

NO BIBLICAL REASON FOR THE SEASON

by Elder Merrel E. Kaley

Text: Luke 2:1-20. Please read.

In our text we see set forth in order by Dr. Luke, the account of our dear Savior's birth. Also, in Matthew chapter two, is the only other recorded account in the whole of the New Testament re-



Merrel Kaley

garding this event. Before us is an extremely popular time of the year, known as "the Christmas season" or "the holiday season."

If indeed there could be any basis for this pagan holiday it is that which is conjured up by the Papists, the uniformed, the ignorant and/or the commercial business establishments of this world system. Why? to prey upon the sentimentality of those mentioned above.

Several weeks ago it was announced in our local newspaper that a well known pastor in this area would be preaching a sermon entitled: "The Reason For the

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AFTER DEATH, WHAT?

By Waldo Whiddon

Down through the years it has been my experience to meet different people who have told about experiences they have had, or say they had, in a death, or



Waldo Whiddon

near death experience. Some say they had a sensation of peace. Others heard sounds. Others say they were drawn toward a great light pulsating with personality. Others say they were met by loved ones who were long passed on from this life. Whether these

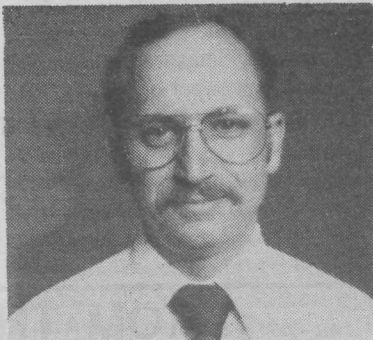
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THE TASK OF KEEPING THE HEART Part IV

Proverbs 4:23,
Ephesians 6:10-18
Baptist Church
by John Pruitt

In keeping with the theme, I will repeat the one very simple statement that I made in the in-



John Pruitt

roduction to the previous lesson, that "the keeping of the heart is indeed a great task." But from what and from whom are we to keep our heart? If we are to diligently keep it as we are instructed, then we must needs answer these questions. First, we must guard against the abiding flesh. The old, depraved will is determined to have its way. Without the keeping of our hearts, it will overpower us and go about the business of sin. That is what the Apostle Paul is talking about in Romans 7:14-23. It is like the little boy who kept wanting to stand up to eat. The old sinful flesh keeps want-

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HOW TO WIN SOULS FOR CHRIST, PART II

by Charles H. Spurgeon

Still, dear open air preachers, and all of you Christian people here, we have not only to be witnesses and pleaders, but we have also to be examples. One of the most successful ways of taking wild ducks is the use of the decoy bird. The decoy duck enters the net itself, and the others follow it. We need to use more, in the Christian church, the holy art of decoy; that is to say, our example, in ourselves coming to Christ, in ourselves living godly lives in the midst of a perverse generation, our example in all manner of gracious ways will be the means of inducing others to

enter the way of life. You cannot, of course, stand up in the street,



C.H. Spurgeon

and tell of your example; but there is no street preacher who is not known better than he thinks. Some one in that crowd may be in the secret of the speaker's private life. I once heard of an out-of-doors preacher, to whom a hearer cried out, "Ah, Jack, you dare not preach like that at your own door!" It so happened, unfortunately, that Mr. John had offered to fight one of his neighbors a little while before, and therefore it was not likely that he would have done much preaching very near home. This made the interruption an awkward one. If any man's life at home is unwor-

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Joseph M. Wilson

TRUE SALVATION: A LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE PART II

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17). This is the second part of a sermon on this vital subject. May I suggest that you first read again the sermon in the last issue.

There are damnable heresies abroad today. Men are teaching that Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 5:5-6, and I Corinthians 6:9-10 refer to truly saved people - and this in spite of what these Scriptures say about the wrath of God coming on such people, and about such people not inheriting the kingdom of God. Men are

teaching that Revelation 22:15 refers to people who will be in eternal heaven; they just will not be in the city. Men are teaching that one can believe in Jesus for salvation while rejecting Him as Lord of their life. They are teaching that a man can believe

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STUDIES IN REVELATION

by Willard Willis

"Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who



Willard Willis

walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks" (Rev. 2:1).

Ephesus was the oldest and the chief city in the province of Asia. You may recall that the Apostle Paul resided in Ephesus for a pe-

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THE BLOOD

H.C. McSwain

"The circulatory life fluid of the body" (from Unger). Blood is the basis of physical life. In the Old Testament Scriptures, the eating of blood was strictly forbidden. This was also carried over in the New Testament (Acts 15:29) "That ye abstain



H.C. McSwain

from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.")

Blood is the sticky, red liquid that oozes from our bodies wherever we scratch or cut through the surface of our skin. Every part of our body depends on the blood for food. The blood in a normal human being weighs a little more than seven pounds for every hundred pounds of body weight. About 250,000,000 of the cells in the blood are destroyed and replaced every day. All the liquid in the human body passes through the blood, and the human body is more than nine-tenths water. Yet

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The Baptist Examiner

Baptist Is Our Middle Name

Paid Circulation in All States and in Many Foreign Countries

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

VOL. 64, NO. 26

ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, DECEMBER 19, 1992

WHOLE NUMBER 2648

The Baptist Examiner

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Office Ph. 606-325-2012
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Owned, authorized and published by Calvary Baptist Church, Ashland, Ky.

Editorial Department, located in ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, where all subscriptions and communications should be sent. Address: P.O. Box 60, Zip Code 41105-0060.

PUBLICATION POLICIES: All matter for publication should be sent to the editor. All manuscripts sent should be typed and double spaced. All such material becomes the property of TBE and will not be returned unless requested by the writer. We reserve the right to edit and condense all materials sent to us for publication. Church news items must reach us one month prior to publication.

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PUBLISHED EVERY 2 WEEKS at 3339 - 13th St., Ashland, Ky., with paid circulation in every state and many foreign countries.

Subscription rates are \$6.00 per year.

PLANNING TO MOVE? - Notify us three weeks in advance. The post office will only forward second class mail for 60 days at no charge to us. After this time the paper is returned to us at a 35 cent charge for each paper returned. Please save us this expense and the post office time.

Second Class Postage paid at Ashland, Kentucky.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Baptist Examiner, P.O. Box 60, Ashland, Kentucky 41105-0060.

TRUE

(Continued from Page 1)

in Jesus, be eternally saved, live just as he always lived, or even live worse than before. These are exceedingly dangerous heresies. They ignore the truth I am preaching in these two articles; the truth that true salvation is a life changing experience. Again, I suggest that you re-read the first article on this.

True salvation is a life changing experience relative to sin. There is Holy Ghost conviction of sin in true salvation. There is a ceasing to deny sin. One is made to confess that he or she is a hell deserving sinner. There is no excusing of sin. One is convicted of his sinfulness as well as of his sins. In true salvation one desires to be saved from his sins. He does not just desire to be saved from hell, though this too is a part of true salvation. The Holy Ghost convicted sinner is not (I said "not") looking for a way he can go on sinning and escape the punishment thereof, but is also looking for salvation from his sins.

There is a new and different attitude as to sin in a truly saved person. He desires to not sin. Sin is a hateful thing to him. He desires to live as clean, pure, and holy as possible. I am not saying that a truly saved person does not sin; I am saying that, even before he commits a sin, he has a different attitude towards sin. When a saved person does sin, it is not the same as with the unsaved. He does not enjoy his sin. He hates it even while doing it. He has the experience Paul de-

scribed in Romans 7:15-25, "what I hate that do I" (v.15). If a man can enjoy sin just as he did before his professed salvation experience, he is not truly saved.

There is a difference in a truly saved person after he does sin. Remember that Peter "went out, and wept bitterly" (Lk.22:62). The truly saved person does not rejoice in his sin, he does not live it over and over with relish and delight, he does not boast to others about his sin;



Joe Wilson

rather he repents of his sin, he weeps over his sin. Oh, my dear reader, there is a difference as to sin when one is truly saved. The saved person will not sin as much, or in the same ways, as before he was saved; or as the unsaved person does. True salvation is a life changing experience relative to sin.

True salvation is a life changing experience relative to repentance. There is a new doctrine of repentance abroad today. There are men who say, who teach blatantly and openly, that one does not have to repent of sins in order to be saved. I know you might find this hard to believe, but I can sell you books, or give you quotes from men who say this. One of them said that teaching repentance of sin as necessary to salvation is as bad as Roman Catholicism. These men are highly respected men. These men are in high and influential places in Christian circles. There is a new monthly publication that teaches this. There is a commentary in the making that will be teaching the things I oppose in these articles.

This new repentance teaches that the only repentance necessary to salvation is to change your mind about Jesus Christ. You have been rejecting Him. Just change your mind and accept Him as your Saviour. Never mind about sin. Don't be overly concerned about sin. You don't have to repent of sin to be saved. You don't have to turn from sin to be saved. You can be saved and go on sinning as before.

I heard one preacher say that he would not tell two people who were "shacking up" that they would have to stop this if they were saved. One preacher makes much of Jesus not telling the woman of Samaria that she would have to give up her life of sin with men in order to be saved. I assure you that, had she continued living like that, it would have proved she had never been saved. Jesus surely did tell the adulterous woman in John 8:1-11, to "go, and sin no more" (v.11).

This is a "new" repentance. It is a new doctrine. It is a doctrine of the Antinomians. It is heresy. It is damnable heresy. It is not the doctrine of repentance that our forefathers preached. It is not the doctrine of repentance that is taught in the Word of God. I tell you again (I know you find it

hard to believe) that men are preaching that one does not have to repent of sin in order to be saved.

True Bible repentance is a change of attitude about sin. The old writers spoke of repentance as a new attitude toward sin in which sins are perceived, sins abhorred, and sins abandoned. Amen! This is what true repentance is. In true salvation one sees his sins, abhors his sins, and turns from his sins. We need to return to an old fashioned, biblical preaching that repentance of sin is essential to true salvation.

