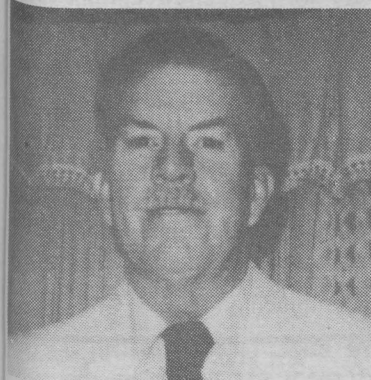


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## COMFORTABLE CHRISTIANS

by Jack C. Whitt

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the



Jack Whitt

Scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). It is only through the Holy Scriptures, of which God Himself is the author, that man has hope and can find true comfort. I would certainly think that all the truly saved would agree to this statement. "Comfortable Christians" is the

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## THE WELL OF LIVING WATER

by Fred C. Beard

Text: John 4:5-26

"Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is



Fred C. Beard

called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a

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## THE COST OF BEING A SOUL WINNER

by Charles H. Spurgeon

I want to say a word to you who are trying to bring souls to Jesus. You long and pray to be useful: do you know what this involves? Are you sure that you do? Prepare yourselves, then, to see and suffer many things with which you would rather be unacquainted. Experiences which would be unnecessary to you personally will become your portion if the Lord uses you for the salvation of others. An ordinary person may rest in his bed all night, but a surgeon will be called up at all hours; a farming

man may take his ease at his fireside, but if he becomes a



shepherd he must be out among the lambs, and bear all weathers for them; even so doth Paul say, "Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." For this cause we shall be made to undergo experiences which will surprise us.

Some years ago, I was the subject of fearful depression of spirit. Certain troublous events had happened to me; I was also unwell, and my heart sank within

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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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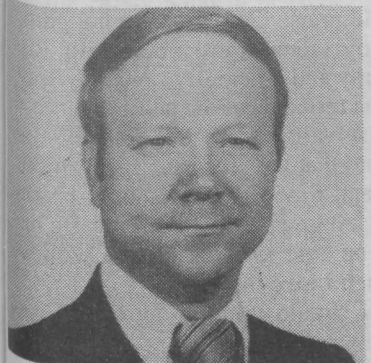
ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, OCTOBER 24, 1992

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## THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

by Samuel West

One of the most beautiful passages of Scripture we will ever read is Psalm 23. "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not



Samuel West

want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 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

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## IS HOLY SPIRIT BAPTISM A SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE IN THIS AGE?

by Jack L. Green

There are six passages in the New Testament that definitely and expressly teach the baptism in the Holy Spirit: Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; and Acts 11:15-17. (I Corinthians 12:13 will be considered at a later point.) These statements, then, must form the substance for the doctrine in question. A close and thorough investigation reveals the following: First, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself is the Administrator, or the One who does the

"baptizing." He (i.e., the Lord Jesus Christ) shall baptize you



Jack Green

with (in) the Holy Ghost..." (See Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16). "...the same is he which baptizeth with (in) the Holy Ghost." (See John 1:33); Second, the Holy Spirit is the one into whom or with whom they were baptized or identified. This is especially stated in every single passage. Third, the incidents that occurred at Pentecost (Acts 1:5; 2:11), and at the house of Cornelius, (Acts 10:44-47; 11:15-17), are the only instances identified by inspiration with the baptism in the Holy

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## STIRRING MATTERS

by Aaron West

"And the same time there arose no small stir about that way." (Acts 19:23).

There are many things that cause a small stir these days. Some things are new, some things are old. Some things are brought on by our own actions. Some things are brought on by the conditions in the world. There is a stir about the economy, the best one for president, the hungry, the drunk drivers, the drug abuse, child abuse, abortion; you name it, there is a stir about it somewhere. But nothing stirs like the preaching of the truth of God's Word. The whole world will rally against the truth. There is much strife between the world and the true church. The world is doing everything in its power to overcome the church. It may not look like it on the surface sometimes, but it becomes very obvious when we openly stand against heresy or a great sin. Liberals are fighting the Bible. Atheists are fighting against God. False teachers are leading sinners in the wrong direction. The world is out of harmony with the teachings of Jesus Christ. Let us notice, "Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of

## The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

## ETERNAL PUNISHMENT: IS IT TRUE? IS IT RIGHT AND JUST? PART I

"And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46). Hell is a fact; a blistering, burning, eternal fact. Hell is not a myth. Hell is not a "scare story" designed to force one into a certain behavior pattern. Hell is not an invention of the mind of men; it is a fact of the Word of God.

We might almost say that, in

some ways, heaven and hell are the only facts. Certainly, heaven and hell are the most important facts. Comparatively, nothing else really matters. When you come to die, and you will die, heaven or hell will be the only thing that really matters. At that hour it will not matter as to your wealth or poverty, it will not matter if you lived in a mansion or a shack, it will not even matter if you lived in good health or

suffered much sickness all your days, it will not really matter how long or how short your days upon the earth; then the only thing that will really matter is heaven and hell. Oh, it will matter supremely then whether or not you are saved and ready to die. It will matter supremely, then, whether you go to heaven or to hell.

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## ETERNAL

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Let us first consider a few things. 1. Man is an eternal being. From the moment of conception, there is a life that will exist knowingly, consciously, and feelingly somewhere forever and forever. Soul-sleep is a lie. Annihilation is a lie. You, my friend, will knowingly and feelingly exist eternally. 2. There is a heaven that is glorious, wonderful, and blessed beyond anything we can even imagine. Oh, the glory, joy, beauty, and blessings that will be the eternal portion of all those who go to heaven! 3. There is a hell that is as bad as heaven is good. It is a place of agonizing and terrible torments. It is a place of eternal fire. Those there will suffer eternally, and as no one has ever suffered in this life. 4. That is all there is in eternity; there is nothing else. Every individual ever conceived in a mother's womb will be in this wonderful heaven or in that terrible hell forever. 5. Jesus Christ and His wonderful and blessed salvation is the one and only difference as to where one spends eternity. It is not church membership, it is not religious ritual, it is not comparative morality, it is not good works; it is knowing Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, it is trusting Him and His work at Calvary, followed by His resurrection from the dead - it is this and only this that can save your soul from eternal hell.

In this article (it may grow into two) I want to discuss two things about hell. Is it eternal? Oh, it is hard to mentally grasp

this fact. It is almost mind-boggling to try to imagine a person suffering terrible agony for ever and ever. Is this true? Will hell really last forever. The second question discussed will be: Is it right and just for God to punish one in hell forever? We are told that it would not be just to punish one so terribly and punish one forever for a few years of sin on this earth. Many men reject the truth of eternal punishment on this basis. I plan to discuss these matters in some detail.



JOE WILSON

Let us know right at the start that God's Word is our only authority on this matter. Only God knows the answers to these two questions, and we must learn from Him. Human sentiment must not be allowed to answer these questions. We dare not answer the supremely important questions of time and eternity on the basis of human sentiment. Human reason and human logic cannot answer these questions for us. We must seek for an answer in the clear and plain teachings of the Bible.

Is eternal punishment true? Will God really punish the lost sinner forever? What does the Bible say about this? "...who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isa. 33:14). The question is not meant as a question as to the fact of everlasting burnings. It is an emphatic way of stating the terrible horror of such. It is another way of saying what Cain said in Genesis 4:13, "...My punishment is greater than I can bear." Of course, he will have to bear it; but he speaks of the terribleness thereof in this way. Note the dwelling with everlasting burning. If the burning is everlasting, so is the dwelling therewith.

"... shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan.12:2). If men are annihilated, where is the room for everlasting-shame and contempt? The shame and contempt of the unsaved here is as eternal as the life of the saved.

"...it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire" (Mt.18:8). Why would the fire be everlasting, if that which is cast into it is burned up and destroyed? My friend, the fact that the fire is everlasting proves the eternal torment of those cast therein.

"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mt.25:41). "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal" (Mt. 25:46). One can but wonder at any professed Christian who can read these verses and not believe

in eternal punishment. I tell you here and now that men who do not believe in eternal punishment, and still pretend to believe the Bible, are men who have already made up their minds against eternal punishment, and who then try to manufacture (in their own depraved minds) some way to get around the clear and plain teaching of the Word of God. No man can read these Scriptures, seek to understand what they teach, and really believe that they do not teach eternal punishment. Men who do this are not honest students of the Bible, trying to learn what it does teach; they are perverters of God's Word, seeking to make it mean what they have already decided on the subject.

How can there be (and what need for it would there be) everlasting fire for the unsaved, if they are not to suffer therein forever? And tell me this; how can there be the everlasting punishment of someone who is annihilated and cannot feel and know the punishment. Oh, how foolish, and how wicked are those men who seek to pervert the clear teaching of the Bible. Note v. 6. How long is the life of the righteous? It is eternal life. Then how long does this same verse say is the punishment of the unrighteous? It is everlasting punishment. By what method of honest and truthful Bible interpretation can a man say that the life of the saved is eternal, but the punishment of the unsaved is only a few minutes? One can only say this by a wicked and deliberate perverting of the Bible. I make bold to say that men who say that the Bible does not teach eternal punishment are dishonest liars and deceitful hypocrites in their pretended interpreting of the Word of God.

"But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation" (Mk.3:29). Eternal damnation is not the grave, neither is it annihilation.

Now read Mark 9:43-48. This Scripture is so very plain as to eternal torment. One simply cannot be honest with this Scripture and deny that the unsaved will consciously suffer in hell fire forever. Notice these words in this Scripture. "to go into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched...to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" What do these words mean? What can they mean except that those in hell will be tormented in hell fire forever? One can but wonder if a man is even saved who can pretend that the Bible does not teach eternal punishment.

"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...And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would

pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence" (Lk.16:23,24,26). This Scripture most certainly teaches that immediately following death, the saved go to a place of conscious blessedness and the unsaved to a place of conscious and terrible torments. It also teaches that these are the eternal conditions of the saved and unsaved. If you desire to read the acme of perverted, foolish, and absurd interpretations of Scripture; read the interpretations of this Scripture by men who do not believe in conscious and eternal torment following death. One can but wonder at the spiritual condition and mental ability of such men.

"Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (II Th. 1:9). When interpreted in the light of the totality of Scripture teaching, this verse can only refer to the eternal punishment of the unsaved.

"Even as Sodom and Gomorrah...are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire" (Jude.7). The opponents of

eternal punishment will jump on this verse (perverting it, of course) and say; see there, Sodom and Gomorrah were burned up in a few hours or less of time, and the Bible calls it eternal fire. Oh, they should not use this verse for it is not talking about what Sodom and Gomorrah suffered then in the destruction of their cities; it is speaking of what the inhabitants of those cities are still suffering - the vengeance of eternal fire. It did not say that they "did" suffer. It says that they "are" suffering. Even as Jude wrote, they were still suffering in eternal hell fire.

"...and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night...." (Rev.14:10-11). How can honest men read this and not believe in eternal punishment - they can't. Honest men will admit that this verse cannot be truthfully interpreted of anything other than the terrible and eternal punishment of the unsaved. If language has any

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## FROM THE EDITOR

WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN I THINK ABOUT HELL? In this issue and the next one, I will be having a two part sermon about hell (Please read them both). I have decided to write my editorials in both issues relative to the question that heads this one.

1. I should think about hell. Hell is a Bible doctrine. There is more about hell in the Bible than about heaven. I should read and study what the Bible says about hell. Certainly, I should believe this. Then, I should think frequently about hell. Hell is a blistering and eternal fact. It will accomplish nothing to not think about it. Let me think about hell until it looms large in the thinking of my soul.

2. Every time I think about hell, I should be sure that I am saved and not going to hell. Oh, this is too important a matter for me to be neglectful of, or indifferent about. If hell is real (and it is), if multitudes of men are going there (and they are), let me be sure that I am not one of them. God has, in the person and work of Jesus Christ, provided salvation for all who desire to be saved. (Of course, I know that the Holy Spirit must work this desire in one, but: 1. I don't have to bring this in every time I preach the gospel: Bible preachers of the gospel did not. 2. I can Biblically make a free offer of eternal salvation through Jesus Christ, upon the conditions of repentance and faith, to every individual on the face of the earth.) I should be sure that I know the gospel, that I understand the way of salvation, and that I am truly and eternally saved.

3. Every time I think of hell, I should praise God that I am not going there. Why, I should shout with joy, sometimes weep with joy, because I know that God has wonderfully and graciously saved my soul, and I will never know experientially the torments of the hell I deserve.

4. I should deeply appreciate my salvation from the hell my sins deserve. I should frequently tell my Lord that I appreciate His salvation.

5. I should love deeply my Lord and Saviour. This should be the greatest love of my life. I deserve hell. At great cost to Himself, He has saved me from hell. I should never be able to think of hell without thinking, at the same time, of how much I love the Lord.

