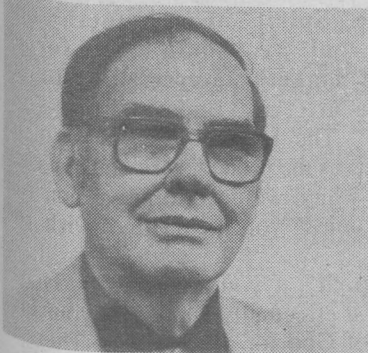


STUDIES IN JOSHUA

by C.T. Everman

"And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?" (Josh. 5:13).

After setting up camp at Gilgal, Joshua had obeyed the Lord



C. T. Everman

in performing the rite of circumcision upon all the male Israelites who had not been circumcised. Having completed this rite, the people then observed the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month. On the following day the manna, which had fed them in the wilderness for forty years, ceased as they now had corn of the land to eat.

The children of Israel were now

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STUDIES IN DANIEL

by John R. Gilpin

In the preceding chapter of the book of Daniel, we noticed that Daniel interpreted a forgotten dream on behalf of King Nebuchadnezzar. He had had a dream in which he saw a vision of which the head was made of gold,



John R. Gilpin, Sr.

the chest and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, the legs of iron, and the feet of iron and miry clay. That was the dream which Nebuchadnezzar had had, and Daniel retold to him the dream which Nebuchadnezzar had forgotten when he awakened, and at the same time, he gave to him the interpretation thereof.

As you will recall, Daniel made this plain statement, "Nebuchadnezzar... 'Thou art this head of gold.'" In other words, Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar that in the light of that image, he was represented

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SUBSCRIPTIONS ANY AMOUNT \$1 EACH

Come to Christ or go to Hell.

LAYING THE AXE TO HERESIES

by John M. Alber
The Will of Man

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16, 17).

"BELOVED, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1).

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17).

Charles H. Spurgeon once wrote, "We must throw down the mischievous system of falsehood, be it ever so great or high."

HERESY

1. A religious belief opposed to the orthodox doctrines of a

church; especially, such a belief specifically denounced by the church and regarded as likely to cause schism. 2. any opinion (in philosophy, politics, etc.) opposed to official or established views or doctrines. 3. the holding of such a belief or opinion" (p.



John Alber

679. Webster's New World Dictionary).

Louis T. Talbot listed six areas in which heresy has been and is yet a problem today: (1) "There

will be a denial of God and the Saviour." (2) "There will be a denial that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh." (3) "There will be a denial of the Lord that bought them, referring to the atonement." (4) "There will be a denial of the power of godliness." (5) "There will be a denial of sound doctrine, and the substitution of fables." (6) "There will be a denial of authority" (p. 4, 5 - Heresies Exposed).

Beloved, the world has not changed since Mr. Spurgeon wrote those words; the apostasy of his day and ours is ever as great if not more so. We have raised people up in our churches that do not know the truth of God's Word; yes, they have no idea as to what the Bible says about many Bible doctrines. Much of the blame rests squarely on the shoulders of the pastor and the people who have come to

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

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THE PERPETUITY OF BAPTIST CHURCHES

by J. W. Porter

It may be well to define what is meant by the word perpetuity in this connection. It must not be confused with what is commonly known as Apostolic Succession. Neither the speaker, nor the people for whom he speaks believe in Apostolic Succession. To the contrary, we believe that the apostolic office ended with the apostles, and that they have never had or ever will have successors. But we do believe that Baptist churches were instituted by Jesus Christ, and that they have had a continuous existence ever since and will continue to exist as long as time shall last.

We do emphatically affirm the succession of Baptists, in spite of imprisonment, blood and fire, as witnesses for the truth, and that he who hath preserved them, will continue to be with them till the end of the age.

We may demonstrate the reasonableness of this doctrine by analogy. Strangely enough, the people who object to church succession glory in the idea of succession along other lines. For example, we are proud of the fact that our race is hoary with age, and rich with history, and that our species extend back to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. The Jews, with justifiable pride,

point to Abraham as their father, Moses as their lawgiver, and to a synagogue with succession throughout centuries. A false claim of uninterrupted succession in the days of Solomon magnifies the mission of lodgism in the eyes of mankind. The followers of Zoroaster assert, with unspeakable pride, that the fires which were lighted upon their altars by Zoroaster have never for a single moment been lost. Many of our people love to know that that their families go back to the days of the revolution, and some to the days of William the Conqueror. Why, then, should the

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STUDIES IN ACTS

by Willard Willis

"Or else let these same here say, if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council, Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them. Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day" (Acts 24: 20-21).

Paul, as you will recall from Acts 22:30, was "set" before the



Willard Willis

council by the chief captain in an effort to resolve the charges which had been made against him. Paul then began his defense by stating that he had "lived in all good conscience before God". The high priest, as the result of this statement by Paul, commanded that he be smitten on the mouth. The situation from this point, as far as Paul was concerned, grew worse to the

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"HELL, IS IT REAL?"

by Waldo Whiddon

"Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their



Waldo Whiddon

thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols; the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, Os Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT HEAVEN

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with

them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev.21:1-4).

Life is not worthwhile, and is an increasing disappointment if there is not something better ahead on the other side of death. Praise God, the Bible reveals that there is such. The toils of the road will seem nothing when we get to the end of the way. All our

sorrows, trials, and troubles will sink into everlasting forgetfulness when we get to heaven. When a few more weary years (or less) have come and gone, you and I who are saved will have passed beyond this vale of tears, and will be gathered on the blissful shores of sweet deliverance. Let us answer some questions about heaven in this message.

1. Is there really a heaven? Oh, sometimes as we think of it, it seems just too good to be true. But it is true. God, in His pre-

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cious Word has told us many times about the blessed and wonderful heaven that awaits His blood-bought children. "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2-3). This is one of a multitude of Scriptures that teach us about heaven. One must throw away the Bible in utter unbelief to do away with heaven. Sometimes our vision of that fair land may grow exceeding dim, but it is still there in all of its wonder and glory. Yes, dear heart, there is a heaven. The saints of God have trusted in, looked for, and sang about heaven through the ages. Some of our most loved songs express our confidence in the reality of heaven. God has given His dear children this blessed and soul sustaining hope, and He will surely not disappoint that hope that He has given.

2. Is heaven eternal? It surely is. God has given eternal life to His children, and that involves wonderful heaven as the place where they will live eternally. God is eternal, His people are eternal (from the moment of conception), and heaven will be eternal. The glory, the joy, and the blessedness of heaven will truly last forever. What, after all, could promises of heaven mean

to us, if they did not involve the eternity thereof? We would prefer to sink down into eternal oblivion, nevermore knowing or feeling anything, than to even think of going to a heaven that will not last. Surely, one of the greatest joys of heaven is to know that its joy is forever.

3. Where will heaven be? I am not talking about where it is now. I verily believe that the departed saints are even now rejoicing with the Lord in the heaven where He now dwells.



Joe Wilson

I am here discussing the question of where heaven will be in the eternal state. I feel that my text is clear in teaching that eternal heaven will be on earth. I am just not clear in my own mind as to whether the new earth of my text (Rev.21:1) is this earth renovated, or a totally newly created earth. It seems that most of the men I read believe the eternal and new earth is this earth renovated. I have some trouble with that, but it does not greatly bother me. I just am not sure on this question. I do not believe that this question has any real significance as to the answer I give that eternal heaven, the eternal dwelling place of God and His people, will be on this earth.

4. What will heaven be like? Let me just state here that the Bible does not give a multitude of details about heaven as to this question and the following two. Heaven will be totally free from all the things that make this life troublesome, sad, and disappointing. There will be no sickness in heaven. All the inhabitants will have gloriously wonderful and absolutely perfect health. We will feel better than we have ever felt on this earth. There will be no sin in heaven. Surely, sin is the root cause of all that makes this life bad. There will never be a sinful desire in heaven, or a sinful thought. There will never be a sinful word spoken by or to anyone through all eternity. Oh, how much hurt has wrong words caused in this life. The words spoken in heaven will be kind, gracious, and good. There will never be a sinful act in heaven. I truly believe that this total absence of sin will be one of the chief delights in heaven.

There will never be any sorrow of any kind in heaven. Oh, the sorrows of this life! How often have we been made to weep over the many and varying sorrows of life! We have all had our share of sadness and sorrow, some more than others. One does not live long upon the earth until he enters into some of the tragedies of life. There will be no death in heaven. This has been one of the major sorrows that many of us have had to go through. There are few things in this life that are more painful than the death of a loved one. Even when there is the comfort of knowing that one's departed loved one is in heaven, and that we will be together again; still there is great hurt in

the death of a loved one.

Just recently, as a police chaplain, I stood helplessly, trying to comfort a young father and mother whose young son had just died in a fire. I cannot say how many times I have stood by the grave in Big Stone Gap, Virginia, where sleeps the body of my oldest son, and praised God that in heaven there will be no more death.

In heaven there will be the presence of all that can make one joyful. There will be light, joy, perfection - oh, it will be joy beyond compare. It is hard to try to speak of the blessedness of heaven, when we only have the words of this earth which we can use. We might take all the good, all the joy, all the blessedness of this life; and multiply that by infinity - if this could be done - and then have some knowledge of what heaven will be like. Why go on? How can I go on? The half has never been told, can never be told; of the blessings of heaven. Take all that makes life enjoyable here, multiply it many, many times; and you will begin to have some idea of what heaven will be like.

5. What will we be like in heaven? I guess that the major thing in answering this is to say that we will have glorified bodies. We will be free from sin and sickness. Our bodies will be greatly like the resurrection body of Jesus Christ. I do not, of course, believe that there will be in heaven any of the modes of transportation that we have on this earth. I think that we will be able to move about with incredible rapidity, probably simply by an act of the will. There will be no one with any bodily handicaps of any kind, and I do not believe there will be anyone with mental handicaps of any kind. I believe that every one in heaven will have minds developed to the utmost possibility - each far greater than any mind on earth. We will be able to know and comprehend vastly more than we ever could in this life.

I do not believe that there will be any infants in heaven. Of course, I believe that all who die in infancy are saved by the grace and power of God and will be in heaven. But I do not believe they will be infants then and there. I am sure that when a woman has a miscarriage (or an abortion) that, that soul will be in heaven in a glorified body. It could not be the body, partly formed, that is there at the moment of death; it will be a fully formed and fully glorified body. I have a son who died when he was eight years old. He had professed faith in Jesus Christ. I believe I will see him in heaven. But I do not believe he will be an eight year old child; I believe he will be fully grown, physically and mentally.

I do not believe there will be in heaven any with the disabilities of the very aged. I do not know just how it will be, but I am sure that all in heaven will be fully developed in every respect, and that none will have any of the natural infirmities of old age.

6. What will we do in heaven? Well, we will not sit around on a cloud playing a harp. We will not just sit around heaven all day doing nothing. God has never favored idleness. God has always favored work. We will serve God in heaven. "...and his servants shall serve him" (Rev.22:3). We will not sit around, lazy and idle, doing

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FROM THE EDITOR

"...be filled with the Spirit" (Eph.5:18). If I had to pick one thing as the most important matter in the Christian life, I would pick this. The greatest one need of any believer is to be "filled with the Spirit." It would be utterly impossible to over-emphasize this matter. You simply cannot be what you ought to be, or do what you ought to do as a Christian without being "filled with the Spirit."

You must be "filled with the Spirit" in order to live the life that a Christian should live. The proper Christian life is utterly beyond the power of man to live in and of himself. I believe that the one word that most completely describes what a Christian life should be is "holy." No one can be holy apart from the enabling of the Holy Spirit. I believe that the Scripture that best describes the proper Christian life is Galatians 5:22-23, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Since these things are the fruit of the Spirit, one must be "filled with the Spirit" in order to have these fruits in his or her life.

You must be "filled with the Spirit" in order to pray properly and successfully. Romans 8:26 gives us one of the great keys of effective praying, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." Jude 20 speaks of, "...praying in the Holy Ghost." The Holy Spirit works in us the desire and ability to pray. He gives us the needed spirit and fervency in prayer. He leads us as to that for which we need to pray. You will not have the prayer life you need unless you are "filled with the Spirit."

You must be "filled with the Spirit" if you are to properly understand the Word of God and have it effectually applied to your life. Oh, there is so much in the Word of God for the believer. There is comfort and encouragement. There is guidance and power. There is great joy in the Word of God for the child of God. But the Holy Spirit, who inspired the Word of God, is the only one who can open our understanding as to its meaning and application; and the only one who can make the Word of God effective in, to, and through us.

You must be "filled with the Spirit" in order to win souls to Jesus Christ. Every Christian should be concerned about lost people. Every Christian should witness to lost people. Every Christian should win some lost souls to Jesus Christ - yes, they should. We must realize that winning souls is a supernatural work requiring supernatural power. The unsaved man cannot save or help to save himself; he must be saved by the mighty, supernatural, miraculous power of the Holy Spirit of God. God uses saved people in witnessing and giving the gospel to the unsaved, and bringing them to salvation. The soul winner must know that he can never, never win a soul to Jesus Christ in and of himself. He must have the power of the Holy Spirit upon him and upon his witnessing if men are to be won to Jesus Christ thereby. Oh, it should be one of the chief desires of our souls to win others to Jesus Christ; and we must realize that we must be "filled with the Spirit" if we are to do this. The Bible tells us in Luke 1:15-16 that John the Baptist was "filled with the Holy Ghost" and that "many of the children of Israel shall be turned to the Lord their God." The Bible tells us in Acts 11:24 that Barnabas was "full of the Holy Ghost" and that "much people was added unto the Lord." We must be "filled with the Spirit" if we are to win souls to Jesus Christ.