True salvation is a life changing experience relative to faith in Jesus Christ. By the working of the Holy Spirit I see my sin, I desire to be saved from my sin, I see a Saviour, the only Saviour, in Jesus Christ; and I trust in Him for my eternal salvation. Oh, what a blessing this is! Oh, what relief, peace, and joy comes immediately upon receiving Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour! Tell me, oh, tell me; how can I really trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and not have a life changing experience? It cannot be done. Receiving Jesus as Lord and Saviour is a life changing experience. If my life has not been changed, I have not yet truly trusted in Jesus Christ for real salvation.

True salvation is a life changing experience relative to love for Jesus Christ. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha" (I Cor. 16:22). True love, even in the natural realm is a life changing experience. A young man and a young woman truly fall in love. Surely, this love has an effect upon their lives. They give up many things, they adopt many things; their lives are changed by their love for one another. Oh, my dear reader, how can I truly love the Lord Jesus Christ without it changing my life? If you do not love the Lord Jesus, you are not saved. If you do love Him, it will have a great effect upon the way you live. You cannot love Jesus and still live as you did before you began to love Him. If you do not love Jesus, you are not saved. If you do love Jesus, you will live differently.

True salvation is a life changing experience relative to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. There are anti-Lordship men abroad today. I heard one of them say, "I hate Lordship." These men are teaching that you can receive Jesus Christ as your Saviour to save you from hell, while not receiving Him as Lord to control your life. They say, in essence, that one can say something like this to Jesus, "Jesus, I take you as my Saviour to save me from hell; but I will not have you telling me what to do; I will live as I please." These men say that, then or later on, you can receive Jesus as Lord. It would be better for you to do this. You would be happier and have more rewards, but you don't have to ever do this; and you will still go to heaven whether or not you ever receive Jesus as your Lord. What a horrible heresy is this! True salvation involves receiving Jesus Christ as Lord; it involves a surrender to Him. You must throw down your arms of rebellion and surrender unconditionally to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, or you have not yet been saved.

True salvation is a life changing experience relative to conversion. "...Except ye be converted...ye shall not enter

into the kingdom of heaven" (Mt.18:3). To be converted is to be turned. Unless you have been turned around, you have not been saved. One must be turned from sin to holiness. "...and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (I Th.1:9). My friend, if you have not turned from the service of Satan and sin to the service of God, you have not yet been saved. If one is not converted he will go to hell. If he is converted, it will truly be a life changing experience. Someone said, "I am not what I ought to be, I am not what I want to be, I am not what I am going to be; but, praise God, I am not what I used to be." That's it. That is a true salvation experience.

True salvation is a life changing experience relative to three biblical figures of the salvation experience. True salvation is a new birth. Understand most

clearly that no one is saved who has not been born again. What is birth? It is the beginning of life. (of course, as to human life, life begins at conception, but independent life outside the womb begins at birth. In spiritual life, there is no distinction and no time lapse between conception and birth). What is the new birth? It is the beginning of a new life. The one who is not living a new and different life, has not yet experienced the new birth.

The true salvation experience is pictured as a new creation (II Cor.5:17). I would ask those who teach the damnable heresies referred to in this article, "What kind of creation is that which does not change anything?" If a man can go on living as he always has, how can we say that he is now a new creature in Christ, or that old things have passed away and all things become new?

The true salvation experience is (Continued on Page 3, Col. 1)

FROM THE EDITOR

"He first findeth his own brother Simon...And he brought him to Jesus..." (Jn. 1: 41,42). What does "first" mean in this Scripture. It may mean that both of the disciples mentioned in v.37 brought their brothers to Jesus, but Andrew brought his brother first. I would almost encourage a holy competition in bringing others to Jesus. Who will be first in my church to bring another to Jesus? Who among us will bring the most to Jesus? This would be a competition in which everyone would win. Remember that I said "almost" in this matter.

"First" may mean that Andrew brought his brother to Jesus first, and then he brought many others to Jesus. This is a wonderful thought. Every believer should try to catch all the fish - win all the souls - he can.

"First" may mean that Andrew made soul winning the first thing in his life. I might ask my reader, what should occupy a higher place in our lives than winning souls to Jesus Christ?

Some of my friends will immediately answer me (some a little critically) that glorifying God should be the first thing in our lives. Well, I will gladly agree with that. Now it is my turn to ask a question: will not winning souls to Jesus Christ bring glory to God? Does not the Shepherd rejoice over each sheep that is found? Are not the doctrines of grace all closely related to winning souls to Christ - in fact is not the salvation of souls what the doctrines of grace are all about? Does not God get glory through the church? Is it not the commission of the church to make disciples among all nations by preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, to baptize them, and to teach them all things, including preaching the gospel to others?

Winning souls to Christ and glorifying God are not two different options of which we must choose the one or the other. Why not choose to glorify God through seeking to win souls to Jesus Christ? Now, I know there are other things involved in glorifying God. But it will become us to talk about how much we are glorifying God by living right and standing for the truth, while we make no effort to win souls to Jesus Christ. I know that living right and standing for the truth are important - who would accuse me of not believing and preaching this? But what about the part of living right which consists of obedience to Jesus Christ in witnessing to the lost? What about standing for the truth of soul winning?

What about being a blessing to others? Is not this the duty of a child of God? Does not God bless us that we might be a blessing to others? What greater blessing can we be to anyone than to bring that one to Jesus Christ? Andrew loved his brother, Peter. He wanted to do something for him. What greater thing could he ever do for his brother than to bring him to Jesus Christ? Do you want to be a blessing to those with whom you come in contact? Do you? Well, tell them the old, old story of Jesus and His love. Nothing could ever be a greater blessing to them.

Andrew brought his brother to Jesus. Oh, we ought to be deeply interested in, and concerned about the salvation of our loved ones. What kind of love does a saved person have for his family who never tries to win them to Jesus Christ? If God has saved you as the only saved in your family, or one of a few who are saved; then God has placed you there that you might be a witness to those in your family who are unsaved.

Parents, seek to win your children to Christ. What can you do for your child that is any more important than this? A saved parent has not fulfilled his duty as a parent until he has earnestly sought to win his children to Christ. What about saved children seeking to win their parents? What about husbands and wives? What about brothers and sisters? Oh, we ought to all be like Andrew and seek to bring our loved ones to Jesus Christ.

Then our heart should grow larger and larger with love. We should reach out with a loving witness to our neighbors, to our fellow workers, to any and all that we have opportunity to tell about Jesus.

Can you do anything greater with your life than to bring others to Jesus? Can you do anything greater for mankind than to bring some of them to Jesus? Can you do anything greater for God than to bring others to Jesus? You answer these questions for yourself; I will answer them for myself, and it may be that we will all have to answer them at the judgment seat of Christ. Yours for souls brought to Jesus. God bless you all.

TRUE

(Continued from Page 2)

pictured as a resurrection from the dead (Eph.2:1,4-6). The physical resurrection of Lazarus is a good illustration of the spiritual resurrection of the sinner in salvation. Is there a very significant difference between death and resurrection? Of course, there is. Is there then not also a great difference between the dead sinner and the way he lives in spiritual death, and the resurrected one who then lives a new and different life? Of course, there is. The men who teach the heresies I am dealing with in this article deny the truth contained in these three figures of the salvation experience: new birth, new creation, and resurrection from the dead. They just absolutely do not believe what the Bible teaches about the salvation experience.

Look at Bible examples of salvation. Zacchaeus did not continue living as he had before. Listen to him, **"Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him four-fold"** (Lk.19:8). See, his life was changed. He was a new creation. He was not the same as before salvation. Note that he calls Jesus, "Lord." The man who does not call Jesus, "Lord" is not a saved man.

Look at Paul. He was a murderous, self righteous, persecuting, religious bigot. After salvation, he became a new man. He became humble, prayerful, holy, and a faithful servant of Jesus Christ. Was not his salvation truly a life changing experience? Who can deny it? Matthew left his place of sinful business and followed Jesus Christ. The woman taken in adultery was told to go and sin no more. My friend, is there an example of true salvation in the Bible in which one's life was not changed? Show me one. You can't do it.

True salvation is a life changing experience. Who can believe any differently? Well, sad to say, some do believe that one can be saved and go to heaven, and never have a life changing experience. I am sure that these men believe that men will live differently in heaven than living a life of sin. Since they do not believe that salvation is necessarily a life changing experience, I wonder what they do believe causes those in heaven to live a different life. Do you suppose they believe that death is that life changing experience that is necessary to heaven? Do they believe that death will do in the live of an individual what salvation does not do? I wonder, I wonder.

True salvation is a life changing experience. Who would want it any other way? A salvation experience that did not change the way a person lives would be so dishonoring to God. I wonder if these men realize how much what they are teaching dishonors God. They believe in a God who saves a man from hell, but lets him go on living as before. It would be a disgrace to the grace of God, it would greatly tarnish the glory of God for such a thing to be true.

Such a thing would defeat the whole purpose of Jesus coming into this world, and rob Him of the glory due Him for the saving work He did. **"...thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins"** (Mt.1:21).

What glory would accrue to Jesus Christ if He saved men, and left them in their sins, left them to live the same as before, or even worse? The heresies I am opposing in this article would disgrace God and place eternal dishonor upon His holy name. God forbid! A Salvation that is not a life changing experience would be unsatisfying to a man. I made a profession of salvation when I was sixteen. Suppose that nothing had changed in my life at that time, or since that time? Suppose that things had continued as before, or even worsened as to my life. What joy could I have? What peace could I have? What assurance could I have? If there had not been a change in me when I thought I experienced salvation, I could have never been convinced that I was truly saved. I had walked into that building many times, and walked out in the same condition. That night; oh, that blessed night when Jesus saved my soul; I walked out a different person. I was not the same person I was when I walked in. I was a new creature in Jesus Christ. And if I had not had that kind of life changing experience, no one could have convinced me I was saved, and I would never have pretended that I was saved. A life changing experience is necessary to satisfy a man that he has been truly saved.

