a solid rock? That is what God does for the sinner who is sinking in the quicksand of sin; that one who is wallowing in the putrid mire of depravity. "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name. On Christ the solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand. All other

ground is sinking sand."

Then our text says that He "established my goings." This speaks of Holy Spirit leadership in the life of the believer. God doesn't just save us and leave us standing. Notice the word "goings." At the very onset of the believers new life he begins a journey which will last the rest of his life. God establishes our goings and marks our path.

This path has many characteristics. It is a path of trial, of trouble, of sacrifice, of suffering. But it is also the path of witness, of security, of abiding strength, of glorious hope, and of blessedness. In all these things God establishes our goings. Beloved, no matter where you go; no matter where this path leads you, the lovely Holy Spirit is always with you. Oh, how we need to be reminded of this one simple truth from time to time!

David was at the point of despair. He had no place to go, no place to hide from those who would destroy him. But yet he knew of One who would help, the only One who could help. He was also sure that He would help, for the Bible says that he waited patiently for the Lord. So many weak believers fail at this point. They fail to wait upon the Lord.

Most of the time the Lord does not do things according to our time schedule. Notice that David waited. Maybe God was in no hurry. No doubt God had David right where He wanted him at that time. Have you ever felt that God was taking too long to rescue you from a situation? Perhaps you even thought that He had forsaken you or at least forgotten about you. Have you ever considered that God had you right where He wanted you? I have pastored a couple of churches where I found myself in what I thought was a bad situation. But now looking back I can see that I was in the place where God wanted me at that time. God is never very far away from us.

One other thing I would like to notice about verse one. In the midst of any given situation, we are not to leave off calling upon the Lord. David declared, "...and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry." David had cried unto God in his distress. How many times do God's people today turn to some person or some thing for help, when only God can help? People will turn to many things to relieve them of their distress. Some turn to tranquilizers, and/or alcohol to deliver them from reality. Some will seek help or advice from an unbeliever, when all the time they need to be crying unto the Lord!

The most glorious thing about being saved is that God puts a new song in your mouth. The old songs of the world no longer satisfy the soul like they once did. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." And what is that new song? It is the song of praise unto our God. "And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God..." It is a happy song of rejoicing, rejoicing that we have been

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## AMAZING

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brought up out of the horrible pit and from the miry clay. Beloved, let us turn our faces toward heaven and lift our voices of praise unto our great and marvelous God. Let us praise Him for His amazing grace. See Psalm 33:1-3; Rev. 5:8-10.

The new song spoken of in Psalm 40 and Psalm 33 has to us a practical application. It represents the new life of the believer as a result of the miraculous working of redemption. It stands to reason that the new creature will sing a new song.

In Revelation 5:9,10 we read of 24 elders who, according to Chapter four, are seated around the throne of God. They are singing a new song unto the Lamb. This song is the song of redemption. I do not believe that anyone can at this time, sing that new song because we have not yet experienced our full redemption. I believe that these 24 elders represent the saints of the Lord's true churches. Three things in Revelation 4:4 lead me to this conclusion. (1) They are seated on thrones. In Revelation 3:21 the Lord says to His churches, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne..." No angel that I know of, or any other creature of God has been granted that privilege. Revelation 5:9 speaks of redemption. Only people have been granted redemption. The blood of Jesus Christ means nothing to the animal kingdom, nor to angels. (2) They are clothed in white raiment. According to Revelation 19:8 and 14 all raptured saints will be clothed in white raiment, but again, only saints of true churches will be granted to sit in the throne room of the Lamb. (3) They are wearing crowns. I know of no place in the Scriptures where any creature except saints will receive crowns. In Revelations 4:10 they cast their crowns before the throne of God and sing a song of worthy praise unto the almighty Redeemer.

The final point of the message is found in verse three of our text. "...many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD." This speaks of the witness and testimony before the world. We are as shining lights in the darkness. Jesus said in Matthew 5:14, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." When the believer begins to sing a new song, people are going to notice. They are going to fear God in reverence. People are going to trust in the Lord. People will be brought to Christ by your new song. God calls His elect out through the song of redemption sung by the saints.

What we find in the 40th Psalm is the gospel and the praise of the results of that gospel.

The sinner's state---"in a horrible pit"

The Saviour's power---"He brought me up"

The saint's standing---"feet on a Rock"

The saint's walk---"Established

my goings"

The saint's song---"New song in my heart"

The saint's testimony---"Many shall see and fear" (copied)

Perhaps you are distressed today. It may be financial distress, or emotional distress. It may be a problem inside your family structure. Most women and some men undergo changes physically and emotionally. You may be dealing with some secret sin.

Whatever distress you may be experiencing, you can call upon God and He will hear you. (Proverbs 16:7) God's grace is sufficient for both sinner and saint!

## POSITIVE

(Continued from Page 1)

surgery, and I trust that as we pray in the next few days that we shall remember him to our Saviour and rejoice that Daniel saw our day and said that "...knowledge shall be increased."

Is it not wonderful that doctors today can do gall bladder surgery on what they speak of as an outpatient basis, and that one can go back to full duty after two or three days? I have a dear friend in Midland who had his gall bladder operation some years ago, and he spent some two weeks in the hospital and then wore a drain in his side for another four weeks. His recovery involved something like six months. Today, after just two days, your pastor sits in the audience, and he probably will be going full force within the next two or three days. Let us never forget that God has made all of this increase in knowledge possible and give thanks that we are living in such a wonderful day.

If you will pardon a personal reference right about here, I can tell you that when I was a young person and a young man, I had what the doctors in those days supposed was gall bladder trouble. So, I would go to see them, and they would go to their great medicine cabinets and pull down bottles containing powders of various sort. They would mix these things together in some water or some sort of a solution, and I would then take them home and take them as they suggested. Later, I heard that a fellow by the name of Dr. Brinkley in Arkansas was selling some miraculous "Crazy water crystals." I sent and got me some.

When they came, I saw that they could be mixed a tablespoon at a time, or one could mix them up in a gallon jar and drink a little bit each day until they had cured whatever was wrong. Not being too smart and supposing that if a little would do some good and that a lot would do better, I mixed up the gallon. There was nothing particularly wrong in my mixing it in the gallon lot, but there was a whole lot wrong with my attempting to drink that one gallon of crazy water crystal solution in one day. Believe me, for the next two or three days, I wished that I had never seen or heard of Dr. Brinkley and his crazy water crystals.

Thanks, perhaps to crazy water crystals and an appendix operation, I was able to be relieved of what the doctors had supposed was my gall bladder trouble. So, I am thankful -- very thankful -- that we live in the latter part of

this 20th century. Doctors have learned a great deal, and, in time, they may learn a lot more. Back when the doctors operated on me for appendicitis, there were no antibiotics, and if I had developed an infection I could have died from it. The son of President Wilson, some of you may know, developed a blister on his foot which became infected and killed him. So, we can be most thankful, and we can praise our God for the progress which we see in science and technology.

