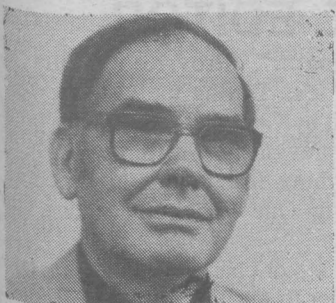


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STUDIES IN JOSHUA

Chapter 4:1-19
by C.T. Everman

"AND it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over Jordan, that the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, Take you twelve men out of the



people, out of every tribe a man. And command ye them, saying, Take you hence out of the midst of Jordan, out of the place where the priests' feet stood firm, twelve stones, and ye shall carry them over with you, and leave them in the lodging place, where ye shall lodge this night" (Josh. 4:1-3).

At long last the children of Israel stood on the land that God had made a covenant with Abraham that He would give him and his seed for a possession. Many hundreds of years before God had told Abram, "...Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy

THE FIRST AVERAGE BAPTIST CHURCH EVERYWHERE, U.S.A.

By Davis W. Huckabee
817 East Pine Lake Road,
Salem, Ohio, 44460

This church is presently without a pastor, but is seeking one, but has been unable so far to agree on what kind of a man they desire to lead them. It is considering Rev. H. A. ("Ham Actor") Promoter. He is a good mixer, but is a poor separator from the world.

FORMER PASTORS:
Brother Saintly Seeker: the Church's first pastor. He was a good and sound man, but he died of a broken heart because the church would not serve the Lord.

Rev. Speak Shallowater: He is responsible for much of the church's present carnality, for he never preached any doctrinal messages nor taught them anything.

Rev. I.M. Forme: The church's third pastor. He had no concern for anyone but himself and his own family.

Rev. I.L. Backdown: The previous pastor. He was a compromiser, and never stood for anything. He was president of the local Ministerial Alliance the whole time he pastored this church.

MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH:

Deacon Reddy Worker: A real jewel of a church member. He

(Continued on Page 6, Col. 1)

AND WHAT DOETH GOD REQUIRE?"

by Jack Whitt

"He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and



Jack Whitt

what doeth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy,

(Continued on Page 6, Col. 3)

HOW OLD IS THE OLD TIME RELIGION?

by T.N. Russin

We have all heard and probably sung the old spiritual song, "Give me that old time religion... it's good enough for me." In this article let me ask the question: "how old is the old-time religion?" Is it 100 years old? Is it quite possibly 1,000 years old? Just "how old is the old time religion"? We must face the facts that what many call the old time religion is at best only 150 to 200 years old. Most of the roots of the so-called old time religion go back only 150 years and what many call "old-time" can be traced back a mere 50 to 75 years

(Continued on Page 7, Col. 1)

ONCE

by Elder Edward Graff

Hebrews 9:1-18, & 10:1-10.
One of the key words of Hebrews chapters nine and ten, is the term



Edward Graff

"once," which occurs seven times. In these two chapters we are shown that Christ is superior in His priestly ministry. That what He has done for us is once and for all times. Therefore He

(Continued on Page 7, Col. 3)

STUDIES IN ACTS

by Willard Willis

"And after five days, Ananias the high priest, descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul" (Acts 24:1).

We know from Acts 24:11 that it had been only twelve days



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THE LORD'S SUPPER

by Paul Jackson

The Lord's Supper is one of the two ordinances Christ gave to His church; the other being Baptism. Like everything taught in God's Word, the Lord's Supper has been added to and taken away from by modern religion. This Scriptural and very important ordinance of the Lord's church has been given power of salvation by the Catholic church. The "Holy Eucharist" is said to have powers of grace and can give anything living the power to enter Heaven if it is consumed. There are those

(Continued on Page 10, Col. 2)

A DIVIDED HEART

by Waldo Whiddon



Waldo Whiddon

"AMAZIAH was twenty and five years old when he

(Continued on Page 9, Col. 2)

WHAT SHOULD BE OUR ATTITUDE TOWARD CHURCHES WHICH TEACH HARDSHELL DOCTRINE?

by John Pruitt

I am not sure that I am qualified to answer such a question; on the other hand, if I claim to be able to discern the truth in the Word of God, I should be able to make some Scriptural judgments on the matter. I do feel that it would be unwise for me to try and give a definition of a Hard-

(Continued on Page 11, Col. 4)

SIN AND ITS PUNISHMENT DEGREES IN HELL

by T. T. Martin

"For all have sinned..." (Rom. 3:23; "...every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward" (Heb. 2:2); "...a just God..." (Isa. 45:21); "...it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee" (Matt. 11:24).

Reader, what you and I need to know concerning God's plan with the sinner, the lost, is not what some people think, nor what some teach, nor what some desire; but what God teaches. God is just. Fasten that in your mind; never lose sight of it. Over and over again is this fact impressed in the Scriptures. Yet lurking in the minds of multitudes is a vague suspicion or dread that God will be unjust in sending some to hell, and that He will be unjust in the way He will punish. Many who are thus lose sight of the fact that God is just; that whatever God does in regard to the lost, one thing is certain--He will do no injustice. With my loved ones, with your loved ones, with the most obscure, worthless creature, with the most refined, delicate nature, with the most cruel, debased creature that ever lived, God will do no wrong. Many have turned away to infidelity, not on account of the Bible's complete teaching as to future punishment, but because they have taken some one pas-

(Continued on Page 8, Col. 4)

SOME OBSERVATIONS & DISTINCTIONS ABOUT FAITH

by Alfred Smith

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of

them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

My Observations About Faith:

1. The Origin of Faith - Some Misconceptions:

The most prevalent view, which is very wide spread among most people, is that faith is produced by their own volition or doing. It is thought of as a self-

(Continued on Page 10, Col. 3)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

REDEMPTION

"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us..." (Gal.3:13).

Redemption is a prominent word and teaching in the Bible. It is one of the great words relative to salvation. It surely is in the same category with the words; salvation, forgiveness, regeneration, etc. One needs to under-

stand the meaning and Scriptural usage of this word to properly understand the Biblical doctrine of salvation.

It is difficult to choose a text for this subject because there are so many good ones. I suggest that the one I have chosen is one of the better ones, but there are many just as good. It would be a blessing to you, and increase

your knowledge and appreciation of redemption, if you would get a concordance and look up and study the many Scriptures that deal with this subject.

This verse, or part thereof, easily divides into three parts: 1. The curse of the law, 2. The redemption from that curse, 3.

(Continued on Page 2, Col. 1)

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REDEMPTION

(Continued from Page 1)

How this redemption is secured. Might I suggest that if one is not under the law, he is not under the curse thereof and needs no redemption therefrom. This alone shows the folly of those who teach that the law was only for Israel, and only for a certain period of time. All men of all time are always under the law of God. God's elect have been redeemed from the curse of this law by the sacrificial, substitutionary death of Jesus Christ. This does not mean that they are thereby freed from the obligation to obey the law in daily life - what saved person would want to be? The commandments of God are not grievous to the saved person; rather he delights in the law of God after the inward man. Those not redeemed from the curse of the law will suffer that curse in the eternal flames of hell.

Please note in this verse the price of our redemption. Oh, redemption was not easily accomplished by our God. He could not just say the word, as He did in creation, and men be redeemed. Men could not be redeemed simply by a decreed pardon from the Lord. Men could not be redeemed by animal sacrifice. Oh, no, the holy character of God demanded that the curse be borne, that the debt to God's law and holiness be paid; someone had to die for men to be redeemed, and that someone could have been no other than the Son of the living God. Oh, what a price He paid, oh what a work He did in the redemption of His chosen people from the curse of the broken law of God!

I will divide this sermon into three parts: 1. The Redeemer, 2. The redemption, 3. The redeemed. Let us look at these three parts for a while.

Who is the Redeemer of God's elect? Jesus Christ is the only Redeemer thereof. Leviticus 25:47-55 tells of the kinsman-redeemer. A brother might become poor and sell himself into slavery



Joe Wilson

to another. Oh, what a pitiful condition, what a hopeless situation! But, though there was no hope in self, there was hope in another. One of his brethren could, if able and willing, redeem him from slavery. Read this Scripture. If you cannot see Jesus Christ, our wonderful Kinsman-redeemer in it, your eyes must be blinded. In this Scripture the redeemer must be near of kin, he must be able to pay the price of redemption, and he must be willing to do so. Jesus Christ became man that He might be of near kin to those He came to redeem. He was willing, praise His name, to pay the price of their redemption. No man took His life from Him, but He laid it down of Himself, (Jn.10:18). And He, and He alone, was able to pay the redemption price required. No man can pay for another's redemption. The highest angel in heaven could not pay the redemption price for a single man. In fact, if all men but one, and all angels had died to redeem that one man, they could not do it. Only the blood of Jesus Christ is able to wash one from his sins. Praise God for Jesus Christ, our blessed Kinsman-redeemer.

Our Redeemer must be God, for He must have the power to redeem. Our Redeemer, Jesus Christ was and is God. Those who do not have a Divine redeemer do not have a redeemer at all. Oh, how necessary it is, in order to eternal salvation, to believe that Jesus is God. I make bold to declare that no man who denies that Jesus is God, and who continues in that denial, is or can be redeemed. Those who do not have a divine redeemer have no redeemer at all. Those who deny that Jesus is God, those who deny that he was born of a virgin, those who deny that He died a saving death at Calvary, and those who deny that He arose from the dead - not one of them has a redeemer, not one of them is redeemed. Understand that I do not mean that one who is at present in error on these things can never be saved; I mean that one who continues and dies in these errors cannot be saved. Praise God that even some who have been in error on these fundamental and necessary truths have been saved by the grace and power of God; but they were saved from these errors as well as being saved from their other sins. I hope I am making myself clear. I am saying that no one who denies the deity of Jesus Christ is a saved person. Jews, believing

their religion, are not saved. Unitarians are not saved. Modernists and liberals who deny the fundamental truths about Jesus Christ are not saved. A man can be wrong on many things and still be a saved person. A man can be wrong on the five doctrines of grace and be saved. A man can be wrong on church truth and be saved. A man can be wrong on baptism and be saved. But, hear this, a man cannot be wrong about Jesus Christ, who He is and what He did, and be a saved person.

Our redeemer must also be man. Jesus, simply as God, could not save any man. He must become man in order to redeem His people from their sins. The eternal Son of God had to indissolubly join Himself with a human nature in order to be the Redeemer of God's elect. God (God only) could not redeem; man could not redeem; only the God-man could redeem. His humanity, I say it reverently, is as necessary to our redemption as is His deity. Those who deny the humanity of Jesus Christ are as lost as those who deny His deity.

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb.2:14). "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people" (Heb.2:17). He had to become a man, and have many experiences as a man, in order for Him to be our great high priest. He could not enter into our sorrows, or be touched with the feeling of our infirmities (Heb.4:15) except He be a man. Oh, there is a Man at the right hand of God who sees and feels our needs and makes intercession for us. He had to be a man to do these things.

He had to become a man in order to die for us. God cannot die, but the God-man could and did die (died in His sinless humanity) for our sins. **"For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings"** (Heb.2:10). It would not have been becoming to the character of God to save His people without their sins being suffered for. In order for Jesus Christ to suffer savingly for their sins, He must become a man, for He could not die for sins in His deity. I urge you to read Hebrews 10:4-14. It was not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin. God prepared for His Son, in the womb of the virgin, Mary, a body so that He could, in that body, offer an acceptable sacrifice for sins, and by that sacrifice save with a perfect and eternal salvation all those for whom He died. He had to become a man in order to die for His people, and by that death redeem them from the curse of the broken law.

Think a while on the price He had to pay for our redemption. The making of the world was an easy thing compared with the redemption of His people. He must take upon Himself the guilt of all

the sins of all the elect, and satisfy the claims of God's holiness and God's law relative to that guilt. He must suffer the exact equivalent of what all of the elect would have suffered in eternal hell had He not died for them -- I mean the exact equivalent. The death of Christ was not a bargain basement plan of redemption. It was not a "pay so much on the dollar and be credited with a total payment" plan dishonoring to the blood of Jesus Christ would such be, yet many believe and teach

such a plan of redemption.

Understand that the true doctrine of redemption is that God laid on Christ the total guilt of all the elect, and that Christ died for that guilt - and for that only. It is utterly foolish, God and Christ dishonoring, and redemption perverting to teach that the death of Christ would have been sufficient for the salvation of all men had God purposed it so to be. I do not at all deny that Jesus

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 1)

FROM THE EDITOR

"A righteous man hateth lying..." (Prov.13:5). This is, believe, my third editorial from this text. During the last few years I have known of more lying among and by Christians, especially preachers, than I remember for many years previously. One thing that bothers me about this, maybe more than anything else, is that these people do not seem to be bothered by their lying. One would think that a Christian would feel very badly about lying.

We recently excluded a man, and a major charge was lies that he had written in a letter. I invited a preacher to our last revival. He told me he would come some. He did not come a single time, and he did not call and tell me that something had happened to keep him from keeping his word. I invited another preacher to the same revival. He told me he would try to come. He did not come. Do you suppose he really tried to come? I doubt it. Usually one can do what he really tries to do along this line. If I tell a person that I will come to a meeting to which he invites me, or that I will try to come; I will be there; or if I cannot be there, I will let him know why I could not. No person can truthfully accuse me of lying in this way. Some preachers need to learn that lying is a sin, and a terrible sin that God hates.

I hate to be told a lie. I hate to be lied about. I hate to learn that a Christian has lied, even if it does not involve me in any way. I have been lied to many times. I have had many lies told on me. I have learned that my friends will not believe those lies, but usually will ask me about them. I have learned that my enemies often will believe those lies (often seem glad to hear them, and repeat them) without even bothering to ask me about them. Very, very much of the troubles I have had in the last several years have been because of lies told about me, and would have been avoided if people would just check the stories they hear with me. I often ask brothers to at least hear my side of a matter before believing what someone says about me. Then, they can believe as they want to. But, so many times, men will hear things about me, they will believe them, they will repeat them to others; and never even bother to hear what I have to say.