I am about through. I have not exhausted my subject, but I have dealt with it rather thoroughly. I feel sure that most of my readers will agree with what I have written. I feel sure that the vast majority of Christians will agree with me. I write to warn such against these heresies and against the men who teach them. I urge you, especially my preacher friends, to beware of any man who preaches the things I have herein written against. I would urge every reader to avoid, shun, and stay away from those who believe the heresies I have written against. These heresies are exceedingly dangerous, even soul destroying. They will lead many to believe they are saved when they have not had a life changing experience. I do not say that all who believe and teach these things are unsaved, but I do say that these things will lead many to a false profession and a false assurance.

I urge my reader to examine himself by what I have written. Have you had a life changing experience? Are you trusting in a false profession that did not change your way of life? Oh, dear reader, cast such from you, believe it no longer, depend upon it no longer; it will be like a house built upon the sand that will be destroyed in the storm of judgment. Examine yourself by this test: are you different now? Are you a new creation? Do you have different desires? Do you hate sin and love righteousness? Oh, friend, be sure, be sure. Multitudes will be in hell who professed salvation, but who never had a life changing experience. Please read the close to the Sermon on the Mount - that great sermon of our Lord Jesus Christ. Read Matthew 7:21-29 and examine your hope of salvation by those searching words. Genuine salvation can stand examination, only the counterfeit fears the test. God bless you all.

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Season," from the above mentioned text. I asked for and received a cassette copy of that sermon. While I am hardly surprised any more at some of the inane babblings and ramblings of some so-called preachers, this particular man still held in my eyes some measure of respect (you see, he had been my Protestant pastor for ten years). I was treated to twenty-one minutes of rambling sentimental slush without so much as a single Scripture being used.

Finally, Exodus 34:14 was used: **"For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God."** Why? Don't know! Thereafter followed another twelve minutes of defense of the Christmas tree and how the verses of Jeremiah 10:1-5 was really speaking of a totem pole, not a Christmas tree.

Three times in the message, it was set forth that only cults and isms did not celebrate Christmas. And only they (cults and isms) were the ones preaching and distributing literature against the keeping of Christmas or calling it a pagan holiday. Now, I will not bore some of you learned readers by seeking to prove that Jeremiah 10:1-5 is our modern day Christmas tree. For we do certainly know it is not! Still yet, can any deny the very striking similarity? And were they that did such told not to do as the heathen do? Certainly Christians should not mimic the ways of the heathen idolators and pagan humanist secularists of this present world system. Shame, shame on you. I fear that many of our Christian friends (even some Baptists) miss the entire point of these Scriptures. Let us for a moment put aside Jeremiah 10:1,3,4 and 5 and concentrate on verse 2a only: **"Thus saith the LORD, learn not the way of the heathen..."** Clearly we have a "thus saith the Lord" here. This pertaining to God's people learning (taking up) the way (customs and traditions) of the ungodly. Yet hand-in-hand and side-by-side, we see even good Baptist people flocking to the Xmas tree lots and carrying home (for they must needs be borne) dying trees, right along beside the ungodly; yea, the haters of God who hold Christ in so little esteem that while shouting drunken (or ignorant) merry Christmas' in one moment, and in the next, using the matchless and dear name of Jesus as a curse word. Wherein are we as believers instructed or commanded to do such? Nay, brethren, we have learned the way of the heathen, and sadly we do delight in it. Let us examine then first:

The Professing Christian's Reasons For the Season!

First they set forth the birth of the baby Jesus as supposedly the main reason. Our text, Luke 2:1-20 is brought before us. But is this the reason? To be sure there was a birth! To be sure it was, or must have been, on a given day--but what day? No one knows, and even the Catholic scholars admit the date of December 25th was not the day and that they know not what day it actually occurred. In point of fact, no scholar has ever been able to ascertain the date of His birth. Why this hidden date? Dare we say as Baptists that our sovereign God forgot to mention the date? God forbid! Or

is it just possible He never intended it to be kept? I prefer the latter. Why? Because always and ever we should seek a "thus saith the Lord" for any and all actions we take as Christians. Where, oh where, are we ever asked, instructed or commanded to keep Christmas? If any good Baptist, or any Christian, or anyone, can show me a single Scripture in the Old or New Testament advocating such, I will forthwith send him a \$100 bill. Believe me, I am in no danger of losing that money!

You, at this point, may ask, "Brother Kaley, why do we need instruction from God to do this?" Where indeed is the precedent for such? Let us hear God in the matter: II Timothy 3:16, **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."** Now remember, when these words were penned by Paul to the beloved Timothy, the New Testament did not yet exist. Timothy's instruction then, came from Old Testament teaching. What can we learn from this?

1. All Scripture is profitable for instruction!

2. We may look to the Old Testament for examples of doctrine in what is called types or typeology. Let's look at Genesis 2:1-3: **"THUS the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."** Here we see that God blessed and set aside (sanctified) a certain day! Let's amplify on this. Please read Exodus 16:23-30. Herein we find God not only sets the seventh day aside, but gives explicit instructions on how it is to be kept! Again let us look at Exodus 12:40-50. In these verses we find the instituting of the Passover as a year by year observance. Verse 42 states: **"It is a night to be much observed..."** In verse 43 we see a "thus saith the Lord." Please note: **"And the LORD said unto Moses and Aaron, this is the ordinance of the passover: There shall no stranger eat thereof."** In the 50th verse a command was given: **"Thus did all the children of Israel; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so did they."**

Can there be any doubt that God's example has always been that whatsoever special day/days (Sabbath) or (Passover) that was to be kept--was carefully given commandment by God as to when, where and exactly how it was to be kept? Wherein can a comparison to keep Christmas be found? Where is the date? The commandment? The manner in which it is to be observed? I fear that Christians, indeed many Baptists, have made an ordinance out of the Roman Catholic date of December 25th, with no commandment or instruction or "thus saith the Lord," for such. This is a terrible and fearsome and, yes, wicked thing.

Jeremiah 5:30,31: **"A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by**

their means: and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" Indeed, what will be the end of this pagan nightmare; this nightmare known as Christmas? Have we not seen some of its end? Drunkenness, reveling, office parties and their attendant sexual promiscuousness? At the same party given in the name of Jesus' birth, is not His lovely name bandied about in the vilest of terms? The same man who will decorate his Xmas tree, his home, and wish all a merry Christmas will in the same breath slam his door in the face of a pastor or Christian worker coming to his home to share this same Christ by means of the gospel. Indeed, Christmas causes strange bedfellows.

The same ungodly sinner who gets so excited about Christmas will not, and has no interest in, keeping the Sabbath or Lord's Day (first day of the week-Sunday) which God has plainly put as a commandment.

On the same cassette tape (the fellow's name was E. John Gillis) mentioned earlier, the male choir director is heard to say: **"The singing of our cantata is based on Matthew 2:1-11 where gifts were given. Indeed this is the basis of our Christmas gift exchanging."** This same man is a graduate of a large, supposedly fundamental, Bible college in Indiana. Yet how woefully ignorant he is of Scripture! Almost all Bible scholars agree that the arrival of the wise men was some two years after the birth of Christ. The Scripture further says in Matthew 2:11 that the gifts were given to Jesus alone. Wherein is gift exchanging found? There was no exchanging or gift giving at Jesus' birth at all! Listen again to Matthew 2:11: **"And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."** Please note, beloved reader, the wise men came to a house, not a stable, to a young child, not a baby. They gave gifts to Jesus. They did not exchange gifts with anyone! All their attention was on the Holy Infant--the King. Not on trees, decorations, lights, mistletoe, holy wreaths, yule logs, nor gift exchanges.

I personally believe the proof that Jesus was about two years old is based on Matthew 2:16: **"Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men."** Now, beloved, please note that Herod ordered the death of two year olds and under, based on his diligent questioning of the wise men concerning when they had first observed the star. It is very obvious by his selection of two year olds and down, that this was the amount of time since they had first seen the birth star.

So then we find that the reason

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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

Are demons and fallen angels the same? If not, where did the demons originate?

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Matthew 25:41; "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."

I believe that demons and fallen angels are the same. I guess I could just stop there, but I will spend a little space talking about demons and their origin. Let me first mention a few wrong theories concerning demons.

Some, though certainly not Bible believing people, believe that demons are superstitious names for certain natural diseases. This is wrong because it denies the real and personal existence and evil forces of demons. Secondly, some believe that demons are the wicked spirit of men already deceased. This is just a theory and has absolutely no biblical backing at all. The biblical view is that the soul is separated and being tortured in hell (Lk. 16:19-26). Thirdly, there is the view that demons are spirits of a pre-Adamic race. I reject this theory because it teaches the gap theory and I oppose the gap theory. We also know of no accurate evidence that there was a pre-Adamic race of people. If so, then what were they? Did they have souls that will be eternally saved or doomed? This theory leaves far too much to mere speculation. The fourth theory is that demons are the offspring of angels and women. This theory is based upon Genesis 6. I personally do believe that the "sons of God" in Genesis 6 were fallen angels. I believe it was an attempt of Satan to destroy the seed from which he knew Christ was to come. However, I see no evidence nor implication that these would become demons. These are some of the theories that I believe to be false.

Let me take a little time to examine what I believe to be the truth. I believe that demons are indeed fallen angels. We read in the Bible of "the devil and his angels" We read of, "the dragon...and his angels." We find from this that demons have a similar relation to Satan. We also note that angels and demons have a similar essence of being, in that they are both designated as spirits. We also note that angels and demons have similar activities. Both good and bad angels, or demons have influence over men. I think there is sufficient

Bible backing to say that demons are indeed fallen angels. God forbid that we ever underestimate their power. May God bless you all.

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Demons and fallen angels are the same. I find no evidence of a third kind of creature in the Scriptures. When Satan was cast out of heaven and the presence of the angelic creatures who had followed him were cast out with him. Lucifer the anointed cherub (Ezekiel 28:14) is identified by many different names and titles in the Scriptures; Satan, devil, prince of the world John 12:31; John 14:30. Beelzebub, Matthew 12:27; the Wicked One, Matthew 13:19, II Thes. 2:8; Apollyon or Destroyer, Rev. 9:11 are names for the diabolic inventor. His workers, the fallen angels, have many names also, such as evil spirits, devils, and demons.