Since these things are true, the question of how we can be filled with the Holy Spirit becomes of the greatest importance. Acts 5:32 says in part "the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." So we must obey God if we are to be "filled with the Spirit." We cannot live in disobedience to God, doing that which we know we should not do, not doing the things we know we should do; and still be "filled with the Spirit." Especially must we obey God in giving the gospel to lost sinners if we would be "filled with the Spirit."

Luke 11:13 in part tells us "how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" I know that every believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. But every Christian is not "filled with the Spirit." It is surely applicable in this age as well as any other age, for the believer to ask for the power and fullness of the Spirit in and upon him. I would urge every believer (even as I urge myself) to pray most earnestly and persistently that he might be "filled with the Spirit."

We must be yielded to the Spirit if we are to be "filled with the Spirit." We must yield to His leading. We must not put our will against Him. When His will for our lives conflicts with our will, we must yield. We must "Quench not the Spirit" (I Thess.5:19). When He is moving within us, when He is speaking to us, when He is burning in our souls, we must not quench these things.

We must "grieve not the holy Spirit of God" (Eph.5:30) if we desire to be "filled with the Spirit." We must not allow in our lives things that grieve Him. He is the Holy Spirit. He is very sensitive in His holiness. Sin of any and every kind will grieve Him.

We must "grieve not the holy Spirit of God" (Gal.5:16) if we are to be "filled with the Spirit." We must listen to Him, we must follow His leading, and we must live our daily life and perform our daily services to Him in His power.

These are some things we must do if we are to be "filled with the Spirit." They may be difficult and trying to the flesh, but they are the best things we can do. The glorious result of being "filled with the Spirit" is well worth the things God requires us to do in order to have this blessing. Are you "filled with the Spirit?" You need to be. God wants you to be. God commands you to be. You can be. Will you do these things required of God in order to be "filled with the Spirit"? Will I? Each must answer for himself. Oh, how different each Christian would be if he or she was "filled with the Spirit." Oh, how different our churches would be if the pastor and many of the members were "filled with the Spirit".

SOME

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nothing - who would want to? I have very little respect for the man, woman, boy, or girl who is perfectly capable of doing some work, who sits around doing nothing all the time. The Bible has much to say against the slothful and the sluggard.

I do not know what service we shall perform in heaven, but we will serve Him. We will serve with great delight. We will ever be about that service that He assigns us. We will serve without weariness. We will not complain about how much or what kind of service He has for us. It will be our joy to serve Him.

We will see and praise the Saviour. Oh, it would be eternal delight just to dwell in His presence and praise Him without intermission forever and forever. We will have so much to praise Him for. We will praise Him most of all for dying at Calvary to save us from our sins. We will also praise Him for a multitude of other things He has done for us.

We will fellowship with the saints in heaven. Fellowship with God's children is one of the chief joys of this life; it will be one of the delights of heaven. We will fellowship with all of the saints. Things that have marred our fellowship on earth will not exist in heaven. Doctrinal differences will not exist to mar our fellowship. Things that we don't like about others - that hinder our fellowship here - will not be there. We will all be perfect and will be able to perfectly fellowship with one another. We will fellowship with the saints we have known on earth, with the saints of yesteryear; some of whom we have read, and some of whom we never heard before.

I have lost some friends in the last few years. I have lost some fellowship that was once precious to me. One of the joys that I look forward to in heaven is that we will all make up and live happily ever after. I wrote a letter this week to a brother with whom I once had fellowship. I do not question his salvation. But I told him that, apart from his repentance and trying to make things right, I wanted nothing else to do with him in this life. I really don't, but I believe we will have sweet fellowship once again when we both get to heaven. I love Christian fellowship. This is the thing I love most about conferences. I have some dear Christian friends that I love so very much. I love to be able now and then to have fellowship with them; by mail, by phone, and best of all, personal and face to face. Oh, I will have a wonderful time in heaven, fellowshiping with the saints.

We will view the scenery. Oh, how beautiful heaven must be. What sights will thrill our souls as we journey over heaven! We will sing songs of praise to God. Serving God, fellowshiping with the saints, singing songs of praise - how wonderful heaven is going to be.

7. Will we know our loved ones in heaven? Of course we will, we know them here; why should we not know them there? How would it be possible to know and love dearly here, and then see those same ones in heaven, love them there; but not know them? This question is often asked, but I cannot imagine

how anyone would even think that we might not know our loved ones in heaven. There could be a problem in the thinking of some. My boy died when he was eight, I believe he will be a grown man in heaven; how would I know him? A mother knows and loves her darling baby, the mother dies, the baby girl grows old, is saved, dies, and goes to heaven. How will the mother know her daughter in heaven when she was just a baby when she last saw her? I do not know exactly how God will bring this about, but I am very sure that we will know our loved ones in heaven, and will know the relationship we had with them while on earth.

Not only will we know our loved ones in heaven (and this might answer the problem stated above), but we will also know everyone else in heaven. Not only will there be "recognition" in heaven, there will also be "cognition." That is, everyone will know everyone else in heaven. Peter, James, and John had never met Moses and Elijah; but they knew them when they saw them on the Mount of Transfiguration. I do not believe that we will have to be introduced to one another in heaven, but that we will immediately know everyone as we meet.

8. How can we be happy, knowing that some of our loved ones are not there? I do not know just how God will bring this about. I do know that we will be totally and eternally happy in heaven. God could just blot such from our memory, but I doubt this. We will be so like God, that we will rejoice over His doings. We will know that our lost loved ones deserve to be in hell, and we would not want God to do any differently. We would not have them, in their unsaved condition, in heaven if we could do so. We will be happy. God will take care of this problem.

9. How can one go to heaven? This is the most important general question of all. It would do us no good - it would torture us - to know that there was such a place if there was no way we could go there. Praise God that He has revealed much to us about heaven. Praise Him even more that He has told us how we can go there. There is only one way to heaven. There is only one way that leads from earth to heaven. Now, there are many false ways devised by men, but they will never take one to heaven. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 16:25). Good works do not lead to heaven. The mourner's bench is not the way to heaven. Doing the best you can (which no one does) is not a way to heaven. Baptism is not the road to heaven. False religions, popular with men, are not ways to heaven.

There is only one way to heaven. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). Multitudes are on a way that professes to be a way to heaven, but they will end up in hell. There are many signs on these false ways, saying, "This is the way to heaven," but they are lying signs put up by false prophets. You can go to heaven, my friend, but you must enter in at the strait gate and walk the narrow way that leads to life. Jesus Christ is God, He was born

of a virgin, He lived a sinless life, He died at Calvary for the sins of all who will ever trust Him, He was buried, and He rose from the dead. He is the Saviour, and this is the gospel. You must repent of sins, receive Him as Lord and Saviour, and believe this gospel in order to go to heaven. This is the way, and the only way. All other so-called ways lead to hell.

10. Can one know that he is going to heaven? Yes, praise God, you don't have to wander around in the darkness, wondering where you are and where you are going. You can know with the utmost assurance that you are going to heaven. David knew; he said, "...and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever" (Psa. 23:6). When David's baby died, David knew that he had gone to heaven; and David said, "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again: I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (II Sam. 12:23). Yes, David knew he was going to heaven; and every child of God can know the same thing.

Now, there are some folk who are going to heaven but don't know it. The Hardshell does not know if he is going to heaven or not. I believe some of them are. But they don't know it because they believe the heresy that a person cannot know for sure that he is saved. Those who believe one can lose his salvation do not know they are going to heaven. They may say that they know they are saved now, but they would have to admit, that according to their doctrine (Praise God, it is false doctrine) that they do not know if they will lose their salvation or not. Therefore, they cannot know they are going to heaven.

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life..." (I Jn. 5:13). What a great Scripture. Note these things: 1. One can have life. 2. He can know that he has it. 3. This life is eternal life. Yes, one can know that he is going to heaven.

11. Will you be in heaven? This is the most important question so far as you are concerned. What good is it to you that there is such a blessed and wonderful place, if you are never going to be there? The rich man saw Lazarus in Abraham's bosom (a figure of paradise), but it did not do him any good. Heaven will mean nothing to you unless you are there. All its joy and blessings will but taunt you eternally if you are not there. As you suffer eternally in hell, you might say to yourself, "There is a heaven, and I could be there if I had repented and trusted in Jesus." I ask you again, I ask this in sincerity, I ask it in concern and almost in tears; my friend, will you be in heaven?

Listen, if you are not in heaven, you will be somewhere; and there is only one other place to be. If you are not in heaven, you will be suffering terrible agony in eternal burning hell.

If you, my reader, are going to heaven, rejoice therein, praise God for it, and tell others about heaven and urge them to receive Jesus Christ. If you are not saved, dear reader, "...Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..." (Acts 16:31).

JOSHUA

(Continued from Page 1)

fully entrenched in the land. Now the next move was to begin to take possession of the land which God had given them. Jericho was to be the first city that must be taken.

Joshua took a walk out to look over the city. Being an early riser (3:1) I can imagine this was just before daybreak. As he looked toward Jericho he saw a man standing with a sword drawn in his hand. Joshua at once wanted to know which side he was on, was he friend or foe? Joshua realized that there was no middle ground in the warfare with the enemies of Israel. No one could stand on the side lines and say, "This fight does not concern me, I will not enter into the conflict, I will not take sides."

"And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?" (Josh. 5:14).

In answer to Joshua's question, "Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?", the answer was that this One had come not only to help Israel but He was there to take control of the operation. He was the Commander-in-Chief, "as captain of the host of the LORD am I come." This "host of the LORD" was far more than the forty thousand men of war in Israel's army (4:13). This host was without number. When Elisha was surrounded by the Syrian army his servant cried, "Alas, my master how shall we do?" Elisha's answer was, "Fear not for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." He then prayed that the Lord open the servant's eyes. "And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man: and he saw; and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha" (II Kings 6:14-17). In the Garden of Gethsemane Christ told Peter that if He needed help He could pray the Father and He would send more than twelve legions of angels to His aid (Matt. 26:53). It was this "host of the LORD" of which this Captain was in charge. Israel's armed men were only a very small division of that "host."

"And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant." (Josh. 5:14). Joshua realized that he was in the presence of the most Holy God and he fell down and worshipped Him. How glad was he to turn the command of the warfare over to that One! He was only too glad, instead of leading the charge, to just follow, just be a servant, "What saith my lord unto his servant?"

"And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua. Loose thy shoe from off thy foot: for the place where thou standest is holy... And Joshua did so" (Josh. 5:15).

This verse proves that this One speaking to Joshua was none other than the Lord Himself in human form. We might note that the act of reverence required from Joshua was the same as that of Moses at the burning bush by

"the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." This command to Joshua gave to him further assurance of God's promise that, "as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee" (Josh. 1:5). What assurance was this to Joshua that the Lord was with him and would never fail him! Joshua wasted no time in obeying his Captain, it is recorded, "And Joshua did so."

CHAPTER SIX

Joshua "fit" the battle of Jericho,

Jericho, Jericho, Joshua "fit" the battle of Jericho,

And the walls came a-tumblin' down.

We sometimes hear this old spiritual song. It is true the walls did come down but it is very clear that it was not Joshua that "fit" the battle. Not only did God plan the operation but He was ever present to give direction and to fight the battle for the children of Israel. Looking at a map of the land of Canaan we can see that Jericho is near the center of the land and by first taking that city the enemy would be divided. With this city destroyed, Israel's army could either move north or south and take possession of the whole. It would seem that Jericho was the principle stronghold of the enemy and it must be taken if they expected to take over the land. But Jericho had high and strong walls around it. There is much disagreement as to the height and thickness of the wall, but we can be sure that Jericho was one of the well-secured cities of Canaan of which the spies said, "the cities are walled and very great" (Num. 13:28). To ten of the twelve spies which Moses sent to spy out the land, it would be an impossibility to take those cities, "The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to heaven;" (Deut. 1:28). Humanly speaking, it was impossible for Israel to take this fortified walled city with its strong army. Israel had no way of scaling the wall, no means of battering down the gates. With only bows and spears as the instruments of war, what could they do in the capture of the city? There was only one way this could be done. God must act! The taking of Jericho was just as much a miracle from God as was the crossing of Jordan.

"NOW Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in" (Josh. 6:1).

Inside Jericho there was fear and trembling. The crossing over Jordan by the Israelites had struck fear in their hearts. There was One with Israel whom they could not conquer. "AND it came to pass, when all the kings of the Amorites, which were on the side of Jordan westward, and all the kings of the Canaanites, which were by the sea, heard that the LORD had dried up the waters of Jordan from before the children of Israel, until we were passed over,

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The Baptist Examiner Forum I

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

Explain Rev. 3:5.

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"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels." (Revelation 3:5)

We are told in the beginning of the verse that he that overcometh will be clothed in white garments. This of course, is applied to those in Sardis, but also to all of God's people through the ages. Who are the overcomers and what, and from where, are their white garments? The Bible says in I John 5:4,5, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Positionally, every true believer by the faith given to him or her is an overcomer. They will persevere to the end of this life according to their individual circumstances by the will of God as to their individual lives. All true believers, of course, are clothed with the righteousness of Christ; it is accounted to them. Christ is made unto us righteousness among other things. See I Corinthians 1:30. I also believe that the robing of the saints in Scripture speaks of their service and fidelity. In Revelation, speaking of the bride, the Bible says, "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." (Revelation 19:8) However, we are here speaking of the saint's position in the Lord.