I give God the glory for this, but in all the troubles I have had over the last few years, no man can truthfully say that I have lied about anything or anyone. I am not saying I have never lied - a man would be foolish to say that. But I do say that, in the problems of the last few years, I have not lied. I have been lied about, but I have not lied about others.

I hate lying. I hate to be told a lie, I hate to be lied about, I hate to even know that someone has lied. I hate to be involved in a situation where I know someone is lying. Sometimes someone will tell me something about a person. I hate to believe that the person has done the thing that I have been told; I hate to believe that the person who told me such just lied about it; yet, one or the other of these things must be true. I hate to be put in a dilemma like this.

There are different ways of lying. One can just out and out lie. One can act out a lie. One can flatter another, which is just another way of lying. One can slander another which is often a way of lying. One can pretend, and be lying.

When one says or does something that he or she knows will leave a false impression, that one is lying. I know a preacher who was asked if he did a certain thing relative to a present situation. He told his inquirer that he had done this certain thing. Well, he had done it relative to a previous situation, but not relative to the present situation about which he was asked - he lied. One can tell something that is true, but if he applies that to something that is not true (it is true in itself, but not true relative to the situation to which he applies it) - he lies.

One can lie by mixing enough truth with the lie to deceive another. I think this is one of the worse ways of lying. When one tells something that, in and of itself, is true; but he knows that another will receive a false impression, and he does it in a way to deliberately give that false impression - he lies. I am responsible, not only for what I say, but from what another understands by what I say; especially when I know (and even mean for him to) that he gets a false impression from what I say.

It is a terrible thing to lie. It is a terrible sin. Lies have done more damage and hurt more people than we can even imagine. If you cannot defend yourself or your actions by telling the truth; don't do so by lying. How much better it is to just confess your wrong and sin than to try to defend or justify them by lying.

"A righteous man hateth lying..." As I said, in the last few years I have known many Christians, especially preachers, to lie. I do not even dare to say (I don't want to say and won't say) that they are not truly saved; I believe they are. How to reconcile this with the above Scripture, I don't know; I just let it be, leaving it with them and the Lord.

Oh, let each one of us determine that, by God's grace and power, this year will be a year of total truthfulness in our lives. Let us confess the sin of lying when and if we are guilty thereof. Let us determine to always tell the total and honest truth about everything and everybody and in every situation. Let us never seek to deceive. Let us never seek to leave a false impression. Let us be committed to truthfulness in all our dealings. Yours for truthfulness.

REDEMPTION

(Continued from Page 2)

Christ could have atoned for the guilt of the sins of a multitude more had He so desired. He is God, and could have redeemed by His death any number of men. But He would have suffered more than He did if more were to be saved by His death. He could have died for more men, but He did not; therefore His death is not sufficient for the salvation of any more than will be saved thereby. Away with this theory that seeks to honor the death of Christ (that He did enough to save multitudes more had God purposed it) but really destroys the real truth thereof.

Now, let us think awhile about the Redemption. First, let us look at some suppositions that are demanded by this word. Men are sold and in need of redemption. Men are sold in sin. They are the bondslaves of sin. They are willing bondslaves, but bondslaves nonetheless. Men are sold under the curse of the law. They are bound to suffer the penalty of that broken law, except some other suffer it for them. They are sold under the power of the devil. He is the strong man armed who keepeth his goods in peace until and unless a stronger than he come and deliver them, (Lk.11:21-22).

There are three Greek words used for "redemption" in the New Testament. One of them is "agorazo." This word means to purchase in the market by paying the required price. Our blessed Lord came into the market place of this world for this purpose. Oh, the price demanded was exceedingly high; it was the suffering of the exact equivalent of what those to be redeemed would have eternally suffered had He not paid the exact price. It was His eternal love for His elect that brought Him, "Out of the ivory palaces into a world of woe" for, "Only His great eternal love made my Saviour go." He knew what the price would be even before He agreed, in the everlasting covenant of grace, to pay it. He knew what it would be even before He left heaven. When, as a twelve year old boy, He said, "...wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Lk.2:49) - that twelve year old boy (who was even then the God-man) knew that at the end of the road lay the great suffering of Calvary. Knowing, fully and in detail, what the redemption price would be; He gladly, lovingly, and freely came into this world to pay it.

There is the Greek word "exagorazo." It means to buy out of the market place. Our Lord does not leave His redeemed ones in the slave market where He found them. He delivers them from that place by His redeeming death. They are eternally delivered therefrom. They will never be "up for sale" again. Those who teach that one of Christ's redeemed ones can lose his purchased salvation and go back to the slave market highly dishonor the Redeemer and His precious blood. And I might also say that those who think that Christ redeemed all men by paying the price for their sins - and yet that many of those thus redeemed will spend eternity in hell - they too greatly dishonor the Redeemer and His precious blood. In other words, those who teach that

Christ died for every individual of mankind and those who teach that a saved person can lose his salvation; these dishonor the Saviour and His precious blood.

There is the Greek word "lutroo." This means to set free by paying a price. Not only did Jesus pay the price; not only will He never allow those He redeemed to be up for sale again, but He set them eternally free by paying that price. They are the only ones of mankind who are truly free. They are free from the bondage of the law (not free from the claims of the law as a rule of life, but free from the bondage of the law as a way of salvation. They are free from the slavery of sin. They do sin, yes, they do; but it is not like it used to be. They have the victory over a multitude of sins. They are more and more freed from sin. They will eventually, as a result of this redemption, be freed from even the presence of sin. They are free from the bondage and power of the devil. Greater is He (the Holy Spirit) who is in them than he (the devil) who is in the world. They have more and more victory over the devil. They are free to live for their dear Redeemer and to serve Him forevermore. What greater freedom can any one have, can any one desire, than this?

Now let us look briefly at the Redeemed. Who are these favored ones who are the objects of the redeeming work of Jesus Christ? Well, they most surely are not all of mankind. Nothing could be surer than that all men are not redeemed. Eternal hell will be an eternal testimony to the fact that all men are not redeemed. The redeemed are the elect of God, and they only. Jesus Christ came into this world to save His people (not all of mankind) from their sins; and He will not and cannot fail. Oh, what a weak and failing saviour is taught by the doctrines of Arminianism.

Before all worlds began, God sovereignly and unconditionally elected a multitude that no man can number and predestinated them to be the objects of His saving grace. He gave them to His dear Son that He might redeem them from their sins. The Lord Jesus Christ, in the eternal covenant of redemption, agreed to die for the redemption of these elect ones given Him by His Father - and at the appointed time, He fulfilled this agreement and covenant. Yes, the redeemed are the elect of God.

Furthermore, the redeemed are those effectually and savingly called by the Holy Spirit. There is a general call to all those who hear the gospel to repent of sin and receive Christ. Yes, I do believe in the free offer of the gospel. But all to whom this call comes will not be saved. Then, there is the effectual call of the Holy Spirit. All who receive this call will respond to the general call, will repent of sins and receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. These, the effectually called, are those redeemed by the death of Jesus Christ. Oh, beloved; there is an election by the Father, there is a redemption by the Son, and there is an effectual call by the Holy Spirit - all these enter into the salvation of God's people.

The redeemed are the secure ones. They are those who will be eternally glorified. They will, by virtue of Christ's saving redemption, be eternally saved and blessed. Redemption is one thing, the blessings are some-

thing else; but the blessings were secured by and are guaranteed by the redemption.

Now what? Well, the redeemed owe everything to the Redeemer - not for salvation, but because they are saved, and in gratitude for that salvation. "...and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:19-20). "I would not work my soul to save, for that the Lord hath done. But I would work like any slave for love to God's dear Son." May these words be true of each one of the redeemed.

We ought to love our Redeemer more than we love all others and all things put together. We should love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. We should love Him with a consuming love. We should love Him so much that we would do anything for Him.

We should live clean, holy, dedicated, separated lives for His glory. Oh, let us not continue to live in those sins that He gave His life to redeem us from. He did not die that we might continue in sin, but that we might henceforth walk in the newness of life for His glory.

We should serve Him to the utmost of our God given and God enabled ability. We should become a member of one of His true churches - a Sovereign Grace Landmark Missionary Baptist Church, if you please. We should be faithful members of and workers in and through that church. We should give our tithes and offerings into that church. We should serve in any possible way in that church.

We should be faithful witnesses to others about our dear Redeemer. We should testify far and wide and often to the unsaved. We should praise our Redeemer before men. We should seek to win others to Him.

Yes, all these things we should do, and much more; not in order to be saved, not in order to stay saved; but simply to show our great love for Him who, "loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood" (Rev.1:5). May God bless you all.

JOSHUA

(Continued from Page 1)

father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:" (Gen. 12:1, 2). Later this covenant was reaffirmed to Isaac and also to Jacob. After spending over four hundred years in Egypt, most of that time as slaves, God brought them out from Egypt across the Red Sea into the wilderness, where because of unbelief, all the adults (except two) must die. Therefore, after forty years, this new generation had witnessed one of the greatest of all miracles, the stopping of the river Jordan from flowing while they passed over on dry ground.

On their journey from Egypt to the land of Canaan, Israel had been taught many important spiritual truths. One which is of most importance is that of the "memorial stones." How well they learned this truth would, in many respects, determine their

future as a nation. It was most important that the Israelites never forget this most important miracle. Therefore, God directed them to take stones from the river to build a memorial of stone in memory of this event. Man has always built memorials of his great achievements. But where are our memorials to the greatness and goodness of God? These verses describe the building of such a memorial in memory of the crossing of Israel over the dry ground of the bed of Jordan, even when the river was at flood stage.

After the last of the Israelites had stepped on the soil of the promised land, "all the people were clean passed over Jordan," God told Joshua to command the twelve men, who had been previously chosen (3:12), to go back to the center of the river bed where the priests with the ark still stood and each man was to carry out a stone. In verse 5 we are told that Joshua did this, telling the men to carry out the stones upon their shoulders, indicating that they were to be large stones. Joshua then explained the meaning of this activity, "That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them, That the waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever" (Josh. 4:6, 7).

Note that these stones were to be a "sign" unto Israel. A "sign" is a mark or a token used to distinguish a person or thing from others. The miracles which Moses was to perform before his brethren were called signs (Ex. 4:1-9). They were to show that God had chosen Moses as the leader of Israel and that He, the Almighty God would be with him. The miracles which Christ performed while here on earth were called signs (John 20:30; Acts 2:22). They were given, "...that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:31). The memorial of which these stones were to be built, was to signify that Israel had not crossed Jordan by their own ability, but it was by the miracle performed by their Lord. It was also to remind them that they passed over the river bed on dry ground. And it was a pledge that God would continue to be with them and would drive out the nations who were now occupying the land.

"And the children of Israel did so as Joshua commanded, and took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, as the LORD spake unto Joshua, according to the number of the tribes of the children of Israel, and carried them over with them unto the place where they lodged, and laid them down there" (Josh. 4:8).

The response of the 12 men was to act without question. They immediately went back into the middle of the river and brought out twelve stones as commanded. By these men going back into the river bed while the

water was still standing upon a heap shows their faith. They did not go alone, for in verse 9 we find Joshua has gone with them, "And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day." It would seem that Joshua did this on his own as we are not told that God had commanded him to do this. This action on the part of Joshua shows his desire to have a personal reminder of God's faithfulness at the crossing of Jordan. "and they are there unto this day," means they were still there when the book of Joshua was written. It may have been when the river was low the stones could be seen. Hundreds of years later when John was baptizing in the river Jordan, it may have been at this place when he said unto the Pharisees and Sadducees, "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Matt. 3:9), pointing to these raised stones in the middle of Jordan.

"For the priests which bare the ark stood in the midst of Jordan, until everything was finished that the LORD commanded Joshua to speak unto the people, according to all that Moses commanded Joshua: and the people hastened and passed over" (Josh. 4:10).

We need both the complete obedience and the patience of the priests. They were the ones who bare the ark that when they stepped into the water it stopped flowing and stood "upon an heap." Moving to the center of the river there they stood until this vast host had all passed over. It was indeed a test of their courage and patience. Here is an example for us to continue with courage and patience; to continue steadfastly in the work in which the Lord has placed us. Also, we need to note that Joshua closely followed the orders which he had received from Moses who had received his instructions from God. Joshua did not make a move except by a Divine command. The priests, in turn, followed the orders given by Joshua. Still another point to be noted is, it is said, "and the people hastened and passed over." This tells us that the people hastened to obey the command to cross Jordan. There was no delay, no holding up the march by someone dragging along, thus causing the priests to stand longer in the river bed while they passed over. The lesson to be learned is that those whom God has placed in authority should be governed solely by Christ and those who are under their authority must hasten to obey their commands. It is interesting to note that God not only records what we do but how we do it. We read, "...his princes gave willingly..." (II Chron. 35:8). "then the nobles put their necks to the work of the Lord, -- Zabbi earnestly repaired the other

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The Baptist Examiner Forum I

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

*Should a tobacco-using member be allowed to serve as
deacon in a Baptist Church?*

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To my knowledge there is no Scripture that condemns tobacco use. There are many verses that are sometimes applied to it, such as I Corinthians 3:16, which I assume has to do with our works at the judgment seat of Christ; and I Corinthians 6:19 which talks about physical and spiritual fornication. As to their application to tobacco use, I cannot say. Whether a man should or should not be kept from serving as a deacon because of it, I think that that would have to be left up to the church who has called for the ordination. Personally, I do not feel that it should be used as a single factor to disqualify an individual from the office.

I am against the use of tobacco in any form. It is extremely harmful to the health of the user as well as those around him. The smoke and the spit are obnoxious, offensive, and irritating. Beside all of that it is just plain dumb. I speak from experience, because I was a user for many years. Tobacco is also an addictive drug that takes control of you, and will carry you to the grave. If you are a user, I happen to know personally that the devil has told you many times that you cannot quit; but of course that is typical of the father of lies that he is. The devil says you cannot, and God says that you can, (I Corinthians 10:13) so who are you going to believe, God or the devil?