These evil angelic creatures are everywhere in the world. They are able to enter both man and beast. In Matthew 8:28-34 you will find the record stating that the Lord Jesus cast demons out of a man into a herd of pigs. I suggest that you get a Naves Topical Bible and do some research on the subject. You will find it very interesting and helpful. You will find references to the many activities involving these evil ones. Also you will learn their final fate in eternity hell. Thank you for your question.

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"So the devils (demons) besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine" (Matt. 8:31).

There is much speculation as to the origin of demons. One theory is based upon the "gap" theory of Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. This theory being that after God created the heavens and the earth as told in verse 1, some great catastrophe took place as a result of God's judgment of the sin of angels and that of supposed pre-Adamic race of men. Some who hold to this theory maintain that demons are the souls of the supposed pre-Adamic men.

Another theory is based upon the theory that "the sons of

God" of Genesis 6 were fallen angels, who married "the daughters of men," thereby producing children who were part human and part angelic. Some who hold to this theory believe that the demons are the souls of those mongrel creatures who were the offspring of the fallen angels and the "daughters of men."

Even if either the "gap" of Genesis 1:1 and 1:2 and that of the fallen angel theory of Genesis were true (I do not believe in either), there is no Scriptural proof that the souls of men or part men even became demons, but upon death the souls of men wait for the judgment. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27).

I believe that demons are fallen angels. All the angels were created perfect, including Lucifer (Job. 36:7; Eze. 28:15). But when Satan rebelled against God he took with him a great multitude of the angels. (Eze. 28:18; Rev. 12:4). I believe the fallen angels are the demons because they are referred to as angels. We read, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mat. 25:41). In Matthew 12:24 Satan is referred to as "Beelzebub the prince (ruler) 'of the devils' (demons)". Angels are referred to as "spirits." Demons are also called spirits, "unclean spirits" (Lk. 11:19-26), "evil spirits" (Lk. 8:2). I believe a study of the Scripture concerning the activity of the fallen angels and that of demons will show that they are the same. I believe that demons are the angels who fell with Satan and are now under his control and aid him in his warfare against God and man.

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for this holiday season cannot be because of the birth because:

1. We have no command, instruction or "thus saith the Lord" for it, or to do so.

2. It cannot be because of the wise men and gift giving at his birth-they were not there! They arrived much too late! and when they did arrive (two years later) there was no gift exchanging, only gift-giving to a king, King Jesus.

Why then has this date become so popular and widespread? I believe it is inspired of and by Satan, that great enemy of Christ and His people. The appearance and steadily growing influence of Santa Claus is a case in point. Here an overweight, smiling, red outfitted man has stolen the supposed spotlight of the supposed birth of Christ. He calls the attention of children away from, not towards, the Lord. Further he is given attributes only our God possesses. He knows all about us, knows if we've been good or

bad, knows when we wake or are asleep. He can traverse the entire earth in a single evening, fly anywhere and cause reindeer to be able to fly also. While his bag of gifts is only slightly larger than he, still yet it never runs dry until the last child has been delivered to. This is much like the Lord's miracle of the loaves and the fishes. All this, to steal what little honor this holiday might have given to Christ if it were proper, which it is not. All of this is revealed later to be a giant lie. We lie to our children and call it harmless fun.

Our crafty, wily enemy is indeed clever. To set forth a day brought about by the Roman Catholic murderers of the saints, the bringing into our homes of a similitude of the old mystery Babylon in their idol worship by the installation of living trees decorated strikingly like the one of Jeremiah 10:1-5. The decorations of eye-catching lights on homes and trees, even in places of business (including bars and night clubs). Tinsel mixed with greed becomes the watchword. Daddies actually robbing and stealing from others that they might have a nice Christmas for their children!

I have heard of mothers who have sold their bodies rather than have their children go without a nice Christmas! What abomination we have encouraged and let ourselves become a party to! What is the charge of the Lord to them that do such? Luke 16:15: "And he said unto them, (the religious folk) ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." Is there any holiday more highly esteemed among men? Matthew 15:8,9 speaks clearly of our Lord's feelings: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." And the crushing charge: Jeremiah 5:31, "...And my people love to have it so..." The great Apostle Paul, the elder statesman of the faith, expresses his fear of such; Galatians 4:10,11: "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain."

In conclusion, let me say this; Christmas is not for those who love God. Even its date is hidden that we might not know it. We, as believers, Baptists at that, need no special day to remember Him, nor His birth, we are reminded as we study His Word and as we remember Him in our communion services. I humbly and prayerfully ask that you might consider that indeed there is no Biblical reason for the season. Let us therefore put away from ourselves these vain traditions of men, and love and serve Him; whom to know aright is life eternal. May God bless you is my sincere prayer.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS PRAY FOR US

THE TASK

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ing to stand up. Secondly, we are admonished to keep the heart from the fiery missiles of the wicked one. He wants to put God's people out of commission and destroy their testimony.

The devil is our arch enemy, yet he is invisible. (Ephesians 6:12). It is very hard to fight against something that cannot be seen. Therefore, we must put on spiritual armor in order to protect and defend both ourselves and truth, that is - spiritual truth. If spiritual truth is not defended and protected, the child of God will have nothing whereupon to hang his/her faith. All faith, whether carnal or spiritual, must be based upon a presumption of truth. Do you trust your bank? Do you trust your doctor? Do you trust your husband/wife? Do you trust your parents? It is the same with spiritual faith. Paul said concerning this very thought "I

know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he, (God) is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." The armor of God protects us against old Satan's temptations unto sin and helps us to defend the truth upon which our faith rests.

The first piece of armor, by the way, happens to be the girdle or belt of truth. Before we study the girdle of truth, we should look at another very important word in this passage.

You will notice the word "stand" is used three times and the word "withstand" one time. Verse 11 tells us to "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." The thought here is to not be knocked down by the deceitful strategies of the devil. How many Christians have been knocked down and their faith lost in the dust because they found themselves facing temptation without the whole armor of God? How many times has this happened to you?

The second time the word "stand" is used is in verse 13; "...and having done all, to stand." In verse 11 we are told to "put on the whole armor of God." That is, put it on as our protection and defense. In verse 13 we are admonished to "take unto" us "the whole armor of God." "Take unto" indicated ownership. We must make this spiritual armor our very own. Each piece will be custom made and tailored to fit. It will be conformed and molded to us, so as to get the full benefit from it. David could not use Saul's armor because it did not fit and had not been proved.

This word "stand" therefore means (1) that we have made full preparation... "having done all, to stand." We have tested the strength and effectiveness of the armor, and we have proven our ability to wear it. David, when he would face Goliath, had not proven (trained for the use of) Saul's armor. To face that giant in such a way would have meant agonizing defeat. On the other hand, the armor of God proved to be all sufficient for the battle, and David overcame the enemy of truth and righteousness. How many times have you attempted

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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

Read I Corinthians 14:34-35. Does a woman disobey this by:

1. Joining in "responsive reading? 2. Joining in congregational singing? 3. Singing specials? All this applies to the church service.

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The writer of this verse is the same writer of I Timothy 2:12 which says, "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." Of course the Holy Spirit inspired him to write these verses. After thirty years of study and preaching on this subject, I take the position that the Bible, the Word of God, is teaching here that women are not to usurp authority over men in the church. In a service where men are present, they are to let men do the preaching, teaching, and praying. I use the word let loosely. Women have no right to let, the men are to take complete control of church services. Funk and Wagnalls Dictionary reads, "Usurp means to seize and hold the office, right, or powers of another, without right or legal authority; take position of by force; to practice usurpation: with on or whom." Many churches have been taken over by women to the extent that preachers yield to them like many hen-pecked husbands.

Some churches call on women to pray, but the Bible says in I Timothy 2:8, "I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." But you might wonder what the Bible means in I Corinthians 11:5, "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven." The woman can pray silently as did Hannah in I Samuel 1:13, "Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken." God is not hard of hearing and the only reason a woman wants to pray aloud is to be heard of man. If a woman prophesies, she had better be sure that she is led of God, for this is the only reason for her to speak in the church.

Does a woman disobey I Corinthians 14:34-35 by joining in responsive reading? Joining in congregational singing? Singing specials? First of all, in responsive reading, she is not usurping authority over the man. The same goes for congregational singing. Some question a woman singing specials. We, the New Testament

Baptist Church in Bristol, Tennessee permit and enjoy Christian women singing specials as long as they do not give a testimony or announce the song. If we use a quarter we ask a male member of the group to introduce them and announce their songs. If there is no men, I will do it.

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"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church" (I Cor 14:34-35). The restriction that these verses emphasize is that of speaking in the church. There are two direct statements made that will prohibit a woman from speaking in the church. They are "not permitted to speak" and "a shame for them to speak". The word permitted is translated from the Greek word allowed. They are not allowed to speak. If it is not allowed, and it is a shame; they break the subjection they are under and they also break the law when they speak in church. If a responsive reading is singing, and in my opinion it is not, they do not disobey in this matter either. But, if it is speaking, then they disobey by joining in a responsive reading.

Since there is no restriction placed on singing in these verses, or by any other Scripture; it would be my conclusion that a woman does not disobey by joining in congregational singing or by the singing of a special. There are a number of places in the New Testament that encourage singing. In some, singing may be expressed inwardly. "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph. 5:19). In others the expression may come in a group. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3:16). These verses are not explicit as to whether or not the singing is done in church, but

there is also no restriction from women participating.

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We are instructed in God's Word to study. It is due to the lack of studying of and reading of God's Word, that so many fail to see the importance of obeying this Scripture or to understand it's meaning. The Scriptures say, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). Therefore, we are to study so that we would be able to learn the meaning of such Scriptures. We are to study also that we may learn the meaning of the words in the text. In I Cor. 14:34, "...for it is not permitted unto them to speak;..." The word "speak" in this place means a continuing to do so. But not only are the women not to make a speech, they are to be under obedience and to be quiet. This obedience includes being under subjection to their husbands. "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord" (Eph. 5:22). This obedience is not only to their husbands, but to the church, that the Word of God be not blasphemed. (Titus 2:5). This obedience is unto the Lord (Eph. 5:22).