Still, we never want to forget that this, nonetheless, is a most perilous day. This is an especially perilous day in many respects. Here in America, we kill more people on our highways each year than we have killed in many of our wars, and the total killed on our highways exceeds all who have been killed in all of our wars. Then, too, more than a million little ones who have not yet been brought into this world are killed each year by doctors and nurses who have taken an oath to preserve or to save lives. So, one of the perils that we face in our world is the hypocrisy which is rampant in our world. I really do not understand this mixed-up mess, but I am thankful that we have a God who knows what He is doing each hour of every day, and one day He will make everything right. Yes, we live in a most perilous world.

We never know when we get up in the morning whether we will be alive in the evening. Our houses may fall on us! Our cars may turn over with us! Or someone may plough into us as we drive or as we walk. It is a perilous world. We may get up in the morning and suppose that we are in perfectly good health, or, as Landon discovered a few months ago, before the day ends we may learn that we have only a few days, a few weeks, or a few months to live. It really is a perilous world. Many a mother and many a father has started a family with great hope and with a wonderful and positive outlook on life. Then, after one visit to the doctor, it is learned that someone else will be raising the children. Truly, it is a perilous world. Even in this, God has a message for us.

When my son advised me a couple of days ago that I would be preaching this morning, he explained that I probably would only have 10 or 15 minutes as a number of activities had been scheduled for this worship service. Thankfully, in my preparation for any message, I always plan more than I can really preach. In some respects, it would have been nice for someone such as I to have lived in an earlier day when sermons could be an hour or sometimes even an hour and a half. I shall never forget an experience that I had with R.G. Lee in another day. When I was in Louisville many years ago, I had the privilege of leading the music during one of his evangelistic meetings. I just do not suppose that he ever preached less than an hour during any of the services.

Then, some years later, when he -- the retired and aged Christian and Baptist Statesman -- was preaching at the Amphitheater of the Trinity Baptist Church in San Antonio, he said that if he had it to do all over again, he probably would never preach more than ten minutes at any one time. That night, he preached more than an hour. Thankfully, this morning,

while I am not limited to 10 or 15 minutes, I do not have an hour if you are to get home in a reasonable time, but I do have some 30 or 35 minutes. So, we turn now to II Timothy 1:6-14.

We neglect the gift. We see here that our God has been thinking about us for a long, long time my friends. Perhaps the first thing that all of us who are saved need to realize is that we have the Holy Spirit. We have God -- (God' The God who created the heavens and the earth! The God who sustains the heavens and the earth! The God who set the stars out in space!) -- dwelling within us. And this Holy Spirit provides us with a gift. And this is a gift that every saved person on the face of the earth has! It is an ability. It is an ability to do what? The thing that the Apostle Paul is talking about here is that each one of us who is saved has the ability to witness. Each one of us has the ability to testify. Each one of us has the ability to proclaim or to tell what Jesus has done for us.

This proclaiming can be in any one of a thousand ways. You may do it rather quietly, or you may be rather bold and brusk, but it must always be done in love. All of us must ever remember that our Lord Himself said, "For God so loved..." You may do your testifying at breakfast, or lunch, or at supper or dinner. You may do your testifying or your witnessing at work. Sometimes you will experience some rather strange reactions. I remember when I was a young man that I had my eye on a very lovely young lady who worked in the office of the large corporation where I was a shipping clerk. Thankfully, we occasionally had to communicate in connection with the work that we were doing; namely, preparing Masonic Regalia for shipping and Machete Knives for the South Pacific and other jungle areas of our world.

Early in my experience with her, I learned that she was not a Christian and that she lived a rather wild life. So, each time I sent her flowers, they generally were in the shape of a cross. When I tied up a package for shipment, I generally made the string to form a cross on the package. And at every opportunity, I would speak to her about Jesus. When I was getting ready to leave and to go into the Service in WWII, I shall never forget one special moment. Betty came in to tell me goodbye, and she did so most sincerely for we had enjoyed a lot of good and lively discussions and conversations. Then, she went on to say, "Ray, you would be a pretty nice guy, if you did not talk about Jesus all of the time!" What am I saying? Very simply, you and I need to talk about Jesus. We need to talk about Jesus, and we need to write about Jesus.

Years ago, I had a very fine brother-in-law whom I loved dearly. He and I spent many long hours hunting in parts of Texas and fishing alone on the Gulf Coast and on the Gulf. I do not suppose that there was ever a time that we did not at some point in our conversation bring up the subject of Jesus. However, knowing that he was a very active member of the Church of Christ, I always attempted to converse in such a manner that I would not offend him. I never really ever had any question in my own mind but that he was a saved man, for his testimony concern-

ing Jesus being God and the Son of God and his Savior was very clear. He, however, had come from a long line of Church of Christ folk, and he found that Church environment more to his liking. And since it is probable that our Lord will not have any denominational "Statements of Faith" for us to sign when we get to glory, he and I doubtless will continue to have considerable good fellowship in Jesus when I get to see him in glory!

Paul instructs about witnessing. Speaking of the witness of the Apostle Paul, what did he do after he was saved? First of all, he went blind, and someone had to lead him. After a little while, this man who had been thoroughly educated in the Scriptures began putting two and two together, and he realized that there was one message God wanted him to deliver; namely, "I have determined not to know anything about you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." It may be that there is a message for all of us in this truth. After we are saved, the first experience we have is blindness, and we need someone to lead us.

We might listen to this brother or that brother, or even this sister or that sister, and assume that he or she will be leading us along the right path to truth. However, there is no way that we can know this for certain. Therefore, somewhere along the way of our Christian walk, we need to have a good knowledge of the Word of God. Perhaps a failure on the part of most people to have this knowledge about the Word of God is at least part of the reason why there is such a confusing mass of churches and such a din of conflicting religious politics. People have given themselves to following some man or some woman rather than following the Lord Jesus Christ and the holy Word of God.

Paul, of course, was already schooled in the holy Word of God. He had been fully instructed in the schools in Tarsus and also in the School of Gamaliel in Jerusalem. Therefore, it was no problem for him to reflect on what he had learned, and the prophecies which had been given concerning this Man, Jesus Christ, the Messiah, this one whom he had met on the Damascus Road. What had been a mystery to him and what had turned him into the madman that he was against the Christians and against the churches of Jesus Christ now began to make sense. When Jesus came to him there on the Damascus Road, Paul said, "Who are you, Lord?" And our Lord explained to him that He was Jesus, and that Paul was persecuting Him. Paul did not know that he was persecuting a Man. Paul only knew that he was trying to persecute the church and kill those who claimed to be following and testifying concerning a Man of Galilee who had been executed outside of Jerusalem.