The next phrase which concerns the book of life, has and does cause many problems for some. Many feel that this phrase reflects the possibility of one being blotted out of the book of life. Some feel that all of mankind's names are written in this book; and then, if they reject Christ, their name is erased. Others feel that when a person is saved, their name is written down and could later be erased if they do not persevere of their own volition. All of these ideas are wrong. Anyone with a true knowledge of the comprehensiveness of salvation will not

have this problem. Taking this verse and comparing it with all of the other Scripture that teaches its impossibility, should be enough to clear the matter. God is simply giving all saints an assurance that their names will always be there and can never be blotted out. Eternal life and eternal salvation are the only kind the Scripture teaches. John 5:24 is but one of many Scriptures that teach us this. I believe the double negative in the Greek says to us, "I will by no means blot out his name." This is an emphatic assurance of eternal security.

Finally, we are told that Christ confesses our name before the Father. He knows us by name; individual, personal recognition. Christ will lose none of those given to Him (John 6:39), and will present them in the last day in all His perfection and purity. All the true saints shall overcome and be eternally recognized by God no matter from whence they come. Bless God! Praise His name!

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Revelation 3:5; "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."

How nice it would be to have all the answers. I will be the first to admit that there are many things about God's Word that I do not understand, and I feel helpless in trying to explain them. Let us start by mentioning some things we know this verse cannot mean.

We must interpret Scripture with Scripture. Another good principal is to interpret difficult Scriptures by easy Scriptures. We know that the Bible does not teach one thing in one place and another somewhere else. This verse is not teaching that a person can lose his salvation. It does not teach that salvation comes from good works; and that if you cease to perform good works, you will no longer be saved. Praise God, once you are saved, you are eternally saved. There is abundant Scripture to support this. One of the hardest things for me to understand is how a person can read the Bible and deny the truth of eternal security.

In trying to interpret this verse let us notice a few things. First, we know that God has a Book of Life. Revelation 13:8 bears this out. We know that whosoever's name is not written in this book will perish eternally. We know

that God is sovereign in knowing who will be saved and who will not. God does not have to erase names from this book because He was deceived about who would and who would not be saved. We know that works are not necessary for salvation. We know that all those who are truly saved, will indeed overcome. They will overcome by the mercy and grace of our God. Not one of God's elect will be blotted out of this book. Notice that there is not a specific mentioning of blotting out, there is just a mention of not blotting out. God knew that the truly saved would overcome. Those who did not overcome were those who thought and or made others think they were written in the book of life when in reality they were not saved to start with. There is also the theory that this is a reference to physical life. This would imply death because of sin against the church. Thought might be given to this having reference to rewards or even the bride (Please note that I said "might"). This verse is urging saved church members to improve their life and church. Let us heed this and look forward to the day when Christ will confess us before His Father. May God bless you all.

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I feel that I should explain my general position on the seven churches to which Christ spake in Revelation chapters two and three. I hold to the literal interpretation of these letters. I believe that the churches named in these verses were real churches in existence at the time that John dictated the letters from the Lord. Furthermore, the primary application was and is to all the Lord's churches, from that time until this; that they, (the seven churches in Revelation) are illustrative in moral and spiritual character of present day churches.

I will leave the spiritualizing of these verses to the more spiritual minded. I will simply try to explain the verse as it appears, considering the face value of it. I do not believe that we can wander too far off the path of truth if we will follow a few simple rules of interpretation, such as who, why, when, where, and how.

First, we must consider who is the Lord writing this letter to? It is to the church in Sardis. That is church as in saints, Christians, properly baptized believers in Christ Jesus. He is writing to the "overcomers." All, and I mean all of God's people shall overcome. Jesus said in Matthew 24:13, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the

same shall be saved." The white raiment is the garment that represents the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ which has been imputed to all of the elect that the Father gave to the Son before the foundation of the world. Certainly their names will not be blotted out of the book of life, for they were written there before the foundation of the world. Let every true saint of God take comfort in the fact that their names shall never be blotted out of that book. In John 10:27-30 our Lord lovingly spoke of His people as sheep saying, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."

Now, I believe that the Lord Jesus will confess our names before the Father and the angels at the Judgment Seat when we are raptured and the dead in Christ rise from the graves. It is true that Christ is now our High Priest, and makes intercession for us, but Revelation 3:5 points to the Judgment Seat of Christ and the benefits thereafter. Thank you for your question.

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"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" (Rev. 3:5).

The key that unlocks this verse is the word, "overcometh." Who are those that overcometh? John has given us the answer to this in I John 5:4 where we are told, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." The next question that may be asked, "Who are those that are born of God?" John again has given us the answer, "WHOSOEVER believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God:" (I John 5:1).

Now Christ has made the promise that He would not blot out the overcomers (those who are born of God, those who believe that Jesus is the Christ). Another question, What is the "book of life?" Men have made it to be different things, but in Revelation 21:27 this book is called the "Lamb's book of life," and in Revelation 13:8 we are told that all, "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" shall worship the beast.

As all who believe that Jesus is the Christ are born of God and since all who are born of God are "overcomers" (I John 5:1-4), Revelation 3:5 is saying that

Christ has promised that He will not blot out any names from the "book of life." He told us the same thing in John 6:37, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Yes, this is another promise, not a threat, that the child of God can never lose the eternal life that has been given him by Christ, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John 10:27-29).

This is one of the "exceeding great and precious promises" (II Peter 1:4) which Christ has made to all those whose faith is in His shed blood.

JOSHUA

(Continued from Page 3)

that their heart melted, neither was there spirit in them any more because of the children of Israel." (Josh. 5:1). Jericho had shut the gates of the city. None went out nor came in, there they were within, trembling with fear. The only hope they had was that the height and strength of the wall around the city would hold against the God of Israel. But what were these walls to the God who could make the iron gates of a city "opened to them of his own accord" (Acts 12:10), and cause "all the doors" of a prison to be opened (Acts 16:26)?

And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given unto thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour" (Josh. 6:2).

Before anything was done in the taking of the city, God gives Joshua the assurance that He had already given him the city and all that were in it. But we must remember that Joshua and all of Israel had faithfully followed the Lord's commands in the rite of circumcision and in the observance of the Passover. Christ has promised, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him" (John 14:21).

The taking of Jericho was by faith, "By faith, the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days" (Heb. 11:30). The word, "see" in "See, I have given unto thine hand..." carries the meaning that Joshua was to look at things from a spiritual standpoint. Look at it with an eye of faith not by human reason. At the Red Sea the command of Moses was "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord" (Ex. 14:13). They did not obtain this salvation (deliverance) until they obeyed the command, "speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward" (v. 15). They were required to "see" their deliverance by the eye of faith before it was accomplished.

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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 Acts 2:38 as to "ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

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"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). The word repent

brings about two actions: one outward; baptism, and one inward; the giving of the Holy Spirit. The first action, baptism, does not play a part in the process of salvation, but is a result of the action. The second action, the gift of the Holy Spirit, is an integral part of salvation.

The gift of the Holy Ghost is a promise, made by Jesus to His disciples when He told them that He was to return to His Father.

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him: for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:16-17). This promise is stated again by Peter on the day of Pentecost when the multitude was told to repent and they would receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The word gift means free present and is the gift of the Spirit by the Spirit to any and all believers. "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 10:44-45). The gift of the Holy Spirit comes to every believer the instant he receives Christ as Saviour. The promise is one that is emphatic and is stressed by the word "shall." Repent, and ye shall receive the gift. Any time that "shall" is used for emphasis, that which is promised must come to pass.

Now the gift that is stated should not be confused to be the gifts of the Holy Ghost, but the gift is the Holy Ghost. There are gifts that are given to believers after they receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, and these are written for us in First Corinthians, chapter twelve.

There is a purpose for the gift of the Holy Ghost to the believer. He is to be our Comforter in time of need and sorrow. He

is to be our teacher in all things that are Scriptural. He is to be a help in time of remembrance. He is to be our guide into all truth. He shall reveal things of prophecy to us. He is a witness unto us that we are the children of God because His Spirit bears witness with our spirit.

This promise is a continuing promise. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39).

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Repentance and faith is granted by God. Baptism is often referred to as the first step of obedience. Saving faith not only involves an intellectual acknowledgement of Christ as Saviour, but a will to do what He wishes. This was illustrated by the Apostle Paul on the road to Damascus. When Christ revealed Himself, Paul said... "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Obedience is the fruit of true repentance and faith. "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29). "...And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32).

I believe the Gift of the Holy Spirit is exactly that, the giving of the Holy Spirit from God. Paul said in I Corinthians 6:19... "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?"

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While Christ was on earth, He performed many miracles. These miracles were for the purpose of showing the people He was the Son of God, and that His Word and works were of God (John 14:11). The works that Christ did were for the glory of God. When the disciples of Jesus asked Him why the man of John 9 was born blind, He told them that it was that the works of God might be

made manifest. The word "manifest" means to make known (John 9:1-3). The miracles of Jesus were to show forth the power of God, to show His authority and control over His creation and over men and angels, both good and evil.

When Paul wrote to the Corinthian church he explained to them the proper use and purpose of the gifts of the Spirit. In I Corinthians 12:1 we read, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." Paul then, in verses 8-10 names these spiritual gifts.

Chapters 12-14 are given for an explanation of the purpose of spiritual gifts. In chapter 12 the kind of gifts are named and they were given to whosoever God pleased. God uses the human body as an illustration as to how these gifts are to be used so that there would be no schism in the church.

In I Corinthians 1:3 we learn of the more excellent way. The more excellent way is the gift of faith, hope, and charity; these three abide or remain; all other gifts did not abide. Prophecy as a gift of the Spirit failed or came to an end. The gift of speaking in another language or tongue ceased. Knowledge as a gift of the Spirit passed away (I Corinthians 13:8). To learn these things search and study is necessary.

The 14th chapter of 1st Corinthians gives the proper use of these gifts to men. They were to be used for the building up of the church. These gifts were to be used in the proper order. The men (not the women) were given these gifts for the building up of the church. Then they were to speak one at a time. (I Corinthians 14:27-28).

When God gave men the gift of knowledge, they were enabled by the Spirit, to know the Scriptures without studying and searching into them. We cannot do that today, we must study so that we would have a good knowledge of the Scriptures. If we would do what Paul told Timothy to do in II Timothy 2:15, we would be able to rightly divide the Word of God and stop the mouths of the gainsayers.

These gifts of the Spirit were for the purpose of convincing the listeners of the fact that the speaker, God's man and his message was of God.

When Peter gave this promise "ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" to those who propounded that question, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" it was to give them assurance of salvation. And also, it was or would be given to them, for a testimony, or sign to others, that God had saved them. We read in 1st Corinthians 14:22 "Wherefore tongues are for a sign..." A sign is to signify or clarify a certain thing. A sign is for the purpose of clarifying a subject as to what is said or done.

Those who believed were promised the gift of the Spirit.

By this gift they were enabled to speak in other tongues or languages. The gift of the Holy Spirit was a sign to the unbeliever. I Corinthians 14:22.

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The gift of the Holy Ghost meant a lot of things in that day. First of all, it meant that they were saved and set apart for the work of the Lord. It meant that they would be sealed with the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 4:30 says, "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."

The gift of the Holy Spirit is the power source of our ministry whether we be preacher or lay person. We need the Holy Spirit to live for God, and to be able to witness to the lost carrying out the great commission as our Lord commanded. In that day tongues was a part of the ministry as well as healing. The tongues of that day was not the jibber jabber of our day, but rather the speaking in other languages, in order to carry the gospel to every nation. This gift enabled them to heal the sick. In Acts 1:1-11 it tells us of Peter and John healing a lame man. In the book of Acts we see many things performed by the blessings of the blessed gift of the Holy Spirit.

This precious gift today gives us power to live a holy life, to perform the work that we are commanded to do in order to fulfill the Great Commission. Everyone has his/her calling to serve the Lord. We should use this gift; it will bless our lives. We should even pray for the filling of the Holy Spirit and His leadership in our daily lives. What a difference it would make. Beloved, let us use this gift, this gift is the greatest power source in the world.

JOSHUA

(Continued from Page 4)

Joshua was to "see" the capture of Jericho by the eye of faith before it was actually accomplished. What is faith? NOW faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).

"And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of ram's horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him" (Josh.

6:3-5).

Joshua was now given the battle plan on how the city was to be taken. This was a strange way to fight a battle, no weapons of war, no battering rams, no ladders to scale the wall. All Joshua was to do was to have the armed men to march around the city once each day for six days. These were to be followed by seven priests blowing the seven trumpets. These were to precede the Ark of the Covenant. On the seventh day they were to march around the city seven times and at the end of the seventh round the great walls, the ones which the spies, forty years before, had said they were "walled up to heaven," would "fall down flat" at the blast of the ram's horns and the shout of the people. This was to be done "without a shot being fired."

To men, this plan was most foolish, but we must remember that God's ways are not man's ways. Remember, the apostle Paul wrote, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (I Cor. 1:18).

Note the sevens in this plan, seven priests, seven trumpets, seven days, and seven trips around the city on the seventh day. The number "seven" as often used in the Bible means completeness or perfection. Although this plan was foolish to men, it was the perfect plan of God and worked to perfection.

We might also note that the trumpets used were those used in connection with Israel's solemn feasts. They were the jubilee trumpets. They proclaimed that God was in their presence. This tells us that this was not to be a military operation, but a spiritual one. The trumpets as they sounded declared that the Lord of heaven and earth was making His way around this city that was soon to fall to destruction.