The woman is to learn in silence relative to teaching or preaching in the assembly. "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection" (I Tim. 2:11).

Then again, God's Word says, "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (I Tim. 2:12). The word "suffer" in this verse means to allow, to bear, or permit, or tolerate. Putting it this way, Paul is saying, I will not tolerate a woman to teach a man. The word "usurp" in the above verse, means to hold possession or position without the right to do so. That is, the woman is not to take the ruling position over the man.

Where did Paul get all this? He received it from the Lord by inspiration (II Tim 3:16). Whether I or anyone agrees with the Scriptural teaching of the woman's place in the church, is beside the point; it is the instruction of God's Word.

Let us read further, "Unto the woman he said, I will

greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Genesis 3:16). It is not that men and women can't read; it is that they are not obedient to what they do read. Those who are disobedient to the Word of God will give an account to God.

I do not believe that a woman disobeys the Scripture referred to, by joining in "responsive reading." But I am not sure that I agree that "responsive reading" is right. Congregational singing is common worship and is something that all can take part in. Since all the assembly can join in this, it is not wrong for the woman to sing. Nor does she usurp the authority of the man when she sings specials. After all, singing is not speaking as referred to in I Corinthians 14:34-35.

As to a woman asking her husband at home, some women say that they do not have a husband. If this is the case, this does not give them the right to speak in the assembly, for she is to learn in silence.

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I Cor. 14:34, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law." I Cor. 14:35, "And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." I Tim. 2:12, "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."

I have referenced another verse that yields more concerning these instructions to women in the church. God's order of authority makes man the head of the woman.

I Cor. 11:3, "But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."

Thus the instructions in I Timothy 2:12 are given to discourage women from usurping that authority, by teaching or preaching to men in the church. Prohibitions from speaking are intended here, or talking. The Greek word "laleo" was correctly translated "speak" "Humneo" or "Psallo" in the Greek mean sing. I find no disapproval in Scripture concerning women singing in the church services. The instructions are dealing with speaking or preaching, and teaching men.

I think we must use some discernment here. If a woman in the church was to sing with the intention of teaching and usurping man's authority (instead of glorifying God) such action would be in violation of these principles. This should not be allowed.

The women are to teach one another, young women and children. The Scripture is teaching us the order of authority as referred to in I Corinthians 11:3.

THE TASK

(Continued from Page 4)

to face problems and situations without first seeking the Word of God through prayer for the will of God to lead you and the faith of God to sustain you? Was it yesterday or the day before? Is that where you are right now? (2) "Having done all, to stand." We are to stand fast, hold our place and never retreat. Without the spiritual armor of God, this is not possible. But with the whole armor of God, it is not only possible, but a reality.

God never gave us a plan that would not work. I am satisfied that God gave David the plan that he used against old Goliath. Notice that David's defense depended on six, yea, even seven things. One sling, five, smooth stones, and a shepherds pouch. The armor of God consists of seven things that we shall study if the Lord is pleased to grant us this grace.

You will notice the word "withstand" is used in verse 13. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day..."

The Christian soldier, having on the full/whole armor of God will be able to endure even the most powerful ammunition that Satan has. Verse 16 mentions "fiery darts". The armies of that day used a huge launching device to shoot great heavy spears with fiery tips into the enemy camp or to break down a barricade. Today we use guided missiles, long range artillery, and smart bombs. And so does old Satan. Without the whole armor of God there is simply no way to endure the evil bombardment of temptation and sin.

We will take up the third use of the word "stand" when we begin to study the armor piece by piece.

Beloved, can you see how important it is to keep your heart, that is, above all keeping? Open your heart and let the Word of God speak to you, that you may be strong in Him.

WHAT IS

(Continued from Page 1)

just go into one of our large department stores, or ten cent stores, during the last few frantic hours of Christmas shopping and see if the sinners don't elbow you just as quickly, and tackle you just as hard as the saints do.

As I meditated upon that question the thought came to me that if I would make a feast everyone would love, I must give everyone what he wanted. If I wanted the Orientals to come to my feast I would serve rice, if I wanted the Italians to be there I would serve spaghetti, for the Russians I

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WHAT IS

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would be sure to serve plenty of vodka. In other words, if I wanted everyone to come and enjoy my feast I must give everyone what he wants. Then the thought came to me that maybe that is just what has happened to Christmas. So I began to search the reference books to see if that were true.

I had to go to the secular books because I was unable to find it in my Bible. It was truly amazing what I found, and what you can find if you will only look for it, concerning the most loved of all seasons of the year. According to the most authentic sources available, and I will even throw in the Catholic reference works because on this point they all agree, there never was a Christmas before the middle of the fourth century, even in Rome. In Jerusalem, it was first observed in the fifth century, and then we are told it caused rioting in the streets.

I searched through at least a dozen of the world's leading reference works on the subject and they all agreed that no one knows the date of Christ's birth, and some of them say we cannot be sure as to the actual year in which He was born. But, in order for the Catholic Church to have a big feast day, it was necessary for some date to be set for His birthday. The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia says that in order for the shepherds to have been out that night with their flocks it would have been necessary for His birth to have occurred sometime between March and September. The Catholic Church, however, could not celebrate Christmas at that time of the year as we shall see later. It must be in December whether there were any shepherds and sheep out that night or not. It became really interesting when I began searching for the reason why it must be in December.

First, however, let us consider some of the things which were put into Christmas to make it so universally loved. In Babylon, that great heathen Chaldean city, pagan religion reached its peak so far as ancient history was concerned. Here in Babylon the queen of heaven and her son had their beginning in the persons of Semeramis and her son, Tammuz. When Belshazzar was slain (Daniel 5:30) and the Chaldeans defeated by Dailus, the Mede, it seems the capital of the pagan religious world was moved from Babylon to Peramos. Later, at the death of Attalus III, Phrygian was given to the Roman Empire in 133 B.C. The Babylonian pagan worship was then removed to Rome where Semeramis and Tammuz became Fortuna and Jupiter. This queen of heaven and her son became the very heart of pagan, or idol worship throughout the world. They were called by different names in different countries. In Egypt they were Isis and Osiris, in India they were Isi and Iswara, in other parts of Asia they were Cybele and Deoius, in Greece they were Ceres and Plutus, but they were all the same queen of heaven and her son. All of these were dumped into Christmas under the new name of Mary and Jesus. This new name

did not affect the pagan people of the world too much, for no matter what you call a dish of tender fried chicken it is still a very tasty dish.

I learned that the more religion the Catholic Church put into Christmas the more popular it became. The world is a great lover of religion so long as the Christ of Calvary and His shed blood are left out of it.

Now with all the ingredients in Christmas, it is time to look for the reason why Christmas must be in December. Even back in ancient Babylon the birth of Tammuz was celebrated in our December. The heathen sun worshippers throughout the northern hemisphere all celebrated the rebirth of the sun at the time of its turning back toward the North, that is about December 25. Tammuz, Osiris, Iswara, Deoius, Plutus and Jupiter were all representatives of the sun in their respective countries. These heathen people had been brought into the Catholic Church, mainly through the efforts of Constantine the great. They were still just as heathen as they were before they were incorporated into the Catholic Church, and they were going to continue celebrating this great feast at this same time. It did not matter too much what their god was called. It was still a representative of their sacred god, the sun. But the time of their feast could not be changed, because the sun starts on his return toward the North at only one time of the year. Even old Satan, with the help of all his able efficient co-workers, could not change the time. Therefore, Christmas had to be December 25, whether the shepherds were out that night with their flocks or not.

As much as the head of the Catholic Church likes to boast of his God-like power and authority, this was one time when he was completely helpless. He had absolutely no choice in the matter. His problem was clear. If he wanted to make good Catholics out of his host of heathens he must give their queen of heaven and their god a Christian name. So Mary and Jesus had to be the name and December 25 had to be the date. Had Bishop Julian, I, been really and truly interested in setting the real date of Christ's birth, the month of December would not have been considered at all, because anyone who is at all familiar with the climatic conditions which prevail in Palestine during the month of December would know there were no shepherds and sheep out in the field at that time of the year.

With Christmas literally loaded down with the world's religion it is easy to see why the world loves Christmas, but we see people observing the feast who should not be lured into the feast of the pagan gods. The Baptists themselves seem to be trying to out-spend, out-shine and out-do the world in the world's own feast. If you ask why they are at this feast, some would unthinkingly say it is because Mary and Jesus are in it. But that statement won't stand when we turn the light of God's Word upon it. Jesus, Himself, said the world hates Him, and He is not a liar. So it is easy to see that if He were in Christmas that would completely ruin it for the world. The world would care no more for Christmas than they do for the church if Christ were really in it. If He could be put in it, I can just see Him plaiting that whip again.

When I see posters which read, "Let's put Christ back in Christmas," I always think of the story of the boy from a backwoods family who went away to college. Upon his return home he wanted to improve the family's grammar, so when his younger brother said pass the lasses, he said don't say lasses, say molasses. His brother retorted, how can I ask for molasses when I ain't had no lasses? So how can we put Christ back in Christmas when He has never been in it? Maybe we should let God tell us why we Baptists are so deeply in love with Christmas. If we read Jeremiah 5:30-31 in our everyday language it says, the preachers preach false things and the priests run things their own way, and my people love to have it so. The Baptist people run after the false gods and false religion connected with Christmas simply because they love it. Why do so many preach false things concerning Christmas when they can find nothing in the Bible, nor in authentic secular history to justify what they teach and preach?

With everybody, including the Baptists, partaking of Christmas, it was time to give it that good old Christmas spirit. You know, that spirit that makes you feel that it is perfectly all right for you to do things you could not afford to do at any other time of the year. If the drunkard refused to drink on Christmas and the harlot became virtuous for the day, we might be able to say this Christmas spirit is the Spirit of Christ. But it is an undeniable fact that untold thousands of people drink at Christmas without any compunction of conscience who would not drink at all any other time of the year. All manner of evil and God-provoking things are done at this season of the year because this is Christmas.