If you are being considered by your church for the office of deacon, you need to realize that you are being considered for a very high honour. If a man desires the office of a deacon, he desireth a good work. Read I Timothy 3:1, 8-13. If your church makes tobacco use a condition that restricts such, then you ought to claim God's promise in I Corinthians 10:13, and not deprive your church of a blessing. Thank you for your question.

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These are the types of forum questions that I hate to answer. It does not matter which answer I give, there will be people unhappy with me. There are questions to which there is no clear

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Bible answer. Many would use the verse, "Abstain from every appearance of evil" to say that a tobacco user should not hold the office of deacon in a Baptist church. I believe that if we are going to use this verse for tobacco, then to be consistent we must use it for other things. I have found that people are quick to condemn others for something they do not do and have no desire to do. I have also learned that condemning people for things such as tobacco often depends on who the person is. Let me illustrate this. If I were to start smoking a pipe, there would be many in my church and other churches that would look down on me and possibly want me to quit or resign. I know of an older preacher in our circle who smokes a pipe, and by many he is very highly thought of. I detest this kind of inconsistency and favoritism.

I also mention that this is a geographical question. In the south, smoking is accepted more than in the north. I know some very good Christian men and women who smoke. I wish they did not for their own good, but they do and they are fine, godly people. There are many things that are not good for us that we eat or drink. Things such as coffee with caffeine. Sugar and flour are bad for us. Too much cholesterol is bad for us. Recently someone mentioned that none of these things have warning labels on them. My answer to that is, neither does alcohol but we know it is wrong and bad for you. Would we let a person who is fat be a deacon? The Bible has clear things to say about gluttony. The Bible sets down guidelines for being a pastor or deacon. These guidelines should be met by every member of the church. I do not wish to add to the Bible guidelines. In the opinion of some, I am sure that this would make them men of bad report. Then I would urge you to stop boasting about preachers who use tobacco. Do not listen to them preach or brag on their ability. In my opinion a person could use tobacco and still serve as deacon in a Baptist church. I respect your right to your opinion, and please do not judge me as being immoral for holding mine. I know tobacco users who are more godly than many judgmental non-tobacco users. I would rather have them as my deacon than the others. May God bless you all.

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What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is

in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." (I Corinthians 6:19,20).

Let me begin by saying that I know of no Scripture that directly forbids the use of tobacco for anyone, or prohibits its use by deacons. I am none the less against the use of tobacco in any form for two major reasons, and I do not think that it should be used by church members or pastors and deacons.

We read in I Corinthians 9:25, "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." Temperance here is the same thing as rigid self-control. It is something we are to practise in our Christian life of service to the Lord. Nothing, no habit, or detrimental practice should have a hold on us who are God's children. Too much to eat or drink is harmful as are many other practises that harm the body which is the temple of the Holy Ghost. Tobacco is a proven harmful substance that causes sickness in many and is responsible for many deaths each year. It is something we should not use, nor a habit that should not be tolerated in the body for whatever reason or excuse. To many in the secular world the use of tobacco is offensive and unhealthy apart from any religious reasoning. We are to take care of the temple of God just as we are to take care of all of God's gifts to us.

Secondly, Paul gives us a dissertation in I Corinthians 8:1-13 on our liberty in Christ and the fact that we must not use that liberty to offend, or be a stumblingblock to them that are weak. He uses the example of food offered to idols: and our liberty in all things, and he says, "But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are the better; neither if we eat not, are we the worse." (I Corinthians 8:8). He says in the next verse, "But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak" (I Corinthians 8:9). And finally at the end of the chapter he says, "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend" (I Corinthians 8:13). There are many people in the religious world who are offended by the use of tobacco. That is a valid reason also for not using tobacco. Yes, I know Spurgeon did use tobacco and I know that there are many who do so today in many churches. In my opinion these two reasons (one secular, one religious) are sufficient not to use

tobacco. I see no direct prohibition against a Christian using tobacco that would keep them from serving as deacons, but I believe that it is better not to use it. If it causes offense, we ought not to do it.

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Before attempting to answer this question I would like to say that over 42 years ago I was ordained to the office of deacon. At that time I was a user of tobacco (a pipe smoker), but as the use of tobacco was not at that time considered a "cardinal sin" as it is by some today, I was not questioned on that subject. Although I am no longer a user of tobacco, I must confess that my answer may be slightly biased.

Now, as to the answer of this question, we need to see what are the Scriptural qualifications for deacons. We find them listed in I Timothy in 3:8-13. If we consider the seven men chosen in Acts 6 to be deacons, their qualifications are also included. If the use of tobacco is prohibited in any of those qualifications I fail to find it. We know that the Scripture states that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit and we should do nothing that would harm that temple. We also know that the use of tobacco is often harmful to our bodies; but what is there that we eat, drink, or do, that is not harmful? Researchers come up with new things every day that are harmful to our health. Why then, select tobacco from all the other items that are harmful?

As the qualifications for deacons as given in I Timothy 3 are similar to those of bishops (pastors), if the use of tobacco prohibit men from the office of deacon it also prohibits them from becoming preachers. If this were so, Charles H. Spurgeon, Arthur W. Pink, and many well known preachers of former days, as well as many godly men whom I have known during my life time, would have been eliminated from that office.

If one can meet the conditions that are laid down in the Scripture for deacons, why add other conditions?

JOSHUA

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piece" (Neh. 3:5, 20).

"And it came to pass, when all the people were clean passed over, that the ark of the LORD passed over, and the priests, in the presence of the people. And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children of Israel as Moses spake unto them. About forty thousand prepared for war passed over before the LORD unto battle, to the plains of Jericho (Josh. 4:11-13).

This tells us the order in which they crossed over Jordan. The men of the tribes of Reuben and of Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh, about forty thousand

in all, prepared for war, led the way. These tribes had requested of Moses that they might have their inheritance on the east side of Jordan. Moses agreed to this on the condition that they would go on with their brethren and help them to possess the land. This they agreed to do. Therefore, leaving their families and cattle behind, they led the way across the river, "prepared for war." They were the fighting force that led the way.

"On that day the LORD magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they feared him, as they feared Moses, all the days of his life" (Josh. 4:14).

This great miracle not only displayed the mighty power of God in action but by it God magnified (exalted) Joshua in the sight of all the people, thereby, making good His promise which He had made to Joshua (3:7). We can be sure that God will never break one of His promises. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (I Thess. 5:24). We should always keep in mind the promise Christ made to His church, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). Also, "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee; so that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." (Heb. 13:6).

"And the LORD spake unto Joshua, saying, Command the priest that bare the ark of the testimony, that they come up out of Jordan. Joshua therefore commanded the priests, saying, Come ye up out of Jordan" (Josh. 4:15-17).

The priests bearing the ark had moved to the middle of the river bed and there stood firm until all the people, their cattle, and their possessions had all crossed over. They stood firm while the 12 men came back for the 12 stones. They stayed in place while Joshua built the memorial of stones in the middle of the river. They were still standing until they received the command to come out. Are they not an example for us today? Do we have the courage, the patience, the faith, to stand firm in the place in which God has placed us?

"And it came to pass, when the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD were come up out of the midst of Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up unto the dry land, that the waters of Jordan returned unto their place, and flowed over all his banks, as they did before." (Josh. 4:18).

When the priests had dipped the soles of their feet into the waters that morning, the water stopped flowing and the river bed became dry ground, while the priests stood with the ark in the middle of the river the people passed over. Now, as soon as the priests came up out of the river and the soles of their feet stepped onto land above the high water mark, the wall of water came down and again covered the river bed and flowed over the banks as before. Can you imagine the thoughts

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The Baptist Examiner Forum II

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

Explain John 20:23.

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We learn from the Scriptures that Christ forgives sins. Matthew 9:6. "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins...." This same truth is taught in Mark 2:10. There are many other Scriptures which show that Christ forgives sins.

The pharisees did not believe that Christ was God, therefore, in their sight He could not forgive sins. But it is true that a mere man cannot forgive sins, nor remove the guilt from the sinner nor his soul. Jesus is God's Son and God Himself and God in the flesh. Christ is the Son of man and can forgive sins. This doctrine is taught in Luke 5:24, "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house."

God the Father can forgive sins. Christ can forgive sins because He was and is God.

No man can forgive sins. Remission of sins is by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. To remit means to have our sins forgiven. Remission of sins comes by the blood of Jesus Christ. "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without the shedding of blood is no remission (Hebrews 9:22). Redemption is by the precious blood of Christ. "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers: But with the precious blood of Christ as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Peter 1:18-19).

We conclude, from the foregoing Scriptures, that remission of sins is of God. Since this is true, what is the meaning of the text in question?

In the first place, I do not believe that God has given man the power to forgive sins. The disciples did not attempt to forgive sins. This alone, shows to us that they understood what Christ meant. I believe that they understood Christ to be teaching them to preach Christ and the shedding of His blood for the remission of sins. They were to preach Christ Jesus, wherein is the remission of sins. In this way sins are remitted unto the believer.

In preaching Christ, the disciples themselves would not remit sins, but would be

presenting how or who could remit sins.

In this way those sinners who would not or could not repent and believe the preaching of the cross, their sins would be retained.

When John was preaching along the river Jordan, he baptized those who came to him that had confessed their sins. John did not remit their sins but it was through him that they found how sins are forgiven. "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them. O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come" (Matt. 3:7)? John did not actually retain their sins, but he was the instrument or the means whereby they learned that their sins had not been remitted. They showed no evidence of having had their sins remitted.

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While looking through several commentaries, I became very confused. Mark 2:7 tells us that only God can forgive sin. While Isaiah 43:25 tells us about the same thing. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." By this you can see that man cannot forgive sin. What does this verse mean then?

I believe that the Lord Jesus started the church in His earthly ministry. I believe that He took the material that John, the first Baptist preacher, had prepared through preaching and baptizing, and organized the first Baptist Church. I believe that He gave this church marching orders as we find in Matthew 28:18-20. He told the church in Matthew 18:18 "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Paul, who was an authority on the church and its actions, in giving instructions to the church at Corinth told them in I Corinthians 5:5 "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." This man had committed adultery with his step mother. Paul said in essence, get this man out of the church. After Satan works on him perhaps he will repent and come back into the church and ask them for forgiveness.

Excluding someone from church membership does not

mean that they are being put out of the Kingdom of God, but rather to let Satan sift them. Remember how Satan worked Job over to prove, or try to prove that Job would turn against God. It didn't work, Job came back strong. If one is really a child of God, he will come back and repent and be restored to full fellowship with God and the church. Paul says in Galatians 6:1, "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness he considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

The church is told to go to the fallen one and try to get him to come back to the church and repent. Matthew 18:15 says, "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." V-17 says, "And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

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"Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John 20:21-23). This portion of Scripture takes place after the resurrection, but before the Ascension of Jesus. Jesus appeared to his disciples ten times between His resurrection and His Ascension. He has appeared to His disciples as they are assembled behind closed doors in fear of the Jews. His appearance, at this time, was to instruct, to authorize, to commission the actions of those that He was leaving behind to carry on the work that He had started. He tells them that they will be sent, as the Father had sent Him, with the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to declare the gospel message. Compare this verse with the commission in Matthew 28:18-20.

One thing that this verse does not do is to give men the right to absolve sin. Absolution of sin is a right that belongs only to God. Any man that claims to have the ability to forgive sin is a usurper

of the power of God. No man, Rabbi, Priest, Preacher, or layman can presume to give men absolution for sins. God alone is the forgiver of sin. Any man that believes or places his trust in the absolution from sin by another man has been misled, or is just a fool.

This commission that Jesus is giving to His disciples tells them that, first of all, they are going to be sent out on a mission. A mission that is the same as the one on which the Father had sent the Son. To be able to complete the mission they are going to have the assistance of the Holy Ghost. In verse twenty two it says that Jesus breathed on them. The word breathed carries the meaning of inspiration. The Holy Ghost would be their inspiration in the carrying out of the commission they had been given.

Having been sent and properly inspired, they are to do what Jesus had done. Preach the gospel. When men hear the gospel, one of two things will happen; they will believe it, or they will reject it. When they believe, or receive, the Word of God concerning Jesus Christ, their sins are remitted (sent away) from them. They receive the imputed righteousness of Christ. They stand before God justified, just as if they had never sinned.

For those that reject, (refuse to hear) their sins are retained. Their sins are not, or have not been, borne by Christ. They are not remitted, they are retained. Those who reject or refuse do so because of the hardness of their hearts. Retained means that they still have hold of their sins. They are accountable for their sins, not Jesus. They are still charged with the guilt and the penalty of sin.

The power that is extended by the Lord in this verse is to preach or to declare the gospel to lost people concerning their sin, not the power to forgive them of that sin.

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I believe this verse is referring to Church discipline. Christ was speaking to His disciples as they assembled. He was laying the ground work prior to commissioning them to go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. He knew they needed instruction and authority in order to fulfil His work. He provided for the establishment of churches or assemblies giving them a form of government.

No assembly can continue without purpose or discipline. They will self-destruct. Jesus knowing all this gave His directive. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them: and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." (John 20:23). Compare this with Matthew 16:19, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind

on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." And Matthew 18:18, "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." In this Christ is granting authority to His Church to execute discipline; to charge or to forgive moral and doctrinal offences.

To guard against being misunderstood, allow me to say such charging or forgiving of offences has nothing to do with soul salvation. Only with one's standing in the assembly.

JOSHUA

(Continued from Page 4)

that must have passed through the minds of the Israelites as they stood on the West bank of Jordan and watched as the priests bearing the ark came out of the river bed and as soon as the soles of their feet reached high ground, down came the wall of water, filling the river bed and again over flowing "his banks as they did before"? They could look across to the other bank and think, "Just this morning we were on the other side, now we stand on the soil of the land that God had promised so long ago." It must have seemed to them like a dream. This was a new beginning for them. They were now in enemy territory, there was no turning back. God had given them the land but they must take possession of it. The only way they could do this was to be led by the Lord and faithfully follow His leadership. God had promised to drive out the enemy before them, but they must obey His commands. They must trust Him to lead the way. They had crossed Jordan by faith, likewise they must gain possession of the land by faith.