6. Every time I think about hell, I should think about how I can show my gratitude to the Lord for saving my never-dying soul from the terrible agonies thereof. I should be willing to do anything and everything I can to show this. I should live daily for His glory. I owe my life to Him. I have been purchased with the price of His precious blood. I should glorify Him in my body and spirit (I Cor. 6:20). What? Shall I live as other men do? Shall I live my life according to my own will and for my own pleasure? Should not His saving me from the hell I deserve move me to live the rest of my life for His glory and in a way that is pleasing to Him?

I should serve Him to the utmost of my ability. When I think of hell, it should move my soul to greater effort and diligence in serving the Lord. I should follow him in the baptism that pictures what He did for me to save me from hell. I should be a member of the church that He started and of which He is the one and only head. I should be faithful in that church. I should rejoice to partake of the Lord's Supper in that church as I think of Him and His death that saved my worthless soul from hell. I should to anything I can do for Him in and through His church.

These are some of the things I should do every time I think of hell. Oh, may these things become more real and operative in my life. May my thinking about hell and knowing that I am not going there, and knowing that this is all because of Jesus Christ - may this move deeply upon my soul, and may I more and more seek to be a better Christian in my life and in my service for the Lord. Oh, I owe Him so much. I owe Him my life and my all. Let every thought of hell be followed by thoughts of love, gratitude, devotion, and determination to be and do more for Him who loved me and washed me from my sins in His own blood.



## ETERNAL

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meaning, this Scripture can mean nothing else. Unless the Holy Spirit deliberately attempted to deceive men, eternal punishment is the teaching of this Scripture. Men say that the Bible does not teach the conscious and eternal punishment of the unsaved. Let me ask these men: If the Lord had wanted to teach eternal punishment, what words could He have used any plainer than these? Let me plainly say that, if a man can get around this Scripture, and others in this article, and still say that the Bible does not teach eternal punishment; then there is absolutely no possible way God could have taught such if He had desired to do so. If men can get around this Scripture, they, in their perverted and rebellious hearts and minds, would find some way to get around anything God could have said on the subject. Eternal punishment is the plain, repeated, and clear teaching of the Bible; and honest and truthful men will admit this. A man who does not believe this has just, apart from God's Word, made up his mind on the subject, and will not listen to what the Bible teaches.

I have much more respect for the man who said, "I don't care if the Bible does teach eternal punishment, I still don't believe it" than I do for the man who (lyingly, pretendingly, hypocritically) says that he believes the Bible but does not believe that it teaches this.

The man who says that the Bible does not teach eternal punishment reminds me of the so-called Baptist preacher in Raleigh, N.C. who said there was nothing in the Bible that condemned homosexuality. When something is clear and plain in the Bible, and men say that they can't see this in the Bible; it makes me think that they must be spiritually blind. If a man cannot see eternal punishment in the Bible, what in the world can he see therein? Men like this see what they want to see, and close their minds to what they don't want to see.

"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). Now, these deniers of eternal punishment say that men will be cast into the lake of fire and burned up or annihilated. Well, let us check on the beast and false prophet a thousand years later. "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever" (Rev. 20:10). The beast and the false prophet were put into the lake of fire a thousand years before - and they are still there according to this Scripture. So, we see that men are not annihilated in the lake of fire. No, no, they suffer there terribly, consciously, feelingly, and forever.

The Bible is very clear on the subject of the eternal punishment of those who die without Christ. No honest and truthful man will

deny this. Only wicked men who have already made up their minds against eternal punishment, and who want to pretend to be Bible believers while holding to man-made (really, devil-made) heresies will deny that the Bible teaches eternal punishment.

If I could not prove to a man that the Bible teaches eternal punishment, I would not try to teach him anything else from the Word of God. Such a person is blinded by his own pre-conceived beliefs, and will not see anything in the Bible except what he wants to see - whether it is there or not.

Oh, my reader, there is a hell. All who die without Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour will be cast into that lake that burns with fire and brimstone. They will suffer there terribly, consciously, and eternally. Do not believe the lies of man on this subject. This matter is too important to allow yourself to be deceived concerning it. Flee from these "no-hellers" as you would flee from a diamond back rattlesnake or a saber toothed tiger. Those wild animals are not nearly as dangerous as men who teach that there is not eternal punishment. Those animals can only wound or kill the body; these men can lead to the destruction of both body and soul in eternal hell fire, if one is deceived by them.

Yes, there is a hell; and it is eternal. Praise God, I don't have to stop here. You do not have to go to this terrible and eternal hell. God has provided salvation in His dear Son, Jesus Christ is God, He was born of a virgin, He lived a sinless life, He died at Calvary, and He rose from the dead. In doing this, Jesus Christ provided salvation from eternal hell fire for any and all who desire such. If you will repent of your sins, trust Jesus Christ and His work at Calvary, and receive Him as your Lord and Saviour; you will not have to go to the hell your sins deserve. Rather, you will go to that wonderful heaven of eternal blessedness and joy. There is a hell, but you don't have to go there.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation (will never go to hell); but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

Yes, there is a hell, and it is eternal; but you don't have to go there. As an ambassador for Jesus Christ, I plead with each reader to be sure that he or she has received Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. Dear reader, will you meet me in heaven?

## COMFORTABLE

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title I have given to this article for reasons which I hope to make clear as we elaborate further on this subject. It is possible that tender toes may be tread upon, and most likely will be, as we unveil myths, misconceptions, and other religious dogmas that go against what the Bible teaches us.

I would first point out that many people have every reason to enjoy a sense of comfort, while there is yet a larger group of people that have no reason whatsoever to feel comfortable. I qualify this statement, of course, on the basis of God's Word. Our

text tells us, "that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." My friend, it is the Scriptures only that provide comfort and hope to the soul that will spend an eternity in either heaven or hell. Yes, all true Christians may take comfort in the fact that heaven is sure to them. This being true only because God has performed a miracle of His marvelous grace upon that soul who is the object of His grace. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24). It is the gospel of God's Word that must be known, felt and acted upon by all who would enter into everlasting life with Christ Jesus. We read in Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Then, my dear friend, once salvation is applied it is forever secure. We again rely on God's Word "Wherefore he (Christ) is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25). Thus, we who are saved need never fear being lost again. Jesus does not save us and leave us on our own. He lives to make intercession for us because we belong to Him. I mention this because so many denominations teach that a Christian once being saved, can be lost again. How sad and unfortunate not to have the comfort and hope of eternal life.

There are numerous divisions in the realm of Bible doctrine and belief, but there is one grand and monumental fact that must be insisted upon as to the question of salvation. The Bible is plain as to this. Too often many people are prone to succumb to the heresies of those who profess to be Christians but deny all or parts of Scriptures that deal with salvation. The Apostle Paul speaking to the Corinthians says, "MOREOVER, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I have preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Cor. 15:1-4). My friend, if our salvation is not according to the Scriptures, it's not worth anything. As I said, certain things in the Bible we may disagree upon and both still be saved. But it is absolutely an undeniable fact that we must believe the gospel of Christ as to salvation: that Jesus (who is God) came to earth, being born of a virgin, lived without sin, that He was crucified upon the cross, buried in a tomb, that after three days and three nights He rose (bodily) from the grave. We must further believe that His blood shed upon the cross purchased the salvation of all who believe and receive this truth by faith. I cannot believe anyone can be a Christian who denies this Bible

truth. However, I have talked with those who argue against this very fundamental teaching of Scripture. I can only hope that those who deny God's Word will soon humble themselves (or be humbled by God) to see the necessity of salvation in Christ.

Then there are those who may feel comfortable, who call themselves Christians because they belong to some church. This is the case with many folks today. I have talked with such on many occasions. Their confidence is in the church only. Oftentimes these people know nothing of true salvation; what it means to be born again in spiritual transformation. Others will place their confidence in baptism. Have you ever heard someone say to you "Oh, you don't have to worry about me, I was baptized when I was a baby and I've been going to church since then." Such people as these are extremely hard to convince of their need for anything else. They generally think they have everything and know everything. Again, these belong to the group that have no reason to feel comfortable. It should be pointed out that pastors of churches who have such members as this may have reason to question their expounding of God's Word. I know there are so-called churches which will enroll members so long as they are willing to attend (and pay tithes of course). Woe unto such pastors and churches who make a mockery and bring shame upon God's true churches! Woe unto those who teach not the truth, even the whole council of God!

Then there are the good moral folks who are working their way to heaven, or so they think. It is this human nature of man that often deceives folks to think all God requires is to be a good neighbor, give to the poor, and live a "clean life." Certainly, we should do these things but not as a requirement to gain heaven. Again we have the testimony of the Scripture to this fact. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus 3:5). God is merciful to all who realize they are sinners and come to Him by faith in Jesus Christ and what He did on the cross. That He died for their sins.

Preachers better take heed to the warnings contained in God's Word. The Apostle Paul put upon young pastor Timothy a charge as we read in II Timothy 4:1-2, "I CHARGE thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." I wonder how many of our churches have members who could justly be reproved or rebuked by the pastor (or to put it another way) should be reproved or rebuked, but to do so would offend them and they probably would leave. I guess we would prefer to have a happy comfortable member than an unhappy departing member. I wonder how many sermons may have been altered by pastors who suddenly realized that a certain individual is present and would be offended. To be honest, the sermon should be preached as we are led of the Lord to the intent of benefitting the

congregation as a whole. Sometimes sermons make Christians uncomfortable, and well they should, and why not? Are we always so perfect that we need never be rebuked by God called pastors and preachers should preach with Holy Spirit conviction without malice and without favoritism, leaving it up to God to bless individuals whether convicting them of the error of their ways or exhorting to become more faithful in His service.

Now to remind us once again of our subject "Comfortable Christians," we should have learned through some points made, that not all folks who may feel comfortable, religiously speaking, are in fact Christians at all. They may be comfortable with some form of religion but as we pointed out, if it does not harmonize with God's Word, it is worthless. We must again find this assurance from the Scriptures. We read in I Thessalonians 4:16-18, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Then also we read in chapter five verses 9, 10, 11 of I Thessalonians, "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him. Wherefore comfort yourselves together and edify one another, even as also ye do." So you see all who are truly saved have reason to rejoice and take comfort from knowing we are going to heaven to be with Christ. We are not appointed unto wrath as those who are without Christ, but even our salvation is appointed by God. This should be of great comfort to those saints of God who are terminally ill or to the families of such who may be mourning after their departing this life. The apostle Paul again writes, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). Thus we may conclude that salvation is the urgent and most dire need to the soul of man. I would urge all who may not know or who may have doubts as to the assurance of salvation, to seek counsel from a Christian friend or a pastor grounded in God's Word.

One final note as to the importance of salvation: While we may take comfort in the knowledge of salvation, we recognize also that too often many Christians are comfortably content with a mediocre attitude as to their service to God. I am sure all of us can improve in our service to our Lord, but there are, no doubt, many Christians who have serious problems because they have backslidden to the point of

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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, "he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow."  
in Ecclesiastes 1:18.

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In I Kings 3:5, God appeared to Solomon in a dream and told him that He would give him anything he asked. In verse nine Solomon asked God to give him wisdom and an understanding heart to be able to discern good and evil among the great nation of Israel. God gave Solomon what he had asked for and thus Solomon became the wisest of all men, both before and after.

I suppose all of us have thought that we would like to be wealthy or even the wealthiest person in the world. We see the glamour and the excitement. We think of all that we could and would do if we had even a mere million. Dwell on it for a while and your fantasies will run wild. However, there is no room in that fantasy world for the thoughts of what it would cost to be wealthy. For most people who we would consider wealthy, it did not come cheap. Much sacrifice comes with much success. Some have given their very soul for wealth and fame.

It is the same with wisdom and knowledge. I do not believe that God made Solomon the wisest man ever (II Kings 4:29) instantly. I believe that Ecclesiastes chapter one proves that God first gave him the ability to become wise and made him acquire it through "much grief." "He gave his heart to know wisdom;" he gave his whole heart to know the mind of God. He gave all of himself to experience, not only joy and gladness, but sorrow and grief. There are many things that I have not yet come to understand and therefore, am not able to discern and judge in such matters because I have not experienced them.

Now, I am not saying that you have to commit adultery in order to discern that it is a sin. I am saying that a person having experienced that gross sin and come to realize the grossness of it has gained wisdom and knowledge through grief; and though he or she has engaged in what was thought to be pleasure and fulfillment of a fantasy, a dividend of their frolic was much sorrow. Nevertheless, their wisdom and knowledge was increased. Solomon allowed himself to experience the good as well as the bad, but in the end he very wisely concluded that as far as human

wisdom and knowledge was concerned it was all vanity and vexation of the human spirit. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Ecclesiastes 12:13,14. Thank you for your question.