Do you believe it is the Spirit of Christ that causes thousands of people to line up in the saloons of the land at Christmas time who never go near them at any other time? I know there are people who will say that is not the real Christmas spirit, but I wonder if that is not just a weak effort on our part to try to justify our participation in this ungodly thing called Christmas. Certainly it is not the Spirit of Christ that gives us all that freedom at Christmas time, but rather it is the spirit of Saturnalia. In ancient pagan Rome a week of feasting and merry-making was observed in the latter part of December. During this feast everyone, even the slaves, were permitted to do just as they pleased. Things like gambling, etc., which were prohibited at other times, were winked at during Saturnalia. This feast was brought over from ancient pagan Rome by modern pagan Rome and dumped into Christmas to give it that tangy flavor and make people look forward to it with great anticipation.

As you recall, I stated in the beginning that I was unable to find Christmas in my Bible, but after learning a little about this lovely season from other sources, I was able to find quite a lot about it in my Bible. In Jeremiah 7:18 I found that even in His day, some 600 years before Christ was born of the virgin Mary, the children gathered wood, the men kindled the fire, and the women made cakes to the queen of heaven, to provoke God to wrath. In Jeremiah 10:3-5 I learned that the customs of the people in His

day were vain because they went out in the woods with an ax, cut down a tree, took hammer and nails to fasten it upright, and then decorated it with silver and gold. God said it was a vain custom, and vanity is one thing He hates. I must confess that I have done the same thing many times except that I used much cheaper decorations. Christmas, like the groves in Israel, is so beautiful. What could be more beautiful than a Christmas tree with all its decorations and gifts? Surely nothing unless it were the original Christmas trees decorated with silver and gold. But when I think of the beauty of Christmas, I am reminded of the tabernacle. In Exodus 26 we find that all that the world saw was the skins of animals, but on the inside it was overlaid with gold and had all manner of beautiful curtains and hangings. The beauty of the tabernacle was hidden from the world, but not so with Christmas. The beauty of Christmas is on the outside in plain view of everyone, but on the inside are dead men's bones. All manner of drinking, debauchery and unclean living is covered over with the beautiful cloak of Christmas. But in Revelation 17 and 18 we have a ghastly picture of the Catholic Church, including her Christmas and fabulous Christmas trade, which will cause all that weeping and wailing when it is finally cut off (Daniel 9:27), and in Revelation 19:4 Christ says come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

It is not an easy thing to come out of her. No one wants to be a kill-joy or an old Scrooge. Many will say that Christmas has become a part of our American way of life, and that is so true. It has become about as much a part of our way of life as idolatry had in the Jew's way of life in Israel and Judah, and if I remember correctly it took the destruction of their country and enslavement of the Jewish people to tear them away from their idol gods.

If anyone has any evidence to justify our participation in Christmas, please let it be known. I have searched in vain. I have heard that one about it's being handed down to us by our forefathers, but it seems to me that would come under the heading of commandments of men, and Jesus did not sound to complimentary in Matthew 15:9 when He said, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men."

HOLINESS

(Continued from Page 1)

in Him. He is absolute Purity, unsullied even by the shadow of sin. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5). Holiness is the very excellency of the Divine nature: the great God is "glorious in holiness" (Ex. 15:11). Therefore do we read, "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity" (Hab. 1:13). As God's power is the opposite of the native weakness of the creature, as His wisdom is in complete contrast from the least defect of understanding or folly, so His holiness is the very antithesis of all moral blemish or defilement. Of old God appointed singers in Israel "that should praise the

beauty of holiness" (II Chron. 20:21). "Power is God's hand or arm, omniscience His eye, mercy His bowels, eternity His duration, but holiness is His beauty" (S. Charnock). It is this, supremely, which renders Him lovely to those who are delivered from sin's dominion.

A chief emphasis is placed upon this perfection of God. (Continued on Page 7, Col. 1)

ENEMIES OF THE CROSS

by Paul Jackson

"...mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample, for many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross:" (Philippians 3:17-18).

No one has the desire to see another become an enemy of the cross of Christ. Apostle Paul could not think about those who are enemies of the cross without shedding tears of sorrow for the danger each will encounter at the judgment.

What is it to be an enemy of the cross? To be an enemy of the cross is to be an enemy of God. To be an enemy of the cross is to reject the truths that surround the cross. Enemies of the cross love ritual and ceremony but hate worship in Spirit and truth. They love to sing the songs of the pagan season, but hate the songs of redemptive grace. Like those of Philippi, they hold to the Antinomian heresy. This heresy taught men and women to compromise the truth of the Word for the sake of religious unity. Antinomianism is alive and well today. Baptist heritage teaches us that our forefathers did not have ecumenical union with the world. Baptist principles lead men away from the world and its religious concepts. One would be hard-pressed to find Baptist people today who know what Baptists believe. One stated recently that Baptists never did believe those things. I asked, "what things." Baptist institutions and seminaries have led men down the path of Antinomianism for the last century so far that none now know real Baptist principles. They have made enemies of the cross.

Christ sacrificed His all on the cross to redeem His elect children. He loved us before we loved Him. Enemies of the cross make all this of none effect by teaching that spiritually dead men have the power to love God outside of His divine plan and purpose.

Apostle Paul says, "whose God is their belly." Enemies of the cross refuse self-denial. They live in a "satisfy me first" society. Jude said, "...and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage" (Jude 16). A member of one local church in this area was complaining that his pastor has stated many times that he would not unite in marriage any that are divorced, yet when his best tither came to him for his services, he compromised and united this man with his second wife. This preacher was thinking about his "belly".

It is a fact that enemies of the cross will deny Christ and His truth if it is to their advantage. Paul warns us to "mark them".

HOLINESS

(Continued from Page 6)

"God is oftener styled Holy than Almighty, and set forth by this part of His dignity more than by any other. This is more fixed on as an epithet to His name than any other. You never find it expressed 'His mighty name' or 'His wise name', but His great name, and most of all, His holy name. This is the greatest title of honour; in this latter doth the majesty and venerableness of His name appear" (S. Charnock). This perfection, as none other, is solemnly celebrated before the throne of heaven, the seraphim crying, "...Holy holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts..." (Isa. 6:3). God Himself singles out this perfection, "Once have I sworn by my holiness..." (Psa. 89:35). God swears by His "holiness" because that is a fuller expression of Himself than anything else. Therefore we are exhorted, "Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness..." (Psa. 30:4). "This may be said to be a transcendental attribute, that, as it were, runs through the rest, and casts lustre upon them. It is an attribute of attributes" (J. Howe, 1670). Thus we read of "...the beauty of the LORD..." (Psa. 27:4), which is none other than "...the beauties of holiness..." (Psa. 110:3).

"As it seems to challenge an excellency above all His other perfections, so it is the glory of all the rest: as it is the glory of the godhead, so it is the glory of every perfection in the Godhead; as His power is the strength of them, so His holiness is the beauty of them; as all would be weak without almightiness to back them, so all would be uncomely without holiness to adorn them. Should this be sullied, all the rest would lose their honour; as at the same instant the sun should lose its light, it would lose its heat, its strength, its generative and quickening virtue. As sincerity is the lustre of every grace in a Christian, so is purity

the splendour of every attribute in the Godhead. His justice is a holy justice, His wisdom a holy wisdom, His power a 'holy arm' (Psa. 98:1). His truth or promise a 'holy promise' (Psa. 105:42). His name, which signifies all His attributes in conjunction, is holy," (Psa. 103:1)" (S. Charnock).

God's holiness is manifested in His works. "The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works" (Psa. 145:17). Nothing but that which is excellent can proceed from Him. Holiness is the rule of all His actions. At the beginning He pronounced all that He made "very good" (Gen. 1:31), which He could not have done had there been anything imperfect or unholy in them. Man was made "upright" (Eccl. 7:29), in the image and likeness of his Creator. The angels that fell were created holy, for we are told that they "...kept not their first estate..." (Jude 6). Of Satan it is written, "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee" (Ezek. 28:15).

God's holiness is manifested in His law. That law forbids sin in all of its modifications; in its most refined as well as its grossest forms, the intent of the mind as well as the pollution of the body, the secret desire as well as the overt act. Therefore do we read, "...The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Rom. 7:12). Yes, "...the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether" (Psa. 19:8-9).

God's holiness is manifested at the cross. Wondrously and yet most solemnly does the Atonement display God's infinite holiness and abhorrence of sin. How hateful must sin be to God for Him to punish it to its utmost deserts when it was imputed to His Son! Not all the vials of judgment that have or shall be

poured out upon the wicked world, nor the irreversible sentence pronounced against the rebellious demons, nor the groans of the damned creatures, give such a demonstration of God's hatred of sin, as the wrath of God let loose upon His Son. Never did Divine holiness appear more beautiful and lovely than at the time our Saviour's countenance was most marred in the midst of His dying groans. This He Himself acknowledges in Psalm 22. When God had turned His smiling face from Him, and thrust His sharp knife into His heart, which forced that terrible cry from Him, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?...' He adores this perfection -- '...thou art holy...' v. 3" (S. Charnock).

Because God is holy He hates all sin. He loves everything which is in conformity to His laws, and loathes everything which is contrary to it. His Word plainly declares, "...the froward is an abomination to the LORD..." (Prov. 3:32). And again, "The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD..." (Prov. 15:26). It follows, therefore, that He must necessarily punish sin. Sin can no more exist without demanding His punishment than without requiring His hatred of it. God has often forgiven sinners, but He never forgives sin; and the sinner is only forgiven on the ground of another having borne his punishment: for "...without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). Therefore we are told "...The LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth wrath for his enemies" (Nahum 1:2). For one sin God banished our first parents from Eden. For one sin all the posterity of Ham fell under a curse which remains over them to this day. For one sin Moses was excluded from Canaan, Elisha's servant smitten with leprosy, Ananias and Sapphira cut off out of the land of the living.