"And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and encamped in Gilgal, in the border of Jericho" (Josh. 4:19).

The Holy Spirit is very careful to tell us the exact month and day in which Israel crossed into the land. The tenth day of the first month was a day that the children of Israel were to remember and observe each year. It was on this day forty years before when they were commanded to separate a lamb without blemish from the flock and keep it up until the fourteenth day when it was to be killed and the blood was to be applied to the door posts. This was done because God had said, "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD" (Ex. 12:12). This Passover was to be observed as a memorial each year. God timed their entrance into the land so that they could begin their possession of the land by observing

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JOSHUA

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the Passover, "And the people came up out of Jordan on the tenth day of the first month."

After crossing Jordan Israel moved to Gilgal and set up camp. This was a distance of about two miles from Jordan and only about three miles from the city Jericho. It was while here that they prepared to go against the enemy, Jericho being the first stronghold to overcome. They were camped here for quite some time we shall see as we continue to study this book.

To be continued.

AVERAGE

(Continued from Page 1)

was saved under the ministry of Brother Seeker. He is a spiritual man, but is generally voted down by the majority of the members.

Deacon Will Resistall: He can be counted on to always be against any and everything that is truly spiritual that is proposed in the church.

Deacon Watchdog: He feels appointed to harass and hinder the pastor's work. He seldom, if ever, prays for his pastor, but is always critical of him.

Treasurer "Cling" Tightfist: He thinks that the church money is his, and he never wants to spend it unless it is absolutely necessary. He would prefer that all missionary support be dropped, and the money put instead in a savings account "where it could do some good."

Mr. Heza Helrazer: The church's resident trouble-maker. He is unable to get along with anyone but his wife, but they work together well so long as she is allowed to make all the decisions.

Mrs. Ima Helrazer: The wife of Heza. She is a typical woman's libber.

Mrs. Constance Flaptongue: The Church gossip. She will even manufacture gossip if none is available. She spends much of her time on the telephone, but never in prayer.

Mr. N.T. (nicknamed "Anti") Mission: He resists all gospel work except the local preaching, and he only tolerates this.

Mr. Fearful Faithless: He is always crying calamity, and is sure that the church is going to fold up anytime because it does not maintain at least \$50,000 in reserve.

Mrs. Queenie Runitall: She must be the center of everything in the church or she pouts and refuses to attend or support the church. She is well to do, and so, uses her liberal offerings as a lever to get her own way.

Mrs. Emma Tate: She thinks the church should conform its activities to what all the other churches in town are doing, and never differ from them. She seldom reads the Word of God. She is a sister to the last pastor, I. L. Backdown.

Mr. Dick Tate: He is the husband of Emma, and a strong-willed man who always insists on having his own way in all

things. He is another well to do member who uses his offerings to influence the way things go.

Mr. Speck Tate: The eldest son of Dick and Emma. He is a grown man, but never takes any part in any of the church activities, but prefers to just watch what goes on, and to criticize anything that seems the least bit wrong.

Mr. Ro Tate: The brother of Dick. He equates change with progress, and so he is always wanting to change things around. He likes to see both pastors and deacons changed every year or two, no matter how good a job they may do.

Mrs. Agi Tate: The wife of Ro. She is another one of the trouble-makers in the church. She is never happy when the church is at peace, and if there is trouble abrewing, you can be sure that she is involved.

Mr. Irri Tate: Another of those who constantly stir up the other members of the church. Because of his lack of concern for others, he has the ability to make people angry just by walking through the room.

Mr. Hesi Tate: A man of weak faith, he always fears to do anything for the Lord, and so, is one of those generally on the sidelines just watching.

Mrs. Vegi Tate: Like her husband Hesi, she too is a staunch practioner of donthingism. Since she never takes any part in the church services, she is more a fixture than a member.

Mr. Devas Tate: Always the one to stand up in a business meeting and throw cold water on any plans the church has for Revival, Mission work, Remodelling, etc.

Mr. Poten Tate: A man who has a royalty complex, and would like to be a big shot and run everything in the church. He is a twin brother to Mrs. Queenie Runitall.

The Just B. Long family. Another rather large family in the church. These take no active part in any church activities, and but for their names being on the church roll, they would be unknown to be members. The only time they ever attend is when the church is to vote on disciplinary action against negligent members, or some other unpopular matter. Then these will appear to vote with other unspiritual members against any spiritual decisions.

However, not all the members of this church are unspiritual members nor are even all of the Tates bad people. The following are some of the good members.

Mr. Medi Tate: Another of Brother Sainly Seeker's converts, he is a great student of the Bible, and therefore knows how to speak a fit word in its season. He and his wife are great assets to the church.

Mrs. Felici Tate: The wife of Medi, a sweet spirited woman, who by her spirituality makes everyone happy, and sets a great Christian example.

Mr. Cogi Tate: The twin brother of Medi. He is a great thinker, and always seems to come up with the best and most spiritual ideas about how the church should do things.

Mrs. Facili Tate: The wife of Cogi. She is also a great practical Christian, and is one of the workhorses in the church, always taking the jobs that no one else wants, and doing them well.

Mrs. Humble Prayerwarrior: A quiet and unobtrusive person, but

one of the real pillars in the church. She was also saved under Brother Sainly Seeker's Ministry.

Mr. Mission Minded: A great hearted man who would like to see the church support every missionary who comes by. He is not a well to do man because he gives so much of his income to missions.

The less spiritual of the Tate families, like most large, related groups in a church, tend to try to run things to suit themselves, without regard to whether it is Scriptural or spiritual, and their attitude is "We can run things to suit ourselves if we will just stick together."

Dear Reader: Do you recognize yourself in this list?

WHAT DOTH

(Continued from Page 1)

and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic. 6:8).

All of us who are Christians would do well to think at length on the words written by the prophet as he was inspired of God. Is it possible that too often we overlook an important aspect of our Christian experience as we strive to serve our God? Allow me to be bold enough to ask this question of you (and of me as well). What doth the Lord require of thee? God gives us our answer in the above Scripture. We are to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. There are, of course, many other commandments in God's Word that we should obey which is implied by the opening of this verse, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good."

The entirety of God's Word is good. There is nothing in the Bible that is of no value to the reader, therefore we benefit as we prayerfully read and meditate upon His Word. Let us then examine just what it is that God requires from us in light of the above text. We may study these requirements in the three-fold order in which they are outlined in our text. The first of which is to "do justly."

Justly is an adverb of the word "just" which according to my Greek concordance means to fulfill all claims which are right and becoming. A right state (of which God and His Word is the standard) so that no fault or defect can be charged. Christians have an obligation to God and to man to do justly so that no one can justly charge us with willful misconduct. It is a very serious matter when Christians take too lightly their responsibilities to live above-board. We should be honest with our money, our tithes, and how we treat others. To do justly certainly involves a wide realm of ethical standards.

It would seem that many Christians can justify almost anything to accomplish their goals, even if it means lying and deceiving others to do it. Where is the God-given desire for integrity among our brethren? Christian folk, and especially preachers, should be just. They should be fair-minded and honest with those with whom they have to deal. It is a matter of integrity that is too often lacking among many of God's people. We read in Isaiah 26:7, "The way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just." Surely, God judges His people on

their honesty and uprightness. Is it possible that Christians, including pastors and preachers, have lied and deceived to avoid personal responsibility of fault and blame? Yes, I must say I think it is not only possible, but it often happens. We have far too much broken fellowship among our churches today because of a great lack of integrity among many of God's people, especially preacher. We fail in God's requirement to "do justly."

We should strive to be like the Apostle Paul, when he wrote to the Corinthians; "Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man" (II Cor. 7:2). He again wrote of his aim in "Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (II Cor. 8:21). Oh, that God's people would be more like the Apostle Paul with a greater desire to provide for honest things before God and men.

Now let us look into the second requirement of God from our text: we are "to love mercy." We read in II Samuel 22:26, "With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright." And again in Matthew 5:7, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." My friend, we, as Christians, should always stand ready to show mercy, yes, even to those who may have been guilty of causing grief to us through lies or deceit. We should show mercy with no conditions attached. The apparent problem to the accomplishment of showing mercy to one another is often pride. We are too proud to admit our fault. It is much easier to go on in broken fellowship than to seek restoration with a brother or a church. We should be reminded of Jesus' words to His disciples in Matthew 5:23,24, "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

I wonder if it could be that many times our churches fail to grow and prosper, because of pride and a haughty spirit? Is it perhaps that the Lord requires something? Something that would bring reconciliation? To love mercy should bring a desire for reconciliation.

We must recognize however that true reconciliation can only be accomplished if the two parties want reconciliation and believe in the need to unite in fellowship. It is sad to think that men and women who are sound in the faith and doctrines of the Bible and profess to love God and His people will not make any effort to restore fellowship. It is the old Adam nature of man manifesting its ugly and stubborn head rather than the new nature of Christ which desires true Christian fellowship and love. It is

this Adam nature that makes men proud and haughty and unwilling to yield their stubborn will to be right even when the evidence reveals otherwise.

It must be obvious that Christian fellowship is a two-way street. As the Scripture verse in II Samuel tells us, "With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful..." Brother, if I want mercy shown to me, I must be merciful to others. If I want to be loved, I must show love to others. If I want to be forgiven, I must also be willing to forgive. Is this not the Christian character the Lord requires of us? We must, of course, take exception to fellowship at any cost. We cannot and must not have to do with some who have erred from the truth of the Bible; those who in recent years are teaching different from that which Baptists have held strongly to through the ages.

This brings us to the third and final requirement of God from our text which is "to walk humbly with thy God." Humility! A highly desirable characteristic of a Christian. It is something often spoken about, preached about and, I suppose, even bragged about by some. Perhaps if this Christian characteristic prevailed more we would have less problems with the other two mentioned; that is, to do justly and to love mercy. We certainly should walk humbly with our God. We read again from His Word in Isaiah 57:15, "...I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." Surely God's people could stand some reviving. We schedule revivals once or twice a year and bring in a guest speaker to get us revived, but are we truly revived? The above verse says, "...to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." We often fail to be revived because our spirit is not right with God. It can't be right with God when we harbor anger or even hatred for a brother.

Another problem to church fellowship is jealousy among many preachers. Yes, believe it or not I have heard of preachers at Bible conferences who compete for first place and become upset if someone should overly compliment a brother preacher on his sermon. This does not show humility. It is childish behavior that should never exist in Baptist pulpits. Could I have an amen on that? Practicing humility would correct this problem, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves." (Php. 2:3).

I think what has been said thus far brings us back to the matter of walking in integrity; to be honest with yourself, your brother and with God. May we be reminded that God requires us to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with Him? Amen.

AN APOLOGY

The great poem "Xmas" in our December 21st issue was written by Sister Kathryn Parrish. Our apology to her for omitting this.

THE LAW AS AN INSTRUMENT

The true knowledge of God constrains us to worship Him, and that the true knowledge of self leads to genuine humility and self-abasement. The law is the instrument which the Lord uses to bring about both these results: by asserting therein His right to command, He calls us to pay Him the reverence due to His majesty; and by setting before us the standard of His righteousness, He shows us our unrighteousness and impotence. Moreover, the things which are taught in the tables of the law are also taught by that inward law which is written on the tables of every man's heart; for our conscience does not allow us to sleep an unbroken sleep, but inwardly testifies to us of the claims of God and of the difference between right and wrong. But since this inward law is insufficient, through our ignorance, pride, and self-love, God has given us also the plainer and surer testimony of the written law. From the law we learn that God, being our Creator, justly claims all that is due to a Father and a Master, namely, honor, reverence, love and fear: that we are not our own masters, at liberty to follow the desires of our own mind without regard to His good pleasure: finally, that He loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity, and that we therefore must follow after righteousness in the whole course of our life unless we would be guilty of impious ingratitude to our Maker. Nor can we rightly excuse ourselves by alleging our inability to keep His law, seeing that the glory of God must not be measured by the extent of our powers, and that the sin which causes our inability lies within our own heart and is righteously imputed to us alone.

--John Calvin

HOW OLD

(Continued from Page 1)

ago. The roots of the old time religion can be traced back to the days of John Wesley and Charles Finney, two revivalistic (so-called) ministers of the early eighteenth century. It must be granted that these two ministers were used of God to help spread the gospel message, but I have often wondered if the ideals and doctrines which they espoused did more harm than good in the long run. If one but reads a church history book he will soon see that these two men were directly responsible for the beginnings of the modern day "revivalistic" techniques and philosophies.

It was to John Wesley that the dubious title of the most successful advocate of Arminianism was given. It was because of his preaching that the doctrines of the Arminians became so widespread; particularly in the so-called Bible Belt. Prior to his ministry(?) those doctrines which held that the free-will of man was the means or procuring eternal salvation were only held by a minority within the Protestant world. His "free-will theory" and his "perfectionism philosophy" spread like wildfire (or should I say cancer). Because of this, the true teachings of the Bible concerning God's absolute sovereignty began to be supplanted among the ignorant

masses by the lies concerning the freedom of man's choice and man's control of his own destiny.

Shortly after the outbreak of the free-will scourge among the religious people, a young lawyer from New York by the name of Charles Finney, burst upon the religious scene of the day. Although he was noted for his (presumed) spirituality, once again, as in Wesley's case, the false ideas and doctrines which he taught far outweighed the good which he might have accomplished. It is to his discredit that we can trace that most un-Scriptural contraption called the mourners-bench. Here, on this bench, the individual who thought that he might like the Christian religion would go and sit during the revival services. He would sit and endeavor, through human effort, to work-up some type of an emotional experience which would be accepted by the church as salvation. It was at this time also that the before unheard of custom of the altar call was invented by the revivalists. This institution is still practiced in many religious organizations (I fear to give these organizations the title "church," for they are very far from what the name implies). Soft, emotion laden music was (is) played: the minister used (uses) all the hard-sell techniques he could employ to drag the last sinner from his seat down to an old-fashioned altar where they could pray through to salvation. (Arminian style). I have heard so-called preachers, in their religious frenzy, say that they would use any method that it took to try to save souls.