"And Joshua the son of Nun called the priests, and said unto them, Take up the ark of the covenant, and let seven priests bear seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD. And he said unto the people, Pass on, and compass the city, and let him that is armed pass on before the ark of the LORD" (Josh. 6:6, 7).

Joshua being the experienced military man that he was, may have thought this was a strange way to fight a battle. But he was also a man of faith and the Lord had told him that He had given him the city. Therefore, instead of arguing with God as Moses who had argued at length against God's plan (Ex. 4:1-17), he lost no time in calling the priests and elders of the people together and giving them the same instructions which he had received from his Commander-in-Chief. It is well to note that Joshua followed exactly the plan as given him by the Lord. Joshua had been given the exact instructions in the carrying out of this plan. Nothing was left for Joshua to do except faithfully follow those instructions. To take Jericho, Joshua must "trust and obey." This is the lesson that we must learn if we are to take our "Jerichos" that

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THE VAIN EFFORTS OF MAN IN FIGHTING TRUTH OF ELECTION

by Joseph M. Wilson

"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (II Thess. 2:13).

I am always in a bit of a perplexity when I try to decide on a text for the subject of election. This glorious doctrine is taught so prominently, and in so many passages of God's Word. Really, it is difficult to see how anyone can read the Bible, without seeing the doctrine of election. They must read with a veil upon their heart, if not upon their eyes. Truly, election is a Biblical doctrine. As Bishop said: "The Bible not only teaches election, but makes it so prominent, that you can only get rid of election by getting rid of the Bible."

In spite of the fact that this doctrine of election is taught so prominently and clearly in the Bible, men hate it with an awful passion. Many who profess to be children of God manifest a bitter hatred for this precious truth. It is sad to see men who are sound on much of God's Word in their antagonism to this truth. There are two outstanding reasons why men hate this doctrine.

One is because it exalts God. Man does not like to see God exalted. He likes to think of God as very little, if any, above man. He does all he can to make God a little and puny being. Election exalts God to His proper place in salvation. It places God on the throne, doing as He will in the salvation of lost mankind. Man will not have this if he can help it.

Then men hate election because it abases man. It makes man to be lower than a worm of the earth. It makes man to have nothing and less than nothing to do with salvation. Man would have a part to play in salvation. He desires to have whereof to glory. Election cuts out from under man the last ground of boasting, and leaves him nothing. So man hates this doctrine that abases the pride of man.

However, election is in the Bible, and if man is going to pretend to believe the Bible, he must do something with this doctrine. He cannot afford to deny the Word altogether. So man, in his bitter hatred to this doctrine, and in his desperate efforts to get around or do away with it, invents certain doctrines and calls them by the name "election." These inventions are simply perversions of the Word of God, and are men's vain efforts to get around the doctrine of election. Let us look at some of these.

I. Some will say that God elects everyone and that man then might leave himself out. This is so absurd that few men will adopt it. The word elect means to choose from among. In the market, when you pick out some tomatoes, you do not take all, or

it would not be a choosing. When we elect a president, we do not take all the candidates, or it would not be an election. So the very meaning of the word shows the absurdity of this position. Then, also, all men are not saved, therefore all men are not elected.

II. Here is an old effort of Satan to get around and pervert the Biblical doctrine of election, and it is surprising how many people hold this and think they have discovered something wonderful. They will say: God voted for you, the devil voted against you, and you cast the deciding vote. Men, who in the ordinary matters of life are fairly intelligent will put this forth as a serious attempt at explaining the doctrine of election. Now, this actually makes man to do the electing. The one who casts the deciding vote is the one who does the electing. So this makes man elect himself and gives man the glory in the deciding factor in his own salvation. This awful perversity makes Satan equal with God in that the devil's vote cancels out the vote of God; then Satan is equal with God in this respect. What a little God a man must have who can preach such heresy as this. Then, this doctrine makes man to be the superior of God and the devil, because man's vote means more than either one of the other votes. Furthermore, the Bible teaches that election took place in eternity, and neither Satan nor man were there to vote in the matter. And even further, if man cast the deciding vote, all would go to hell, for man always votes with the devil, and against God, until effectually saved by the grace of God. This doctrine denies the total depravity of man. See to what lengths men will go, how they will deny clearly taught Biblical doctrines, how they pervert the Word of God, and how they well-nigh blaspheme in their bitter hatred of, and desperate efforts against, the Bible doctrine of unconditional election.

III. Then some will say that election takes place in time or when we trust Christ. Again this has robbed God of His glory to man. Now the Bible is very clear and made man to be the deciding factor in his own salvation. I want you to note as we go along in this article, that man is continually trying to rob God of glory and give that stolen glory very clear that election is eternal. My text said, "...from the beginning...", Ephesians 1:4 says, "...before the foundation of the world...", Revelation 17:8 says, "...from the foundation of the world..." Men may sing their "new name written down in glory," but they sing a lie and dishonor the Word of God. I heard a preacher give this invitation: "The recording angel is standing here by my side, and if you will come tonight, he will write your name in the Lamb's Book of Life." He lied in his teeth when he said that. He was a liar and a false prophet. Beloved, it is highly dishonoring to God to even imagine that any act of His could be changeable or less than eternal.

IV. Here is a favorite. Men say that election is national and corporate. That God elected the nation Israel as a nation. That God elects (what they call) the church, and you get in that church by your faith. Well, beloved, what are nations and corporate bodies made up of if not individuals? If it is wrong to

elect an individual and pass another by, then it would be even more wrong to elect a nation and pass another by. Jacob and Esau were individuals, and God speaks of loving one and hating the other. Now note this: the things spoken of the elect could only be true of individuals. Romans 8:29, "...to be conformed to...", Revelation 17:8, "...written in the book of life...", Acts 13:48, "...ordained to eternal life...", II Thessalonians 2:13, "...to salvation..." These things can only be true of individuals and not of nations or corporate bodies.

V. Another vain effort against election is to say that election is to outward privilege and to service. Now certainly there is an election to outward privileges.

This was true of Israel and of the places where God sends the gospel. Certainly, there is an election to service. God elects from among the election to salvation some to be special servants of the Lord. But the primary election of the Bible is unto salvation and to deny this is simply to deny the Bible. The Bible speaks of an election to salvation, to be conformed to the image of His Son, to eternal life. What can all this possibly mean other than that the elect are the recipients of the salvation of the Lord? The man who denies election to salvation is just willingly ignorant of the Word of God on the subject of election.

VI. But now we come to the favorite dodge of those who deny the Biblical doctrine of unconditional election. They say that God looked down on fallen mankind, and foreknew who would repent and believe, and on the basis of foreknowing that they would do that, God elected them to salvation. In other words, that election is based upon foreseen repentance and faith. Now this is easily answered. This effort shows man's terrible hatred of the Bible doctrine, and his willingness to go to any lengths to get around that glorious Scriptural truth. Now, if election is based on foreseen repentance and faith, then there would be no reason for anyone to object to it. In Romans 9:14,19 Paul brings forth some objections that men made to the doctrine he was preaching in that chapter. Men objected that if what Paul preached was true, then there was unrighteousness with God, and God should not find fault with man. How easy it would have been for Paul to answer these objections if he had been a present day Arminian. He could have said: "You misunderstand me, I do not mean to preach unconditional election. I mean that God elected Israel to outward privileges. I mean that God foreknew who would believe, and He elected them on that basis." Now this is what the free-willer does. Why did not Paul do that? Because Paul was not preaching free-will doctrine, but sovereign grace doctrine. What did Paul do? He reasserted the sovereignty of God, the unconditionalness of God's showing mercy, and emphasized that man had no right to reply against God. Read Romans 9. No man can read and believe it without believing in unconditional election and reprobation as well. Hear this statement. Any doctrine that does not raise the objections against it by man that were raised in Romans 9:14,19, is not the doctrine Paul preached--is not the doctrine of the Bible.

This invented doctrine of election based on foreknowledge, has gotten rid of those objections, but has perverted the Word of God and is a false heresy. There is no mystery to an election based on foreknowledge, but Paul asserts in Romans 11:33, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

The free-willer has searched out the unsearchable and found out that which cannot be found out--at least in his pride, he thinks he has, but really, he has only grossly perverted the truth of God.

This perversion of election robs the Word of all meaning. It is simply a matter of retaining the Word and destroying the doctrine. The Bible makes election to be the source of all blessings to the people of God. This doctrine makes election to be simply nothing at all. This teaching is highly dishonoring to God. It makes the great and awful God of the Bible to come down and play children's games. Pray tell me, of what use it is to elect a man to salvation who is already going to be saved anyway? What part does election play in salvation, when it is only God deciding to do what would have been done anyway because of repentance and faith?

Furthermore, the Bible presents repentance and faith as the gifts of God to His elect. This heresy makes man's repentance and faith to obtain God's election for man.

The Bible makes God's unconditional election to obtain repentance and faith of man. Search and see. Look at Acts 5:31, 11:18; Ephesians 2:8-10. Man does not have these things by nature. They are the gifts of God and the work of the Holy Spirit. And they are given to and worked in the elect of God. What a turning around of the Bible is this heresy now under consideration.

The doctrine that man repents and believes; and that God, foreseeing this, elects man, utterly denies the doctrine of total depravity as set forth in Holy Scripture. I pause here to say this, and it bears careful thought. No man can deny the Bible doctrine of unconditional election without denying or grossly perverting the Bible doctrine of total depravity. Man may talk long and loud of his belief in depravity, but he is merely talking, and does not believe in Biblical depravity unless he believes in unconditional election.

Repentance and faith are an essential part of the salvation given by God and not the means of procuring that salvation. Repentance and faith occupy a middle station in salvation. They are not the cause or the consummation thereof. The Scripture is very clear on this matter. It is not because of ambiguity in Scripture, but because of enmity toward, that men come up with this foreseen faith theory. Their doctrine is not an exegesis of the Word of God, but a theory of their own which they use to combat a glorious Biblical truth: that of unconditional election.

Well, these are not all, but they are some of the vain efforts of man against the doctrine of unconditional election. I say vain, because the truth will stand in spite of men's efforts against it. God's dear saints will still be rejoicing in the glorious truth of electing grace when all men's ef-

forts to the contrary will have fallen to the ground--rather, to the pits of hell whence they came. Baptists should hold this truth and not just hold, but proclaim it, or drop that glorious name they wear. Surely, this truth is full of sweet comfort to the people of God. Let us all unite in praising God for unconditional election. That is man's only hope. If election is based on conditions to be performed by man, then are we all doomed to an eternal hell; but this glorious truth of unconditional election is the only hope that any will be saved, and the sure hope that an innumerable multitude will be saved. God bless you all.

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face us. Joshua may not have understood God's method, but he trusted God, and we may not understand God's way, but if we are to be overcomers we must do things His way.

"And it came to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, that the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns passed on before the LORD, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them. And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, and the reward came after the ark, the priests going on, and blowing with the trumpets. And Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout." (Josh. 6:8-10).

Joshua, the man of faith which he was, wasted no time in getting ready to follow the Captain's command. He called the people together and placed them in the order in which God had told him. The armed men leading the way followed by the seven priests blowing their trumpets, after them the ark of the covenant, with the people bringing up the rear. The only sound was the trumpets which the priests were blowing as they marched around the city. What a strange sight this must have been to the people of Jericho as they viewed this straggling band of people! I can imagine how puzzling this strange action on the part of Israel must have been to them.

"So the ark of the LORD compassed the city, going about it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp" (Josh. 6:11).

The statement, "the ark of the LORD compassed the city," shows us that this operation is in control of God. The ark of the covenant represents the presence of the Lord. He is the One who is in charge. All that Joshua and Israel were to do was to "trust and obey" His commands. Israel marching around the city was proof of their faith in that One who was in charge of the operation. They showed their

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faith by their works (James 2:18). What was true in Joshua's day is just as true in our day. Could there be any doubt, as Israel silently marched around Jericho, that they were walking by faith? Could the same be said of each of us today?

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by the golden head of the image. I imagine after Daniel had given this interpretation, that Nebuchadnezzar, among other things, felt just a little puffed up to think that he was represented by a head of gold, while all the other nations that were to come after were represented by inferior metals, such as silver, brass, iron, and iron and miry clay. I wouldn't be a bit surprised but what Nebuchadnezzar got a little touch of "swell-head" as a result of the interpretation of this dream. Accordingly, he seemed to take Daniel literally and, therefore, he commanded that an image of tremendous proportions be built and set up in the plain of Dura which was in the province of Babylon--an image which was approximately 90 feet in height and 9 feet in width--an image which apparently was made of gold. I rather imagine it was gold-plated, but be that as it may, at least it was part of gold, and Nebuchadnezzar demanded that the people fall down and worship it.

It would appear, beloved, that Nebuchadnezzar would have profited from the dream he had and the interpretation which Daniel gave to him. I'm satisfied he could appreciate the wisdom which Daniel gave to him. I'm satisfied he could appreciate the wisdom which Daniel possessed when he gave to him the dream and the interpretation thereof. Though he appreciated Daniel's wisdom, he had no heart for the God who had inspired Daniel with that wisdom, and, accordingly, he used the power which God had given him as the head of the nation, which was really a nation of nations--- he used the power that God had given, to deny God and to set himself up in the place of God, thus demanding that the people fall down and worship him. Instead of telling everybody to worship the God of Daniel, he sets up an idol for all the people of his empire to worship.