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"For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." (Ecclesiastes 1:18) Please read Ecclesiastes 1:12-17 also.

Only Solomon, in his circumstances, could pursue wisdom and knowledge to the extent he did, or make the observations he records. I believe that he is speaking here in verse 18 of earthly knowledge apart from God, or the things of God. Certainly, knowledge from an earthly standpoint does nothing, brings no comfort, but only lays bare the vanity of earthly things. The more that earthly knowledge is increased, the more sorrow is increased, as no satisfaction or comfort comes from knowledge for the sake of knowledge which omits the perspective of God. Solomon is looking here in Ecclesiastes at the limitation of wisdom and knowledge from a purely earthly point of view. Knowledge of itself can do nothing but bring more sorrow as it increases itself and gives no satisfactory answers, but leads one to more knowledge. A person pursuing this sees only vanity; no satisfaction, only hopelessness and sorrow fill the mind. Only knowledge for higher good, or of God can bring satisfaction and comfort.

Mere earthly knowledge gives no satisfaction. A man's reason may be exercised by facts, or laws, but that reason cannot ultimately be satisfied thereby. Mere earthly knowledge is painful apart from God and His dealings with men, for then there is no hope; only a panorama of broken and ravaged human beings. Mere earthly knowledge is hopeless, for a person who pursues the origin and end of all things without God can find no hope, or true explanation. Mere earthly knowledge is discouraging in that it can never fill a human heart to warmth and satisfaction apart from God. It can never give the ultimate answers. Hence,

sorrow increaseth with such knowledge. To quote J. Ker, "The tree of knowledge never becomes the tree of life."

Human knowledge is brief and of itself is worth little. In one day all man's thoughts perish. All earthly knowledge and the sorrow it brings will one day pass away. Only knowledge that is based upon and toward God has true worth, comfort, satisfaction, and profitability. May all our learning and acquired knowledge be kept in perspective by basing it upon and ultimately to God.

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"For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow" (Ecc. 1:18).

The subject under discussion is the result of the man who seeks to understand the meaning of life apart from God; he lives, he labours, he dies. "What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun" (v. 3)?

Solomon, the writer of Ecclesiastes, gives his own experience in seeking the answer to this question. He states that he gave his heart to seek and search to find the answer concerning all things that were done under heaven (v. 13). After seeing all that was done under the sun he declared, "Behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit" (v. 14), or "all is vanity and striving after the wind" (N.A.S. trans.). "That which is crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting cannot be numbered" (v. 15). This means that although he had learned many things that were wrong, the things that were missing in this life could not be corrected by man. Remember, in the fall of man, not only did man fall, but there was also a curse placed upon the earth (Gen. 3:17). Man can no more change that than he can cleanse himself of his sin. It is only through Jesus Christ that the crooked can be made straight and that which is wanting can be numbered.

Solomon, after stating that he had obtained more wisdom than all who had come before him in Jerusalem, that after he had gained great wisdom and knowledge, he came to the conclusion that this seeking to learn this was only "madness and folly," that it was only "vexation of spirit," "chasing after the wind." He sums up by stating, "For in much wisdom is

much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow."

What he is saying is that for one to live only to seek and find enjoyment in knowledge, this only increases his/her capacity for sorrow and distress. The only way that any one can find enjoyment and the right interpretation of things as they are is by placing his/her faith in God and remembering that man was placed here upon earth to glorify Him. The last two verses of the book of Ecclesiastes gives us the whole purpose of what has been said in the book:

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Ecc. 12:13, 14).

### COMFORTABLE

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turning from God to worldliness. They are forsaking the assembling of God's people. They rob God of His tithes and offerings; they are living willfully in sin. These Christians have no right to be comfortable in this sorrowful condition. May God enable such as these to repent and return to a place of service and usefulness before Christ returns.

Allow me to now summarize by saying the things contained in this message are based upon Scripture. If you believe the Bible is God's Word, then believe what has been said. Do not base your salvation on anything but the Scriptures. Then permit me to ask this question: "Is your heart right with God?" I close with these verses from God's Word: "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work" (II Thes. 2:16-17).

### THE LORD

(Continued from Page 1)

comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever."

I will bring to you some thoughts found especially in the first verse of Psalm 23. The entire passage is given to show the love of our Lord through chastisement and comfort. We must first recognize the relationship David had with our great Shepherd, and then turn our thoughts to our relationship with this same Shepherd.

The first two words in this passage is "The Lord." By definition the word "Lord" as referred to here means both His character and position. Our Shepherd is of great power and authority. He is ruler over His dominion. He is master over everything in His dominion! Our great Shepherd

has the rank and authority of Lord in His Lordship over His creation. Sooner or later "every knee must bow and every tongue must confess that He is Lord." The fact is that Jesus Christ is Lord. We will graciously and lovingly say "The Lord."

As we continue to see verse one of Psalm 23, we will add one more word to the first two. "The Lord is." The very existence of our great Shepherd is declared here with these words. There is no room for doubt left in this statement. To know that our precious Saviour "is," lifts us up to heavenly places. "Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul." (Ps. 25:1). We find great peace in knowing that the Lord is. Our strength lies in the fact before us, "The Lord is." Seeing this great beauty of His Lordship gives us comfort.

The next words we can see in our text is "The Lord is my." Here is where the personal relationship we have with our Lord is in David of old. There is certain possessiveness in this passage of Scripture found here. The Lord of lords and King of kings is our own. What a wonderful and blessed thought! Do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour? If not, you are not enjoying a great eternal blessing. This relationship will never end. The Lord will continue sending His rich and bountiful blessings upon His own.

As we continue to look at verse one of Psalm 23 we see the "The Lord is my Shepherd." What does this mean to those of us who are experiencing this blessing? David again says, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Ps. 27:1). We have a Shepherd and sheep relationship here, as we see the great Shepherd of our souls. Our Shepherd feeds His sheep. "He leads us beside the still waters." It is said, "He shall stand and feed." Our Lord is actively engaged in providing for His people. He is not leaving us to our own to feed, but He stands and feeds us! Our Shepherd says, "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep... I know my sheep... I lay down my life for the sheep." Oh, may we see the great love of our precious and loving Saviour! The bear may come or the wolf may come, but we are safe in the green pasture with our Shepherd. He guides us, He watches over us, He preserves us, He restores us, He tends to us, and He feeds us. We will not have to eat crumbs at His table but there is plenty and much to spare!

We have seen the first part of verse one of Psalm twenty-three. Now we will turn our attention to the second part of this passage. The first word is "I." There is a certain identification found in this word here that David spoke. Who are we? I am he that is hopeless and helpless without the watch-care of my great Shepherd. I am left to the wolves. Now with my shepherd "whom shall I fear?" I am he whom the enemy is closing in on. In the mouth of the cave David had no place to turn. Saul was right at his feet and ready to destroy him. Yet in this time of much trouble David is able to turn and identify himself with the great Shepherd of our

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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

Discuss the 75-day interval between Daniel 12:11 & 12.

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I believe Daniel 2:11,12 is a reply from "the man clothed in linen" (Jesus Christ), to the question in verse 6... "...How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" The people concerned are Daniel's people, Israel.

Our Lord's answer is given in three periods of days from the day of the "abomination of desolation" where in the middle of Daniel's seventieth week, an abominable sacrifice shall be offered upon the altar to the image of the beast, rendering the rebuilt sanctuary desolate. This date marks the beginning of 1280 days until the destruction of the beast. This is also the duration of the time marking the period of great trouble for Israel, referred to in other Scripture as "Jacob's trouble", plus thirty days; 1280 days. Then another 45 days are added at the end of which the blessing of verse 12 is realized. This amount of time goes beyond the 1280 days ending with the destruction of the beast and the battle of Armageddon. To account for this time I believe there may be a pause, or a rest so to speak, for the clearing away of the world kingdoms that were broken to pieces in the war of Armageddon wherein the "King of kings" set up His kingdom. Scripture that refers to this is Daniel 2:35. "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." After the "wind carries" away the debris, the Kingdom of Christ will be occupied by its rightful heirs. Thus Christ said... "...thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days" (Dan. 12:13b).

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I cannot get but forty-five days between Daniel 12:11-12. But the person asking the question may

have had in mind Daniel 7:25, which, I take it to mean the first half of the tribulation period. This part of the tribulation will be a time of peace, though it will be a time of false peace.

The man of sin ruling under the influence of Satan, will by the midst of the tribulation period, begin a rule of force. All those who do not obey him, he will put to death. Those who follow him, he will put his mark in their foreheads or in their hands. But, even then, the man of sin, will begin to lose his power. "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end" (Daniel 7:26). Satan, by the rule of the beast and false prophet, will in the last part of the tribulation, begin to slaughter men such as the world has never known. Christ said, "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened," (Matthew 24:21-22).

From the middle of the tribulation period until the end of it, there will be three and one half years, less the shortening of the time, as given in verse twenty-two of Matthew 24. The shortening of this time will be the forty-five days (the difference in the number of days between verse eleven and verse twelve of Daniel twelve). By this time the anti-Christ will have about lost control of the situation. He will have so many put to death until there will not be enough help to bury the dead. Read Isaiah 26:19-21, and take particular notice of verse twenty-one, "... the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Because of the putting to death of so many people, during this time of great tribulation, diseases of all kinds will break out upon the people, spoken of as plagues in Revelation, and spoken of as the overspreading of desolation in Daniel. The beast and the false prophet under the power of Satan will exert all their power and force to make all people everywhere to bow down to the rule of the man of sin, or to make the earth desolate in this wicked rule. The rule of the man of sin will have by this time about come to an end.

The length of the tribulation, the great one, will be seven years, less the shortening of the time for the sake of the elect. The man of sin will cause the sacrifices to cease in the midst of this seven year period, and will cause attention to be turned on him. He will exalt himself and cause all to worship him, or attempt to do so. He will oppose God; he will oppose all that is godly. He will

sit in the place of worship and prove to many that he is God. "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." (II Thes. 2:4). The man of sin, the son of perdition, will continue his wicked rule until near the end of the seven year tribulation period. Though, the anti-Christ will, by the end of the thousand two hundred ninety days have worn out the saints of the tribulation period, he himself will be run out of his time, or about so.

Daniel 12:12, "Blessed is he that waiteth,..." He that hath patience, he that endureth to this time, these last forty-five days. There is something special that will come to those mentioned in Daniel 12:12. And in Revelation 12:11, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

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"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate" (Dan 9:27). This verse refers to the last week in the prophecy of the seventy weeks. In this prophecy a week of seven days is equal to seven years; one day of the week equals one year. Seventy weeks are equal to 490 years. Sixty nine weeks, or 483 years, are past and only seven years remain. This is the time we know as the tribulation period in the book of Revelation.

This last week is divided into two equal periods of three and a half years. In these three and a half years there are forty-two months. The Jewish month was thirty days long. Each period is equal to 1260 days. The covenant that was established was for one week. The word confirm means to strengthen; so it was a strong covenant. But in the midst or middle of the week the covenant is broken. At that time, we are told that the sacrifice and the oblations are to cease. And because of the overspreading of abominations, which mean

detestable things, the covenant is made desolate. The covenant is made desolate even until the consummation or the completion of the covenant, which is at the end of the week. Then at the close of the appointed time, that which has been determined shall be poured out. I believe that this speaks of the wrath of God that will be poured out upon the prince that shall come.

Daniel said that he did not understand the vision and was told to go his way because the words were closed up and sealed until the time of the end. Most of the commentators quote this statement of Daniel and make no comment about verses eleven and twelve in the twelfth chapter. It may be that Daniel 9:27 is the key to these two verses.

We know that the time period in question is seven years. We know that this period is divided into two equal parts. We begin with the confirmation of the covenant and it runs for 1260 days (three and a half years). At the end of that time the covenant is broken. The sacrifice and the oblations cease. One month or thirty days is added to the 1260 so that the number of days is now 1290. This is an extra thirty days and the only way that could be used and not add to the time is for them to be a parenthesis. To add the extra days to the 1260 as far as time is concerned, would make the time longer than seven years. What would happen during this parenthesis? Because of the overspreading of abominations in Daniel 9:27. The way that abominations is used, they refer to an army of abominations that overspread that time when the covenant is broken. "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days" (Dan 12:11). The additional month is added to the forty two months, but not counted as part of the seven years.

After this parenthesis there will be another period of time equal to three and a half years or forty two months. The desolation remains until the consummation or completion of the second 1260 days. At this time; the completion of the seven years, we are told that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. That determined, I believe, speaks relative to punishment, the wrath of God, against the abominations that were brought about in the midst of the week. His wrath is to be poured out. This speaks about the time of the end that was hidden from Daniel. This is the wrath that we read about in Revelation 19. We are not told how long that it will take for the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies to be defeated, but before the millennium can begin these things must be consummated (completed). "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days" (Dan 12:12).