The trouble with those dear people who say that they have the old time religion is that what they have is not old at all. They should go back farther than they do, to the truths of the Holy Bible if they want to have the real old time religion. They should go back to what Jesus said concerning God's power to save whom so ever He will, when so ever He will in any manner He wills instead of going back to some man-made religious theory that says that man must decide... must choose... must be willing to be saved. The real old time religion says "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him..." (John 6:44). "Thy people shall be willing in the day of his power..." (Psalm 110:3). "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." (Rom. 9:18).

I am afraid that what many call the old time religion is nothing more than attributing to man more power than God, and of committing the same sin that Nimrod committed, that of trying to reach God by his own works and efforts. If those people want to go back to those days of the man made religion of Nimrod, then I guess they can call their religion old-time, but please don't let them call it Christianity. Yes, these people have some type of religion all right. I can't deny that, but the fact is that mere religion has deceived more people than any other thing in the world.

For a long time I claimed to be an old time Christian as these dear people do, yet when God in His mercy and grace shined the truth of His absolute sovereignty over all things into my heart, I cast aside that man made religion and began to enjoy the salvation that comes from God.

ONCE

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has fulfilled the promise made by Him as to the taking away our sins.

The Once of Limitation

Hebrews 9:6-7, "Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people." Exodus 30:10, "Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it is most holy unto the LORD." The high priest could only enter the holiest of all one day in the year, though he went in several times on that one day. Once each year he must go in to offer the sin offering. That fact signified that no final offering for sin was made and that the offerings that were made could not cleanse the conscience.

Now, none but the high priest could go in, and he must go alone and he must not enter without blood, signifying the coming Christ. But the guilt upon the conscience cannot be washed away but by the blood of Christ.

The Once of Completion

Hebrews 9:11-12, "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption..." Christ has entered into the holiest once for all times, His atoning work is complete. Mark also the contrast: Christ entered in with His own blood. Not only was He the High Priest, but also the Lamb. Here we have the completed sacrifice and Christ entering heaven. Note this also, the reason for the above; He was and is the more perfect tabernacle, one not made by human hands, but His own body. He is not only our Saviour, but our Tabernacle, our High Priest, and our Lamb of God which takes away our sin. He has entered into heaven once for all. He has obtained not a yearly respite, but eternal redemption.

Once of Manifestation

Hebrews 9:24-26, "Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Note: "but now once in the end of the world

hath He appeared." Why? "to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." Christ was hidden behind the veil of His God-head before His incarnation, but He is God manifest in the flesh. Again, ponder the purpose of His appearing, it was to "put away sin," which kept man from God, and God from man.

The legal sacrifices could not of themselves put away sin, neither procure pardon for sin, nor power against sin. Sin would still have lain upon us, and had dominion over us; but Jesus Christ, by one sacrifice, has made an end of sin, He has destroyed the works of the devil. That brings us to the next two.

The Once of Condemnation

The Once of Substitution

Hebrews 9:27-28, "...as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Death on account of sin, and judgment for sin, are the common heritage for the natural man. But notice, "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." I Peter 2:24, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." Those that believe in Christ, and know Him personally as their Savior and Lord, are not looking for death or judgment, but for His second coming, because Christ has stood in their place and borne the judgment for them. "As it is appointed unto men once to die." But, "once Christ bear the sins of many," so we look for the second time of His coming. So that our full salvation shall be body and soul.

In His first coming Christ dealt with sin once for all; in His second coming He will take redeemed sinners to Himself in the consummation of their salvation. That is the completion of all of His promises.

The Once of Being Purified

The Once of Being Sanctified

Hebrews 10:1-2, "...the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins." The sacrifices under the Levitical law were only effectual in atoning for the sin of the past year, and even then could not give a cleansed conscience; but Christ has, once and for ever, dealt with the question of sin in the penal aspect. Hence the believer is no longer a condemned criminal at the bar of justice, but a child in the family of God, with a perfect conscience, because the believer is freed from guilt by the blood of Christ. Here in this chapter the writer, I do not know who was the human author, I do not believe it was Paul, emphasizes the finality of Christ's sacrifice by contrasting it with the lack of finality of the Old Testament system of law and sacrifice. Christ's redemption needs no repetition and no supplementation. Therefore, a rejection

of His sacrifice is final, and leads to hell fire. But now take note of Hebrews 10:9-10, "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God..." He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second. By God's will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." Hebrews 13:12, "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." Also Jesus said in John 17:19, "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." The blood of Christ, which is the purchase price of our salvation is also the means of our separation to God. As those who are sanctified in Christ to God, which is our privilege, we are responsible to be separate in heart and life to the Lord in all things. We do not seek to be saintly, to become saints, but as saints we are to do those things that are consistent with our calling.

In I Corinthians 1:2, "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." Note that the words "to be" are in italics, so we read "called saints." For that reason Paul writes in Ephesians 5:3, "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints." This is all by the will of God, but is by Christ doing the will of God in becoming the sacrifice for sin.

Hebrews 10:14, "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." For all time those who are sanctified, are perfected, or those who are perfected are sanctified. Perfected - to bring to completion, finished, complete, excellent. All this is by the "once" of the blood of Christ. For all times - never to be done again, in this we can rest. For Jesus has done it all, not by the works of man, nor by any righteousness of man, but "once" by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Is He your Lord and Saviour, your High Priest, your Lamb of God that takes away your sin? May it be so! Without Him there is no other offering for sin. By the blood of Christ we are free from guilt! Will you not be free today?

ACTS

(Continued from Page 1)

when it was learned that he had escaped to Cesarea. Their only hope in having Paul returned to them rested in the hands of the governor.

The high-priest and the elders, in an effort to persuade the governor to turn Paul over to them, secured the services of an orator whose name was Tertullus. Tertullus is a Roman name and therefore a Roman orator. He, as

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ACTS

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an orator, had the power and skill of a public speaker. We can be sure that he was more able to present the case to Felix since he was well versed in the law of the Romans. The Jews with the help of Tertullus, felt that they would soon have Paul in their hands and on the road back to Jerusalem for trial.

"And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, We accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness" (Acts 24:2,3).

The praise which Tertullus heaped upon Felix was not all flattery, since Felix had been instrumental in sustaining peace and quietness in the area. He, in fact, had arranged for the arrest of a band of robbers along with Eleazer as their leader. He had sent them to Rome for punishment (Jos. Antiq., b. xx ch. viii). He had also arranged for the arrest of an Egyptian false prophet who had led four thousand men out into the wilderness with the purpose of threatening the peace and well being of Judea (Acts 21:38). Felix had also repressed a sedition which had arisen between the inhabitants of Cesarea and Syria (Jos. Jewish Wars, b. 11. ch. xiii 2). The above fell under the category of "worthy deeds" to which Tertullus referred. The result of which was "great quietness" for the nation. We therefore can be sure that Felix did not feel that he was being flattered by Tertullus. He, no doubt, felt that he had earned all that was being said in his behalf.

Tertullus proceeded by praising the "providence" of Felix, that is, his skill, foresight, and vigilance. He advised Felix that his foresight and action had not gone without great notice and appreciation. We are to understand, then, that Tertullus truly was an excellent orator and that the Jews had been wise (humanly speaking) in choosing him. They, however, were doomed to fail, since their cause was unjust and in opposition to God. Let us not forget that the Lord Jesus had already promised Paul that he was to be His witness in Rome.

Paul's future appeared to be dark since the Jews, by way of Tertullus, had presented themselves well to Felix and because Felix was a fellow who could not be trusted. We know, in fact, from the writing of Josephus how Felix hired thugs to have people killed. Jonathan the high-priest was one of the people that he had killed (Antiq. b. xx. ch. viii. 5). We may say that Paul, humanly speaking, was in the "lion's den", or the "fiery furnace".

"Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee, I pray thee that thou wouldest hear us of thy clemency a few words" (Acts 24:4).

We, as we continue to read the speech made by Tertullus, can understand why he was chosen to speak in the behalf of the Jews. It

is obvious that he had a good understanding of human nature. He knew that the natural man likes praise as much as a cat likes warm milk. Tertullus, therefore, made his requests for Paul's condemnation with great skill. The Lord Jesus, on the other hand, found the words of Tertullus to have a vile odor to them. It was an odor which Tertullus tried to perfume with sweet words. The Lord Jesus saw the words of Tertullus as a flattery in that Tertullus was slapping Felix on the back in an effort to get him to swallow his words. We can be sure that there are a multitude like Tertullus in the world today. Many of these Tertullus fall under the category of false preachers.

"For we have found this man a pestilent fellow and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes" (Acts 24:5).

I understand that the Greek word "pestilent", as used in our text, refers to the very pestilence itself. Paul, as far as the unbelieving Jews were concerned, was similar to a plague of locusts in every area in which he had visited. Let us not forget that God the Spirit was the power behind the Apostle Paul. This fact means that the charges placed against Paul were actually placed against God so that their fight was with God rather than Paul.

Tertullus, when referring to Paul as a "mover of sedition", had reference to the uproar Paul had caused by preaching that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead. The Jews had murdered Jesus and buried Him, and it was their earnest hope that His name and works be buried beside Him. Paul's message, on the other hand, was that the Messiah whom they had put to death was alive. Paul informed the Jews that the person they had murdered was indeed the Messiah—the one who had fulfilled all their laws and who was the substance of all the shadows which had been cast in the Old Testament teachings.

Tertullus also charged Paul with being a "ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes". It is from the word "sect" that we get the word "heresy".

The name "Nazarene" was a name given to Christians out of contempt. Jesus, after all, was from Nazareth. We have, then, Paul being charged with being the "ringleader" relative to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. I'm sure that Paul would have been proud to have been called such a "ringleader". That which he taught, however, was the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

"Who also hath gone about to profane the temple; whom we took, and would have judged according to our law" (Acts 24:6).

The Jews from Asia, according to Acts 21:28, had accused Paul of profaning the temple by taking Trophimus the Greek into it. They did not have a shred of evidence to confirm their charge, yet they presented such to the governor of the land as if it were a fact. They, therefore, were the ones who needed to be judged rather than the Apostle Paul.

"But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands" (Acts 24:7).

Tertullus, by his statement, did not give the governor all the facts. He, in fact, did not advise the governor that the Pharisees and the Sadducees were in the process of pulling Paul into at least two parts. This was because the Pharisees were trying to save his life while the Sadducees wanted him dead. The soldiers obviously used a lot of force in freeing Paul, since Tertullus termed their action as "great violence". It appears that the soldiers laid some strong hands upon many members of the Sanhedrin.

"Commanding accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him" (Acts 24:8).

We have before us a very high level meeting—a meeting where the participants were confident that the destiny of Paul was in their hands. Paul, however, had he chosen to do so, could have made the same statement that our Lord made as quoted from the following passage of scripture.

"Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above..." (John 19:11).

Our Lord had appeared to Paul and advised him to be of "good cheer" for he was to be His witness in Rome after all of these proceedings had ended. All Israel was against God's promise to Paul and they were trying to make Felix of the same mind. The promise, then, was being buried deeper and deeper beneath the shovels of dirt, or charges which men were placing against him. Paul, then, could only have been of "good cheer" if he, by faith, believed the promise. He, in other words, needed to believe in order to see rather than see to believe. We know from Hebrews 11:1 that such is the essence of faith.

We are also to be of "good cheer" since our Lord's promise to us is, **"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"**.

"And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so" (Acts 24:9).

The Jews, by their assent, assented to four lies. These were as follows: that Paul was a "pestilent fellow": that he was a mover of sedition among all Jews throughout the world: that he was a "ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes": that he had "gone about to profane the temple." It is bad enough for anyone to lie, but lies are greater and have a weightier effect when committed by men with the position of those who are before us. They, in their position, were to have been great examples to their constituents as to how men ought to conduct themselves. They, however, were examples of all that is evil. **"Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, Foreasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself" (Acts 24:10).**

Felix, since he had been a judge over Judea for five years, was well acquainted with the habits and customs of the Jewish people. He, no doubt, during his five year reign, had sat in judgment over a variety of conflicts in Israel. It was for this reason that Paul expressed confidence in his ability to pass judgment.

Tertullus had wrapped his presentation to the judge with flattering remarks. Paul, on the other hand, sought judgment from Felix on the basis of his many years of experience as a judge.

The high priest and his cohorts obtained the service of Tertullus so as to make a better presentation to Felix. Paul, on the other hand, because of the experience of Felix, chose to answer for himself. Let us, however, not forget that Paul was a trained lawyer, having been trained at the feet of Gamaliel. I doubt, therefore, that Tertullus, humanly speaking, was any match for Paul. There was no way that Tertullus could match wits with Paul since Paul had God the Spirit as his helper.

Let us remember, too, that the Sanhedrin, at an earlier date, had Paul employed as their lawyer. His responsibility as their lawyer was to ferret out heresy where ever he found it. Paul, therefore, could not have done better than to have answered for himself.

SIN

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sage of Scripture and warped it or gotten from it a distorted idea of the Bible's teachings as to hell; or they have taken some preacher's views as to the Bible's teachings on the subject.

For example, here is a boy fifteen years of age, whose mother died when he was an infant, whose father is a drunkard and gambler and infidel who has given the boy but little moral training; and here is a man seventy years of age who had a noble father and mother, who gave their boy every advantage, the best of training, under the best of influences; yet he when a boy turned away from all these influences and spent his life in sin and debauchery, and in leading others into sin. These two, the unfortunate boy and the old hardened sinner, die. With many the idea is that God consigns them to a common punishment in hell. But, reader, remember that God is just; and if that is justice, what would injustice be? They were different in light and in opportunity and in sins, and yet punished alike? The Bible does not teach it.