I rather imagine this image was but a replica of the image of his dream which he had had in Daniel 2. I imagine it was nothing more or less than an exact reproduction of that image he had seen in his dream. Now he commands that whenever the orchestra sounds out, with all kinds of musical instruments composing that orchestra, that all the people are to fall down and worship the image which he, Nebuchadnezzar, had set up.

Now let's notice from this story a few things that will present to us some spiritual truths.

I. THE DEMAND WHICH THE KING MADE.

On the surface, it looked like a very small demand. It wasn't much that he required. All he asked of them was to fall down

and worship this image which he had set up in the plain of Dura.

I imagine that many individuals would have done that very thing because it was such a little thing which the king demanded. Listen to me, beloved, if you watch concerning the little temptations in life, you will never have to be bothered concerning the big ones. **"Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes"** (Song of Solomon 2:15).

I will be honest with you---I have never fully understood what Solomon meant by that Scripture, but it surely does serve as a remarkable illustration in this respect, that if you will watch about the little temptations and the little sins that come before you, you won't have to be concerned too much about the greater ones.

As I say, it wasn't a big thing that was demanded on the part of the king--- it was a very small thing.

Sometime ago I saw a picture of one of those giant redwood trees in California that had been cut out so that you could drive an automobile right through the base of that tree while it was still standing. A man said to me, "What kind of seed do you suppose that tree grew from?" I replied that I imagine surely it must have grown from a seed the size of a man's head or bigger, in view of the mammoth proportions of the tree itself. Instead, this lumberman told me that the seed from which that mammoth giant of the forest had come, was as small as the tiny proverbial mustard seed.

I am reminded of that story that I remember as a child reading of the dwarf who asked the king for all the land he could cover in three steps. The king looked at him. He was such a cute little fellow that I imagine the king must have thought, "He can't cover much of my domain and I'll just grant to him his request and give him all he covers in three steps." Immediately, that little dwarf shot up to a giant. With his first step, he covered all the land of the king's domain; with the second step, he covered all the water; and with the third step, he knocked the king off the throne and took possession himself.

Watch out for the thing which appears to be little; watch out for that which seems to be harmless; watch out for that which seems to be a small evil. This looked like a mighty small demand which the king made, but those Jews refused to bow to the demand of the king even in this little matter. They might have argued and might have reasoned that they were in a heathen land among heathen people and they might have said, "It's customary here to worship idols." They might have said, "Since everybody else is worshipping idols, we will go ahead and do so," but they did not. It would, no doubt, have been easier for them to thus reason. There is an old adage which says, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do," and the majority of people follow in the light of that adage. They might have reasoned in that manner, but they didn't do it. They might have said, "We are a long way from home--- 500 miles--- and nobody will ever find out about it." They might have said, "We'll shake hands --- the three of us --- Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, that we will never tell

tell anybody as to what we have done. We are miles removed from home and nobody will find out about it and we will never tell it ourselves." Listen, beloved, what's a sin in Palestine, is a sin in Babylon. What's wrong at home, is wrong 500 miles away from home.

To these Jews, this demand of the king meant that they were to forsake God. Maybe it was a little thing in the sight of the king. Maybe it was a little thing when viewed in the light of the demands of the people, and in the light of their customs it probably would have appeared a very small matter; but it actually meant for those three Jews that they would have to forsake God Himself. Listen to what God says: **"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments"** (Exodus 20:4-6).

Beloved, in the light of that passage of Scripture which God gave to the Jews particularly, if they had fallen down to worship this image, though it seemed but a little thing in the eyes of the world, it would have meant to those Jews that they were forsaking God Himself.

II. LET'S SEE HOW THEY REFUSED.

These Jews just absolutely refused to do what the king commanded. They were not unionists. If they had lived in lots of towns, they would not have considered the matter one particle--- they would have gone right along and unionized with those people in Babylon; but, beloved, they were not unionists.

If they had been like lots of Baptists today, they would have done exactly what the king of Babylon demanded, but they were not like a lot of modern Baptists. They had a backbone that was made out of crowbar and most modern Baptist have a backbone made out of a piece of boiled spaghetti. They were not unionists, therefore, they would not unionize with this crowd in Babylon.

You and I don't have any business unionizing with the man who does not believe the teachings of God's Word, nor with any group of people who deny the teachings of this Bible. Listen: **"Can two walk together except they be agreed?"** (Amos 3:3). **"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them"** (Romans 16:17).

Stay away from that crowd that doesn't teach the Word of God. Listen again: **"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away"** (II Timothy 3:5).

"Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we re-

ceive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (II John 1: 8-11).

Listen to me, beloved, God's people have no business unionizing with anyone who does not follow the principles and teachings of this Word of God. If anyone comes along who does not preach the security of the believer, salvation by grace, the glorious old doctrine that we are elected in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world-- we have no business to unionize, and fraternalize or cooperate in any wise with him.

These Jews just were not unionists, and God's people would do well to learn from their experience. You and I would do well to learn from their experience that we are not to cooperate, unionize and fraternalize with those who do not preach and teach according to the Word of God.

Look at these three men who loved the Bible more than they loved popularity. It would have made them popular if, over in that heathen land of Babylon, they had bowed down and worshipped this image. Everyone would have said, "My, these Jews are nice people after all. They are broad-minded --- they are not narrow-minded like we thought they were." Everybody would have spoken well of them; but listen, they loved the Word of God more than they did popularity.

I like to see any man or woman who loves the teachings of God's Word more than he loves anything else in the world.

I remember reading some place in history of an individual who was told by the emperor, "All the world is against you." The individual said, "Then I'm against all the world." My, what an answer! It didn't make any difference to this man if all the world were against him, for it meant that he was against all the world. Beloved, I'd rather be true to God than to be popular with the world by compromising.

Let me ask you a serious question: Suppose the days of Daniel were on us now and that an image were set up here within this town and it was commanded by the mayor or some official in charge, that you bow down before that image. I wonder how many Daniels we would find. I wonder how many people would love the Lord more than they loved the praise of men.

As I stand here, I am reminded of this fact --- that while such an image is not set up and no official command on the part of any individual has been given, yet there are principles that are involved in the teachings and interpretation of the Word of God that are just as far reaching in their effects. Are you standing for the teachings of the principles of the Word of God, or are you willing to compromise with the world and with false religions for the sake of popularity?

These Jews would not do so. They were determined that they would obey God and not man.

They remind me of the two individuals we read about in our Sunday School lesson recently. Listen: **"But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard"** (Acts 4: 19-20).

You remember the Sanhedrin had threatened Peter and John and said, "You had better quit preaching in the name of Jesus or we will put you in prison." Peter and John said, "You can judge for yourselves --- we are going right on and preach in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ." They were determined to love God, and obey God, and not man.

III. THE CHALLENGE WHICH THIS KING ISSUED. **"Now if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the image which I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?"** (Daniel 3: 15).

Up until that time, it had been Nebuchadnezzar on the one side and these three Jews, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, on the other. Now, beloved, the scene changes, for it is Nebuchadnezzar on the one side and you can forget about those three Jews for God steps in and takes their place. The king has issued a challenge--- **"who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?"** Now, beloved, it is Nebuchadnezzar on the one hand, the mightiest king of all time; and on the other hand, it is the King of kings who had made and created Nebuchadnezzar.

In olden times, when an individual wished to challenge another to a duel, he would strip off his glove and throw it down at the feet of the man he challenged. If the individual wished to accept the challenge, he need not say a word --- all he had to do was to reach down, pick up the glove and hand it back to the challenger.

Beloved, Nebuchadnezzar literally threw the glove down in the face of Almighty God and challenged God. God picked up the glove, figuratively, and accepted the challenge.

I want you to notice how this challenge came out. Those three Jews were cast into the fiery furnace which was heated seven times hotter than they ordinarily and customarily heated it. They were bound with their hats on, their shoes on, their hose on and with their clothes on, and they were thrown into that furnace. So hot was the furnace that the heat of the flames killed the men who threw them in.

I want you to see how God accepted Nebuchadnezzar's challenge. Pretty soon that old king stood and looked into that furnace and his eyes got as big as a washing tub, almost. The only thing the fire had burned about

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those Jews was the bands he put on them to tie them. Instead of seeing those Jews melting in the flames, he saw them loose and walking about in that fiery furnace, and low and behold, he saw a fourth one walking in the furnace with them. I hear him as he said, "Didn't I command you to cast three into the furnace?" "Yes," He replied, "But I see four men loose and the form of the fourth is like that of the Son of God Himself." Beloved, God had accepted the challenge of Nebuchadnezzar and now He walks in the fiery furnace with these three Jews.

If ever God accepted a man's challenge, if ever God at any time in all history exhibited His power, it was in this case here. He laid aside all the laws of nature so that these men were not burned, so that their lives were preserved, and God walked with them in the midst of that fiery furnace.

That's what God has promised to do for His children. Listen to what He says: **"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee"** (Isa. 43:2).

That's God's promise.

Listen, beloved, you and I are just like those Jews --- we have some fiery furnaces to go through sometimes, we have some problems arise which are pretty big problems, and beloved, the God who took care of these three Jews in the fiery furnace is the same God we preach to you today. If God took care of those Jews in the fiery furnace back there, God is able to take care of you and me in the hour of difficulty. In the time of trial --- in the heat of the battle when the fighting is the heaviest and the road gets the roughest, that same God can walk with us. Did He not say: **"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."** **"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."** **"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid"** (John 14: 18, 23, 27).

Do the Scriptures not say: **"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me"** (Psalm 23: 4).

I tell you, beloved, God kept His promise to these three Jews. That same God who accepted the challenge of Nebuchadnezzar and who kept His promise to those three Jews, that same God lives today and He will take care of His children today.

I will say this to you in passing, beloved, I would rather walk in a fiery furnace with the Lord than to walk on the outside by

myself. This is mighty comforting and encouraging to me. If you are God's child, you have some afflictions and problems. As I sat here waiting to preach to you and I reflected that there wasn't a family here but what I have seen tears in their eyes. I could not help but be impressed with it that there isn't a family within this building but what I have seen trouble in some wise come to you---afflictions, sickness, death, financial reverses, problems in some form or another. It is mighty comforting to know that when the difficulties arise, we have a God who walks with us hand in hand, and heart in heart, just like God walked in the fiery furnace with those three Jews.

I remember reading some years ago of the man who was attempting to climb a high mountain. About half way up the mountain, a storm broke over him and his guide. They stumbled along for a little while and the man said to the guide, "I think I will have to turn back. I don't think we can make it." The guide merely smiled and said, "Just wait---in a few minutes we will be above the storm." Just a few minutes passed and they had gotten above the realm of the storm, and up above it, they could look down upon the valley that was filled with the storm, but they, serenely above the storm, were out of its path.

Sometimes, beloved, it looks to you and to me that we must turn back, that there is no going forward, that it isn't possible to take another forward step; but our Guide, the Lord Jesus Christ, would say to us: "Fear not, I am with thee, Oh, be not dismayed: I am thy God and I'll still give thee aid; I'll strengthen thee, help thee and cause thee to stand, Upheld by My righteous omnipotent hand. When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie, My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply; The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine."

Remember, beloved, it does not make any difference what kind of furnace you may have to pass through, God will go with you. I say to you, I don't believe there is any furnace that God ever allows His child to pass through but what God will go there with His child. You can look back across the past and you can see some pretty dark experiences. You can remember the time when your heart was heavy. You can remember the hour when you lay awake at night. You can remember the starless nights and the sunless days through which you have passed. You can remember the time that you wished for death. You can remember the time that you wished God might blot out everything. You can look out in the future and be assured of the fact that the same experiences await us in the future as have been ours in the past; but you can furthermore be assured that regardless of what furnace God may call upon you to pass through, He who has been with you, has cared for you and led you in the past---that same God will walk with you through whatever furnace may be yours in the future.

I came across a little poem which is very appropriate in connection with this message: "Twas when the seas tremendous roar A little bark assailed; And pallid fear, with awful power O'er each on board prevailed. Save one the

captain's darling son, Who fearless viewed the storm, And playful with composure smiled At danger's threatening form. "Why sporting thus," a seaman cried, "Whilst dangers overwhelm?" "Why yield to grief?" the boy replied, "My father's at the helm."

Isn't it wonderful to know that when trouble comes and problems arise, isn't it wonderful to know that our Father is at the helm. It just doesn't make a bit of difference what comes in this life of mine---our Father is at the helm. He is running this world and He will manage, control and sovereignly maintain it for His own glory and for our ultimate good.

IV. RIGHT IS NOT ALWAYS ON THE SIDE OF THE MAJORITY.

In this case, there were three on one side and the majority was on the other---just three against the king and his empire, but right was on the side of the minority. There is an old statement in Latin which goes like this: "Vox populi, vox dei," which means, "The voice of the people is the voice of God." This is rarely ever true, for the majority of times the voice of the people is not the voice of God. God is seldom with the majority.

I remember in the days of Noah there were just eight on God's side---Noah, his wife, their three sons and their three wives. They were in the minority, the majority being against them. Right is not always on the side of the majority.

I am reminded of that day when the children of Israel had sent spies into the land of Canaan. The majority said, "We can't take the land," but two of them said, "We are well able to do so." Caleb and Joshua were the only two men who wanted to go over into the land of Canaan and fight the giants. All the balance were afraid to do so. Right is not always on the side of the majority.

As the usual thing, you will find it to be true that right is on the side of the minority and the voice of the people is seldom the voice of God. An enemy and critic sarcastically and bitingly said to me, "If what you preach is right, if what you stand for is true, if the doctrine you have been contending for for years is the truth, then how do you account for the fact that the majority will not listen to you?" That would hurt, beloved, if I were only human. I think that would hurt any man if he were depending wholly upon himself, but I have learned from the study of God's Word that God doesn't make a final settlement every day at sundown. The voice of the people is seldom the voice of God. It was only a minority back here but God was with the minority.