God had a purpose in all of this. He had a message that He wanted Paul to deliver. He had a truth to which He wanted Paul to witness. Each one of us who is here today and who has been saved by believing on Jesus Christ as our Saviour likewise has a message. We have a truth to which our God wants us to witness. If you have been saved, if you have believed, if you have

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## THE WIDE SCOPE AND MEANING OF THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

by A. W. Pink

This commandment to honour parents is much broader in its scope than appears at first glance. It is not to be restricted to our literal "father" and "mother," but is to be understood of all our superiors. "The end of the precept is, that since the Lord God desires the preservation of the order He has appointed, the degrees of pre-eminence fixed by Him ought to be inviolably preserved. The sum of it, therefore, will be that we should reverence them whom God has exalted to any authority over us, and should render them honour, obedience and gratitude....But as this precept is exceedingly repugnant to the depravity of human nature, whose ardent desire of exaltation will scarcely admit of subjection, it has therefore proposed as an example that kind of superiority which is naturally most amiable and least invidious, because that might the more easily mollify and incline our minds to a habit of submission" (Calvin).

Least any of our readers--in this socialistic and communistic age, when insubordination and lawlessness is the evil spirit of our day--demur against this wider interpretation of the commandment, let it be pointed out. First that since "honour" belongs primarily and principally to God, that secondarily and derivatively it pertains also unto those whom He hath dignified and made nobles in His kingdom, by raising them above others and bestowing titles and dominion upon them, so that they are to be revered by us as our fathers and mothers. In Scripture the word "honour" has an extensive application, as may be seen from I Timothy 5:17; I Peter 2:17, etc. Second, observe that the title "father" is given to kings (I Sam. 24:11; Isa. 49:23), masters (II Kings 5:13), ministers of the gospel (II Kings 2:12; Gal. 4:19).

"Wherefore it ought not to be doubted that God here lays down a universal rule for our conduct: namely, that to every one whom we know to be placed in authority over us by His appointment, we should render reverence, obedience, gratitude, and all the other services in our power. Nor does it make any difference whether they are worthy of this honour, or not. For whatever be their characters, yet it is not without the appointment of the Divine providence that they have attained that station, on account of which the supreme Legislator has commanded them to be honoured. He has particularly enjoined reverence to our parents, who have brought us into this life" (Calvin). It scarcely needs to be said that the duty enforced here is of reciprocal nature: those of inferiors implying a corresponding obligation on superiors; but limited space obliges us to consider here only the duties resting on subjects to their rulers.

First, children to their parents. They are to love and reverence them, fearful of offending out of the respect they bear them. A genuine filial veneration is to actuate children so that they abstain from whatever would grieve or offend their parents. They are to be subject unto them: mark the

blessed example which Christ has left (Luke 2:51). "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord" (Col. 3:20): after David was anointed for the throne, he fulfilled his father's appointment by tending his sheep (I Sam. 16:19). They are to hearken to their instructions and imitate their godly practices (Prov. 6:20). Their language must ever be respectful and their gestures betoken submission. Though Joseph was so high exalted in Egypt, he "...bowed himself with his face to the earth" before his father (Gen. 48:12); and note how King Solomon honoured his mother (I King 2:19). As far as they are able and their parents have need, they are to provide for them in old age (I Tim. 5:16).

Our duties to rulers and magistrates whom God hath set over us. These are God's deputies and vicegerents, being invested with authority from Him: "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice" (Prov. 8:15). God hath ordained magistracy for the general good of mankind, for were it not for this men would be savage beasts preying upon one another. Did not the fear of magistrates restrain those who have cast off the fear of God, were they not afraid of temporal punishments, we should be as safe among lions and tigers as among men. They are to be honoured in our thoughts, regarding them as the official images of God upon earth (Eccl. 10:20). They are to be revered in our speeches, supporting their office and authority: of the wicked it is written "...they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities" (II Peter 2:10). We are to obey them: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well" (I Peter 2:13,14). We are to render "...tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear..." (Rom. 13:7). We are to pray for them (I Tim. 2:1,2).

The duties of servants unto their master. They are to obey them: "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God" (Col. 3:22). They are to be diligent in duty, seeking to promote their master's interest: "...showing all good fidelity..." (Titus 2:10 and see Eph. 6:5-7). They are to patiently suffer their rebukes and corrections: "...not answering again" (Titus 2:9). So strictly has God enjoined them to a quiet submission unto their masters that, even when a servant has given no just cause for rebuke, yet he is to silently suffer the groundless anger of his master: "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully" (I Peter 2:18-19). Oh how far have we wandered from the Divine standard!

Finally, we should mention

pastors and their flocks, ministers and their people, for between them also is such a relation of superiors and inferiors as brings them under the direction of this fifth commandment. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17). Christ has so vested His servants with authority that He declares "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me..." (Luke 10:16). So again, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine" (I Tim. 5:17): this "double honour" is that of reverence and maintenance--"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things" (Gal. 6:6 and I Cor. 9:11). How solemn is the warning of, "But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the LORD arose against his people, till there was no remedy" (II Chron. 36:16).

To this precept is added the promise as a notice and encouragement to obedience: "...that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee" (Exodus 20:12). First, as an Old Testament promise this to be regarded typically of the eternal life promised by the gospel--as Canaan was a figure of heaven. Second, as it is repeated in the New Testament (Eph. 6:2,3 and I Peter 3:10) it is often God's way to lengthen out an obedient and holy life. Third, but all promises of earthly blessing must necessarily imply this condition: they shall be literally fulfilled unto us if this would promise our eternal happiness--otherwise they would be threatenings and not promises. In His mercy God often abridges this promise and takes His beloved unto Himself.

## POSITIVE

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been born again, then our God is calling on you to be a witness. God is calling on you to be a proclaimer. God is calling on you to testify concerning your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the fact that He has saved you from your sins. You cannot know that Jesus Christ is Lord apart from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God. This is what we are talking about when we say that we "are saved by grace through faith." God had done the saving and God is doing the saving, and He does this by His Holy Spirit.

Sometime last year, in the month of December, a dear Brother whom I had known for a couple of years asked me to join him and a number of his church members and their friends and relatives at a cafeteria for some food and for some fellowship, along with a message from the Word of God. Since I was aware that there would be a very mixed crowd, I knew that there would be quite a few denominations repre-

sented, and that there doubtless would be some unsaved ones present.