But let us go back and consider this question of sin. **"All have sinned."** That includes you, reader. **"...to him that KNOWETH to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).** All have done this, have failed to live up to the light they have had; hence, **"...all have sinned..."**

Two questions arise: first, ought sin to be punished? Second, ought all sin to be punished, or only the coarser, grosser, more offensive sins?

As to the first, ought sin to be punished? There is a strong drift toward the teaching that sin ought to be punished only for the purpose of reforming the sinner. Intelligent men endorse this teaching without realizing that it is spiritual anarchy and absolutely horrible and detestable.

A woman and four little children are murdered in cold blood by three robbers for the purpose of robbing the home. When the three are arrested, the first is found to be thoroughly penitent, thoroughly reformed, broken-hearted, over his horrible crime. If sin should be punished only to reform the sinner, this man

should not be punished at all, though he murdered five people in cold blood; for he is already reformed. The second is such a hardened criminal that he never can be reformed, and the more he is punished the more hardened he will become. Then if sin is punished only to reform the sinner, he should not be punished at all, though guilty of the murder of five people in cold blood. The third is tender-hearted and easily influenced, and by sending him to prison for thirty days, he will be thoroughly reformed, though guilty of five coldblooded murders. On this principle of punishing sin only to reform the sinner, all a sinner would have to do to make sure of heaven would be to become such a hardened sinner that he could never be reformed, and then he would go to heaven without any punishment at all.

People need to call a halt to realize that sin ought to be punished because it is right to punish it, because it is just. But this means the punishment of all sins, the sins of the refined as surely as the sins of the debased, the smaller sins as surely as the greater sins. Hence the teaching of God's Word, Romans 1:18: **"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men..."** But we need to keep in mind that it is discriminating wrath, and God's Word makes this plain. Hebrews 2:2: **"...every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward..."** **"...a just God..." (Isa. 45:21)-** Many sneer at a "God of wrath" and say they believe in a "God of all love." God is love, but He is just as surely a God of wrath; and were He not a God of wrath, He would not be God, but a fiend. He who loves purity and chastity and has no wrath against impurity and unchastity; but loves them, too, is a moral leper. He who loves the defense of the poor and the helpless, but has no wrath against the cold-blooded murderer, the one crushing the defenseless, but loves him, too, is a fiend. Character, from God to devil, can only be told by what one loves and what one hates.

Notice how clearly the Saviour teaches this same great truth. Matthew 11:20-24: **"Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you, and thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."** Notice, "more tolerable."

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SIN

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difference in punishment. The same teaching Jesus gives in Mark 12:40: "...these shall receive greater damnation." Jesus revealed to show God's judgment of a difference in sin. John 19:11: "...he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."

And Paul teaches the same, Galatians 6:7: "...whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," the reaping according to the sowing.

Let the reader notice the clear teaching: the punishment of sin will be graded, first, according to light and opportunity. A writer, a great scientist, held that heredity and environment largely determine one's destiny. That is what Jesus taught. The people of Sodom were more wicked than those of Capernaum, but heredity and environment were against them. The people of Capernaum had not sinned so terribly as the people of Sodom, but they had more light and opportunity; they had better heredity, better environment; Jesus said that therefore the people of Capernaum shall be punished more severely than the people of Sodom. And that is right; that is just.

Those to whom Jesus spoke were born under better conditions than those of Sodom; they grew up under better conditions than those of Sodom; they grew up under more favorable surroundings; hence, they were more responsible; hence, they are to receive greater punishment at the judgment. Apply to your own case, reader: for every added ray of light, for every added opportunity, there will be that much added punishment for your sins. And that is just; that is right. The opportunities that wealth brings, the light that education and culture bring, will but add to the punishment at the judgment. The most highly educated, the most refined, the most wealthy, those who have lived under the most favorable influences, will suffer most at the judgment.

But punishment will be further graded by the number of the sins. "...every transgression received a just recompense." Hence, the more one sins, the greater the punishment. If one knew that he was going to hell, corrupt human nature would say, "Sin and enjoy while you live," but reason and Scripture would say "Stop! add no more to the degree of hell."

Punishment for sin will be further graded by the character of sin. "...he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." While a small sin is just as surely sin as a great sin, yet God recognizes degrees in sin, and as a consequence, there are degrees in the punishment of sin. Following from degrees in the punishment of sin comes inevitably the fact that no wrong will be done any one at the judgment; that no one will be treated wrong in hell. He who fears only injustice and wrong, has nothing to fear from the judgment or in hell.

Two reflections for the reader: If you have heretofore rebelled against the idea of future punishment, what can you say when now you see that God will make all just allowance for surroundings and conditions, and will take into consideration the number and kinds of sins? God has a right to have laws; His laws are right; a

law without a penalty amounts to no law; the penalty, God assures us, will be absolutely just. What can you say when you stand before such a judge and receive such a sentence?

The other reflection for the reader: Let not this teaching of the Bible lead you into thinking that hell, then will not be so terrible after all, and that you need not fear it. Instead of letting it allay all dread of the future, it is enough to make the blood run cold through your veins; for those who will have the most terrible suffering will be the most enlightened, the most cultured.

Another thought: Not some far distant, cold, harsh, unsympathetic God will be the judge at the judgment day, but the Lord Jesus, "...touched with the feeling of our infirmities," will be the one who will judge you and condemn you and give you your just degree of punishment in hell. Hear Him in John 5:22: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." Peter reveals the same fact, Acts 10:42: "And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." Remember, that He whom the world praises as so good, so just, so discriminating, so loving, so tender, will be the judge at the great day, who will pronounce each sentence. Oh, reader, the very fact that the Lord Jesus will be the judge is absolute proof that no one will be treated wrong, that no one will be punished unjustly in hell; and the bare possibility that He may pronounce your eternal doom is enough to cause you to turn today. "...turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?..."

DIVIDED

(Continued from Page 1)

began to reign, and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Jehoaddan of Jerusalem. And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, but not with a perfect heart" (II Chron. 25:1-2). We believe that something very important is found in this text that has a direct bearing upon us today in many instances. Something of great importance is found in this text, especially verse two. We need to examine ourselves in our own daily fight with faith, to better understand our short-comings.

This short Scripture quoted above shows us that one can do great things through the Lord without being totally surrendered to it with one's heart. For this reason it is essential to take a closer look at not only what we do, but how we do it. Do we serve the Lord with all our hearts? That is the question. God's highest interest is always aimed at our hearts according to I Samuel 16:7, these words: "But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him; for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD

looketh on the heart." (I Sam. 16:7). Therewith we know that the Lord proves our hearts and sees how we fulfill our tasks. If one is naturally gifted and talented he may accomplish much, even two or three times as much as others. But in all the work, God sees the motive of our hearts.

Let us take a look at a deceptive backsliding heart from God's point of view. In the Old Testament we find that men and women served the Lord with all of their hearts at first, but after a period of time they backslid because their hearts were not totally surrendered unto the Lord. King Solomon was a warning example. He loved the Lord with all his heart at first, but in his old age we read a terrible statement about him. "For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father" (I Kings 11:4). He still was a believer, he still was the king, he still prayed, and he still served the Lord; yet because of his not perfect heart, God's promise to Solomon, and with him to all Israel, could not be fulfilled. They were torn apart, two tribes and ten tribes. Originally Israel was one. With the mighty hand of God they were redeemed from slavery in Egypt. God, Himself, the Lord, led them in the form of a pillar of fire through their wanderings in the desert. They experienced great signs, wonders, and even victories; but, nevertheless, the Lord had to complain about their divided hearts. "When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways." (Heb. 3:9-10) The result of the error of their hearts was first that their hearts were hardened, and finally they died in the desert. This terrible tragedy is given to us believers in the New Covenant as a warning because a person with a divided heart will backslide so far until it is pathetic. He becomes diabolical. Then he goes hunting, he strays, he becomes no longer useful to the Lord because he is searching elsewhere for his support. Then he has reached the point where the heart is no longer receptive to the call of the Holy Spirit to total surrender.

Children of God who have a divided heart are unable to listen, one cannot talk to them anymore because of a divided heart, which is an abomination to the Lord. Such a heart is on the same level with the churches named in Revelation 3:15-16. "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev. 3:15-16) I believe that in these readings, in this study, we can see at least six horrible signs that we should be fully aware of in these trying times of today as we are fastly approaching the return of our Lord.

We believe that a divided heart is an end time symptom. Such believers appear to be very good Christians, but getting to know them, and have fellowship with

them prove that their tongue has been put on fire from hell. James talked about this. "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell" (James 3:6). They begin to be formed into the image of the false prophet of which we read in Revelation 13-11. "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon" (Rev. 13:11). He was portraying two personalities with a divided heart, one a lamb, the other as a beast.

We believe also that divided hearts can never experience the victory of Jesus Christ in its fullness. That doesn't change the fact of one's salvation. If he was ever saved, he still is, thanks to an able God and His promises. You see, Jesus gave His all for us, He was not divided. When we try to serve Him with a divided heart, my beloved, we are widely missing the mark! When we do this we are trying to compromise, and by so doing, we are ever so widely missing the mark that He would have us to show it by facing the issue squarely without trying to serve Him half-heartedly, or, with the divided heart that does not please Him in the first place. Beloved, a divided heart is nothing less than an abomination. He gave His all, why can't we? "Seeing you have purified your soul in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (I Pet. 1:22). There is no way to do that with a divided heart.

A person who will practice a divided heart has two personalities. He must constantly camouflage himself to look differently than he in actual fact is. He acts as if he is someone that he is not. Such a one is described in Psalm 62:4, this way; "They only consult to cast him down from his excellency: they delight in lies: they bless with their mouth, but they curse inwardly" (Ps. 62:4).

Yet another passage of Scripture reads like this, showing an altogether different story. "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself" (Dan. 1:8). We note here that his heart was strongly for the will of the Lord, not divided, because it was a pure heart. Jesus said; "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8).

There are reasons why a divided heart is an abomination unto the Lord. If we read carefully, and studiously, with our daily Bible reading, we will see a lot of this divided heart problems way back there among those people of those days as well as today. "Woe unto them! for they have fled from me: destruction unto them! because they have transgressed against me: though I have redeemed them, yet they have spoken lies

against me. And they have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their beds: they assemble themselves for corn and wine, and they rebel against me. Though I have bound and strengthened their arms, yet do they imagine mischief against me. They return, but not to the most High: they are like a deceitful bow: their princes shall fall by the sword for the rage of their tongue: this shall be their derision in the land of Egypt" (Hosea 7:13-16). We believe that our Lord detests a divided heart among those who have been saved from the error of their ways. The Spirit, as God, indwells us, tells us when we attempt to draw nigh unto Him with a half-hearted, polluted heart. Beloved, it will not work! The Master says no to a divided heart. Then again, in Hosea 10:2, we read these words; "Their heart is divided; now shall they be found faulty: he shall break down their altars, he shall spoil their images." We believe that it is no less than an abomination to approach the Master with a divided heart.

A divided heart is unable to convince anyone, especially true in witnessing. This is, of course, in contrast to those whose hearts burn for the Lord, they need to be heard.

A pure heart is contagious, and can be used to enlighten the hearts of others. "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God" (Col. 3:22). God will not honor our daily walk if we try and practice this walk with a divided heart. When He says, "launch out into deep..." Luke 5:4, He does not mean to go with a divided heart. That would be contrary to His command. One cannot hide a divided heart from God.

Finally, a divided heart lives in total discontentment and is unhappy because it has been rejected by the Lord because of its inability to serve under His command because He is straight-forward, and undivided within His glorious leadership. Believers with a divided heart still serve the Lord after a fashion, they still believe, and they still continue to have experience with the Lord. But because of the inner divided personality they are unsteady, and the result is that their first love toward the Lord becomes cold. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. 10:22). Yes, they serve Him, but only in a limited way, and with conditions attached. But, like king Amaziah, they are unable to receive special blessings from the Lord.

"Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats: For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee. The morsel

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THE LAW NOT ABOLISHED

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

The Law of God must be perpetual. There is no abrogation of it nor amendment of it. It is not to be toned down or adjusted to our fallen condition; but every one of the Lord's righteous judgments abideth for ever. I would urge three reasons which will establish this teaching. In the first place our Lord Jesus declares that He did not come to abolish it. His words are most express: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." And Paul tells us with regard to the gospel, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (Rom. 3:31). The gospel is the means of the firm establishment and vindication of the law of God.

--Charles H. Spurgeon

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which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words." (Prov. 23:6-8). Yes, our hearts should always be perfect toward the Lord of Glory.

Complete freedom and the kingdom of heaven are not for the half-hearted. The Lord is willing to give to the uttermost if we will only be willing to give Him a pure undivided heart. "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him. Herein thou hast done foolishly: therefore from henceforth thou shalt have wars." (II Chron. 16:9).

Beloved, our heart must be right with our Lord if we expect Him to shower us with His blessings. As we conclude this article, let us look at yet another remarkable passage to do with the close walk with Him with our undivided hearts. "And Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. And I will be found of you, saith the LORD: and I will turn away your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations, and from all the places whither I have driven you, saith the LORD; and I will bring you again into the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive." (Jer. 29:13-14).

Let me say in conclusion that if we want to be successful when we launch out into the deep, we should not do it with a divided heart if we expect God to bless the effort. Take time to read Ephesians 5:6-13. Beloved, our hearts should be an open book before God and the world. We should strive to appear before God and man with a pure, undivided heart...Amen.

Editor's note: Brother Whiddon's wife of nearly 62 years, passed away (moved from earth to glory), October 15, 1991. It was my privilege to meet her once in this life, and I expect to see her again in heaven. Let us all pray for Brother Whiddon that the Lord will comfort his heart, bless him, encourage him, and strengthen him for the remainder of his earthly journey; and continue to use him to God's glory.

LORD'S

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who use it as a matter of assurance of salvation. It is carried like a precious medicine to those in hospitals and nursing homes who are not able to get to the place of worship. What a travesty of God's Holy Word!