V. IT PAID THESE THREE JEWS TO TAKE THE STAND THEY DID.

Notice the 30th verse: **"Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, in the province of Babylon."** (Dan. 3:30).

It paid those three Jews personally and it also paid from the standpoint of the kingdom of God, for Nebuchadnezzar gave a command saying that if anybody said anything against the God of these three Jews, he would cut off his head and make his house a dunghill. Beloved, it paid them to take their stand for the Lord.

There is an old song which

says: "It pays to serve Jesus It pays every day; It pays to serve Jesus each step of the way."

Mark it down, beloved, it does pay. Take this old Book, fight for what it says. Stand for it and you will find that it pays off in the end.

May God bless you!

LAYING

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church to have their ears tickled with falsehood rather than be taught God's wonderful truth.

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15).

Beloved, we need to be like the believers of Berea that **"were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so"** (Acts 17:11).

OUR SOLE AUTHORITY

Where do we find the truth? We could use the textbooks of the Bible Schools and Theological Seminaries, or the writings of the church leaders down through the years, or we could be so brave as to turn to our Bible and seek out what it has to say. My library is large and many of the books are quite old; yes, they have been a help on many occasions, but beloved, when our books take the place of the Word of God, then we need to remove them. Baptists have insisted that the Bible is the sole authority for our faith and practice. Do we really believe that? Can you give me the Word of God for what you believe, or do you turn to some other brother and quote what he has said?

Beloved, do you really believe that the Word of God is the sole authority; the sufficient and final Word on all truth? The Roman Catholic Church has rejected that truth in favor of "men tradition"; whereas the neo-orthodox position is in favor of a "continuous revelation." We can not continue our study of "Laying the Axe to Heresies" unless we have something with which to measure truth.

Wherefore, let it be known unto all that this Book which we call the Bible is God's Word; that we who claim to believe it need no other book. Baptist people have been accused of having no creed but the Bible; therefore, let that accusation be true of us.

WHAT ABOUT MAN'S WILL?

Does man have a will? Let me put it another way, how free is man's will? There is a lot of preaching on this subject, "Man's Will," and yet is it Scriptural? What you think about this subject will determine whether or not you are orthodox in your doctrine.

First, let it be noted that every man born of Adam's race has a will; though let it be known that it is very much depraved because of sin. The will of man is nothing more than man's simple desire, longing, determination, purpose and pleasure. The will of man is the expression of man. To say that man did not have a will is to deny his very being.

Second, let it be somewhat noted that every man born of Adam's race has a will that is governed by its nature. This is where the problem lies! We would never suggest that man's

will was in non-existence. That would be sure absurdity on our part; however, that will can not and does not respond contrary to its lost depraved nature.

Beloved, man is a moral creature, according to the Word of God and human observation. That simply means that when God created man, He made His creation responsible for their own actions. Every theology book known to this preacher that is worth its salt shows that man has three faculties: (1) Intellect, (2) Conscience and (3) A will. The problem is not with these faculties as such, but with what men have taught with regards to them; and yes, there seems to be a difference between the original state of Adam and the fallen Adam.

DEATH.

The results of Adam's sin and the effects of that sin on the race of Adam was twofold: (1) immediate separation from God - spiritual death and, (2) physical death to Adam and his seed.

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. 5:12).

Spiritual death took place immediately when Adam sinned and that was noticed when Adam hid from God (Genesis 3:8). in the Garden of Eden. That is why it is necessary to be made alive by God's Holy Spirit before one can claim to be one of God's children today. A man should die in that lost state, the tenor of the Scriptures is this: **"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire"** (Rev. 20:15). The Lord told Nicodemus that: **"He that believeth not is condemned already"**. (John 3:18); hence, man does not have to do anything to be condemned and have the wrath of God upon him.

Because of Adam's sin, mankind is brought into this world with a sin nature; a lost, wicked heart that is at enmity with God. Therefore, man has neither the desire nor the ability to come to God (Romans 3:9-18).

So then, how free is man's will if this all be true? Can we not say that man is completely free; however, he will only respond according to his lost fallen nature. He does not have the knowledge or the willingness to do something about his state! Therefore, it is somewhat obvious, then, that man's will is in bondage. He does not know how to please God; and yes, he refuses to seek after God's forgiveness and pardon of sin. Man would rather go about establishing his own self-righteousness as Adam and Eve had attempted in the Garden of Eden.

MAN'S WILL: TO DO HIS OWN WAY.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way" (Isa. 53:6).

When man is left to his own way he will always seek to please himself. The nature of man is to love himself and to practice his own sinful ways. Martin Luther, the reformer, wrote, "There is no such thing as 'freewill' at all... You make the power of 'free-will' to be that certain small degree of power, which, without the grace of God, is utterly ineffective" (p. 32 - On the bondage of the will).

Lorraine Boettner wrote, "Man

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HELL

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the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Matt. 13:36-43).

The unbeliever won't be there very long before he will change his mind about the reality of a literal hell. But by that time it will be absolutely too late. Jesus just told us there in Matt. 13:42, that they will know of the anguish that will be suffered. Yes, they will be conscious of hell. While we are on the subject of personal knowledge of a literal hell, let us read some things that the Lord had to say through His prophet Isaiah "The earth mourneth and languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits. Now will I rise, saith the LORD; now will I be exalted; now will I lift up myself. Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble: your breath, as fire, shall devour you. And the people shall be as the burnings of lime: as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire. Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and, ye that are near, acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings. (Isa. 33:9-14). Yes, there is fire, and yes, those there will be conscious of it.

We believe that God controls hell from heaven according to the Scriptures. "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season." (Rev. 20:1-3). Oh, yes my friend, God does have the keys to hell. While we are reading from Revelation, let us look at something else pertaining to God's control of hell, the bottomless pit. "And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." (Rev. 19:20).

The study of a literal hell is horrifying to say the least. How-

ever, it is a subject that should be preached on very often from the modern day pulpit. We look forward to a beautiful blissful rest with our Saviour after we depart this life. That, within itself, is enough to cause us who have trusted Christ unto salvation to warn others as much as possible. We should point it out to them that there is never any joyful rest for those who are there. There is never rest while enduring the bottomless pits of hell. "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." (Rev. 14:9-11).

There will be people praying while in hell, but it will be to no avail. Luke gives us an account of this prophesy. We see the contrast between the rich man and the lowly beggar. "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass

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is a free agent but he cannot originate the love of God in his heart. His will is free in the sense that it is not controlled by any force outside of himself" (p. 62 - The Reformed Doctrines of Predestination).

The renown John Gill wrote, "God made man upright; but sinning, he lost the uprightness and rectitude of his nature; or the righteousness in which he was created; so that he became unrighteous, nay, full of all unrighteousness; hence it is that there is none of his posterity righteous, no not one" (p. 323 - A Body of Divinity).

Louis Berkhof wrote, "When we speak of man's corruption as total inability, we mean two things: (1) that the unrenewed sinner cannot do any act, however

insignificant, which fundamentally meets with God's approval and answers to the demands of God's holy law; and (2) that he cannot change his fundamental preference for sin and self to love for God, nor even make an approach to such a change. In a word, he is unable to do any spiritual good. There is abundant Scriptural support for this doctrine: John 1:13; 3:5; 6:44; 8:34; 15:4, 5; Rom. 7:18, 24; 8:7, 8; I Cor. 2:14; II Cor. 3:5; Eph. 2:1, 8-10; Heb. 11:6" (p. 247 - Systematic Theology).

MAN'S DEPRAVITY

The Lord said, "...I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you" (John 5:42). The religious world may say that man has the ability to do good; however, the one that is without Christ may have a "form of godliness," but they are "...lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (II Tim. 3:4). That sin nature that man has received from Adam makes him at enmity to Almighty God. Paul said, "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:7, 8).

Man is so depraved that he is free only to act in accordance to the nature that he received; hence, man is in bondage to his own depraved, sinful nature. He is free to make any decision that he wants; however, man will not make any decision that is contrary to his nature.

J.P. Boyce wrote, "Corruption can only be removed by a cleansing of human nature sufficient to root out all taint of sin and to restore a holy disposition and habits. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in the people of Christ. All not thus sanctified by Him are left forever corrupt. The Scriptures show such to be man's condition that he cannot cleanse himself" (p. 246 - Abstract of Systematic Theology).

Thus beloved, we must conclude that man does not have a free will; that a very close examination of the Biblical passages that are related to the will of man will show that man is in bondage to his own sin; hence, man is a slave to sin.

Mr. Spurgeon wrote, "Free-will somebody believes in. Free-will many dream of. Free-will! Wherever is that to be found? Once there was Free-will in Paradise, and a terrible mess Free-will made there; for it spoiled all Paradise and turned Adam out of the garden. Free-will was once in Heaven; but it turned the glorious archangel out, and a third part of the stars of Heaven fell into the abyss. I want nothing to do with Free-will, but I will try to see whether I have got a Free-will within. And I find I have. Very free to that which is evil but very poor to that which is good."

Let me ask you an important question, how profitable is man's fleshly nature? What saith the Scriptures? The Lord said, "The flesh profiteth nothing" (John 6:63). Are you going to argue with the Lord of Glory? What does the Apostle Paul say? "...In my flesh dwelleth no good thing..." (Rom. 7:18). What does Isaiah say? "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises and putrefying sores..." (Isa.

1:6). What does Jeremiah say? "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9). What does David say? "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin" (Psa. 38:3).

Therefore, beloved, if man is by nature a child of wrath (Ephesians 2:3) and a child of the devil (John 8:44) as the Scriptures have declared, are you going to argue with God about that, or are you going to believe it? If man prefers to drink iniquity like water (Job 15:16) and his mind is depraved (Ephesians 4:17) and blinded (Ephesians 4:18) as Paul indicates, are you going to argue with that too, or are you going to believe it? If man can not hear or understand the Word of God (John 8:43-44; I Corinthians 2:14) as such, are you going to argue with that as well, or are you going to accept it as truth? Wicked, sinful man can not please Almighty God (Romans 8:8); he is a slave to the god of this world, Satan (II Timothy 2:26). He is at enmity with God; his very nature is obnoxious to a holy and a just God. This should, that is, if you believe the Bible, lay an axe to the arminian heresy of free-will. Can you accept the truth? Will you believe what the Bible says?

HERESIES

When we think of heresy, we automatically think of wrong doctrine; doctrine that is not founded on the Word of God. In our first study, "The Will of Man," heresy is that which makes man capable of knowing and understanding God without God's help. The damage done by our depravity is to reject: (1) the truth that says man is spiritually dead in their own sin; (2) the truth of man's total defilement (3) the truth of man's total disablement. But, then, what saith the Scriptures? We have tried to show in this study that man does not have the ability, desire or want to serve the God of Heaven. Furthermore, man does not have the knowledge needed to seek and understand Almighty God (Romans 8:7; I John 1:5; John 3:19).

Beloved, when the Bible speaks of man's will it shows to us man who cannot if he would, and would not if he could, perform that which God requires. In other words, the sinner lacks love to Almighty God, as our Lord pointed out in John 5:42, "But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." Though man may possess all the moral faculties, he is disordered and defiled in all of his faculty. (Titus 1:15; Romans 7:18).

Man's Will, whatever that may be;
It is not our friend;
Self-willed and self-determined;
Man's Will has betrayed us.

Depraved and defiled;
Man finds himself lost;
Lost because of inherited sin;
Lost because of sin practiced.

But God in mercy;
Seeks to save that which was lost;

His Spirit quickening mortal

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STUDIES IN PSALMS HOW TO DEAL WITH SIN

by C.D. Cole

Psalm 51 "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness; with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar."

Sin is an eternal problem and if not dealt with properly results in eternal ruin.

Sin is a patent fact. Its reality does not need to be argued. Sin is a fact of experience, observation, and revelation. Sin is something I feel in my own soul; something I see in others, even in my best friends and loved ones; and something revealed in the Bible. Sin is something the policeman pursues, the physician prescribes for, conscience confesses it, God controls it, and nobody owns it. People treat sin like some people treat their trashy relatives -- they ignore it and deny it.

Sin may be defined, but it can-

not be explained. To explain sin is to explain it away. How the thing got started in the universe is a profound mystery. Sin does not belong here. Sin is a parasite, an interloper, an outlaw cell in the moral system.

Sin is a cheat, a deceiver, and a destroyer. It promises pleasure and pays off in pain. It promises a high life and pays off in death. Every sin is committed for profit. We see this in the first sin: Eve thought she would be profited by eating the forbidden fruit. But she was cheated. In doing wrong man never gets what he expected to get by doing wrong, or if he seems to get what he expected, he got something else that takes the joy out of what he got. There is some momentary pleasure in sin, but in the end there is death in the cup. Sin is a terrible blunder.

Sin is dangerous beyond expression and description. Sin is rebellion against a just and holy God and His law cries for just retribution. Sin is against God; crime is against human society.

Sin is universal. All have sinned. There are many queenly women, but no sinless women. There are many moral men in our sight, but no sinless men in God's sight. All are not vicious, but all are sinners.

Every man who is not past feeling feels that he is a sinner. And wherever there is a sense of sin there is some method of atonement. Man is a religious animal. Everybody has a religion because everybody has a sense or feeling of guilt to some degree. And this feeling of guilt has produced many kinds of religion, because religion is an effort to escape guilty feelings. This is true of atheism as well as of other religions. It is the feeling of guilt that makes a man wish there were no God. In Atheism the wish has been the father to the thought. The man begins by wishing there were no God and ends by thinking there is none. No person by nature is an atheist. An atheist is one who has tampered with his conscience until he believes there is no God.