At the end of the second 1260 days there will be a period of 45 days where that determined shall be poured upon the desolate. This again will be a time of parenthesis that occurs between the end of the seven years and the beginning of the millennium. The forty five days for wrath to

be carried out and preparation for the millennium reign of Christ. The 1260 days plus the 30 days takes us to the 1290 days plus the 45 days equals the 1335 days. This accounts for the additional 75 days in Daniel 12.

## THE LORD

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souls.

Next we see, "I shall." David was very positive about his security in the Lord Jesus Christ. If the Lord be for us who can be against us? Here lies our strength in the knowledge of the Lord's faithfulness. We may falter and may even fall, but our Lord stands ready to pick us up and establish our going. We shall prevail through Jesus Christ.

David begins to sum up the situation in the next three words when he says, "I shall not." I shall not be overtaken by the enemy. I shall not be destroyed by the adversary. Victory is surely mine as I am in the hands of my great Shepherd. I can even make it known to those that would destroy; that they are the ones that are in danger of being destroyed. It is a fearful thing to fall in the hands of the living God. I shall not be moved from my protection. I shall not be lost in all that may beset me on every hand.

Then we read, "I shall not want." Do we know what it is to want? I have heard some say "I want to be saved." Have they been in a situation that David was in? David had no place to go and no one to turn to in a physical sense. He was trapped in a cave up in the mountain side. Well, you must reach that point in your own life in order to want to be saved. You must first realize you are hopeless and helpless without Jesus Christ in your life. You have to realize all is lost for you and then you will turn to the Shepherd of your soul. At this time you can say with David, "I shall not want." No matter what may come in our lives we will again and again say with David, "I shall not want."

David could have easily returned to thoughts of his young years as a shepherd boy. He took care of his sheep in a way that he lost none. He knew the sheep he was charged with would have the greatest of protection he could give them. David gained strength from the Lord to protect his sheep. As David went to battle he gained strength for our great God. And now David gained strength for the Lord in knowing that he would want once again.

Let us now tie these thoughts together. "The Lord and I." What a great comfort in this thought in knowing that we are in bonds with our precious Saviours!

Then, "The Lord is and I shall." All things are possible with God. Do we know what that means? Our strength is in Jehovah our great and powerful God! Wherever Christ, our Shepherd is, there is God; and whatever Christ, our Shepherd does is the act of our great God, "Who can stay his hand or say what doest thou?" Our Shepherd stands today representing His people in all their interests. He is God and there is no other. Can

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## STUDIES IN REVELATION

by Willard Willis

**"And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Rev. 1:5).**

We learned from verse four that God the Father and God the Spirit, by way of John, sent "grace and peace" to the seven churches of Asia. We are now informed by our text that Jesus Christ also sent grace and peace to the seven churches. The entire Trinity, in other words, was behind their efforts. This fact means that the love, power and authority of the Trinity were directed toward the seven churches of Asia. We, if we will ponder these thoughts, will realize that the work of the Lord's churches today is no small endeavor. There is no institution on the face of the earth that can even begin to compare with the Lord's churches.

John, in verse four, gave the Father a three fold title. He referred to Him as "He which is, and which was, and which is to come." John referred to the Holy Spirit as "the seven Spirits which are before the throne. John continues in our text (verse five) by referring to the Son as "the faithful witness." He, in other words, when He was here in person, expressed in word and by action, the will of God for us. Jesus, as the Father's witness to us, was never outside the will of God. The Lord Jesus, as we shall observe from the following passage of Scripture, was the brightness of God's glory and the express image of His person.

**"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:3).**

Our Lord, the one that the book before us is all about, was not only the "faithful witness," but He was the "first begotten of the dead," or, as Paul states, "the first-fruits of them that slept" (I Corinthians 15:20). The first tomato picked from a garden is the first-fruit from the garden. The fact that one tomato has been picked is a sure sign that there are more to follow. Jesus, in like manner, is the "first begotten of the dead." We, who died in Him, were buried with Him and arose with Him, have the assurance that we will also be resurrected from the dead. All believers through Jesus Christ as our representative, can boldly say: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Corinthians 15:55).

John, in our text, continues by stating that Jesus Christ is the "prince of the kings of the earth," or the ruler over the kings of the earth. God's total victory over Pharaoh is an excellent example of how God is sovereign over the kings of the earth. God, in the person of Jesus Christ, will subdue all the kingdoms of the earth.

He will bring all kings and their kingdoms to bow before Him. The following passage of Scripture declares that the king's heart is under the control of our Lord.

**"The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: He turneth it whithersoever he will" (Proverbs 21:1).**

John continues by stating, **"unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."** We, then, who know the Lord Jesus, are to see Him as that person of the Trinity who loves us so much that He has washed us from all of our sins by way of His own blood. He, of course, before washing us "from our sins in His own blood," lived a perfect life and thus met all the requirements of God in our behalf. He would have had sin of His own and therefore could not have washed us from our sins, if He had failed God in any way. He, however, as the following passage of Scripture points out, finished with a perfect mark all that God the Father required of Him.

**"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John 17:4).**

**"And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (Rev. 1:6).**

The members of the seven churches of Asia, by way of the new birth, were kings because they were members of the Lord's kingdom. They were priests in that they had authority from heaven to perform the sacred functions of the faith. They, for example, had the authority to baptize, administer the Lord's Supper, etc.

John, after speaking of that which our Lord had done, says: "to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." John is saying, in essence, that our Lord is worthy to be glorified and to have dominion for ever and ever. He, in fact, has more than earned these rights. We, therefore, should not try to steal the show, or rob Him of the glory due Him. May we, then, be like John the Baptist when he said: **"I must decrease, but He must increase."**

**"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen" (Rev. 1:7).**

John, after speaking of that which our Lord has done for us, and after stating how we should honor Him, says: "Behold, He cometh with clouds." Our personal Savior who loved us so much that He washed us in His own blood has not forgotten about us. He, in other words, has gone to prepare a place for us - a place where we can reside with Him, and He will soon come with clouds to take us home with Him.

We know from Acts 1:11 that our Lord is to return in the same manner that He went away. The manner in which He went away, according to Acts 1:9, was by way of a cloud.

John continues by saying that when He returns, "every eye shall see Him." We, as believers, will see our Lord face to face when He comes in the air. Israel will see Him when He comes on down to the Mount of Olives after seven

years in the air. All the lost of the ages will see Him at the Great White Throne. Every person who has ever lived will be required to stand before the Lord Jesus and give an account of his or her life to Him. He, in fact, is to judge the world in righteousness. The result of the Lord's judgment, as far as the lost are concerned, will be, as John says, "all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him" (We will note later that believers will not stand before the Great White Throne).

John continues by saying, "even so, Amen." John, when saying "even so, Amen," is saying, "Thy will be done." John is saying that he is on the side of his Lord and that he is opposed to the world system - the world system which is in opposition to the reign of the Lord Jesus upon the earth.

**"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Rev. 1:8).**

Alpha and Omega are the letters which begin and end the Greek alphabet. We, in the English language would say, "I am the A and the Z." Our Lord, in other words, is all that letters and languages were meant to be, that is, the expression of truth. He, after all is the faithful witness - the Word of God - the one who has revealed God's will to us.

John adds that He is the beginning and the ending. This fact should cause each one of us to be sure that we are pleasing Him. He, after all, will be around to give us a report card when our life's work is done. It is as stated in the following passage of Scripture.

**"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12).**

John, in continuing to describe the Lord Jesus, state that He is the one "which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." We are to understand, then, that we, when considering Jesus Christ, are considering the Almighty God. It is as stated in the following passage of Scripture.

**"I and my Father are one" (John 10:30).**

You and I should be very serious regarding our relationship with Jesus Christ, since only that which is done for Him will last beyond the period which we know as time. We should be very sure that our life's work is built upon Him rather than the shifting sands of time. The old Puritan said, in essence, "Only one life to live, will soon be past, only that which is done for Christ will last."

**"I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:9).**

John, when writing to the seven churches of Asia, refers to himself as "your brother." Brothers are those people who have the same parents. They, in many cases, resemble each other in looks and in their walk and talk. John, then, was a brother to the people in the seven churches of Asia, in that they all had the same elder brother, Jesus Christ,

and God as their Father. He was also a brother to them, in that they had the same interests and the same goals. They resembled each other in their walk, in that they did not walk according to the course of this world.

John continued his letter by referring to himself as a companion in tribulation. We are all aware of the fact that a companion in tribulation is a far greater companion than one is in good times. Two men who are companions on a battle field have a far greater relationship than two men who are companions on the training field. John was a companion in tribulation, or during very difficult times. He, therefore, was very dear to the hearts of the people in the seven churches in Asia and they were very dear to him.

John went a step further and addressed himself as a companion "in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." Jesus had said in John 18:36, "My kingdom is not of this world." John, then, and the people in the seven churches of Asia, by way of the New Birth, had been placed into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. They, as a result, lived in this world, but they were not of this world. They, as it is said of Abraham, "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

John, when making reference to the patience of Jesus Christ, made reference to his and their ability, by faith, to wait for God's promises to be fulfilled. The faith that Jesus had in the Father resulted in perfect patience. He never became impatient because He never doubted the Father's plan for His life. This was the kind of patience that John and the people in the seven churches of Asia endeavored to attain to. They, of course, due to their sinful natures, would never reach their goal in this life, but such did not lessen their responsibility to try.

John informed the seven churches in Asia that he "was in the isle that is called Patmos." It is likely that the people in Asia knew about Patmos. They, if they were aware of the island, must have felt very low when John informed them that he was "in the isle that is called Patmos." This particular island, in our day, is called Patmo, or Palamosa. It is an island that is about ten miles long and six miles wide. The island is rocky throughout, being volcanic by nature. There is a grotto (cave) on the island which is called "the grotto of the Apocalypse," that is, the place where John received the revelation from Jesus Christ. John, while on Patmos, was away from home and friends, but he was not separated from his Lord and Savior.

John, in explaining why he was on the isle of Patmos, said that he was there because of "the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ." They, then, who sent him there, meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. His preaching Jesus Christ had gotten him in trouble with the authorities and the result was that they sent him to Patmos. John, at the time of his banishment, was nearing one hundred years old. He, however, would not stop witnessing for his Lord even though he was probably told by the authorities to do so. We are to understand that John's Lord and Savior was far more important to him than life itself. John was like

Paul when Paul said:

**"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24).**

## THE LORD

(Continued from Page 5)

we fathom this in our finite minds? Such rejoicing it should be to know that "The Lord is and I shall."

Again we turn to our text and read, **"The Lord is my shepherd I shall not."** That personal tie that binds us together with our Lord and Shepherd, Jesus Christ. The fetters of the bondage of sin have been broken and the love of God now bonds us with our eternal God! He will supply all of our needs. He will ever be present with His little children. **"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me."** Now to hear David again, **"When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell." (Ps. 27:2).**

We will again notice our text. **"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."** In times when we are on the mountain top and in times when we find ourselves in the valley we can still trust the Lord. No matter how rough the road, no matter how long the trouble; nor how much the trouble may be, we can still trust the Lord. When we are in the house of God singing praises to Him, we can trust Him and rejoice. When the enemy stands at our door we, yes even then, we can trust Him. When all is taken from us and we are in our deepest despair we can turn and trust the great Shepherd of our souls. **"He is at my right hand, that I should not be moved: therefore did my heart rejoice," (Acts 2:25 & 26a).**

We may feel at times in our minds, "what is the use of going on?" We may want to turn from worship and seek other avenues. We seek to compromise the truth to get relief from the heavy burdens we may bear for the truths sake. It is during these and other times we must feel and experience what David did in our text. **"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want."**

May the Lord richly bless you all is my prayer.

## WELL

(Continued from Page 1)

woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink;

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## WELL

(Continued from Page 6)

thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw. Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands: and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband; in that saidest thou truly. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he."

For our text I want us to look to verse 14. "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

As we read the Scriptures and look to our text, I want you to take note that this woman was not ignorant of the Scriptures. She knew for example that the Messiah cometh. She knew that when He came He would know all things. She just didn't know that it was He whom she spoke to.

The lost world about us is not totally ignorant about spiritual matters. A man said to me the other day, "I don't have to go to church to pray; I can pray at the

river, in the field, in the woods or in my home." You see, he wasn't totally ignorant. He knew for example that he should pray. And I agree that anywhere you are; you can pray and those prayers will be received if you are in the family of God. They may not be answered as you would like for them to be, but they will be heard.

But during my conversation with this same man I found out a few other things. For one thing he was preparing to have a big church wedding. Oh, how important it seems, that when we want to get married we want it done in a church. You know, it's like Christmas, and Easter, you have to show up those days. Seems also that this man's wife to be was also with child. They had been living together for a year or more.