The Bible is plain as to who is qualified to administer and receive this ordinance. The Lord's Supper is the only symbol or celebration of Christ's death given in God's Word. No place in God's Word is it taught that one should set aside a day in March or April to celebrate the death and resurrection of our Lord. I realize the word "Easter" is recorded in the King James Version of the Scriptures. What does it mean? Why is it recorded one time as "Easter" and all other times as the word "paska" which is translated as "passover"? There is no Greek word for "Easter." The reason this happened is that the King James translators (there were 54 of them) were of the Church of England and this was a very popular practice carried over from the Catholic Church. No place in God's Word teaches God's children to set aside a day to celebrate His death and resurrection.

The Lord's Supper was only given to the Lord's Church. This Church was started with the 12 apostles and has perpetuated from that day until now. (See I Corinthians 12:28). His Church is still in the world today and the only Church having the authority to administer this great ordinance. Since this ordinance was only given to His Church, it is to be a closed celebration given only to the members of the particular body administering it. This is the way Christ celebrated it. When Christ served His supper to the eleven minus Judas Iscariot, He didn't invite the "goodman" who owned the house in which it was celebrated. (See Luke 22:7-20). Modern churches will give it to any person in attendance. Christ didn't give it to those who were living in sin, such as Judas, or even the "goodman" who was not a member of His Church. Apostle Paul teaches us not to eat with a brother who is living in open sin. (See I Corinthians 5:1-13). This is evidence to prove that the Lord's Supper is not to be given to every person in attendance.

It is extremely clear that the Lord gave this ordinance to His

local church and intends for that particular church to be the sole proprietor of this great feast.

Seeing our Lord was particular as by whom His supper is to be observed, it is also obvious that He is particular as to the elements used in this ordinance. The last 50 years have brought about a great controversy among the Lord's churches as to the Scriptural elements that are to be administered. The turn of the century brought to the churches liberal views concerning the use of commercially produced wafers and unfermented grape juice as elements. The church, up to this time, had used nothing but unleavened bread and fermented wine in its observance of this feast. Unleavened bread and fermented wine are the Scriptural elements to use. The Bible is very clear concerning this fact. Note some of these facts in the following Scriptures:

"For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry and another is drunken" (I Corinthians 11:21). The Apostle Paul is rebuking the Corinthians church for their blatant disorder of the Lord's table. However, one cannot help seeing that the apostle rebuked them for over-indulging and not the elements themselves. The people had brought bread and wine, but had added a lot more to it so as to have a complete feast. Some had brought a lot, some had nothing. Notice what the apostle said, "What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not" (I Corinthians 11:22).

There are those, who through ignorance, get upset to think that Jesus Christ would use fermented wine in His supper. Let me ask you a very simple question. What did He use when the fresh grapes were out of season? There is no way, without preservatives, to keep grapes fresh. These chemicals were not available in Christ's day. Furthermore, to add chemicals is to add leaven to the juice, and this is a travesty to the Lord's blood. If the bread is to be without leaven (see Luke 22), why should the cup be with leaven? The blood of Jesus was as pure as His body. Modern science declares that the fermenting process removes the leaven (which is found in the skin of the grape) from the juices.

There are those who don't think that it is that important to observe this feast as closely to the way the Lord gave it. These are the same people who don't think it is important to follow the Bible itself that closely. And these are the same people who have apostatized God's Word and will someday stand before the Lord to be judged with fiery judgment.

OBSERVATIONS

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induced thing predicated upon our own free will. This is mainly proffered because of a misconception as to what saving faith truly is.

Let us classify the term. We have what we may classify in respect to faith, as natural faith and supernatural faith. The honest seeker must admit that there is a

distinction. Natural faith is common to all men in all places at all times. It is moreover expressed in mutual aspects within the human family. We have faith in our doctors, lawyers, governmental leaders such as the President, our congressmen, etc... This is based upon human rationalism, in mutual dependence within the human family. Yet, none of us would be willing to call this saving faith. It has similar functions to supernatural faith but definitely is not saving faith.

Although man is a free moral agent, free to choose and do what pleases him, yet he always makes those choices within the confines of his fallen nature. Although he is free his will cannot rise above the confines of its own nature. Our Lord was dealing with the myth of freewill when he said: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. They (the Pharisees) answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (John 8:32-34).

An honest person will not escape the reality of this truth if he very carefully studies the chapter from which the above is quoted. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:8).

There is untold confusion in our churches over this matter simply because Satan substitutes man made faith (human rationalism) for supernatural faith and pans it off as being the latter. Because of similarity in the functions of faith (natural and supernatural) many have concluded that there is not a distinction to be concerned about. Thus, many who think that they have saving faith perish in the deception that is latent in natural faith. Again let us look to Jesus for clarification. (Please read St. John 6:24-30).

If you did not read the foregoing Scripture, don't blame me if you proceed and fall into misunderstanding. When Jesus answered the people who followed Him, following the miracle of feeding the five-thousand, He made this distinction between natural faith and supernatural faith. Jesus describes the operation of natural faith when He says: "Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth..." (verses 26,27).

They had faith in Jesus! They sought Him! They saw the miracles! They had natural faith. They were no different than the people who go to the grocery store for bread, because they know where it is. They have faith in the grocery man but only to a natural end. Then our blessed Lord Jesus makes manifest what is supernatural faith when He says, "...This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent" (verse 29).

Again, Jesus reveals that they were locked into their natural faith resource and could not exercise supernatural faith. This is confirmed by what they said in verse 30: "...What sign

shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee?..."

Just so, we have people who follow Jesus only for what they can get out of Him naturally; and they reject the supernatural. There is a natural faith and there is a supernatural faith. Faith can be no greater than its object!

For the sake of brevity, let me quote a source of edification. "The origin of faith is not represented as coming from one's own strength and virtue, but as a gift of God (Eph. 6:23), through Christ (Acts 3:16; Phil. 1:29; I Peter 1:21), by the Spirit (II Cor. 4:13; Gal. 5:5), by means of the preached Word (Rom. 10:17; Gal. 3:2,5). And since it is obtained from God (II Peter 1:1; Jude 3; I Peter 1:21), thanks returned to God for it (Col. 1:4; II Thess. 1:3)" (The Encycl. of Christianity, Hughes, Vol. IV, p167).

The word "obtained" in the above quote does not mean that we by our effort obtain faith, but simply refers to God as to its origin. It comes from God and is sovereignly bestowed as He sees fit.

You are the loser if you argue against the Scriptural mandate that faith is the gift of God. Once bestowed, it is ours to exercise and to cause to function but we must always recognize that it is God's doing, it came from Him and from Him alone. Follow closely now and slowly because we come to the sure Word of God for understanding.

II. The Operation of Faith:

When faith has been bestowed sovereignly of God, it always operates on a spiritual premise. It supernaturally results from regeneration. Regeneration is not reformation but it is the imparting of a "new nature" from God. That is simply why saving faith is and must be an act of God. This is why salvation never fizzles out! This is why it does not run out! This is why it is essentially eternal life because it is of God.

"The saving power of faith resides, thus, not in itself, but in the Almighty Savior on whom it rests. Faith is not a frame of mind (natural faith) or attitude of heart (natural faith) that has virtue with claims of its own on God for reward. Nor does it in itself predispose God to favor, or open a channel of communication from Him. It is not faith that saves; faith in any other savior, or in any other gospel than that of Jesus Christ and Him crucified, brings not salvation but a curse (Gal. 1:8-9).

It is not even faith in Christ that saves; it is Christ that saves through faith. The saving power resides exclusively, not in the act of faith, the attitude of faith, or the nature of faith, but in the object of faith" (The Encycl. of Christianity - Hughes vol. IV, p.167).

It is not the size of faith that causes it to operate. Jesus tells us that faith no bigger than a grain of mustard seed can move mountains. It is not the size of faith that matters, it is only that we have faith that really matters. Yet it is true that if we increase faith by spiritual obedience we enjoy a greater measure of spiritual power, that is the supernatural function of faith because it is of God. It has always been this way and always will be. Faith is the axel on which the wheels of both the Old Testament and the

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OBSERVATIONS

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New Testament turn. It never has been any different and indeed never can be, for faith is sovereignly given or withheld as God corresponds all contingencies to the pleasure of His own good and perfect will.

III. The Order Of Faith:

God is a God of orderliness. He does everything decently and in order. With faith it is no different. It is a thing untouched by human hands. Faith might be called the womb of salvation in which the elect of God are conceived unto salvation.

God is the originating source while Christ is the mediating source. The Holy Spirit is the regenerative source and this He does through the Word of God which is the effectual source which produces "life from God" which results in believing faith. This moves on in the Christian life to perceiving faith for Christian service. Thus we better understand it when Isaiah says: **"LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us"** (Isa. 26:12).

Thus we better understand what St. Paul meant when he tells us in Philippians 2:13: **"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."**

No man can say that he has authored his own faith for the same reason that a dead man cannot say anything about being dead. Simply because he is dead! Faith does not come from without. If it is to be saving faith it must be like unto the One who brings or bestows it. Faith puts us in touch with God as to who He is and what He is. Faith from God is pure. Faith from the human heart is corrupt and degenerative. Faith from God is life bestowing and regenerative. Faith is not ascent to creedal statements, it is not conferred by one man upon another, it is not conceived in water baptism, it is not joining a local church, it is not attaining a set of rules to perfection. Faith is the gift of God bestowed by His own sovereign will whensoever, wheresoever, and on whomsoever it pleases Him.

"Your idea of faith, I suppose, has been something like this. You have looked upon it as in some way a sort of thing - either a religious exercise of soul, or an inward, gracious disposition of heart; something tangible, in fact, which when you have secured it, you can look at and rejoice over, and use as a passport to God's favor, or a coin with which to purchase His gifts. And you have been praying for faith, expecting all the while to get something like this; and never having received any such thing, you are insisting upon it that you have no faith. Now, faith, in fact, is not in the least like this. It is simply believing God; and, like sight, it is nothing at all apart from its object. You might as well shut your eyes and look inside, and see whether you have sight, as to look inside to discover whether you have faith. You see something, and thus know that you have sight; you believe something, and thus know that you have faith. For as sight is only seeing, so faith is only believing. And as the only necessary thing about sight is that you see the thing as it is, so

the only necessary thing about belief is that you believe the thing as it is. The virtue does not lie in your believing, but in the thing you believe. If you believe the truth, you are saved; if you believe a lie, you are lost. The act of believing in both cases is the same; the things believed are exactly opposite, and this it is which makes the mighty difference. Your salvation comes, not because your faith saves you, but because it links you to the Saviour who saves: and your believing is really nothing but the link" (H.W. Smith).

Faith is not a lever to pry from God the things that we want. Nor is it an instrument of leverage to force God to do anything He ordinarily would not do. It is not a lever to make God do miracles or to get in a hurry about life situations. It is not a "situation faith" exercise where God is put on alert to do certain things because His creatures do certain things. I know this is the modus operandi of the status quo but it is not so explained nor contained in the Word of God.

With all the contemporary tentacles of surrogation today let me be the first to coin a phrase. There is not such a thing as a surrogate faith. Parents cannot have faith for their children. Children cannot have faith for their parents. Faith is not conceived in one and then transferred to another. Covenant theology is the direct product of man made natural faith and has nothing to do with divine supernatural faith bestowed as God's gift to the sinner. "Natural faith is ours by creation and saving faith is ours by recreation through God's grace" (The Baptist Examiner, July 26, 1986, Duke Watson).

In the Biblical concept faith... "consists neither in mere assent, nor in mere obedience, but in a reliant trust in the author of all good (Heb. 11:27), a trust in which the mind is set upon things that are above and not on things that are on earth (Co. 3:2). The examples of Hebrews 11 show that this faith is not a mere belief in God's existence and His justice and goodness, or a crediting of His Word and promises to be true and reliable. It is an active trust upon which the actions of life are based, and which is so deep that no trial can shake it (Heb. 11:15). Such a faith cannot come from sinful man, who takes pleasure in unrighteousness (II Thess. 2:12), who has a heart aversion to God (Heb. 3:12), and whose unbelief is akin, not to ignorance, but to disobedience (John 3:36). It comes from its object alone, which is the grace of God found in the gospel of Christ Jesus. Christ, as God the Redeemer, is the one object of saving faith (Gal. 2:16)" (The Encl. of Christianity, Hughes, Vol. IV, PP 166-67).

Let us beware lest we are carried about by every wind of doctrine in these last days. When they speak of faith do not shift your mind into some kind of euphoric neutral and give way to human rationalism but demand faith on the terms of the Word of God alone. "Constant change of creed is sure loss. If a tree has to be taken up two or three times a year, you will not need to build a very large loft in which to store the apples. When people are always shifting their doctrinal principles, they are not likely to bring forth much fruit to the glory of God" (A Defense of

Calvinism, C.H. Spurgeon).

Natural faith (man orientated) is the religious side of the philosophy of subjectivism. It is the root of arminianism and is moreover contained in this humanistic philosophy "or a priority elements of conscious experience." It subtly supplants objective truth and makes human experience the ultimate judge of reality. This is why so many are confused and even lost in the sea of arminianism. It makes truth dissipate in the winds of relativity. There are no absolutes according to their teaching. It is almost epicurean in its philosophy degenerating in to "an ethical doctrine that considers the supreme good to be some form of subjective feeling..." (Webster's New World Dictionary, College Edition). Satan can be no more successful than when he wraps his lie in a fig leaf of substitution for the real thing.

There are two sides to true faith. God's side and man's side. Since man cannot create faith he can only receive and possess true faith as a result of God's gracious bestowal of the same. We get into trouble when we fail to realize that the two sides of faith are stamped on one coin. You cannot spend only one side of the coin. When you spend faith, which is God's gift, it must by its very nature be spent from and with both sides, God's side and man's side. Without this union faith is null and void no matter how much we try to force it to our liking and convenience. The Scriptures declare without reservation that Jesus is the **"...author (leader or originator) and finisher (Perfector) of our faith..."** (Heb. 12:2a).