Why does the heathen mother in India throw her newborn baby to the crocodiles? It is because she has a sense of God and a feeling of guilt and does this to atone for her sins. This is why the Roman Catholic goes to the confessional. He has a guilty feeling and goes to his priest and makes confession to get rid of guilty feelings. Why does the child of God pray and confess his sins to God? Is it not in hope of getting rid of guilty feelings? This is the explanation of conscience money. Atheism is an effort to get rid of guilty feelings. Of course if a person can persuade himself to believe there is no God he can have an easy feeling, so far as guilt is concerned.

In this 51st Psalm David confesses his sins, pleads God's mercy and forgiveness, and gets rid of his guilty feelings, and is happy again.

1. He takes the right attitude towards his sin. After David committed his terrible sin with Bathsheba he went about a year trying to forget it and tried to be happy. But in spite of all his efforts he was a miserable man. He wept so much that his health was broken. He cried for forgiveness. Have mercy upon me, O God. He did not beg for justice but for mercy. He was penitent. He did not deny or condone his sin but repented of it. A saved man does not live sinless, but he does have

the right attitude towards God about his sin. Here is a vital matter. What is our attitude towards our sin? Right attitude is necessary to repentance. In repentance sins are perceived, abhorred, and abandoned in heart and desire. Repentance and faith are the two sides of an experience of grace; like the two sides of a coin. In repentance we are occupied with self and sin; in faith we are occupied with Him - Christ. In repentance sin is black; in faith Christ is precious. In repentance the sinner sees himself as a sinner; in faith he sees Christ as Saviour. In repentance the sinner steps out of himself, gives up all hope in what he can do; in faith he steps into Christ and hopes in what Christ has done.

2. David confesses his sins. He uses three words in describing his sin. One word means transgression. I John 3:4, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." This is the aspect of rebellion. Sin is a revolutionary war against the authority of God. It is an effort to dethrone God. Another word he uses means to miss the mark. Sin is failure to hit the mark, failure to reach the goal, failure to do what man was created for, the glory of God. Rom. 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The other word he employs is the word iniquity. This word means that which is twisted or bent, something crooked. When we wish to describe a man as mean, we say he is crooked. Morally, man is a twisted and warped creature. His moral make up is crooked in the sight of God. In this prayer of David he takes all the blame upon himself. He does not blame Bathsheba; he does not blame the circumstances that brought them together. He sees no sinner but himself.

A favorite way with many in getting rid of guilt is to put the blame on someone else, pass the buck. Adam put the blame on God and Eve. Gen. 3:12, "And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. Jer. 31:29-30. In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity; every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge."

He prays for purity. He longs for deliverance from the very presence of sin. Our conduct will not be perfect until our heart is pure and clean. Here is a prayer I believe all of God's people continually make, and the answer is a long time coming. It will not come in this present life. But it will be answered in the world to come. Those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness shall be filled.

David prays for joy, the joy of salvation. This prayer was answered and he became a happy person. But this prayer for joy will not be completely answered until Christ comes and we awake in His likeness.

David makes a vow. Psalm. 51:12-13, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinner shall be

converted unto thee."

No Christian can be an evangelist for Christ while he is working for Satan. When the hands are busy doing evil the mouth will be shut so far as witnessing for Christ is concerned.

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man;
Bringing to life that which was dead.

Man's Will, where once it was dead;

Now by Christ is made alive;
Quickened and given life;
All by God's grace and mercy.

PERPETUITY

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boast of a splendid and unbroken spiritual ancestry be despised or counted an unholy thing?

First of all, we predicate our perpetuity upon prophecy. It will be generally conceded that in the Old Testament Scriptures, there is clearly set forth the setting up of a kingdom, and that this kingdom was to be everlasting. This is the plain teaching of the following passages: "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever" (Dan. 2:44). "Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations" (Psa. 145:13).

The cherished and oft expressed hope of Israel was the final establishment of the Messianic kingdom, which kingdom should endure throughout all generations. We believe that the highest concrete expression and manifestation of God's kingdom is to be found in the churches of Jesus Christ, and that the kingdom of God could not have endured without a continuous existence of the churches of Christ. We do not believe that the prophecies have perished, or the promises of God have failed. A Gibbon may write of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," but no historian will ever rise to write the fall of God's kingdom among the children of men! A church may die, but the churches live: God may remove the candlestick, but He does not put out the light. The leaves of the forest may fall with the coming autumn, but the great forests wave on in the winds of the centuries. The stone that was cut out of the mountains without hands, shall break to pieces all other stones, but itself shall not be broken. Napoleon, on the eve of the battle of the Pyramids, gazing upon them in their solemn grandeur, said to the army: "Men of France, from yonder heights forty centuries look down upon you." As an inspiration to continued faithfulness, I would say today to all our churches, "Two thousand years of heroic history and tragic struggles attest the truth of the promises of God to our people."

We further affirm the succession of Baptist churches, from the express promise of Christ.

The language of our text "...upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The only question then is, "Has the promise of Christ failed of fulfillment?" But the question will be asked, "Were these churches to which Christ promised perpetuity, Baptist churches?" In order to prove that the church He instituted was a Baptist church, it will not be necessary to demonstrate by history the continuous existence of Baptist churches. This, indeed, would be difficult to do, as history was for a time in the hands of our enemies, and many of our people in their prisons. It may be asserted, however, with mathematical certainty, that there is not a single century that does not afford evidence of the existence of a people holding doctrines that now differentiate and distinguish us as a peculiar people. Granted, then, that there is a church which had had continuous existence, we may, by a process of cancellation, ascertain this church. With the exception of the Baptist churches, it is a comparatively easy task to ascertain the year in history, when each of the various denominations had their origin. It may be announced as the incontrovertible verdict of history that each of them had its origin several centuries this side of the apostolic period. In fact, nearly all of the denominations frankly admit their human origin. In truth, the only denomination, apart from the Baptists, that had even the semblance of claim to any early origin is the Roman Catholic, and this church, by the common consent of Protestant Christendom, has neither the birthmarks nor earmarks of a Scriptural church. Their present faith and policy, when tried by New Testament truth, conclusively show the lack of Scriptural origin or teaching. Nor do they need, in accordance with their faith, any Scriptural origin, for, with an infallible pope and council, they have the right to change, subtract, or supplement any portion of Scripture, or any doctrine of the church. If, then, it be true that Christ did start a church, and the church He started has had a continuous existence; if it be further true that the human origin of all other denominations can be proven and the origin of Baptist churches cannot be proven, then it must follow that the Baptist churches were instituted by Christ, and have enjoyed the unbroken existence promised them by the Head of the churches.

As has been said: "We must either suppose that there has been a Christian people existing in every age from the apostolic to the present, characterized by the same doctrines and practice, or that there were periods in the intervening history when apostolic faith and practice had absolutely no representative on the face of the earth." Are we prepared to take the latter alternative? Have there been such hiatuses in the history of Christianity? No church, no Christian people to uphold the standard of a pure gospel, and bear witness to the truth as it is in Jesus amid a perverse and crooked generation? What, then, becomes of the Saviour's promise? Reasoning

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JONAH'S PRAYER AND CONCLUSION

by Paul Jackson

"Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord his God out of the fish's belly. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed, Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:1, 9).

Jonah was typical as a child of God. He was comfortable just living the relaxed life without giving God so much as the time of day. However, God called him anyway. Just like most mediocre Christians, he decided not to go. Jonah left Joppa on a ship bound for Tarshish. All he wanted was to get away from the presence of Almighty God. There are so many today who want nothing to do with God, much less, be in His presence.

Jonah thought all was well until the Lord stirred up a great wind into the sea. The ship began to toss upon the rough sea and brought about great fear among the mariners. The mariners began to pray unto their pagan gods and tossed anything heavy overboard to lighten the ship. During all the commotion, one of the mariners realized that Jonah was asleep down in the side of the ship. They awakened him and inquired as to why this evil had come upon them. Jonah told them, "... I am an Hebrew; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven which hath made the sea and the dry land" (Jonah 1:9). This was the last thing these carnal seamen wanted in their midst—a saved Jew and one running from God. The only thing they could do was done. They cast Jonah overboard.

God had prepared a great fish (the fish didn't just happen along as the Arminians would have you believe) to swallow up Jonah and ultimately carry him to the destination God had told him to go in the beginning. It was in the belly of the fish that Jonah prayed his prayer and came to a final conclusion.

Jonah's prayer was one of giving God the glory for all the things that had happened to him. He had to do this because he had no control over his destination. He had to rely completely upon the Lord and it was in the belly of the fish that Jonah remembered the Lord. He said, "When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord..." (Jonah 2:7).

What will it take for you to remember that God is in control of everything you do? You have no control over your life. God has planned your destination and is at this minute seeing that you move in that direction. You will come to the same conclusion that Jonah did. "Salvation is of the Lord."

PERPETUITY

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a priori, we must infer, I think, that there must be a continuous line of witnesses for the truth, not only as individuals, but as organized bodies, keeping the faith as originally delivered to the saints, and practicing the ordinances as instituted by the Head. It cannot then be 'arrogant'—nay, it is a duty we owe to the truth—

to go into a careful and thorough investigation of historical sources to find out, if possible, such an uninterrupted line of witnesses. We beg leave to ask if the continuous line of witnesses from the apostles to the reformation were not Baptists, what were they? Surely no one of the present sects, having no earlier origin than the reformation, will claim them. Were they, then, Lanins, Greeks, or Baptists? Nor is this doctrine of the succession of Baptists a new one to our people the writers of other days abound in reference to this cherished tenet. Not a few historians, unfriendly to our faith, have conceded the truth of our historical contention. Indeed, as we see it, our exclusive claim to be the only existing New Testament churches, must stand or fall with our claim to perpetuity.

Dr. James P. Boyce, who was the founder of our Southern Baptist Seminary, was a staunch advocate of this doctrine. But let his faith in this connection be determined by his own words, for, "though dead, he yet speaketh." I quote from "Memoir of James P. Boyce," by John A. Broadus: "The Baptists in the past have been entirely too indifferent to the position they thus occupy. They have depended too much upon the known strength of their principles, and the ease with which from Scripture they could defend them. They have therefore neglected many of those means which extensive learning affords and which have been used to great advantage in support of other opinions. It is needless to say, gentlemen, that we can no longer consent to occupy this position. We owe a change to ourselves—as Christians, bound to show an adequate reason for the difference between us and others; as men of even moderate scholarship, that it may appear that we have not made the gross error in philosophy and criticism which we must have made if we be not right; as the successors of a glorious spiritual ancestry, illustrated by heroic martyrdom, by the profession of noble principles, by the maintenance of true doctrines; as the church of Christ, which He has ever preserved as the witness for the truth, by which He has illustrated His wonderful ways, and shown that His promises are sure and steadfast. Nay, we owe it to Christ Himself, whose truth we hold so distinctively as to separate us from all others of His believing people; to whom we look confidently to make these principles triumphant, for whose sake, on their account, men have been ever found among us willing to submit to banishment, imprisonment or martyrdom; and for whose sake, in the defense of the same truth, we are willing now to bear the scorn and reproach, not of the world only, but even of those who love our Lord Jesus Christ" --Memoir, James P. Boyce, 136, 137. Brother Broadus, in his comment on the text of this discourse says; "It most naturally means, according to the Hebrew uses, that the gates of Hades shall not swallow up the church. All earthly things go down through those dread gates, but Christ's church, for which He gave Himself, will never cease to exist." An over-weening desire to be called liberal, upon the part of some of our broad brethren, has caused them to cease to believe in, or contend for, this time-honored and Scriptural doctrine, and

even to designate as "landmarkers" those who do hold to the doctrine. Be it so, we are still obeying Scripture; 'remove not the ancient landmarks.'

"There is reason to think that in the middle of the twelfth century, congregations of Waldenses Baptists were gathered in Switzerland and France, under the name of Apostolici; for, in the year 1147, we find Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, complaining against the Earl of St. Gyles for favoring one of their noted teachers, named Henry, who is charged with 'hindering infants from the life of Christ, the grace of baptism being denied them.'" (Mosheim, Cen. 12, Part II, chapters. 5, 8)

"Zwinglius, the celebrated Swiss reformer, who was contemporary with Luther, Muncer, and Stork: 'Is Anabaptism a novelty? Did it spring up in a day? The institution of Anabaptism is no novelty, but for one thousand and three hundred years has caused great disturbance in the church, and has acquired such a strength that the attempt in this age to contend with it appeared futile for a time. This carries our history back to A. D. 225.'" (Introduction to Orchard's History). H. Bullinger invariably identifies the Donatists with the Anabaptists, or, as he styles them, "Baptists." "They are," continues he, "similar in every particular to the old Baptists."

Bishop Bossuet, the great Catholic controversialist, complaining of Calvin's party for claiming apostolical succession through the Waldenses, observes: "You adopt Henry and Peter Bruis among your predecessors, but both of them, everybody knows were Anabaptists."

But in the Syro-Babylonian desert, off the line of the church's main advance, primitive forms of Christianity, perhaps also of Essenism, still survived which the course of church history had left untouched. To these belong, on the one hand, Sabians (Baptists); on the other, the numerous Anchores." (Op. 547, IX, Edition Ency. Brit., by Rev. F. W. Gotch).