I knew, too, that my witness would be wholly and completely about Jesus, the only one who could save the peoples in Old Testament times and the only one who can save in New Testament times. I knew that there were some who had some differing ideas as to how one believes in Jesus and when one believes in Jesus. Needless to say, and most thankfully, there was in my heart a revival of the thought, "I am determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified." What a glorious opportunity would be mine to minister to some who would differ widely concerning religious practices, but perhaps most of the saved who were there would never question our Lord's word, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man comes to the Father but by me," since most of the saved would be Baptists of some sort.

I was aware that some of them had been caught-up in the raging prophecies of the moment, so some of them doubtless would be thinking of Jesus in relationship to prophecy. Some would be thinking of Him in relationship to His comings as a baby. Some would be thinking of Him in relationship to His experience as the Man of Galilee. Some of them doubtless would be thinking of Him as the crucified One. While others would be thinking of Him as the resurrected One. So, I pondered and meditated regarding the one theme that runs uninhibited through every Word of The Word of God. By the Word of God, the reality was mine in which to rejoice; namely, the Messiah of the old testament and the Jesus of the New Testament is God! When the Holy Spirit of God gets into our very beings with this truth, then we should have no trouble really with any other Scriptural truths.

So, when my fifteen or twenty-minute opportunity came on that lovely December evening, I declared that God has "a seven-fold ministry to men." What did I mean by that? Very simply, and in brief, my message was first, "Forever Jesus is God." Second, "The Propheted Jesus is God." Third, "The Virgin-Born Jesus is God." Fourth, "The Proclaimed Jesus is God." Fifth, "The Announced Jesus is God." Sixth, "The Crucified Jesus is God." And seventh, "The Resurrected Jesus is God." When Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God," he said it all! To be continued.

## ACTS

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that Paul was a Roman. He, if in a high level meeting with his associates, was called out of that meeting because of a far more important matter which could have resulted in his own death and the loss of all his property. These facts also meant that his family would be left destitute.

"Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born" (Acts 22:27-28).

The chief captain, because he

had not been born free, may have felt inferior to free born Romans. This fact, of course, gave Paul an advantage. Paul, after all, had received by birth that which had cost the chief captain a great sum. We are to see the hand of God in the fact that the man in charge was not a free born Roman. Our Lord, in fact, before the chief captain was born, appointed him to his position for the sake of the Apostle Paul and the work assigned to him. It was as the song states, "My Father Planned it All".

Many have questioned how it was that Paul was a free born Roman citizen, since he was born in Tarsus. The historical record shows that Tarsus was either a Roman colony, or that it was endowed with the privileges of a free city by Augustus Caesar after it had been greatly afflicted and oppressed by wars. This is the explanation given by Appian.

"Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him" (Acts 22:29).

Some say that to mistreat a Roman citizen, as far as the Roman government was concerned, was equal to doing the same thing to one's father. One can understand, then, why the chief captain was so concerned, or, as our text states, "afraid". He, up to this point, had not been afraid. This was because that he had been looking down to those who were subject to him. Paul's words, however, caused him to look up to those who were his superiors. The great problem in the world today is that people will not look up to that one who is sovereign over all. Our judges, for example, often make unjust decisions because they fail to acknowledge that they, at some future date, must stand before the Judge of all the earth.

"On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them" (Acts 22:30).

The fact that Paul was "free born" and the fact that the chief captain had purchased his own freedom with a "great sum", was of the utmost importance now that the arguments had begun. The chief captain, in fact, knew that Paul could still have gotten him into a lot of trouble with his superiors. He, therefore, had to make sure that Paul received a fair trial. Let me say again, that it is very obvious that God was in full control of all that is before us.

The chief captain, in order to protect himself, went so far as to order the Sanhedrim, the great council of the nation, to gather for a meeting regarding Paul. He did this, as he said, so that he could know "the certainty wherefore" Paul was accused. We will find that the trial gave Paul another opportunity to witness for his Lord.

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## A BURDEN OF PRAYER

by L. R. Shelton

The Lord has laid the burden of the lost so definitely upon my heart, and I am praying that the Lord will lay the same burden upon your heart. We must first realize that such a burden of intercessory prayer comes from God and God alone. It is the Holy Spirit Himself who creates such groanings and yearnings within the human heart for the souls of men. Let's notice first, how we do not obtain such a burden of prayer.

No individual who spends his time watching television will ever know such a burden of prayer. You must remember it will cost you your time. Many things may be lawful to us, but not expedient (I Cor. 6:12). Watching television, sitting in the movies, or such like places, never generates a burden of prayer.

In the next place, giving all your time in church work robs you of such a burden of intercessory prayer. You cannot spend every night in church work, and at the same time know such a life of prayer.

In the third place, you cannot live in known sin and at the same time expect the Holy Spirit to lay the burden of such yearnings and longings upon your heart for a refreshing from the presence of the Lord which will fall in such spiritual power as to convict and regenerate souls. All known sin must be confessed and forsaken.

Again, the individual who knows the secret of intercessory prayer will not spend his time mingling with the world in its social life, fraternal orders, and civic clubs, partaking of and condoning the spirit and the things of the world. It means a life of separation from the world and a life of consecration unto God. There can be no make-believe, pretense, or camouflage.

Now let's look at the positive side of such a life of prayer. Paul puts it in these words: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal. 6:14). Paul said again: "...I die daily" (I Cor. 15:21). The Christian who walks in the will of God is constantly repenting, confessing and forsaking every sin. Then there is a constant praise in his heart unto the Lord. Such a life of prayer costs you everything that you have, because it means a crucifixion, a dying unto the world and the world dying unto you.

Then, in the second place, it's a life of meditation--meditating upon the Word of God. Then the Spirit takes the things of Christ and shows them unto you, and leads you to meditate upon what Christ has done for you and in you. He is constantly showing you the blessings of the atonement in Christ. At the same time He never lets you forget what He brought you from, where He found you, what He saved you from, and what you were out of Christ, and what you are in Christ. He brings you, as the 37th Psalm says, to "Trust in the LORD...Delight

thyself also in the LORD...Commit thy way unto the LORD (roll thy way upon the Lord)...Rest in the LORD (be silent to the Lord), and wait patiently for him..." This becomes the pleasure and the delight and the hidden resources of joy and peace of the child of God. Then you'll find yourself praising the Lord, rejoicing in the Lord, and in everything thanking the Lord. In such atmosphere of the soul the Holy Spirit will create within you such a longing and a yearning for others to come to know the same Lord that you know and walk with.

Then God uses another means to create such a compassion to see men saved. He brings the believer to reflect upon his spiritual condition before God saved him, and in so doing he comes to see the awful ruined condition of the sinner out of Christ. He sees him lost, condemned to die the death of the wicked. He sees him standing guilty before God and yet blinded. He sees him dead in trespasses and sins. He sees him under the wrath of a sin-avenging God, because he is under the curse of God. He sees that he's ungodly, unrighteous, has no taste for spiritual things, and he is galloping toward hell on the wild horse of sin. He sees hell from beneath moved to meet him at his coming. Then he can't help but cry unto the God of all grace, and the Father of all mercies, "Oh, Lord, have mercy upon sinners, upon my boy, my girl, my husband, my wife, my friends, that they may know the Christ that I know! Lord, there are no greater sinners than I. You saved me; you can save them."