The race was on. You know, was it going to be the stork or the preacher that got there first? This story would be funny if it wasn't so sad. And sadder yet, this story is multiplied over and over thousands of times every year. And listen to me, these people aren't ignorant people; they aren't all poor people. This kind of problem goes on in every walk of life. The problem is that they aren't looking at the right source.

These should, as should we all, have been looking to the well of living water, to Christ Jesus. And you find Him in the Word of God. You don't find Christ over on the lake, out in the woods, down in the field or on the river. Oh, he is there! Don't get me wrong. I believe Jesus is God, and God is everywhere. But you don't find Him there because you are not looking for Him there. In the lake or on the river you are looking for fish, in the field or in the woods you are hunting game. The farthest thing from your mind and heart is God.

Christ Jesus said to this woman, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24). In order to worship God in spirit, one must have the Spirit. The Word of God tells us that the Scriptures are spiritually discerned, and the natural man receiveth not the things of God, for they are foolishness to him.

Now, pray tell me, where are you going to find the truth? Where are you going to have the Spirit work the work of faith upon you? Down at the river? I think not! In a tree stand waiting to kill one of God's creatures? I think not. If you are looking for the Spirit of God, you are going to have to go to the source. What is that source? Jesus is the source and the Word of God is where He is found, and in God's house of worship is where He is expounded.

That's where the child of God goes to worship in truth. He goes to the source; to the well of truth.

We read over in Proverbs 16:1, "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD." What a blessing, to know that even that which is in my heart was prepared there by God and what comes out of my mouth is from God. Oh, if that well of truth could only be held by all, think how much better this world would be.

Paul said to the Roman brethren in Romans 10:9-11. "That if thou shalt confess

with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."

Week after week I hear men trying to beg confessions out of people, people that God has not prepared their hearts to receive the gospel. Of a truth I say to you man must believe with the heart. But beloved, God must have prepared that heart, or all the words and all the begging, and all the "repeat after me" prayers of the world will not change one soul. That, my friends, is the truth of God's Holy Word.

Yes, truly man makes confession unto salvation. But it is God that gives the answer of the tongue. It is not God that answers with the tongue when you repeat some made up prayer of man's cunning, conniving ways.

Beloved, I am talking about worshipping God in spirit and in truth. Truth that must come from the Word of God. This truth like the salvation is all of God.

"I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west; that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things." (Isaiah 45:5-7).

Oh hear me beloved, the truth is not hidden from God's people. The truth is revealed in His word. God created all things. God created the good: God created the bad. God brought down the wall between the two Germany, God brought an end to the Russian power. God has this country in the problems in which it is in. God has a purpose for it all.

Without the bad, we would have no need of a Redeemer. What would He redeem you from if you were without sin? You see, there would be no need for hell if it were not for evil. There would also be no need for the grave. For without sin Adam and Eve would still be alive.

Knowing the truth of God's Word should be a great blessing to you. Like when we read in John 1:1-5, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."

How clear the blessed Word tells us that Christ Jesus was, and always has been. All things that are or ever will be was made by Him. Yes, even those in darkness that comprehend not the light of God, they too were made by God. Hear me; not only created by God, but made to be what they are.

Every one of us has a desire to be something that we are not. Some of us want riches, some of

us fame, some to just leave a mark that will be remembered. Our desires may never be fulfilled to our liking, but hear me, the Lord directed our steps. "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directed his steps." (Proverbs 16:9).

You see, everything we do is that which God has prepared for us to do. I tell you, yes, even the mistakes and the goof-ups, they are not ours alone. We must always remember that we are not perfect. Only God is perfect. I know, someone will look at this and say, "well then if God is perfect how come we were made imperfect." Simple, we are imperfect because He is perfect.

I have been told that to believe what I believe, would be to give man freedom to sin all they want to and blame it all on God. But hear me beloved, those that think this way have the desire in his flesh to live that way, and will do so no matter what. No true child of God, that truly loves God, would ever think or act in this manner.

That lost man knows not that he is lost. One man may curse God, and another worship Him, and both come from the same family. Thus it was with Jacob and Esau. One God said He loved, the other He said He hated. Beloved, hear me, God's love is an everlasting love, He loves from eternity to eternity. If God loves you now, you must know that He loved you forever, and He will love you forever more. And the same holds true for those whom God hates. It's an everlasting hate, for ever and ever.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Ephesians 1:3-6).

God chose His people before this world was ever formed, He predestinated those He chose to Christ Jesus and made us accepted. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:8-10.

Our salvation is of God, all of God, plus nothing, minus nothing. Even our works are not our own. God is all, and all is of God.

I ask you in closing; has God prepared your heart to believe that Jesus died for your sins? Has the Spirit given you faith to believe on his name?

## STIRRING

(Continued from Page 1)

his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is

not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. (Matt. 10:34-38).

The truth sometimes is hard to accept, but we must accept it. God's Word must be obeyed no matter how difficult to be believed or accomplished. Many have used the excuse of following Jesus to be disobedient to; or contrary to family and government. I think of the hippy generation and the flower children. They were supposedly following Jesus, but yet they were contrary to their families, the government and even morality. They did this in the name of Jesus. This is not what Jesus meant by being at variance with the family. Christ had reference to the times when His people will speak out against immorality, such as homosexuality, lesbianism, and abortion. This is when a stir begins. As long as we are inside our church buildings preaching against these things we are fine; no one bothers us. As long as we don't write anything in the newspapers or magazines no one bothers us. Christ had reference to the times when His people speak out against the doctrines of men. Heresies such as Arminianism where people are taught that they can be saved by doing certain things such as praying the sinner's prayer. I haven't found that prayer in the Bible yet. Yes, there are many prayers that we ought to pray. But no such thing as a sinner's prayer. Friend, you must look and depend solely on the blood of Jesus Christ to save you and nothing else. Heresies such as the universal, invisible church. No such thing. How do I know. It's universal and it's invisible. I can't see it. It doesn't exist. The churches in the Bible were visible and local. Paul nor anyone else knew about or taught a doctrine called a universal, invisible church. Heresies such as gap salvation or salvation in stages. No such thing. When you're saved you're saved. God doesn't save you and then ten years later let you know. When He saves you, you know it. There may be a time of resistance and rebellion, struggle and fighting, but when God saves, he saves. Heresies such as Antinomianism, the teaching that we are not under the law of the Ten Commandments. If we are to obey one we are to obey all. We cannot be saved and not have to follow the first commandment. We cannot say that we are not under the Ten Commandments but it's wrong to commit adultery. We either disobey all or obey all. We cannot pick or choose. Well, there are many more heresies that are too numerous to mention in one article. But these things cause a stir. Preach against them, tell others the errors of their ways, cause a stir. Don't be afraid. Why should we hold back the truth if it is indeed the truth. Let us be careful that what we are telling is the truth? Let us not mislead others. Let us help others go the right way. Let us be in harmony with the teachings of Jesus. Far more harm will come by telling a lie than telling the truth.

Faithful preaching of the Word (Continued on Page 8, Col. 1)



## STIRRING

(Continued from Page 7)

of God always stirs up strife. It stirred it up in the days of Jeremiah. "Mine heart within me is broken of the prophets; all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness. For the land is full of adulterers; for because of swearing the land mourneth; the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up, and their course is evil, and their force is not right. For both prophet and priest are profane; yea, in my house have I found their wickedness, saith the LORD. Wherefore their way shall be unto them as slippery ways in the darkness: they shall be driven on, and fall therein: for I will bring evil upon them, even the year of their visitation..." (Jeremiah 23:9-12). You preachers of heresy hear this! Read Jeremiah. See what he says. Don't say you are not doing the same thing. What will the Antinomians do with Jeremiah 7:9, 10, "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?" What will you do with it? Has God's Word become void? I think not.

Faithful preaching stirred up things in the days of John the Baptist. Read Matthew 3:1-10. Who would have dared called a religion so prominent in John's day a generation of vipers? Have we become such pacifists that we are scared to call the heretics by name. Is not the Catholic religionists a generation of vipers? Are we afraid of being persecuted by telling the truth? It is not that we are to say these things to simply stir up strife, but the telling of the truth will stir up strife. It was once said that if the Catholics were allowed in this country it would cause its downfall. Could that be true? You judge! John stirred things up so much that he was imprisoned and then beheaded. Why? Because he spoke the truth. Why were so many murdered in the Dark Ages? It was not so called Medieval men. It was the Catholic religion because true believers in Christ would not bow down to their ways. These people spoke the truth and would not deny Christ.

Jesus stirred things up. Jesus said, "...not to send peace but a sword." Jesus called the Pharisees hypocrites. They hated Him for He spoke the truth. Even in His very birth, things were stirred up. Notice Matt. 2:1-3, "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, where is he that is born King of

the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." Herod did not care to see Jesus to worship Him, but to kill Him. Jesus spoke the truth. Let us follow in His steps.

Strife does not come until we reach the seat of sin. Let us notice Acts 19:26-29, "Moreover, ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. And the whole city was filled confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre." Notice that everyone was in an uproar over the possibility of losing their income from making false gods. Everyone was greatly disturbed by the attacks on their so-called goddess, Diana. Why were they so fearful? Why couldn't their gods help them? The situation was pure material. Nothing spiritual about it. Paul had reached the seat of their sin had he spoken on some other subject; and he did. You see there was no mention of Paul speaking about Jesus. They did not argue about that. They were able to stomach that. But when Paul hit at the belt, when he got to the heart of the matter; it was altogether different. Sure, preach Jesus, but don't preach against our crafts and our gods. People have no problem with Jesus as long as they can live and do as they please. It doesn't work that way. We must do as God says. We must seek to please Him, regardless of the cost. We may not be popular, but if we speak the truth God will be pleased with us. You may not like to hear about your sins, you may not like to be told you are out of fellowship with God, that you are serving the flesh, that you are serving your own desires instead of the desires of God. What are you thinking about? Who are you thinking about; God or yourself? Turn from your sinful ways, turn to God, He will forgive you. Listen! "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile. Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and

his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil (1 Peter 3:8-12). May the Lord bless you is my prayer.

## COST

(Continued from Page 1)

me. Out of the depths I was forced to cry unto the Lord. Just before I went away to Mentone for rest, I suffered greatly in body, but far more in soul, for my spirit was overwhelmed. Under this pressure, I preached a sermon from the words, "...My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" I was as much qualified to preach from that text as ever I expect to be; indeed, I hope that few of my brethren could have entered so deeply into those heartbreaking words. I felt to the full of my measure the horror of a soul forsaken of God. Now, that was not a desirable experience. I tremble at the bare idea of passing again through the eclipse of soul; I pray that I may never suffer in that fashion again unless the same result should hang upon it.

That night, after the sermon, there came into the vestry a man who was as nearly insane as he could be and be out of an asylum. His eyes seemed ready to start from his head, and he said that he should utterly have despaired if he had not heard that discourse, which had made him feel that there was one man alive who understood his feeling, and could describe his experience. I talked with him, and tried to encourage him, and asked him to come again on Monday night, when I should have a little more time to talk with him. I saw the brother again, and I told him that I thought he was a hopeful patient, and I was glad that the word has been so suited to his case. Apparently, he put aside the comfort which I presented for his acceptance, and yet I had the consciousness upon me that the precious truth which he had heard was at work upon his mind, and that the storm of his soul would soon subside into a deep calm.

Now hear the sequel. Last night, of all times in the year, when, strange to say, I was preaching from the words, "the Almighty hath vexed my soul," after the service, in walked this self-same brother who had called on me five years before. This time he looked as different as noonday from midnight, or as life from death. I said to him, "I am glad to see you, for I have often thought about you, and wondered whether you were brought into perfect peace." I told you that I went to Mentone, and my patient also went into the country, so that we had not met for five years. To my enquiries, this brother replied, "Yes, you said I was a hopeful patient, and I am sure you will be glad to know that I have walked in the sunlight from that day till now. Everything is changed and altered with me." Dear friends, as soon as I saw my poor despairing patient the first time, I blessed God that my fearful experience had prepared me to sympathize with him and guide him; but last night, when I saw him perfectly restored, my heart overflowed with gratitude to God for my former sorrowful feelings. I would go into the deeps a hundred times to cheer a downcast spirit: it is good

for me to have been afflicted that I might know how to speak a word in season to one that was weary.

Suppose that, by some painful operation, you could have your right arm made a little longer, I do not suppose you would care to undergo the operation; but if you foresaw that, by undergoing the pain, you would be enabled to reach and save drowning men who else would sink before you eyes, I think you would willingly bear the agony, and pay a heavy fee to the surgeon to be thus qualified for the rescue of your fellows. Reckon, then, that to acquire soul winning power you will have to go through fire and water, through doubt and despair, through mental torment and soul distress. It will not, of course, be the same with you all, nor perhaps with any two of you, but according to the work allotted you, will be your preparation. You must go into the fire if you are to pull others out of it, and you will have to dive into the floods if you are to draw others out of the water. You cannot work a fire escape without feeling the scorch of the conflagration, nor man a lifeboat without being covered with the waves. If Joseph is to preserve his brethren alive, he must himself go down into Egypt; if Moses is to lead the people through the wilderness, he must first himself spend forty years there with his flock. Payson truly said, "If anyone asks to be made a successful minister, he knows not what he asks; and it becomes him to consider whether he can drink deeply of Christ's bitter cup and be baptized with His baptism."