Herein we find proof for the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. The unregenerate do not really believe in the holiness of God. Their conception of His character is altogether one-sided. They fondly hope that His mercy will override everything else. "...Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself..." (Psa. 50:21) is God's charge against them. They think only of a "god" patterned after their own evil hearts. Hence their continuance in a course of mad folly. Such is the holiness ascribed to the Divine nature and character in Scripture that it clearly demonstrates their superhuman origin. The character attributed to the "gods" of the ancients and of modern heathendom are the very reverse of that immaculate purity which pertains to the true God; an ineffably holy God, who has the utmost abhorrence of all sin, who was never invented by any of Adam's fallen descendants! The fact is that nothing makes more manifest the terrible depravity of man's heart and his enmity against the living God than to have set before him One who is infinitely and immutably holy. His own idea of sin is practically limited to what the world calls "crime." Anything short of that, man palliates as "defects," "mistakes," "infirmities," etc. And even where sin is owned at all,

excuses and extenuations are made for it.

The "god" which the vast majority of professing Christians "love," is looked upon very much like an indulgent old man, who himself has no relish for folly, but leniently winks at the "indiscretions" of youth. But the Word says, "...thou hatest all workers of iniquity" (Psa. 5:5). And again, "...God is angry with the wicked every day" (Psa. 7:11). But men refuse to believe in this God, and gnash their teeth when His hatred of sin is faithfully pressed upon their attention. No, sinful man was no more likely to devise a holy God than to create the lake of fire in which he will be tormented for ever and ever.

Because God is holy, acceptance with Him on the ground of creature doings is utterly impossible. A fallen creature could sooner create a world than produce that which would meet the approval of infinite Purity. Can darkness dwell with light? Can the Immaculate One take pleasure in "filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6)? The best that sinful man brings forth is defiled. A corrupt tree cannot bear good fruit. God would deny Himself, vilify His perfections, were He to account as righteous and holy that which is not so in itself; and nothing is so which has the least stain upon it contrary to the nature of God. But blessed be His name, that which His holiness demanded His grace has provided in Christ Jesus our Lord. Every poor sinner who has fled to him for refuge stands "accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:6). Hallelujah!

Because God is holy the utmost reverence becomes our approaches unto Him. "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him" (Psa. 89:7). Then "Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy" (Psa. 99:5). Yes, "at His footstool, in the lowest posture of humility, prostrate before Him. When Moses would approach unto the burning bush, God said, "...put off thy shoes from off thy feet..." (Ex. 3:5). He is to be served "with fear" (Psa. 2:11). Of Israel His demand was, "...I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified..." (Lev. 10:3). The more our hearts are awed by His ineffable holiness, the more acceptable will be our approaches unto Him.

Because God is holy we should desire to be conformed to Him. His command is, "...Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Peter 1:16). We are not bidden to be omnipotent or omniscient as God is, but we are to be holy, and that "in all manner of conversation" (I Peter 1:15). "This is the prime way of honouring God. We do not so glorify God by elevated admirations, or eloquent expressions, or pompous services for Him, as when we aspire to a conversing with Him with unstained spirits, and live to Him in living like Him" (S. Charnock). Then as God alone is the source and fount of holiness, let us earnestly seek holiness from Him; let our daily prayer be that He may "...sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming

of our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Thess. 5:23).

REVELATION

(Continued from Page 1)

riod of three years. The Apostle John, by all accounts, also lived in Ephesus during the last years of his life. It appears, in fact, that it was from Ephesus that he was banished to the isle of Patmos. Clement of Alexandria has said regarding John: "After the death of the tyrant (Domitian) he returned to Ephesus, from Patmos."

Heathen worship was very deeply entrenched in the city of Ephesus. The extent of the entrenchment can be seen by the fact that the temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the world, was constructed in Ephesus. The temple of Diana became one of the seven wonders of the world because people from throughout Asia contributed to its construction. Women even gave their jewels as the Jewish women had done as a gift in aiding the construction of the Tabernacle. The historical record informs us that the temple of Diana, when finished, "gleamed far off with a star-like radiance." The temple had one hundred and twenty pillars which were made of marble. The doors were carved from cypress-wood. The stairway which led to the roof is said to have been cut out of a single vine of cypress. The temple was full of paintings by the greatest Greek artists. The roof of the temple was made of cedar, supported by columns of jasper, on a basis of Parian marble. You will recall from the Scriptures that it was in Ephesus that thousands, "...all with one voice, about the space of two hours cried out, great is Diana of the Ephesians." It becomes quite obvious as to why John was banished from this city.

Ephesus, humanly speaking, was a great city. Our Lord, however, was not concerned with the greatness of Ephesus, or the greatness of the temple of Diana. Our Lord's concern was for His church which He had established in Ephesus, the church for which He had died. This same truth applies to our day in that the Lord's greatest concern is not for a particular city, but for His church which is located in that city. Our Lord, in fact, did not give His life for a city, but for His church (Ephesians 5:25).

A question might arise regarding how the Lord's church could have been effective in such a city as Ephesus. The answer rests in the fact that the pastor was in the Lord's "right hand" (Rev. 1:20). Jesus, in John 15:5, said, "...without me ye can do nothing." We, on the other hand, "...can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13). Our strength, according to the following passage of Scripture, rests in the power of His might.

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:10, 11).

"I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy pa-

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BOOK ANNOUNCEMENTS

We have some more Sermon Outline books in our book store. I do not use such, but some men seem to profit from these books. I leave this to individual judgment. We have three such books by Charles R. Wood. They are: Sermon Outlines On The New Birth, Sermon Outlines On the Names And Character of God, and Sermon Outlines On The Great Themes of the Bible. These are paper back books of 64 pages and they sell for \$3.99 each. Order from our book store.

We have three new books in our book store. We have How To Survive In The Ministry by Leslie Flynn. We pastors know that there is much pressure in the ministry. I, for one, have felt that pressure; but I have never even considered leaving the ministry. I would not want to be anything else, still, there are problems and pressures. This author has pastored one church for forty years. His book tells of many problems and difficulties he has faced, and how he has dealt with them. The book may well contain much practical help for others. It is a paper back book of 150 pages and

sells for \$8.99. Order from our book store.

We have Climbing The Heights by Al Bryant. This is a book of daily devotions of which there are many on the market today. It could not but be helpful to have this book and to read the devotional in it for each day of the year. These devotions are compiled from many of the great preachers of the past. It will be a blessing to the reader. It is a paper back book of 375 pages and sells for \$11.99. Order from our book store where the profit goes into our book ministry.

We have Bible Nuggets by Ivor Powell. Those who have read this author's books will be glad to obtain this one. It is just what it says it is. It is filled with small nuggets of gold gleaned from the Word of God. It will be helpful to the Bible student. It will help promote one's spiritual life. It may well start the preacher on the road to many sermons. It is a paper back book of nearly 200 pages and sells for \$7.99. Buy it, you'll like it, I think. Order from our book store.

REVELATION

(Continued from Page 7)

tience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars" (Rev. 2:2).

The "Alpha and Omega" with "hairs... white like wool" and "eyes were as a flame of fire," knew the works of the people in the church at Ephesus. There is nothing, according to the following passage of Scripture, which can be hidden from His eyes.

"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15:3).

We know from Malachi 3:6 that our Lord does not change. He, therefore, when saying, "I know thy works," is speaking to us, too. We will do very well to hear and heed His every Word to us. The following passages of Scripture explain why it is important to hear and heed His every Word to us.

"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Corinthians 3:13-15).

The Lord, when addressing the church at Ephesus, continued by saying, **"I know thy works and thy labor..."** The works look back to that which had already been done while the labor is a reference to that which they were in the process of doing. Their labor would become works as it was finished.

Our Lord continued by stating, **"I know... thy patience."** Patience is the produce or fruit of faith. We are willing to wait and be patient through a dark night of suffering if we are convinced that God's promise of joy will arrive in the morning. We will exercise patience according to the confidence that we have in God's promise as given in Romans 8:28. This passage of Scripture reads:

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Those who do not believe God's promises will faint and fall by the way side. They, according to the following passage of Scripture, must believe to see beyond the adversity that confronts them.

"I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living" (Psalms 27:13).

We, today, are prone to say, "Seeing is believing." The above points out that believing is seeing. This fact is brought out clearly in the following passage of Scripture.

"Now faith is the sub-

stance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1).

The people, then, in the church at Ephesus, were exercising patience because they had faith in the Word of the Lord Jesus Christ, the one who had assigned their work to them.

The Lord, through John, continued to address the church of Ephesus by saying, **"...and how thou canst not bear them which are evil..."** This statement makes it obvious that the saints at Ephesus were Christ-like, since He cannot bear with them which are evil either. The Lord cannot bear with them while they are on the earth; and neither will He bear with them in heaven, since they will never see that holy place. We need to examine our lives if we find that we can bear those, that is, honor those who preach false doctrine.

Our Lord continues by saying: **"...and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars."** Every person who calls himself a minister of Christ should be tried or examined on the basis of God's Word. It is as stated in the following passage of Scripture.

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

A judge, before he can properly try offenders, must be acquainted with the law. We, in like manner, must be acquainted with God's Word before we can judge who is of God and who is not of God. These facts mean that the people in the church at Ephesus were trained in the Scriptures to the extent that they were able to distinguish false apostles from true ones.

"And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted" (Rev. 2:3).

The people in the church at Ephesus had borne, that is, carried the weight which their Lord had assigned to them and they had done so with patience. They, of course, had grown tired and weary, but they still carried their load with patience. This fact reminds me of the story of the boy who was carrying his brother on his back. Some one asked if the boy on his back was heavy and he replied, "No, he's my brother." This same truth applied to the people in the church at Ephesus. They, in fact, borne and exercised patience for our Lord's name sake. It was because of Him that they had laboured and not fainted.

"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love" (Rev. 2:4).

It is not enough for a husband to supply the needs of his wife by supplying shelter, food, etc. It is very important that all of his actions toward his wife be based upon love. The same applies relative to our works for our Lord. Our believing, teaching and practicing must be motivated by love for our Lord, or He will not accept our efforts. We, therefore, must be very cautious so that our work for our Lord is not based upon formality. It is as stated in the following passages of Scripture (keep in mind that the word charity, as used in the following passages of Scripture, means love).