Do you want such a burden of prayer? If you are willing to pay the price, it is yours for the asking. Our hope is in Him. Our help comes from Him. It is only as we walk with Him in His will and way that this mission work will prosper. Will you join hands with me, asking the Lord God of heaven to lead us in such prevailing prayer, knowing it is God who works in us to will and to do His own good pleasure? (Phil. 2:13). (copied from Voice of Truth, vol. 30, #10)

## ACTS

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"And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day" (Acts 23:1).

We are to see, first of all, how that our God and Father arranged it so that Paul would address the council of the nation. This was God's way to speak, through Paul, to His chosen people, Israel. Ananias, according to Acts 21:15, informed Paul that he was to be the Lord's "witness unto all men of what" he had "seen and heard". Paul was carrying out the Lord's assignment when he spoke to the mob from the stairway to the castle. He now carries out the assignment further by speaking to the council of the nation.

Our text informs us that Paul, when addressing the council of the nation, earnestly beheld them. He, no doubt, would have said a great deal to them if he had not have opened his mouth. His eyes, in other words, informed them that he was very sure of the

ground on which he stood. Paul knew in whom he had believed and he said so by simply looking at his audience.

Paul, when "earnestly beholding the council", may have been remembering that it was the same council that he, at an earlier date, reported to. He, in fact, at an earlier date, had received letters of authority from this council. They were letters which authorized him to ferret out law breakers and bring them to justice. Perhaps many of the council members were those with whom Paul was personally acquainted. It is also likely that Paul, while earnestly beholding the council, was determining what proportion of them were Pharisees and what proportion as a skilled lawyer were Sadducees. We, in fact, will learn later that he returned one group against the other.

Paul, when addressing the Sanhedrin, advised them that he had "lived in all good conscience before God..." He, in other words, informed them that he had always done that which he believed to be right in the sight of God. They, of course, did not agree with him. The mob, on the previous day, in fact, had set the stage regarding that which the unbelieving Jews believed regarding Paul. They, as we have previously noted, did not believe that he was fit to live.

The Sanhedrin, of course, wanted Paul to renounce his faith in Jesus Christ and come back into their fold. Paul, however, while "earnestly beholding the council," said, "I have lived in all good conscience", or I have always done that which I believe to have been right before God.

"And the high-priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth" (Acts 23:2).

We will learn from Acts 23:5 that Paul was not aware that Ananias was the high-priest. Perhaps the reason that Paul did not know that Ananias was the high-priest was because no one had replaced the high-priest Jonathan after his death. The high-priest Jonathan, in fact, had been killed by agents of Felix. It seems that Jonathan was troublesome to Felix and the result was that Felix had him killed. It is said that those sent by Felix to kill Jonathan, arrived in Jerusalem as worshippers. They, however, had daggers hidden under their garments--daggers with which they killed Jonathan (see Josephus Antiq., b.x.ch.v1111).

King Agrippa appointed Ishmael as the high-priest at a later date. It was during the interval between Jonathan and Israel that Ananias was a temporary high-priest. Ananias had been the high-priest prior to Jonathan and it is probably for this reason that he assumed the office during the mentioned interval. We, therefore, can understand why it was that Paul did not know that Ananias was the high-priest.

"Then Paul said unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law" (Acts 23:3).

It is important to keep in mind that, during this entire ordeal, the chief captain and the soldiers were watching over Paul. The chief

captain, in fact, was still very conscious of the fact that he, when binding Paul, had bound a Roman citizen. He was still very much aware of the fact that Paul could still have caused him a lot of trouble. He therefore, through God's plan, was very obligated to Paul. He, in other words, was in debt to Paul. This fact meant that the Sanhedrin was up against Paul and the Roman army. We can be sure that the chief captain would not have allowed any one to smite Paul on the mouth. Paul's response to Ananias was that God would smite him because of his being an unjust judge. He was to uphold the law, but was unjust in that he, contrary to law, asked that Paul be smitten. Paul was correct in stating that God would smite Ananias. He, in fact, was slain with Hezekiah, his brother. History says that Ananias tried to hide in an aqueduct from robbers who had taken over the city of Jerusalem. He, however, was found, drawn forth and killed (see Josephus, Jewish Wars, b.II.ch.xv11-8).

Paul, when calling Ananias a "whited wall", was probably using a proverbial expression which meant that he was a hypocrite. He, in other words, was one who pretended to be that which he was not. He was not a fair and just judge as he pretended to be, but one who had made up his mind prior to having all the facts.

"And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high-priest?" (Acts 23:4). The high-priest was considered as God's representative and one who spoke in God's behalf. The question therefore to Paul was, in essence, Do you, a person who is not fit to live, challenge the high-priest who is a man of God? The fact that Paul did challenge the high-priest, made it impossible, humanly speaking, for the Sanhedrin to ever acquit him.

"Then Paul said, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high-priest; for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of the people. But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope of the resurrection of the dead I am called in question" (Acts 23:5, 6).

Paul had been away from Jerusalem for fourteen years (Galatians 2:1). It appears, however, that he was still able to identify those who were Pharisees and those who were Sadducees. I'm saying that many of those who made up the council were probably on the council fourteen years earlier. Paul, no doubt, when he had earnestly beheld the council (Acts 23:1), was able to distinguish the Pharisees from the Sadducees.

Paul knew, from the attitude of the mob and from the attitude of Ananias, that there was no way for him to have received a fair trial.

His hope, however, was that he could have the support of the chief captain. He obtained this support by setting the Pharisees against the Sadducees and thus demonstrating to the chief captain that the council was full of party strife. Paul also helped his cause with the chief captain when he showed clearly to the captain that Ananias was a "whited wall, or a

hypocrite and thus one who was not fit to be his judge, especially since he was a Roman citizen.

Paul, when bringing before the council the subject of the resurrection of the dead, touched a very sensitive nerve which ran through all the council. Here was a subject which would cause the council to choose sides. It also meant that the Pharisees would no longer be opposed to Paul on every matter. We are to see, then, that it was not so much that Paul was on trial as it was that what he believed was on trial.

## DO YOU

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under the teaching of the pastor from week to week? Often the pastor may spend hours upon hours, yea even weeks, preparing for a single sermon. He intends the message for the whole congregation but oftentimes it may be the Lord has prepared that message in the pastor's heart to go to one individual, probably even unknown to the pastor himself. But as he prepares his sermons, he prays that the Word will have effect both in God's saved sheep and lost sheep. How important it is that we pray that the message would speak to us. When we do this, then we are more attentive and more receptive to the message. An attentive audience gives a speaker more confidence and boldness in speaking and it's no different with your pastor. Gum chewing, yawning, shuffling, the thousand-mile stare--these are all signs that convey to the pastor that we have not prayed for the message like he has. Oh, how we need to pray for the pastor and for the message as he prepares it.