If Christ is the originator of our faith we might ask the question, "Does He ever start anything that He does not and cannot finish?" Verily, the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, which is a very true doctrine in the Word of God, is predicated upon this fundamental principle. I dare say, that it is perhaps the most neglected doctrine in all of the Word of God in contemporary preaching. To have received the "gift of faith" from God is to have received that which in itself is self-originating, self-sustaining and self-sufficient. If you have trouble with that thought merely substitute the name God for self in the foregoing. Faith is God's own doing. It is sovereignly bestowed and maintained in and upon those to whom it is given. This only reflects the nature of the one who bestows it. This doctrine does not produce lazy saints who settle back and float all around creation in neutral. Nay, it implants an active principle, which is resultant from and inherent within itself. It literally motivates the believer with a living propensity toward righteousness and true godliness. Paul says it this way: **"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me"** (Gal. 2:20). **"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it"** (I Thess. 5:24).

My friend, the very reputation of God is at stake in the salvation of the sinner, and rest assured that He will not let it fall into disrepute. This makes of faith the greatest stewardship that we can

be entrusted with from the hand of Almighty God. This is literally why **"...all things work together for good to them that love God..."** (Rom. 8:28a).

"Whatever may be the appearances to the contrary, whatever the circumstances and mockings of the adversary, and whatever the temptations to doubt, true faith can count on the unshakable faithfulness of God.

To the faithfulness of God, the faithfulness of true believers in Him must respond. Just as God perseveres in His faithfulness, so those who are His must (and will) persevere in theirs (Matt. 24:41-51). But the faithfulness of the believer is based on the faithfulness of God. He upholds the believer and causes him to be faithful in his faith" (The Encl. of Christianity, Vol. IV, p. 169).

Faith is like the fire which burned in the Shekinah Glory of God's visible manifestation to the children of Israel. It was not a fire dependent upon something to consume in order to sustain itself. It was not inanimate fire burning unintelligently and indiscriminately and without purpose or design. This is surely what the Scriptures teach when it says in Ezekiel 1:4: **"And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire."**

By faith we have demonstrated the very power and omniscience of our God. It does not work inanimately, unintelligently, nor indiscriminately without purpose or design. Faith honors God and God honors faith. The faith that I have now is still the gift of God. It was such the day He gave it to me and it always will be. It does not behave itself unseemly, it is not puffed up, it is both steadfast and sure because it is of God.

In Galatians 2:20 Paul enunciates his doctrine of the mystic union with Christ. He is so entirely under the influence of Christ that he regards his thoughts and words and deeds as prompted by the Saviour. All that he is he owes to Christ who abides in him. The spiritual relation between Christ and himself is so intimate that he can only describe it as Christ living in him. This is all in, by, through, and with, faith!

ATTITUDE

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shell since there are so many different views on the subject. If I were to give a three point outline on the subject of what a Hardshell is, my thoughts probably would differ from at least 50% of my colleagues. In addition, one church's attitude may differ from another church's attitude; that is our prerogative. I, nor the church I pastor, has the right to tell other churches and/or pastors what they should or should not teach or practice. Consequently, neither does any church or pastor have the authority to tell us what we should or should not teach or practice. On the other hand, it is my duty and responsibility to keep my own flock informed and advised as to enable them to have

the proper attitude toward doctrines and practices of other so-called Baptist churches.

This leads me into another thought, and that is that I should attempt to teach the flock of which I have been called to oversee the Word of God in such a way that they would be able to detect false teaching when old Satan attempts to bring it into our assembly. I am afraid that many people in even sound churches, perhaps ours included, would not be able to detect some subtle false teachings if they were confronted with them, nor would they know what to do about it when they were confronted.

Hardshellism along with many other wolves in sheeps clothing is a danger and threat to sound Baptist churches, and not just "preacher" issues to be discussed in a motel room at Bible conferences. I have always made it a practice to try and keep my congregation informed as to what is going on around us. Some pastors think it best to keep their people ignorant about certain things so as not to give opportunity to potential problems. You can take this for what you think it is worth, but it is my opinion that the more open and honest a pastor is with his people, the less likely he is to hang himself. I try to keep my congregation informed because I value very highly their opinions and advice. I figure it this way: if the church does not know the dangers of Hardshellism, they will not know to flee from it if it ever comes our way. But if they are aware of the dangers of it and the signs to look for they can deal with it in a Scriptural and spiritual manner. When God's people conduct themselves in a Scriptural and spiritual manner, they also bring honor to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Having said these things, let us return to the original question, "What should be our attitude toward churches which teach Hardshellism?" Well, what is Hardshellism? I am not sure that I know all of what Hardshellism is. I know some of the things they teach, but not all. There are some things that we would actually agree on, though I am not sure what those things might be. The problem that we face in many cases is that not all Hardshells will admit that they are Hardshells, and not all Hardshells realize that they are Hardshells. So if you have some that will not admit that they are Hardshells, and some that do not realize that they are Hardshells, it may be difficult identifying them by the hat that they wear. For this reason, it is very, very important that a church know what to look for before they can decide what their attitude is going to be toward a particular church or individual.

The next thing I would like to mention is that we should be careful not to brand someone just because we might not agree with everything that they preach or practice. While we should be selective with whom we fellowship, such as exchanging pulpits and receiving and granting membership letters, we ought to be very careful who we "unchurch." Just because I will not have church fellowship with a particular church or pastor does not

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ATTITUDE

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mean that I cannot recognize them as such. I know of a number of churches that are true churches in the strictest sense, but I could not recommend that we, (our church) grant or receive letters of membership, or allow their pastors to preach in our pulpit. How many of the seven churches which the Lord Jesus spoke to in Revelation 1-3 could we feel comfortable with as far as church fellowship? I would say perhaps one or two. They were recognized as churches by their master notwithstanding.

The Apostle Paul speaks of moderation in Philippians 4:5, "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand." The word moderation means a gentle, sweet spirit. It is synonymous with the word longsuffering, which according to Vine is "that quality of self-restraint in the face of provocation which does not hastily retaliate or promptly punish" and the word forbear meaning "to bear with, or hold back". We should not be too quick to condemn those with whom we disagree. Many innocent people can get hurt in crossfire and friendly fire. However, let me quickly say that if a preacher or church is found to be a true enemy of the truth and they have clearly departed from the faith which has been delivered unto the Lord's true churches for safe keeping, then we must take a stand against them.

What should be our attitude toward those who teach Hardshell doctrine? Let us consider Titus 3:10, 11. "A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." You might like to read these verses from the Amplified Bible. What is a heretick? Heresy is a self-willed opinion, which is substituted for submission to the power of truth, and leads to division and the formation of a sect. (Vine) (See also II Peter 2:1).

We should consider Paul's instruction carefully. First, notice that the person has to be identified as a heretic by Scriptural definition. Then notice that he should be admonished. To admonish is to train by word of teaching or by reproof. An attempt should be made to show and teach them the truth and lead them away from their error. Secondly, notice that it is after the second admonition that he is to be rejected indicating moderation. We have already discussed this point. Thirdly, only after the second admonition are we to reject him; but if he will not hear the truth he is to be rejected. It is obvious that no spiritual fellowship can be continued; therefore, all fellowship must be severed.

What, though, is a Hardshell? Some make no bones about what they are. They define their position and speak clearly. For this I am grateful. Notwithstanding, there are others who may have

some hardshell ways, but cannot justly be branded as such. Just as there are some who have Arminian ways, but cannot be justly branded as pure Arminian.

Hardshells commonly identify themselves as Baptists. The Primitive Baptist sect established in 1831 by Daniel Parker is the grandfather of true Hardshellism. They are not true Baptists. I say that a Hardshell is one who believes in an election of salvation instead of unto salvation. This excludes evangelism and the gospel. A Hardshell is one who believes in regeneration without the gospel. However, we should be very careful to investigate a matter thoroughly before passing that judgment. We must not make any judgments based on heresy information. It is possible for a church to hold some hardshell positions and yet continue to be recognized as a true church, though out of order and out of

fellowship.

Beloved, I believe that our own attitude toward evangelism, the gospel, church truth, the doctrines of grace, baptism, the Lord's Supper, eschatology, church discipline, etc., is going to keep us, for the most part, separated from the true Hardshell crowd just as it has always kept us separated from the Arminian crowd.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to this world to save sinners by His crucifixion, burial, and resurrection. He came to seek and save that which was lost. He died for the ungodly. He died for those whom He loved, and loves those for whom He died. The heavenly Father elected them unto salvation, and the Holy Spirit is calling them out by our gospel. The truth itself is going to shield us from many dangers; let us remain faithful to His truth!

BOOK REVIEWS

We have two new books in our book store that are absolute "musts" for Baptists. These books are by J.W. Porter, one of the great Baptist preachers of yesteryear; one who was truly a Baptist. In these days when one hardly knows what to expect from a church that calls itself "Baptist," or from preachers who call themselves "Baptists," it is good to read something by a Baptist that really is a Baptist. One of these books is, "The World's Debt To the Baptists." These are messages by Mr. Porter telling the great things that Baptists have done for the world. This world owes more to Baptists than they can imagine. Many precious truths of God's Word have been preserved and propagated by Baptists. Other churches (?) teach some of these same truths, but they got them from and because of Baptists. The other book is, "The Baptist Debt to the World." These are great Baptist sermons by a great Baptist preacher concerning that which Baptists owe to this world - to proclaim many precious truths and defend many great doctrines that others do not believe nor proclaim. I sincerely urge my Baptist Brothers and Sister, especially my preacher brethren, to obtain these books as speedily as possible and to read them as soon as they can after receiving them. These are paper back books. The first one is nearly 200 pages, and the second one nearly 250. They are great Baptist books and will add much to your library. They sell for \$9.95 each and are well worth that price. Order from our book store where the profit goes into our book ministry.

We have a new book in our book store. It is "The Covenants" by R.B.C. Howell. Those who have read anything by this writer will want to read all that he has written. Mr. Howell does a magnificent job in the main in dealing with his subject. With reference to many of the covenants, he does about as well as one can read. However, with reference to the prophetic teaching of some of the covenants, one who believes Premillennialism - which is surely the teaching of the Bible - will be disappointed. The best I can gather from scanning the book, the author was a postmillennialist, and there is much teaching in Biblical covenants that a Postmillennialist cannot expound. However, in other respects I consider this a worthy book, and plan to read my copy ere long. It is a paper back book of nearly 150 pages and sells for \$5.95. Order from our book store.

TELL THE TRUTH

LET'S GET SOMETHING STRAIGHT, I am not ashamed of anything I believe. I will tell you exactly what I believe about anything you ask me. If I am not sure of what I believe about the matter, I will tell you. I am an honest man.

I do not believe in "gospel regeneration." I believe that the Holy Spirit regenerates. I believe that the Holy Spirit uses the gospel in regeneration. I have said this, publicly and in print, so many times that there is absolutely no excuse for any man to accuse me of being a "gospel regenerationist." The gospel, without the power of the Holy Spirit has no more power to regenerate than does baptism. I have, more times than I can count, been accused of being a "gospel regenerationist." Any man who does this is a deliberate liar. He knows, or can and should, know better. I have just recently had another preacher brother twice accuse me of this. He knew better the first time he did it. I wrote him after that first time and told him better. He did it again in so many words. Why can't men be honest in their dealings with other men about the things of God - or why won't they be honest?

One more time - please let my enemies quit lying on me - Christians ought to tell the truth - I do not believe in "gospel regeneration" I believe in "Gospel/ Spirit regeneration." I believe that the Holy Spirit uses the gospel in His regenerating work.

By The Editor

MY EYES

My eyes were once set upon
The riches of the world,
No one ever told me that it was
Sin I so adored;
Until by God's grace
I heard The true Word.
I repented and cried out,
"I am yours, oh, Lord!"
I thank God daily for forgiving
My sins;
His love can't be fathomed
It never ends.
Faith in my Lord keeps me strong
Day by day;
Trusting in Christ Jesus is the
Only way!
What the world has to offer
My eyes no longer see;
For my eyes are now set on the
Riches in Glory!

by: Melissa Carter

PROVIDENCE OF DIVINE

We believe that the same God, after he had created all things, did not forsake them, or give them up to fortune or chance, but that he rules and governs them according to his holy will, so that nothing happens in this world without his appointment... This doctrine affords us unspeakable consolation, since we are taught thereby that nothing can befall us by chance, but by the direction of our most gracious and heavenly Father, who watches over us with a

paternal care, keeping all creatures under his power, that not a hair of our head (for they are all numbered), nor a sparrow, can fall to the ground, without the will of our Father, in whom we do entirely trust; being persuaded, that he so restrains the devil and all our enemies, that without his will and permission, they cannot hurt us...

Article XII
The Belgic Confession

HYMN OF THE WALDENSES

Hear, Father, hear thy faint afflicted flock
Cry to thee, from the desert and the rock;
While those, who seek to slay thy children, hold
Blasphemous worship under roofs of gold;
And the broad goodly lands, with pleasant airs
That nurse the grape and wave the grain, are theirs.

Yet better were this mountain wilderness,
And this wild life of danger and distress
Watchings by night and perilous flight by day,
And meetings in the depths of earth to pray,
Better, far better, than to kneel with them,
And pay the impious rite thy laws condemn.

Thou, Lord, dost hold the thunder; the firm land
Tosses in billows when it feels thy hand;
Thou dashest nation against nation, then
Stillest the angry world to peace again.
Oh, touch their stony hearts who hunt thy sons
The murderers of our wives and little ones.

Yet, mighty God, yet shall thy frown look forth
Unveiled, and terribly shall shake the earth.
Then the foul power of priestly sin and all
It's long upheld idolatries shall fall.
Thou shalt raise up the trampled and oppressed,
And thy delivered saints shall dwell in rest.

William Cullen Bryant
(1794-1878)

CAN YOU IMAGINE THIS?

The wise men giving one another gifts to celebrate Jesus' birthday?
"And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh" (Matt.2:11).

10 SUBSCRIPTIONS
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