I was led to think of this by the prayer which has just been offered by our esteemed brother, Mr. Levinshon. He is, as you perceive, of the seed of Abraham, and he owes his conversion to a city missionary of his own nation. If that city missionary had not himself been a Jew, he would not have known the heart of the young stranger, nor have won his ear for the gospel message. Men are usually won to Christ by suitable instruments, and this suitability often lies in the power to sympathize. A key opens a door because it fits the wards of the lock; an earnest address touches the heart because it meets the state of that heart. You and I have to be made into all sorts of shapes to suit all forms of mind and heart; just as Paul says, "And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some." These processes must be wrought out upon us also. Let us cheerfully bear whatever the Holy Spirit shall work within our spirits that we may thus be the more largely blest to our fellow men. Come, brethren, and lay your all on the altar! Give yourselves up, you workers, into the Lord's hand. You who have delicacy and refinement, may have to be shocked into the power to

benefit the coarse and ignorant. You who are wise and educated may have to be made fools of, that you may win fools to Jesus; for fools need saving, and many of them will not be saved except by means which men of culture cannot admire.

How finely some people go to work when the thing needed may not be daintiness, but energy! On the other hand, how violent some are when the desired thing is tact and gentleness, and not force! This has to be learned; we must be trained to it as dogs to follow game. Here is one form of experience: The brother is elegant; he wishes to speak earnestly, but he must be elaborate, too. He has written out a nicely prepared address, his notes are carefully arranged. Alas! he has left the priceless document at home! What will he do? He is too gracious to give up; he will try to speak. He begins nicely, and gets through firstly. "Fair and softly, good sir." What comes next? See, he is gazing aloft for secondly. What should be said? What can be said? The good man flounders about, but he cannot swim; he struggles to land, and as he rises from the flood you can hear him mentally saying, "That's my last attempt." Yet it is not so. He speaks again. He gathers confidence; he grows into an impressive speaker. By such humiliations as these the Lord prepares him to do his work efficiently. In our beginnings we are too fine to be fit, or too great to be good. We must serve an apprenticeship, and thus learn our trade. A black lead pencil is of no use at all till it is cut; the fine cedar wood must be cut away; and then the inward metal which marks and writes will have fair play. Brethren, the knife of affliction is sharp, but salutary; you cannot delight in it, but faith may teach you to value it. Are you not willing to pass through every ordeal if by any means you may save some? If this be not your spirit, you had better keep to your farm and to your merchandise, for no man will ever win a soul who is not prepared to suffer everything within the compass of possibility for that soul's sake.

A good deal may have to be suffered through fear, and yet that fear may assist in stirring the soul, and putting it into fit posture for work; at least, it may drive the heart to prayer, and that alone is a great part of the necessary preparation. A good man thus describes one of his early attempts at visiting, with the view of speaking to individuals upon their spiritual condition: "I was thinking, on the way to the residence of the party, how I would introduce the subject, and all that I would say. And all the while I was trembling and agitated. Reaching the door, it seemed as if I should sink through the stones; my courage was gone, and, lifting my hand to the knocker, it dropped at my side without touching it. I went partly down the steps from sheer fear; a moment's reflection sent me again to the knocker, and I entered the house. The sentences I uttered and the prayer offered were very broken; but thankful, very thankful, I am that my fears and cowardice did not prevail. The ice was broken. That process of ice-breaking must be gone through, and its result is highly beneficial.

O, poor souls, you that wish

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## SEND OUT THE CLOWNS

by Bill Farmer

Over the years, I have noticed a lot of clowns involved in church, Sunday School and youth programs. Back in the early seventies, some brought in "Bozo the Clown" for the bus kids. I'm sure Bozo preached a lot of Scripture to these overflow crowds!

At some point in this same period of time, I was approached by a slick gentleman who had his hair in a bouffant. This man said that he could guarantee me 1500 in Sunday School by letting him come in and organize a Sunday School Circus! He would have some of our men dress as clowns! This man was a clown and I wondered how he would look with a real red nose!

In the eighties, a "church" in Tennessee had clowns on the highway inviting people to services. This reminds me of that old saying (I just made up), "If a church has a clown on the road, it has a bigger one behind the pulpit."

Here in Houston, a big sign reads, "Come one, come all...Fall Clown Festival." This sign is not for a carnival, but a large Baptist church. Such things most certainly inspire people to trust Christ, think of spiritual things, and read Scriptures!

A very large bus sat on a church's parking lot near Pasadena, Texas. This bus had a clown's face on the front, but on the side, it said, "Clowns for Christ". Later, someone told me they demonstrated object lessons on how life "takes a tumble", the "Fall of Man", and other things that border on blasphemy. Actually, the clowns here probably do about as well as the pastor.

A SBC church put out a bulletin inviting people to have "Clown Stew" at an evening service. We don't need "Clown Stew"; we need "Humble Pie", and not in the face!

Clowns find their origin in antiquity. The painting of the body and face is pagan, and pagans still do it! It seems that clowns, like TV, radio, football (oh, me!), fine cars, movies, dances, etc., are something to help sinful man take his mind off his wicked, guilty, helpless state. Have Baptists become so diluted that none of this matters to them? Thus far, we've not mentioned puppet shows, Christian melodrama, Christian rock music, James Dobson movies, Halloween parties, Santa Claus, dancercize classes for the ladies, Super Bowl games broadcast at Sunday night services, and this is all taking place in "Baptist" churches. These are all modern-day, up-to-date methods for "reaching people for God's glory". Well, someone is getting glory, but it is not God! All this leads me to believe that soon there will be "Christian Witches" or "saved" devils! With clowns, puppets, and actors, these churches have as much spirituality as a poker game between the Beatles and the Hell's Angels!

It looks as though you don't have to be a rank heretic to dabble in heresy! So, let us go to the final authority on life and death, time and eternity, science, you, your great-grandmother, WMU, BBF, space, the Helly Papa in Rome, mixed marriages, hippies, white slavers, dope fiends, fruits and nuts, preachers and churches. Since there is such

an authority, let us run to it as quickly as possible!

**"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you...Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks" (Ephesians 5:3-4).**

You should also read some sobering words in verse 5. These things are "foolish"...the Bible condemns such things (Ecc. 7:17, Psa. 73:3, Prov. 9:6, Gal. 3:3). Man's methods cannot come close to God's (I Cor. 1:21, 25). Preaching is God's way! His only way! More preaching! Send out the clowns!

## COST

(Continued from Page 8)

to find the Saviour, Jesus has died for you; and now His people live for you! We cannot offer any atoning sacrifice for you; there is no need that we should; but still we would gladly make sacrifices for your soul's sake. Did you not hear what our brother said just now in his prayer: We would do anything, be anything, give anything, and suffer anything if we might but bring you to Christ? I assure you that many of us feel even so. Will you not care for yourselves? Shall we be earnest about your souls, and will you trifle them away? Be wiser, I beseech you, and may infinite wisdom at once lead you to our dear Saviour's feet. Amen.

## HOLY SPIRIT

(Continued from Page 1)

Spirit. This was a past event that has been historically fulfilled! The common assumption that every believer is baptized by the Holy Spirit into the "Body of Christ" at conversion is simply an error in interpretation.

This Protestant doctrine was invented by Luther and the Protestants. If there is such a thing as a universal, invisible church, (which there is not), then the only way to entrance into it would be by Spirit baptism. It is therefore incumbent upon its advocates to prove this doctrine of Spirit baptism from the Scriptures. It simply cannot be done. There is not a verse in the New Testament that teaches it. Most of its advocates try to prove this doctrine of Spirit baptism from the Scriptures, it simply cannot be done. There is not a verse in the New Testament that teaches it. Most of its advocates flee to I Corinthians 12:13 and weakly point to it as their only proof text. The problem is simply that this verse is not Spirit baptism but water baptism, leaving these teachers without a single proof text. To teach that I Corinthians 12:13 is Spirit baptism is an assumption on their part. It is not so construed by many Bible scholars such as A.T. Robertson, the Greek scholar, and others.

Commenting on I Corinthians 12:13, Dr. Harry Ironside makes the following admission.

It is a significant fact that if you omit this definite passage in I Corinthians, there is no other verse in any epistle that tells us in plain words just how the body is formed. (Dr. Harry Ironside - Misc Papers, Vol. 2, page 24).

With this acknowledgement

Dr. Ironside gives the farm away. Note: "No other verse in any epistle." They have no other Scripture to fall back on. Here the incredible fact is acknowledged that the Protestant and Interdenominational theory of a universal invisible church is built on one verse of Scripture only. The most elementary Bible student knows that you do not build a major doctrine such as Ecclesiology on one verse of Scripture.

Let us examine the teaching of I Corinthians 12:13 and see if it teaches Spirit Baptism.

I. The first question we need to ascertain is, "Who is the baptizer?"

Our premise is that in reference to baptism and the Holy Spirit it cannot be demonstrated that the Scriptures teach a baptism by the Holy Spirit, but rather that Jesus was the baptizer and the Holy Spirit was the element, and that this was fulfilled at Pentecost in Acts 2 and Caesarea in Acts 10, and that Ephesians 4:5 specifically states that there is only one Baptism. Therefore, that one baptism would have to be, of necessity, water baptism because water baptism was to continue through all generations.

Spiros Zodhiates, Greek Scholar, although a believer in the Protestant theory, nevertheless confirms this vital fact that it is Christ, not the Holy Spirit, who is the Baptizer.

**Christ the Baptizer**  
Nowhere in the Bible does it say that the Holy Spirit baptizes anybody into the body of Christ. For instance, in Matthew 3:11, John the Baptist says, **"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He (Christ) shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."** This indicates that it was Christ who was going to do the baptizing. The Holy Spirit would be the element, so to speak, with which Christ would baptize believers, even as water was the element of water baptism.

In fact, the Greek text says, "He himself (Christ) shall baptize you in (en) Holy Spirit and fire." The Greek preposition en, primarily meaning "in," refers here to the element in which Christ was going to baptize believers. Practically it is the same as "with" or "by means of," as in the case of water, just as it means the same thing whether I say, "I baptize you in water or with water." (Spiros Zodhiates, I Corinthians 12:13, page 3).

Now in the case of water baptism we know that the element - water - cannot also be the baptizer. It was John who did the baptizing. And in the Spirit baptism the baptizer must also be other than the element. Christ is the baptizer, and the element in or by means of which He baptizes us is the Holy Spirit. It is therefore incorrect to say that any of us has been baptized "by" the Holy Spirit. (Spiros Zodhiates, Page 5-6).

Likewise, Dr. W.A. Criswell, although he now accepts the invisible church theory, nevertheless agrees that Christ is the baptizer. He writes:

"Who is the baptizer and with what does He baptize? In Matthew 3:11, Acts 1:5; 11:16, the three passages presenting the prophecy of John the Baptist, Jesus is unmistakably the baptizer and it could be that the Holy

Spirit is the sphere into which He baptizes." (W.A. Criswell The Holy Spirit in Today's World Page 114).

W.A. Criswell acknowledges: "The study of the New Testament presentation of the baptism of the Holy Spirit has brought astonishing, amazing discoveries to me.

For one thing, the term as such is not found in Scripture. The term "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" is so much used and so greatly abused, but it is not in the Word of God. Only in reference to the prophecy of John the Baptist concerning the ministry of Christ, is any mention made in the gospels or in the Acts to a baptism by the Holy Spirit. After reading Matthew 3:11 one would expect page after page in the four gospels to describe this marvelous experience. It is never referred to by name, it is never mentioned as such." (W.A. Criswell, The Holy Spirit in Today's World, Page 113).

Bob Ross writes in a similar vein:

"In one Spirit," or under the indwelling influence and leadership of the very same Spirit, all were led to be baptized.

Actually, the Holy Spirit does not today and never has baptized anyone at the new birth. This may sound strange to some, but if you will just carefully check up on this statement, using the Bible, you will come to the same conclusion. It is certainly true that on Pentecost the church was immersed into the Spirit, but who actually was the administrator? If they were immersed into the Spirit (as to the substance), then who put the church into the Spirit? The answer is found in Matthew 3:11: "He (Christ) shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." (Baptist Examiner).