When we pray for our pastor and seek to obey his rule over us, we find we are in regular attendance in the Lord's house. It would be a great waste of time if we were to pray for the pastor and the message and then not be there to support him with our attendance. I can't imagine anything being more discouraging to a pastor than to stand up Sunday morning and not see church members in their places. Churches of the Sovereign Grace ranks generally run fewer in membership than other more socially accepted "churches." Though I don't feel this fact is something to brag about, I do feel that when every member of the church is in his or her place come time to publicly worship the Lord, the pastor is more encouraged than if half the congregation is visitors. As we pray for our pastor and the message the Lord has given him, we will find the excuses, and that's what they are--excuses, for not being in the Lord's house at the appointed time will disappear. I think of what my own dear pastor, Brother John Pruitt, says on this point, "There is no Biblical reason not to be in church," and I pray that the Lord would remove every hindrance from my attending the house of God more faithfully.

A pastor not only prays for the message and for the Holy Spirit to move on the hearts and lives of men and women, he prays for the many problems that the members of his congregation have. The church family is actually an extended family in the pastor's case. If someone is sick,

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## DO YOU

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call the pastor. If there is any specific problem, call the pastor. A death in the family or community? The pastor is always the first one notified. God has given pastors special abilities to deal with problems that arise in the lives of the members and families of his congregation. The right words of comfort, the appropriate Scripture, the sympathizing tear shared in the moments of grief—these are all things that the pastor gives to those in need. But do we stop to think about that except when we are the one who needs the help; who needs the words; who needs the comfort? Even though called of God, your pastor is a human being, subject to human limitations and human emotions. Statistics have shown that suicides are disproportionately higher in the fields of psychiatry and counseling than any other profession. Now, I can't say that preachers and pastors should be considered in the same breath as psychiatrists and psychologists, but isn't that part of the pastor's duties, to give scriptural counseling? They are burdened when their members are burdened. They are heartbroken along with the family who has lost a dear loved one. And these are not just occasional times. These things are ongoing in a pastor's life. Do we think about this when we pray for our pastor? Do we share the load that he has to bear for the entire church family? Atlas' task of bearing the weight of the whole world on his shoulders must seem light compared to the weight of the burden that a pastor bears for the lives and souls of the people that he ministers to regularly.

What about the spiritual needs of the pastor himself? As we first read in Hebrews 13:17, "...they...must give account." It is a serious matter when the man of God stands behind the sacred desk to deliver "thus saith the Lord." Though this may seem repetitive with what I said about praying for the pastor and his message, Paul also emphasized this in Galatians 1:8-9, "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." These are strong words by the Apostle and show the gravity of "rightly dividing the Word of Truth." How we need to pray for the spiritual needs of our pastor. Pray that God will give him spiritual understanding. Pray that he may "beware lest... also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (II Peter 3:17-18) Old Satan loves to see God's men fall away to error and if the people have their eyes more on the pastor than on God, they are prone to follow right on with prayers and exhortations to "earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints."

Do we consider the pastor's family as we pray for him? Have we taken time to give special

prayer to God for his unsaved children? No greater heartache can a pastor have than that of thinking about his children in eternity lost and without Jesus Christ. Preachers kids have long been joked about as being worse than the world and I've seen cases that it was true. We should pray mightily that God would show mercy to the unsaved children in our pastors' families.

We need to be much in prayer for our pastor's family marriage. The pastor's wife is unlike any other in many respects. She should accept that her husband is first and foremost the undershepherd of God's flock; then support him spiritually, physically, and emotionally. However she, too, is a human being and human nature generally dictates that spouses are somewhat selfish about each other. Marriage takes work in any case (or so I've been told since I've never been married), but doubly so in the case of a pastor. He must find the proper balance between duty to God and duty to wife and family and I don't believe these things are mutually exclusive.

I have spoken primarily to this point about the spiritual and psychological needs of the pastor. It is also important that we pray for his physical needs as well. "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." (I Cor. 9:14) Few sovereign grace Baptist churches are able to support their pastors in a full-time ministry. I'm not sure why this would be so. It may be to our shame at the judgement seat of Christ, especially if we were found to be unfaithful in our stewardship and in our tithes and offerings. Be that as it may, many pastors must also work in secular jobs to support themselves and their families. If this is the case in your church, do not fail to pray to the Lord concerning this aspect of your pastor's life also. The world is at enmity against God (James 4:4) and hateth preachers of the Word especially. "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John 17:14) Perhaps nowhere is a person attacked more for his stand for the truth than in a worldly workplace. But as Jesus prayed for His disciples in the verse succeeding the one above, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." (John 17:15) So should we. Each of us know of some instance where a preacher has been attacked by the world, and often at his workplace. Be, therefore, in constant prayer for your pastor if he is in the situation of having to perform secular work.

In conclusion, I want to take some words my pastor has said to us many times at the West Griffin Baptist Church and apply it to our subject of praying for our pastors. He has made the statement "If we talk (pray) to the Lord about lost souls, soon we'll begin talking to lost souls about the Lord." Well, brothers and sisters, allow me to say, "If we pray to the Lord about our pastors and their needs, soon we'll be doing those things that help them to meet their needs and the needs of the church." Those things may be tithing, attendance in the

Lord's house, personal witnessing, teaching a Sunday School class, mowing the pastor's grass, or simply just supporting him with our prayers and attention. I thank the Lord for the able pastors and preachers that will stand for and defend the truth of God's Word. May the God of all peace be with you. Thank you.

## JOSHUA

(Continued from Page 1)

Canaan to the Israelites. Although Israel was camped on the other side of Jordan, Rahab believed the issue was already settled. It should be quite clear from what Rahab said that she was saved before the spies came, "I know that the LORD hath given you the land, -- for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven and in the earth beneath, (2:9, 11). "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not." (Heb. 11:31).

"For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in the earth beneath" (Josh. 2:10, 11).

"For we have heard...". How did she know that Israel's God was the true God? She had heard. What a difference between Rahab and the generation of the Israelites who perished in the wilderness! They not only heard, but they stood on the bank of the Red Sea and watched the water roll back for them to pass over on dry ground. On the other side they watched as the water overflowed the Egyptian army. They were there when the water flowed from the rock and they were fed by bread from heaven for forty years. During all these years they saw over and over the mighty working power of their God. God had told them, "This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven, who shall hear report of thee and shall tremble, and be in anguish because of thee" (Deu. 2:25). Yes, they had heard; yet because of unbelief they were not permitted to enter the promised land, "they could not enter in because of unbelief" (Heb. 3:19).