According to this high and disinterested authority, Baptists can be traced to 618 A. D. The overwhelming presumption is that a denomination whose history extends to this remote date must seek its origin at the original source of the churches.

Father Gretzer, who edited Sacco's works in 1613, on the margin opposite the account of the Waldenses' way of teaching, has this striking statement: "This is a true practice of the heretics of our age, particularly of the Anabaptists." "There are a few of the Baptists of the present day, it is to be hoped, who would blush to own an alliance with either the old Waldensian preachers, or the heretical Baptists referred to by this father of the Catholic church, at least in this part of their conduct; and, indeed, it would be well if all our missionaries and private Christians of the present day were as conversant with the Word of God as the Waldenses, even in that dark age, appear from the testimony of their enemies, to have been." Jones' Church History, p. 352.

Limborch, Professor of Divinity in the University of Amsterdam in 1670, who wrote a history of the Inquisition, in comparing the Waldenses with the Christians of his own times, says: "To speak honestly of what

I think of all the modern sects of Christian, the Dutch Baptists more resemble both the Albigenes and Waldenses, particularly the latter."

We glory in the fact that Baptist churches were born of the divine purpose, and were fashioned by divine hands, and that neither death nor hell shall ever prevail against them. As long as the tide shall ebb and flow, as long as the rivers shall run to the sea, as long as the stars shall shine in their glory, so long shall Baptist churches continue on the earth.

The ordinance of the Lord's Supper likewise implies the perpetuity of the churches. That the Lord's Supper is a church ordinance, is a closed question, at least in this presence. Paul, in his letter to the church at Corinth, says: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come" (I Cor. 11:26). This passage teaches not only the design of the Supper, but emphatically teaches that this Supper shall continue to be observed till He come again.

Being a church ordinance, it would manifestly be impossible to observe it without a church. Therefore, in affirming the continued setting forth of the Supper, the Bible affirms the continuance of the church.

The doctrine, too, of the final preservation of the saints, corroborates the doctrine of church perpetuity. If Christ has promised, and is able to keep one individual, and if a number, why not a church, which is composed of individuals? If He preserves the parts, He must preserve the whole.

The most glorious page in human history, though stained with tears and blotted with blood, is the page that tells of our struggles throughout the centuries. As I have stood in the darkness of the catacombs of Rome, I have seen again my fathers worshipping God in their caverns, among the dead. As I have crossed the everlasting Alps and gazed at the ceaseless snow, I have thought of the blood of my people that has stained it in other times; and, touched to tears, I have bowed and thanked God for such a spiritual ancestry, and for the heaven-born heritage which they have bequeathed to the Baptists of this generation.

That we may prove worthy of it, is my plea and my prayer, for Christ's sake! Amen.

ACTS

(Continued from Page 1)

point that Paul's life was in danger. It was at this point that Paul, in an effort to divide the council, made reference to the resurrection of the dead, or as our text states: "Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day". You will recall that Paul's reference to the "resurrection" caused a "dissension" (Acts 23:7) to arise between the Sadducees and Pharisees. The Sadducees, in fact, did not believe in the resurrection while the Pharisees did. Paul, then, when making his defense before Felix, appealed to the above as the only charge that any one could place against him. He, however, in taking the action as stated above, did so in order to remove an illegal noose from his own neck and was therefore justified by his action.

"And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias, the chief captain, shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter" (Acts 24-22).

We will see later that Paul's reference to the resurrection of the dead, made a great impact upon the mind and heart of Felix. He, in fact, trembled when Paul spoke to him about this matter. Felix, after all, was a very vile fellow and he knew that he was in very serious trouble with God if he was to be resurrected and required to give an account of his life on the earth. He, in fact, had hired thugs to kill the high-priest Jonathon and probably many others. He would also be required to give an account for his three marriages to three different princesses and the manner in which these marriages had been arranged.

Felix, then, by deferring his ruling regarding Paul until the arrival of Lysias, was giving himself more time to converse with Paul regarding the resurrection. He, after all, according to our text, already had a "more perfect knowledge of that way", that is, the doctrine of the resurrection. One will find that "that way", as recorded in our text, relates to the same as "this way" as noted in Acts 9:2. We may say that "that way" or "this way" was a reference to Jesus Christ as the Messiah.

"And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come to him" (Acts 24:23).

The fact that Felix allowed Paul to enjoy liberty and visitation rights shows, to a degree, the extent to which Paul had persuaded him. It appears that Felix, because of the kindness he showed to Paul, believed that Paul could not have done all the things for which he was accused in a period of twelve days. Felix, on the other hand, did not want a confrontation with the Sanhedrin, so he agreed to keep Paul under guard.

The fact that Paul was given visitation rights probably means that he was visited by Philip the evangelist. We know from Acts 21:8 that Philip was one of Paul's acquaintances in Cesarea. Paul, at an earlier date had stayed at the home of Philip. We also know from Acts 21:12 that Paul also had other acquaintances in Cesarea. This passage of Scripture reads: "And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem" (Acts 21:12).

"And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ" (Acts 24:24).

Drusilla was the daughter of Herod Agrippa, the elder. The Jewish historian Josephus says regarding Drusilla that she was engaged to be married to Epiphanes, the son of King Antiochus, on the condition that he would embrace the Jewish religion.

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ACTS

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gion. He, however, refused and the contract was broken. Later she was given in marriage by her brother Agrippa the younger, to Azizus, King of Emesa, upon his request to be circumcised. Felix, however, when he saw Drusilla, the King's wife, fell in love with her and proceeded to lay plans to steal her from the King. He, in carrying out his plan, sent his friend Simon, a Jew, to meet with her and persuade her to forsake her husband and marry him. We are informed by Josephus that she proceeded to forsake the laws of her fathers and marry Felix so as to avoid the envy of her sister Bernice, who treated her ill because of her beauty (Josephus, Antiq., b.xx.Ch.v11. 1-2).

Felix, no doubt, before taking his beautiful wife Drusilla to visit with Paul, informed her regarding the controversy between Paul and the Sanhedrin. He, no doubt, informed her, as Paul had informed him, that the entire controversy centered around the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The result was that Felix sent for Paul so that he and his wife might have a better understanding of Paul's convictions.

"And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee" (Acts 24:25).

It is most likely that Felix had planned for his visit with Paul to have been for the purpose of entertainment. We can be sure that he had not expected to leave the presence of Paul in a trembling condition. It is not likely that Drusilla had ever seen her husband in such a shaken condition. It is likely, however, that she had also been greatly disturbed. We can be sure that neither of them ever forgot that meeting. That which shook Felix was Paul's discourse regarding "...righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come..." The fact that Felix was a judge meant that it was very appropriate for Paul to have dealt with the subject of "righteousness", or justice. Many, in fact, had been required to lay their sins before Felix the judge and to receive their sentence from him. Paul made Felix aware that there was a judgment for him too. He would have to account as to the basis for his judgment of others. This fact also meant that he would have to give an account as to how he judged Paul.

We know from Acts 24:26 that Felix could be bribed, which, no doubt, makes it obvious that justice was not something which all of his subjects received. It is likely that he justified the rich and confined the poor. I'm saying that an umpire who will throw one game for money will also throw other games. Paul, therefore, hit Felix very hard when he "reasoned of righteousness". He also hit him hard when he "reasoned of...temperance", since Paul was speaking to Felix regarding his passions and evil inclinations. Felix, in fact, at the time, was living in adultery with his

third wife, Drusilla.

Paul, even though being on trial before Felix, did not hold back the truth from him so that he might have received a lighter sentence. Paul, in fact, informed the judge that he was to be judged too. The result, as our text states, was that "Felix trembled."

The jailor at Philippi, when shaken, asked, "What must I do to be saved?" Felix, on the other hand, said, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." Felix, then, sent God's messenger away while the jailor was a receiver of God's message to him. It is possible that Felix never repented of his sins and believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. He, however, did hear Paul again and again on the subject at hand.

"He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him; wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him" (Acts 24:26).

It may have been because of money that Felix allowed Paul's acquaintances to visit with him. Paul, in fact, in Acts 24:17, had informed Felix that he had gone to Jerusalem with alms for his nation. It is likely that Felix hoped that Paul's friends would chip in again in an effort to have Paul released. It appears to me that Felix visited Paul the "oftener" in hopes that Paul's latest visitor had brought a bag of gold for his release.

"But after two years, Porcius Festus came unto Felix' room: and Felix, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound" (Acts 24:27). There were at least two reasons which Felix used to keep Paul under his guard. The one was so that he might receive money from him and the other was so that he might please the Jews. It is obvious that justice was not in his thinking.

The statement, "But after two years, Porcius Festus came into Felix' room", means that Porcius Festus replaced Felix as governor. Josephus has informed us that Felix was an unpopular governor with the Jews. Josephus says further that he would have been punished by the Roman government for his actions while governor, if it had not been for the intercession which his brother Pallas made to Nero. Felix, then, failed on two fronts. He failed to obtain money from Paul and he failed to please the Jews and thus retain the governorship.

HELL

(Continued from Page 9)

from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." (Luke 16:22-29). We notice another outstanding thing concerning this man in hell; he did not want any company. He did not even want his own brother, vs. 28. Brethren that tells us that we are dragging our feet when we are not witnessing to the lost. We must carry the message that hell is real because

our Lord said so. There is a heaven to gain while by faith in the shed blood of Christ we are avoiding the surety of a hell.

Are people conscious while in hell? Do they know what is going on? Yes, certainly they do. They gnaw their tongues, they curse God. Their agony is so great that they will curse God, and blame Him for their predicament. **"And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds."** (Rev. 16:10-11). Is it true that God will punish sinners? Yes, we face Jesus, the eternal judge, just as surely as it is appointed unto us to die. That assures us that we must face Jesus Christ, our Creator, our Maker, our Saviour, and our Judge. **"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."** (Heb. 9:27).

What must I do? I am alarmed! I think I will change, and do better! Only one thing wrong with that, it won't work. We are no good in the eyes of God in our present condition. We cannot go to heaven on our basis of goodness. God will not accept self-righteousness. Our righteousness stinks in His nostrils. **"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."** (Isa. 64:6).

Oh, dearly beloved, God in His great love for His children, while we were in a helpless state provided a way for us to miss hell. The only way, the only plan of salvation. There has to be a death, a sacrifice, the shedding of blood to pay for sin. Jesus did this for the elect. He was the only sacrifice that would appease the wrath of a Divine God, in His divine judgment hall of mercy! **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."** (John 14:6).

The only way is through Him. He is the way. Be assured that God is Holy and must punish sin, but He is also a God of love and pity. He loved us enough to send His Son in our stead to pay for our sins, Himself being sinless! Beloved, why should we try to shun hell? Because we have that sort of a loving, sacrificing God, pitying us enough to send the very Gem of heaven who had no sin, to die that horrible death in our stead that we could miss this place called hell. He was not paying for His sins, because He had no sin. He was paying the debt for us. Oh, what a loving Saviour! **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."** (John 3:16). While we were lost, dead in trespasses and sin, God commended His love toward us. He gave His Son. We are saved through Christ.

In conclusion, let me say that the only way to benefit from this is to admit that we are, or were, as the case may be, lost. One does not usually come to, and trust Christ, until after he comes

face to face with the fact that he is lost, doomed, on the way to hell without Christ. Then, and only then, will he seek the Haven of Mercy, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour. This Scripture usually helps in such a time; **"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us, Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."**

And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." (Rom. 5:8-11).

Do you know the Saviour? Are you lost? I hope the first question has a "yes," for an answer. Hell is real! Yes, we have a Saviour that is also real! Let me leave you with some very helpful suggestions if you do not know Him as Saviour. Read and study Romans chapter 10, verses eight through thirteen. Then please look at Rom. 8:1. May we see the fact that there is a literal hell for the unbeliever. Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENT

There will be a Doctrines of Grace Conference at Faith Baptist Church in Lawtey, Florida on March 20 & 21. Services will be at 7:30 p.m. on Friday and at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday. There will be five speakers. The noon meal will be served on Saturday. For further information call pastor Marty Hoffman at 904-782-3106.

HOMESICK FOR HEAVEN

Why does life seem oft so drear,
And often falls the silent tear?
Though in my soul there's nothing amiss,
I've been made for better things than this,
And thus I'm homesick for heaven.
The best laid plans of earth are vain.
Man is but a transient here 'tis plain.
The saint is promised joys untold,
When he shall tread those streets of gold.
Little wonder then if he's homesick for heaven.
Impatiently I wait my summons there,
While constantly assured of my Saviour's care.
But to depart from this body, O gift of grace,
Is to instantly behold my Saviour's face.
And this makes me homesick for heaven.

Davis W. Huckabee

HAVE YOU PRAYED TODAY?

Have you prayed today?
Have you asked your heavenly Father
To guide you along your way?
Temptations are so great out there,
As we stumble along our way,
I ask you again, my brother,
Have you prayed today?
There are so many who are wandering
Down the worldly road to sin,
They act as if Jesus
had never been their friend.
Well, let me tell you brother,
That this not the end,
When Jesus comes to get us,
You'll wish He was your friend.
He'll take us home to heaven,
And give us our rewards,
And there we'll live forever,
Rejoicing ever more.
So if you have neglected prayer,
And visits with our Lord,
I suggest you repent of your sin,
And turn once again,
To Jesus Christ our Lord

--Ruby Beard

CAN YOU IMAGINE THIS?

Mary having an abortion?
"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Mt.1:21).
Had Mary had an abortion, what would have happened to the adorable Trinity? What would have happened as to the salvation of His people?