T.P. Simmons, a Baptist College President and Professor states in his Systematic Study of Bible Doctrine:

"We have shown that each believer has the spirit. It now remains only to be remarked that there is no warrant in Scripture for affirming a baptism of the Spirit today either in or after regeneration. The Scripture is silent on the notion of a baptism of the Spirit for this day. The passage usually referred to, to substantiate a baptism of the Spirit in regeneration (I Cor. 12:13), refers to water baptism." (Thomas Paul Simmons, A Systematic Study of Bible Doctrine, Page 96).

Professor Simmons goes on to state concerning I Corinthians 12:13:

"This passage means that being in or under the power of the Holy Spirit we were all brought by the Lord to baptism, and thus were made members of His body, the local church. Thus baptism is the ceremonial door in the church." (Thomas Paul Simmons, A Systematic Study of Bible Doctrine, page 96).

In his book, "The Doctrine of the Church," page 92, Dr. W.A. Criswell states:

"The believer identifies himself with Christ and the local fellowship of believers through baptism. In water baptism the new believer identifies himself with the Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ, and also with 'the body of the Lord,' the local church. (A.W. Criswell, The Doctrine of the Church, page 92).

In his commentary on I Corinthians, the Greek scholar W.E. Vine, (author of the

Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words), clearly demonstrates that the body in I Corinthians is a local body not a universal body:

"Moreover, as in the human body, there is intercommunication in the present scene among the members of a local church (vv. 15, etc.), and they are to have a care one for another, facts which could not apply to the whole Church of which Christ is the Head. That complete organism is never viewed as "on earth," as is obviously the case in this chapter regarding the local assembly."

"The body in this chapter is the local church, as is clear from verse 27, lit., "ye are a body of Christ," inasmuch as the apostle is speaking of the local assembly under the figure of a body, this verse is to be understood in keeping with that fact, and that the reference is to the formation of the local company, as believers were from time to time baptized and received into the assembly, thus becoming part of it in the local capacity as a spiritual body. No such person as an unbaptized believer is contemplated in the Acts and Epistles."

Verse 14: "For the body is not one member, but many." The "For" is explanatorily connected with "we all" in verse 13 and supports the view that the reference in that verse is to the local church." (W.E. Vine, I Corinthians Commentary, Page 171-172).

If this body in I Corinthians is a local church as Vine so succinctly demonstrates, then the Baptism would have to be water baptism since the Holy Spirit does not baptize anyone into a local church.

In his book, "Systematic Theology," T.P. Simmons argues stoutly against Spirit baptism as a viable doctrine:

This Scripture reads: "In one Spirit were we all baptized into one body." Some hold that this passage refers to baptism in the Holy Spirit, but there is no scriptural ground for such a notion. There is no hint in Scripture that each believer receives Spirit baptism either in or after regeneration. This is an assumption pure and simple." (Thomas Paul Simmons, Systematic Theology, page 370).

Therefore, the Biblical teaching concerning Spiritual baptism is that the Lord Jesus Christ was the baptizer of His church, and this baptism ceased.

II. What then is the Baptism of I Corinthians 12:13 and what body does it refer to?

We believe the Scripture is very clear that the only baptism taught in the New Testament for today is water baptism. Ephesians 4:5 clearly states that there is "one baptism" (and if there is one baptism, i.e., in kind, there cannot be two kinds.) There cannot be both Spirit and water baptism today. In desperation for some kind of scriptural basis for their unscriptural theory of Spirit Baptism into a universal invisible church, these advocates have latched onto four other scriptures, Ephesians 4:5; Romans 6:3, 4; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12, which clearly teach water baptism and have arbitrarily designated them as Spirit baptism. These Scriptures do not have the slightest mention of the Holy Spirit.

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## HOLY SPIRIT

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Secondly, the One whom they are baptized unto is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Writing concerning the "one baptism" of Ephesians 4:5, Dr. I.M. Haldeman, the great Bible scholar, author, and long time pastor of First Baptist Church of New York City, writes cogently against the theory of Spirit baptism:

There are those who seek to escape this conclusion by contending that water baptism is altogether unnecessary.

In support of the contention they quote the words of Paul: **"One Lord, one faith, one baptism."** (Ephesians 4:5). They imagine this "one baptism" is that of the Holy Spirit; and having, as they assume, received such a baptism are delivered from responsibility to any other.

They are greatly in error.

They are in error about the entire subject of Holy Ghost baptism.

The Holy Ghost Himself never baptized any one.

The risen Son of God alone was behind Holy Ghost baptism.

He never baptized by, nor with, but always in the Holy Spirit.

The baptism at Pentecost and at the house of Cornelius was therefore fundamental -- as fundamental as the cross or our Lord's resurrection. It could not be repeated in respect to the Church as a Church.

It came to an end at the house of Cornelius. It has never taken place since.

It was not individual, but corporate baptism; the baptism of a body as such.

Although baptism in the Holy Spirit ceased, water baptism continued.

As water baptism continued by apostolic admonition and practice after the administration of baptism in the Holy Spirit had come to an end and as Paul's epistle to the Ephesians was written some twenty-five years after the baptism in the Holy Spirit had ceased, it is evident that the "one baptism" of which he speaks in connection with the one Lord and the one faith is -- water baptism.

There is one baptism! And what baptism, I ask you in the name of all logic and all sequence could it be in that connection of the one Lord and one faith or doctrine, but the water baptism which as a symbol sets forth this amazing, gracious and all divine death, burial and resurrection?

To ask the question is to answer it.

It is water baptism.

In the connection in which the Spirit places it, it could be logically and intelligently none other.

Even, therefore, if there were such a thing as Holy Ghost baptism (and there is no such thing today) every believer would be under bonds to be buried with Christ by baptism. (I.M. Haldeman, The Truth About Baptism, Page 26).

Roy Mason states:

In I Corinthians 12:13 Paul is writing about plain old immersion in water. (Roy Mason, The Myth of The Universal Invisible Church Theory, Page 36).

Arthur Pink agrees:

Whenever we read of baptism in the New Testament with out anything in the verse or context which expressly describes it (as in Galatians 3:27); (Ephesians 4:5), it is always water baptism which is in view. (A.W. Pink, Why I Corinthians 12:13 does not refer to the church universal.)

Similarly, Professor E.H. Overby, an astute teacher of Ecclesiology, confirms:

I Corinthians 12:13 refers to water baptism that the Holy Spirit leads us to receive. (E.H. Overby, The Meaning of Ecclesia in The New Testament, Page 34).

Professor S.E. Anderson definitely disarms the objection that if the local church is the body of Christ then Christ would have many bodies by calling attention to I Corinthians 11:3:

The weak objection, "Christ cannot have many bodies," ignores the fact that Christ can be the Head of each separate church as well as He is of each man -- as in I Corinthians 11:3, **"the head of every man is Christ."** Conrad Hilton is the head of each of his hotels, and of the entire chain. Christ was the Head of each church in Asia (Revelation 1:4), and they were not called "the church in Asia." The word "church" is used by Christ 20 times in the Revelation, and not once does it mean a universal church. (S.E. Anderson, Baptized into one body, page 15).

Even Dr. Harry Ironside admits:

Every local church in apostolic days was the Body of Christ representatively in that place." (Dr. Harry Ironside).

Nearly 200 years ago the question of Spiritual Baptism arose among the churches of the Philadelphia Baptist Association. The Association met and drafted a circular letter to the churches in 1802. They refuted the notion of Spirit Baptism for our age, and affirmed water baptism. We quote a portion of those minutes:

Circular Letter

By Rev. T.B. Montanye

The elders and messengers of the Philadelphia Association,

To the churches they represent send Christian salutation.

Beloved brethren, --

Anxious for your increase in knowledge, and to be instrumental in advancing the kingdom of our Lord the Messiah, we have chosen as the subject of this our epistle -- The Baptism of the Holy Ghost.

That haply we may be of use to some of our respected friends, by showing them, that, though they may be regenerated, and enjoy the highest consolation in the sweet incomes of the Holy Comforter, and the most sensible communion with Christ; yet, as all this does not constitute the baptism of the Holy Spirit, nor is designed by it in the sacred Scriptures, it follows of consequence, that, rejecting the water baptism, they have no baptism whatever, and ought cheerfully to submit to that prescribed in the example of Jesus Christ.

It being extremely absurd to hold one point of the Christian religion under the denomination of another, especially when there is no well founded evidence of its present existence.

Here it is proper to remove some apparent difficulties, which are a means of puzzling the minds of many. First, what baptism the apostle denominates one baptism? We answer, the instituted appointment of Jesus

Christ, which He authorized after His resurrection, which remains a standing ordinance in the church.

And now, dear brethren, you may perceive, that our intention is not to deny any of the blessed operations of the Holy Ghost upon the human mind; but to distinguish between truth and error.

Signed by order of the Association.

Hezekiah Smith, Moderator.

Burgiss Allison, Clerk.

(Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, 1802, Page 373-375).

Conclusion:

The truth that all and every believer is united to Christ by faith and in union with Him spiritually is certainly Biblical truth, but such a union cannot scripturally be referred to as the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

We believe in the Deity of the Holy Spirit. He is God the Spirit and the author of regeneration. Without His ministry no one could be saved. John 3:8. Thus He has many wonderful ministries in the life of a believer such as quickening, filling, guiding, sealing, etc. But we find no scriptural teaching that the individual receives a spiritual baptism.

Furthermore, if there is no Spirit Baptism for individuals today, then obviously there is no such church in existence as an Invisible, Universal Church on the earth composed of all the saved.

## THE TRUTH ABOUT HALLOWEEN

by Robert McCurry

Excited children masquerading as witches, ghosts, goblins, demons, and other grotesque characters skipping through the neighborhood knocking on doors chanting "trick or treat" while holding out a sack in which one is to rope a piece of candy or other goodies... the party at school, or church, or Sunday School where they bob for apples, tell fortunes, or go through "haunted houses"... decorations of jack-o'-lanterns, witches on brooms, and black cats with arched backs... It's "Halloween" -- one of the strangest days of the year.

Are Halloween activities really just the simple, innocent holiday fun most people believe them to be? Where did this holiday originate? Why is this holiday celebrated?

History provides the answers. Though it was the Roman Catholic Church who designated the October 31st date as Allhallow's Eve, or "even of the holy one's day," in prelude to their November 1st All Saints' Day, it was earlier pagan peoples who gave the annual holiday the sinister meaning and traditions it still holds.

"The American celebration rests upon Scottish and Irish folk customs which can be traced in direct line form pre-Christian times. Although Halloween has become a night of rollicking fun, superstitious spells, and eerie games which people take only half seriously, its beginnings were quite otherwise. The earliest Halloween celebrations were held by the Druids in honor of Samhain, Lord of the dead, whose festival fell on November 1."<sup>1</sup>

"It was a Druidic belief that on

the eve of this festival, Saman (Samhain), lord of death, called together the wicked souls (spirits) that within the pas 12 months had been condemned to inhabit the bodies of animals."<sup>2</sup>

"The Druids, an order of priests in ancient Gaul and Britain, believed that on Halloween, ghosts, spirits, fairies, witches, and elves came out to harm people. They thought the cat was scared and believed that cats had once been human beings but were changed as a punishment for evil deeds. From these Druidic beliefs come the present-day use of witches, ghosts, and cats in Halloween festivities."<sup>3</sup>

Halloween "was the night for the universal walking about of all sorts of spirits, fairies, and ghosts, all of whom had liberty on that night."<sup>4</sup>

The pagans believed that on one night of the year the souls of the dead returned to their original homes. "There was a prevailing belief among all nations that at death the souls of good men were taken possession of by good spirits and carried to paradise, but the souls of wicked men were left to wander in the space between the earth and moon, or consigned to the unseen world. These wandering spirits were in the habit of haunting the living... But there were means by which these ghosts might be exorcised."

To exorcise these ghosts, that is, to free yourself from their supposed evil sway, you would have to set out food -- give the demons a treat -- and provide shelter for them during the night. If they were satisfied with your treat, it was believed they would leave you in peace. If food and shelter were not provided, or if they were not satisfied, these spirits, it was believed, would "trick" you by casting an evil spell on you and causing havoc.

Trick or Treat

"The modern custom of 'Trick-or-Treat' began in Ireland hundreds of years ago. A group of farmers went from house to house begging food for the village Hal-

loween festivities in the name of their ancient gods. Good luck was promised to generous donors, and threats were made against those who would not give."<sup>6</sup> Thus these ancient pagan traditions continue today as youngsters, masquerading as ghosts, skeletons and demons go "trick-or-treating" -- begging in a sense for food while promising to refrain from evil deeds.