All the people of Jericho had heard the same things as did Rahab, they all trembled at what they heard, yet only Rahab put her trust in the one true God. Why was this? All had heard with the natural ear, but it was Rahab, like Lydia, "whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken" (Acts 16:14). Why do some who hear the gospel message today and by faith receive that message, while others reject it? Christ said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him" (John 6:44).

Rahab "heard" and believed because she had been drawn by the Father. Her words, "I know that the LORD hath given you the land" shows that she had both heard and believed God's promise He had made to Abraham.

We need to note that Rahab's faith produced works. James, in telling of the relationship of works and faith stated, "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works... But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" (James 2:18-20). By her works, Rahab's faith was shown not to be a dead faith, but a real living faith. Is this not the reason the Holy Spirit directed James to give her, along with Abraham, as prime examples of showing that true faith produces works? "Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?" (James 2:25).

"Now therefore, I pray you, swear unto me by the LORD, since I have shewed you kindness, that ye will also shew kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token; And that ye will save alive my father, and my mother, and my brethren, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death" (Josh. 2:12, 13).

Not only did Rahab show her faith by protecting the spies, but also by her concern for the safety of her family. She desired "a true token" from them that her family's lives as well as her own would be delivered from death. The word for "true token" carried the idea of a covenant, an unwritten promise or agreement. Rahab's request was that the two spies make a covenant with her and her family, just as she had made a covenant with them by saving them from the king's men. They immediately, without hesitation, made an agreement with her on the condition that she would not tell on them, "And the men answered her, Our lives for yours, if ye utter not this our business. And it shall be, when the LORD hath given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with thee" (2:14).

"Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall. And she said unto them, Get you to the mountain, lest the pursuers meet you; and hide yourselves there three days, until the pursuers be returned: and afterward may ye go your way. And the men said unto her, We will be blameless of this thine oath which thou hast made us swear. Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thy shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father's household, home unto thee. And it shall be that whosoever shall go out of the doors

of the house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with you in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him" (Josh 2:15-19).

Before leaving, the spies again confirmed the agreement which they had made with her. In addition to the condition that she was not to tell on them, they added the condition that she was to mark her house in such a way that it could not be mistaken as being her house. This mark was that she was to hang out from the window the scarlet cord which she had let them down with. Another condition that she must meet was that she was to bring all her family into her house. When the battle for Jericho came the only place of safety in all the city was to be a certain house on top of the wall of the city, a house that has a scarlet cord hanging from its window. Rahab and all in the house were to be saved from death. Later, as the Israelites marched around the city each day for seven days they knew that there was one house that was to be spared. That house was to be identified by the scarlet cord.

The only firstborn in the land of Egypt who were saved from the judgment of God were in houses that had the blood of the Passover lamb applied to the door posts, "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all at the firstborn in the land of Egypt -- And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses, where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt" (Ex. 12:12, 13). In like manner, all who were in Rahab's house were protected by the scarlet cord. These two events are types of our salvation. Only those who are under the blood of the Lamb of God will escape the eternal judgment of God. As the old song states:

"When I see the blood,  
I will pass, I will pass over you."

"And if thou utter this our business, then we will be quit of thine oath, which thou hast made us to swear. And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window. And they went, and came unto the mountains, and abode there three days, until the pursuers were returned: and the pursuers sought them throughout all the way, but found them not" (Josh. 2:20-22).

As a final warning, the spies again told her if she told on them, the oath they had made with her would be void. She agreed to this condition and they escaped to the mountains and hid there until the pursuers had given up their search for them and had returned to the city. As soon as the spies had left, Rahab wasted no time in placing the scarlet

(Continued on Page 12, Col. 1)



## CAN YOU IMAGINE THIS?

Paul instructing the church at Corinth as to the proper way to observe Christmas and playing Santa Claus in their Christmas program?

"For I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you...." (I Cor.11:23).

## JOSHUA

(Continued from Page 11)

cord in her window, thus, showing her faith in the God of Israel, the one true God.

Verses 23 and 24 tell us that the two men returned to camp and told Joshua all that had taken place on their trip. **"And they said unto Joshua, Truly the Lord hath delivered unto our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us."** What a different report these two gave on their return than that of ten of the twelve spies whom Moses forty years before had sent into the land. The report brought back by those was, **"We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we, And there we saw giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers and so we were in their sight"** (Num. 13:31, 33). The whole congregation believed these ten rather than Caleb who said, **"Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it."** As a result of their unbelief, that generation died in the wilderness. The two whom Joshua sent out came back with very encouraging news after telling of all that had happened to them they said, **"Truly the LORD hath delivered into our hands all the land."**

There are several lessons for us in this account of the spies and Rahab. First, we see that God has His elect sometimes in the most unexpected places. Who would have thought that there was one in the wicked city of Jericho who would have faith in the true God? Who would have thought that one person was a woman of such immoral character as Rahab the harlot? Who would have thought that the Samaritan woman who had had five husbands, but was at the time living with a man who was not her husband, would be one of God's elect (John 4:)? Who would have thought that Saul who consented unto the death of Stephen would become Paul the great apostle of God?

Second, we need to learn that true faith always produces works. We see that fact brought out in the life of Rahab. Her faith in the God of Israel is proven by her works. James states that faith without works is dead. Rahab's faith was living, a real faith. This is a working faith, the only faith that saves. Rahab took God at His word. Her first words in Joshua 2:9 **"I know."** There was no doubt. She believed in the one true God and He was the only one who she could trust. How strong is our faith? Do we have as much faith as did Rahab? Remember, we have much more light than did Rahab, do we make use of that light?

## ANOTHER NEW DOCTRINE

by Joe Wilson

I have before me "The Hardshell Baptist" December issue. The paper is edited by Hardshell Eddie Garrett. The lead article in this issue is, "The Sin Unto Death." If I were a gambler (thank God, I am not) I would wager much that the vast majority (Probably all) of my readers will not come even close to guessing what Eddie says this is.

Of course, we who believe the Bible, know that this is the sin of a Christian; and that it is a sin that God punishes with physical death. I doubt that it is any certain or specific sin; but that it is a sin that one will not give up, that one continues on and on it; and that, after some chastisement without results, God takes the life of the guilty one. It lies wholly within the sovereignty of God as to what sin, how much chastisement, how long continuance therein will be allowed before this drastic step is taken by God. It may be that Ananias and Sapphira committed this sin in Acts 5:1-10 (or maybe they were unsaved). The Corinthians in I Corinthians 11:30 (last part) committed this sin. Moses almost committed this sin in Exodus 4:24. Doubtless, many Christians have committed this sin through the years. This may well explain the untimely and unexpected deaths of many Christians. By "untimely" I do not mean before God's predestinated time, but before the normal and usual time. Again, it lies totally in the sovereignty of God as to the dealing with believers in this matter.