October 31

"It was the Celts who chose the date of October 31 as their New Year's Eve and who originally intended it as a celebration of everything wicked, evil and dead. Also during their celebration they would gather around a community bonfire and offer as sacrifices their animals, their crops, and sometimes themselves. And wearing costumes made from the heads and skins of other animals, they would also tell one another's fortunes for the coming year."<sup>7</sup>

"The celebration remained much the same after the Romans conquered the Celts around 43 A.D. The Romans did, however, add a ceremony honoring their goddess of fruit and trees and thus the association with apples and the custom of bobbing for them."<sup>8</sup>

Jack-O-Lantern

The apparently harmless lighted pumpkin face or "Jack-O'-Lantern is an ancient symbol of a

damned soul. "Jack-O'-Lanterns were named for a man called Jack, who could not enter heaven or hell. As a result, he was doomed to wander in darkness with his lantern until Judgment Day."<sup>9</sup>

"Fearful of spooks... folks began hollowing out turnips and pumpkins and placing lighted candles inside to scare evil spirits from the house."<sup>10</sup>

Halloween "Christianized"

Since Halloween is unmistakably pagan in its origin and practice, how did the professing church come to accept and keep such a day?

Again, history provides the answer.

Ever since the time of Constantine -- who made Catholicism the state religion -- the Roman emperors realized how essential it was to have a unified empire, where as many as possible would be of one mind. The civil and religious leaders saw how important it was for the sake of unity to allow only one religion within the Roman domain.

A stringent state policy was implemented to force all non-Christians to accept the state religion. The condition for "conversion," of course, made it easy for the pagan population of Rome and elsewhere to "accept" 'Christianity.' Since "acceptance" of 'Christianity' was made simple, refusal was made difficult. This plan resulted in large numbers of the heathen population within the empire to flock into the membership of the church. These people bought with them many pagan practices and celebrations, Halloween merely being one of them.

How could the church deal with this problem? The church realized that to excommunicate these pagans would only reduce the membership of the church. This they were unwilling to do. The church had also learned in past times that it was not possible to force the people into discarding all their heathen practices and adopting Roman ones.

There remained only one other way.

It was reasoned that if a pagan practice of festival could not be forbidden, let it be "Christianized." Let the recently converted pagans keep certain of their heathen festivals, such as Halloween or All Souls' Day -- but label it "Christian." Of course they were asked not to pray to their ancient pagan gods on this day. They would now use this day to commemorate the death of "saints."

"In the A.D. 800's the (Catholic) church established All Saints' Day on November 1 so that people could continue a festival they had celebrated before becoming Christians. The mass that was said on this day was called Allhallowmas. The evening before became known as All Hallow e'en or Halloween... It means hallowed or holy evening."<sup>11</sup>

"The celebration of Halloween is a survival of ancient pagan beliefs. When the early (Catholic) church was unable to stop pagan practices, it accepted them and gave them a religious tune."<sup>12</sup>

Halloween Today

Most of the ancient symbols and traditions of Halloween still exist today. Youngsters still dress in costume and go trick-or-treating: begging in a sense, for food while promising to refrain from evil deeds. And, too, they still

(Continued on Page 11, Col. 1)



## MY IMPRESSIONS

I loved the preaching and fellowship. It should have lasted longer.

Ken Boswell, Waynesboro, PA  
\*\*\*\*\*

Best messages ever. I took a lot of notes and Scriptures. I look forward to looking up the Scriptures, studying my notes and meditating upon the sermons in my quiet times. On your schedules try allowing more margin space for notes. Thank you Calvary for everything you have done. You have made our visit very special and long to be remembered.

Anon.  
\*\*\*\*\*

The time has been spiritually refreshing, with much learning. My own position in many doctrines have been reinforced, and I have been encouraged to continue in the wonderful service of our great God. May God richly reward Brother Wilson and the Calvary Baptist Church for their labour of love in their 33rd Annual Bible Conference. I look forward to many more, if the Lord does not return soon.

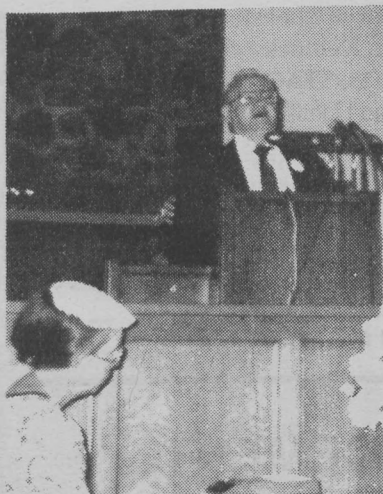
John Pruitt, Griffin, GA  
\*\*\*\*\*

The fellowship with God's people has only been surpassed by the excellent preaching. Brother Joe has again aligned the right speakers with the right messages. The hospitality of Calvary Baptist Church continues to be a major reason this conference is one of the most successful in the country among our type of churches. I feel that there was an exceptional spirit of love and unity among all the people. And it was good to see some brethren I had not seen in over 15 years. This was the second time I have attended this conference but by God's grace I'll return annually until He returns in the clouds of glory to take us home!

Anon.  
\*\*\*\*\*

I always look forward to coming to a conference because it uplifts and strengthens me in the Word. It's like a few months worth of preaching at your home church, condensed into a few days. It's great. The host pastor is OK too.

Lonie Moore, Appalachia, VA



Joe Wilson sings a special.

## HALLOWEEN

(Continued from Page 10)

light their candles, although much smaller than a torch, and place them inside their pumpkins.

"...It is the one night of the year in which a child experiences the emotion of fear, fantasy and



Singing in the park.



Sam Wilson preaches in park service.



Our own Rhoda Smith sings for us.



Eldon Joslin brings a fine message.

mystery."13

In advising on what to do on Halloween, The Good Housekeeping Book of Entertainment says: "Orange, black and red, the devil's colors, are the colors associated with Halloween, and this scheme should be carried out as far as possible... Have paper streamers and lanterns hanging from the ceiling, or if you would like to have something less usual, you could make a giant spider web with black and orange strings, or in narrow strips of crepe paper coming from the four corners of the room, complete with a large spider -- one of the devil's followers."14

Inconsistency of Professing Christians

Bible-believing Christians crying and shudder at the thought of Satan worship and occult rites. But how many of these same people will dress their children as witches, ghosts, skeletons, or

devils and send them out to "trick-or-treat"? How many smile approvingly at the church or Sunday School and youth organizations that have Halloween parties and sponsor "haunted house" activities?

Can any Christian give any scriptural -- or even logical -- reason for participation in, or approval of, that which is unmistakably associated with paganism, devil-worship, and witchcraft?

God's People Governed By the Scriptures

The 18th chapter of the book of Deuteronomy, (vv. 10-13) very explicitly forbids Christians to have anything to do with witchcraft, spiritism or the demonic. In verse 10 of that chapter we read: "There shall not be found among you anyone that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire (this has reference to the worship of the

pagan god Moloch which was state worship), or that useth divination (a false and pagan counterpart of prophecy; the art or act of foretelling secret knowledge, especially of the future), or an observer of times (astrology), or an enchanter (to cast under a spell; charm; enrapture; to chant (magic words), or a witch (divinations in connection with the worship of idolatrous and demoniacal powers), or a charmer (a fabricator of material charms or amulets to be worn especially around the neck, as a charm against evil or injury), or a consultant with evil spirits (an inquirer by a familiar spirit), or a wizard (a false prophet, especially a conjurer. One who summons a devil by oath, incantation or magic spell), or a necromancer (one who in one form or another seeks to find information by consulting the dead).

"Thou shalt not learn to do after their abominations..." (Deuteronomy 18:9). Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 19:31).

It is obvious that the elements, symbols, and traditions of the Halloween observance with its emphasis upon goblins and demons, witches and skeletons, ghosts and apparitions rising from cemeteries constitute a dabbling with the very things which Scripture forbids to God's people and are an open invitation to demonic activity.

It is at this point that many will say, "But we don't worship demons on Halloween. It doesn't mean the same thing today as it did in the past. It's now just a harmless, innocent time of fun for the children and the young people."

Yet, history clearly shows that Halloween is unmistakably a "religious" (pagan and Roman) holiday. Religion is the adoration, obedience, and service rendered to the object of one's worship. It presupposes profession, practice, or observance of whatever belief and practice -- in his case Halloween -- as required by some superior authority. It is indisputably clear that Halloween is not commanded or sanctioned by Jehovah God -- the true Christian's Superior. Authority -- in the Scriptures.

"Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

"And many that believed came and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men" (Acts 19:18, 19).

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

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## THE TRUE CHURCH

By Raford Herrin

"I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

In John 18:38 Pilate asked, "What is truth?" While praying to the Father in John 17:17 Jesus said, "Thy word is truth," this answers the question!

Many are asking for the truth about the church. Is the true church, that Jesus built, in the world today? The answer is yes, the true church is in the world today. Our text assures us that the church cannot die; not can the unseen world have power to overcome it. "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The true church had its origin with God. Jesus set up the church during His ministry and for the first time, it became a visible reality to the world. The devil has tried hard to duplicate the church with many organizations, to confuse as many as possible, in identifying the true church.

The true church was given divine authority to do God's work. In Matt. 18:17-18 we are taught to recognize the church as God's authority. All other religious organizations are impostors, masquerading as the true church, deceiving the unlearned; for all men do not have faith. There are those that Paul spoke of, "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:3-4). Apostasy can easily be seen everywhere; however, the truth remains the same, the true church is yet on earth.

The true church started her work with Christ. The commission was given to His followers in Matt. 28: 16-20. It is the same work that John was commissioned to do; the only difference, John was sent to the Nation of Israel, the church is to go to the whole world. The church is a Baptist, even as John was a Baptist; because of the divine commission.

After Jesus Christ ascended to the Father, He sent the Holy Ghost to enable the church to do God's work on earth. Pentecost was not the beginning of the church, nor the beginning of her work, but it was the coming of the Holy Ghost to lead and empower the church in doing God's work.

The true church is Jesus Christ's bride; which is now being prepared for His return. Paul wrote to the Corinthians and said, "I have espoused you as a chaste virgin to Christ." Again in Ephesians he said, (Continued on Page 12, Col. 1)

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THE TRUE

(Continued from Page 11)

"Christ also loved the church and have Himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:25-27).

It will not be long until the Lord will come in the air and get the church as well as all saved people. There will be a wedding in Heaven. This is the sanctioning of the union of Christ and His church, which will never be separated. When He comes as Lord of Lords and King of Kings the church will come with Him. When He sits on His Throne, the church will sit with Him. In Rev. 3:21 John writing to the churches, recorded the words of Christ to say, "To Him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in throne; even as I also overcome, and set down with my Father in His throne."

Make sure you are a member of the true church, a local New Testament Church! When you are saved, you are born into the family of God; you are a member of the Kingdom of God, but you are not a member of the church until you have scriptural baptism. God adds to the church. (Acts 2:37-47). Jesus Christ saves; He died to save, He lives to save. Receive Him by faith, Today! Now! then follow Him in scriptural baptism to become a member of the true church.

Scriptural baptism can be ministered only by a New Testament Baptist Church that has an unbroken heritage from Christ.

copied from "Door-Step Evangel"

Concerning the character of God, what gross mistakes men make! I believe it is a mistake about God Himself which has been the root and foundation of all the mistakes in theology. My conviction is that the free-will theology of today makes God to be less than He is. The professors of that system have come to receive its doctrines because they have not a clear understanding either of the omnipotence, the immutability, or the sovereignty of God. God has an absolute RIGHT to do what He will, with whom He will, when He will. He has the POWER also to accomplish that will and the RANSOM which enables Him to be true to His character in carrying out that will. When Almighty God comes to the soul of man in grace, none can stay His hand. The beauty is that the enemy's power is broken, and the sinner is made willing. Satan cannot stay the conquering hand of Jehovah, and the sinner wants to be conquered.

To see the holiness and mercy, the righteousness and grace, the justice and love of God in Christ, rising like a mighty sun, will put an end to the darkness and confusion of will-worship and modern fundamentalism. What will your God do? How will your God do what He does? TELL ME WHO HE IS! If He is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient and dwells in the heavens, He will do what He pleases. If He is less than this, He must wait to see what you will do. But the subdued king in Daniel 4:35 declared, "He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand or say unto Him, what doest Thou?"

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The Philadelphia Baptist Church of Birmingham, pastored by Eldon Joslin, has authorized a mission work in Columbus, Miss. The mission is called The Friendly Baptist Mission. Elder Samuel West has been called as mission pastor, and has accepted the call.

Brother Samuel says that the mission is in agreement with the doctrines of grace and church truth as taught by the authorizing church, by Calvary Baptist Church, and printed in The Baptist Examiner. Hence, this is a sound work. Brother West has been associated with and supportive of The Baptist Examiner for many years.

Brother West tells me that the mission members are attending faithfully, and that they have had many visitors.

For any information concerning this mission, call Virgil Blalock at (601) 328-5091, or Julian Johnson at (205) 658-2233. I am sure that any of our readers in this area would be blessed by attending services at this mission. Pray for Brother West and this mission.