But, now Mr. Garrett has a new interpretation of this Scripture - one, I venture to say, never heard of before. At least, I am sure that few have previously heard of this. I read much, and in all my reading I have never heard such an interpretation of this Scripture as I read today in "The Hardshell Baptist."

Mr. Garrett says that the sin unto death is adultery. He does not mean just any adultery. He says that if one gets a divorce on unscriptural grounds, and then remarries; that one has committed the sin unto death. Wow! what a fertile imagination this man has. Of course, it seems that the death meant by this Scripture (in the understanding, or should I say misunderstanding? of Mr. Garrett) is that such a one would never be eligible for membership in a true church (Which he calls a Primitive Baptist church). So, according to Mr. Garrett, the one who divorces without Scriptural grounds and remarries, does by that act die forever to the privilege of church membership. I ask my reader if he or she has ever read or heard such an interpretation before.

The only thing I can say in Mr. Garrett's favor as to this foolish interpretation is that it is more consistent than that of those who say that there are no

Scriptural grounds for remarriage, but such a one can still be a church member. Of course men who say this say it because they are after numbers and money. One could certainly not accuse Mr. Garrett of being after numbers and money as to his position as qualified for church membership as any other repentant sinner.

I think my reader will agree with me that this doctrine of Mr. Garrett's is another new doctrine. I am continually amazed at the fertility of the depraved minds of men evidenced by the continual coming forth of new doctrines. I really think that such men have some sore of mental sickness that causes them to reject old, tried, tested, and true doctrines; and to continually come up with something new. I was holding a revival for a certain preacher. He read a Scripture, and said that he wondered what that meant. I told him that it meant exactly what it said. But he had this strange mental quirk - he wanted to see something there that wasn't there. This attitude on his part had since then led him far down the road of heresy, and heresy, and more heresy.

Mr. Garrett used to be with us. He wrote some good articles, years ago, for The Baptist Examiner. He left us and went into Hardshell heresy. Since then he has gone further and further into heresy. I have often said that heresy leads to heresy leaders to heresy leads to heresy. Here is another example of the truthfulness of that statement.

I have often said that if I saw something in a Scripture that no one else had ever seen, I would check it many, very many times before I really adopted it and started preaching it. After all, the Bible has been around a long time; many men have studied it; why, at this late date, would I see something no one else had ever seen.

I like the old paths (Jer.6:16). I like to walk in those good old paths. I like the rest to my soul that I find therein. I will leave the new doctrines for someone else. I am satisfied with the old doctrines of our Baptist forefathers. If it is old, it might be false. If it is new, it most certainly is false.

## EUROCLYDON

The south wind blows softly  
Where it's called The Fair Havens;  
But beware of Euroclydon!  
Yes beware of Euroclydon!

When you think that you're standing  
Take heed lest you fall;  
A tempestuous wind blows  
And it blows on us all.

When quicksands surround us  
God's grace will abound;  
When sun and stars hide  
His love will abide.

Our bark may be battered  
Our hope nearly shattered;  
But He'll see us to shore  
Safe in Him evermore.

by Charlene M. Redding

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## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

I write this on November 11th. Katie is doing well. She suffered intense pain the first day after surgery, but this has eased up somewhat since then. By the time you read this, I feel sure she will be home and back very close to her normal activities. She was upset with me when I put the announcement of her surgery in an earlier issue, but I did it anyway. She shies away from publicity. She asked me to write that she realizes I was right in doing that, and she is glad I did. She realizes how important it was for people to know about this and to be praying for her. We do thank you for your prayers - Prayer helps a lot. We appreciate the flowers, calls, and cards very much. Please continue to remember us in your prayers.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

The Philadelphia Baptist Church of New Mexico is in need of a pastor. Any interested Elder can contact Jesse James at (505) 334-3014.

We have in our book store, "182 Bible Questions Answered" by R.A. Torrey. Though I disagree with him on some things, I have always had great respect for Torrey. I am sure that this book, in the main, will be helpful with many questions that people often ask about the Bible. It is a small paper back book of 120 pages. It sells for \$4.95. Order from our book store.

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## CAN YOU IMAGINE THIS?

Paul teaching that tithing is not for this age? **"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him...."** The last part of this certainly teaches proportionate giving, and the tithe is the proportion taught in the Bible.

## XMAS

Twenty-fifth of December, another year trod,  
And the world once again is serving it's "god";  
But alas, for God's children are joining in too,  
Forgive them, dear Lord, they know not what they do!  
How well I remember and surely realize,  
I, too, was in bondage 'til You opened my eyes;  
Thank You, precious Lord, for setting me free  
From this thing called Xmas, real idolatry!  
Oh, I remember how hard it was to break  
The tradition of men, and finally forsake  
This heathen holiday, even though I'd heard  
That it was pagan, forbidden in God's Word.  
No time to read my Bible, to praise Your name, or pray,  
Too busy getting ready for that "most important" day;  
No thought of your second coming, though You bade me  
watch and wait,  
For I must keep Your "birthday," though You gave me not  
the date. No harm, thought I, to decorate and have a Xmas  
tree,  
To gather 'round and gifts exchange with friends and family;  
If I don't they'll think me narrow, and may even call me  
"Scrooge," It's not like I would celebrate with revelry and  
booze.  
And thus, deceiving self, went I from year to year,  
"Til one day, Lord, Your still, small voice came through  
quite clear, Come out and be ye separate, touch not the un-  
clean thing,

Be not yoked with unbelievers, this message You did  
bring.  
Then I started studying to find out the reason why,  
Xmas is an abomination to my God on high;  
And to my great amazement, this is what I found,  
That I was an idolator on very dangerous ground.  
For Xmas, with all it's customs can be traced to ancient  
Rome;  
"Was there that the Catholic Church adopted as it's own,  
Astarte, queen of heaven, and Tammuz, her son,  
Originating with Nimrod and ancient Babylon.  
The story of Tammuz, the sun god, and his resurrection,  
How strange that it should parallel the life of God, the  
Son!

How very sly of Satan to take these gods, these very  
same,  
And deceive the people of the world by changing their  
names. Thus we see the great deceiver up to his greatest  
tricks,  
Changing their names to Mary and Jesus, oh, how very  
slick!  
How easy to take feast day with it's revelry and disgrace,  
And change it's name to Xmas for the Christians to embrace.  
So when they say put Christ back in Xmas, I just stand  
and stare, You never could put Him back, for He was never  
there!  
My God is a jealous God, He will never suffer loss,  
Nor share His glory with another, not even Santa Claus!