"Though I speak with the

tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as a sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

Our Lord, as stated in the text which is before us, not only expects our works to be based upon love for Him, but He expects that love to be the "first love," that is, the kind of love we had when we first began following Him. The love that a new wife has for her husband is a good example of the "first love." Our Lord, after all, still loves us with His first love - the love he manifested for us at Calvary. It is said, in fact, in John 3:16 that He "so loved" us. The word "so" is made up of only two letters and yet that to which it refers cannot be measured. May we also love Him with a "so" love.

It has been argued that the Ephesians were lost because of their leaving their first love. This idea is not only incorrect, but it is unfair to those dear saints at Ephesus. It is quite obvious from that which is said in verses two and three that they were not lost. The fact that one's love is not as it used to be does not alienate us from God as our Father and Christ as our Savior. We know from Romans 8:33-39 that there is nothing which can separate the believer from the love of God.

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works..." (Rev. 2:5).

The Ephesians had not fallen from salvation, but from the height of love which they had originally possessed. The Lord, therefore, was saying to them, "I want your best. I want to be first in your lives rather than second or third." The Lord, after all, did not need the church at Ephesus any more than the air needs the bird, or the soil needs the trees. We need God, but He certainly does not need us. He, however, has chosen to use us and to bless our efforts, but He requires that our efforts be motivated by great love for Him. We, in fact, are to love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, mind and spirit.

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people really died, or were merely hallucinating in a near death experience is hard to say. This much is certain however, the Bible says life continues beyond the grave. When death occurs, our bodies will return to dust to be sure, but our spirits will return to God who gave them. This much is clear, as seen in the following examples.

(I). The thief on the cross. Christ promised the thief, who was dying next to Him on the cross, that before the day was over, he would be with Him in paradise. We hear the thief saying to Christ while nailed to the cross; **"And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy**

kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Lk. 23:42-43). That, beloved, would not have been possible if death was going to completely terminate the thief's existence. That he was going to die, and that his body was going to be buried, the thief already knew. But what was going to become of his soul? That is what he wanted to know. No, beloved, we are not thieves, but our concern about our future should be as grave as his. Christ assured him that before the day was over, his soul would be ushered into a place called paradise. Obviously, physical death was not going to be the end of his experience.

(II). The Bible account of the rich man and Lazarus shows us that life continues beyond the grave. There is much to be noted from that text. When we read Luke 16:19-31, we see a terrible case where a great division was made between two men, one lost, and the other saved. They were both aware of where they were, one was beyond help, and the other had reaped a better reward. He had reached the comfort of righteousness in the bosom of Abraham. He was delivered forever from the judgment of unrighteousness. The important thing is, that even after both of these men died, and were buried, their spirits lived on. Beloved, Lazarus lived in a place of comfort. The rich man lived in a place of torment.

(III). The encounter with Moses and Elias who had departed from the earth hundreds of years before the coming of Christ. When Christ was transfigured before His disciples, and His garments became white and glistening, an amazing thing happened. Two Old Testament prophets, Moses and Elijah, who had passed of the earthly scene hundreds of years earlier, suddenly appeared. They talked with Christ about His impending death at Jerusalem. The fact that Moses and Elijah appeared hundreds of years later, after their departure from the earthly scene, shows very emphatically that life continues beyond the grave. How else could they have been there on the mountain with Christ, and the three disciples? **"And there appeared unto them Elias and Moses: and they were talking with Jesus."** At this point it would be good for the reader to read the entire account found in Mark 9:1-8.

The thief died, but his spirit lived on; the rich man died, and so did Lazarus, but their spirits lived on. Moses and Elijah passed off the earthly scene, but their spirits lived on. What greater evidence do we need to prove that life actually does continue beyond the grave? There are many things about life after death which we know little about. This much is certain however, life continues beyond the grave in very much the same way we know it now.

Take the rich man and Lazarus, for instance; they could see, hear, feel, speak, think and remember! The rich man was even concerned about his five brothers who were left behind.

Another question often asked about all this is; will we recognize one another, especially our loved ones, in the world to come? Every indication is, that we will. Peter, James and John, for instance, knew Moses and Elijah instinctively without introduction, when they appeared on the

mountain with Christ. The rich man and Lazarus recognized each other in their after-death state. The disciples also recognized Christ after His resurrection. That, beloved, leads me to believe that we will recognize each other also. What about husbands and wives; what will their relationship be in the next life? When the Sadducees informed Christ about a woman married seven times, He gave this answer in Luke 20: **"And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die anymore: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection"** (Lk. 20: 34-36). From this we see that we will be neuter in sex, neither male, nor female. One thing for sure, our relationship will be totally different.

We'll probably experience certain limitations in our existence between the time when we die and when we are raised, as they are scheduled to be at the end of the age. But in our soulish state of existence, it seems quite clear that life for the righteous is going to be a very happy and pleasant experience. God doesn't look upon death as a tragedy, or an end of everything. Quite the contrary. **"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints"** (PS. 116:15). He also says; **"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them"** (Rev. 14:13).

Paul referred to this in a very special way in his writings. **"We are confident. I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord"** (II Cor. 5:8). He wanted to stay and be a help to those left behind, but had a desire to go to the Lord of glory. He said again in his letter to the church at Philippi; **"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you"** (Phil. 1:23-24). What is life in the other world going to be like? That depends, of course, on whether a person dies in Christ, or outside of Him. We don't know everything we would like to know about heaven. What we do know, however, is pleasant. The Bible says that God will wipe away all tears from our eyes. In heaven there will be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor pain. There will be no night there. no need for lamps, or even the sun, for the Bible says **"And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever"** (Rev. 22:5).

When Paul was caught up into heaven, he heard and saw things

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which were beyond his ability to describe. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (I Cor. 2:9).

Death is not the termination of our existence. We are a very strange, but wonderful union of flesh and spirit. Our bodies will grow old and die. They will return to the dust from whence they came, as Genesis 3:19 says, but beloved, our spirits will return back to God who made and gave them. At the end of the age, our bodies which have passed away, will be raised and united with our spirits again. Oh, what a Saviour we have! Amen.

LANDMARK BAPTIST COLLEGE

Editor's Note: I am often asked by young preachers as to a good Bible school. I am happy to print the following for the benefit of such.



Jack L. Green
Pastor-Memorial Baptist
Ft. Worth, Texas

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Landmark Baptist College has been raised up in the providence or God to provide students with a Baptist education. The college is located on a beautiful five acre campus near downtown Fort Worth. The college is operated under the authority of the Memorial Baptist Church. The faculty is composed of academically qualified pastors with many years of experience in the teaching ministry.

This College provides degree programs at the Bachelors and Masters level. The College stands, without apology, for that system of doctrine which teaches the absolute sovereignty of God, His electing grace, and the premillennial return of our Lord. In the area of ecclesiology this college stands firmly on the old landmarks of the perpetuity of Baptist Churches as started by Christ during His ministry on earth. We believe the Bible is the infallible and inerrant Word of God.

The great Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area provides numerous job opportunities. The tuition at the College is minimal to meet the need of those who cannot afford the high cost of a college education. We invite you to call or write us today if you are interested in a college which still walks in the old landmarks of our fathers.

BLOOD

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the blood is able to keep its volume steady at five to six quarts by taking on more water or giving it to other parts of the body as needed.

The blood is made up of millions of cells that float in a liquid called plasma. Men usually have more cells than women. Blood carries oxygen to the different parts of the body, and in turn picks up the refuse of the body and dispenses it to the lungs and kidneys, thus cleansing the body of poisons.

The heart is the pump that circulates the blood through the body with a volume of about six barrels every hour. The heart does in this hour, work, equivalent to raising a 160 pound man seventy feet in the air. Blood is produced by the red marrow of the bones.

Another most important function of the blood is that of immunizing the body against diseases. The white cells do this and compose almost one half of the blood volume. When this system breaks down, diseases such as AIDS kill the body. This usually happens as a result of neglect or self abuse. (Most of this information taken from *The World Book*.)

The word is used in the O.T. 282 times; in the New testament 93 times, making a total of 375 times. The first in the O.T. is Gen. 4:10; the last time is Zech. 9:11. In the New, the first time is in Mat. 9:20; the last time is in Rev. 19:13.

Blood is often times used in a symbolic way to represent life. Christ is said to have "shed" His blood on the cross. This is symbolic for offering His life on the cross.

I. TALKING BLOOD

As I said before, this is the first time the word is used in the Bible. Often times, a first use of a word is very important. In this first example, we hear it talking. I have dubbed this the "talking blood."

Genesis 4:10, "And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;"

The word "cry" can mean several things: to raise one's voice, to make an emotional petition; to cry like in to weep. In this case, it must mean to make a petition. This is probably a figure of speech, as blood cannot literally speak.

This is a cry for justice. Abel had been slain by his own brother, according to the flesh, and justice was demanded. And this being true even today, there are a lot of unpunished murderers walking our streets. According to my statistics, there were between two and three thousand murders in the United States in 1990, the latest year for this information, and only a small percentage of them were solved.

Only a few days ago, in Baton Rouge, three young men, ages 16, 17 and 19, went out looking for a car to steal. They were unsuccessful at first. And then they happened upon an unfortunate student parking his car in the parking lot of LSU. They decided to take his car and him with it. After abducting him and his car, they decided to kill him. They

pushed him out of the car, and shot him in the head at close range. Later, the car was found burning. Such awful events are commonplace here and in the entire country. We have to charge the government with neglect of duty as it is the primary business of the government to protect the population from such criminal activity. But we see it working hard to protect us from almost every type of supported threat but neglecting this very real threat.

It is interesting to note that God was the only one who seemed to hear. We are not told that Adam or Eve was involved. Perhaps they did not know about it or felt helpless before such a tragic event. If God took note of this first murder, do you suppose He still does take note when people are murdered today? I surely hope so, as no one else seems to be taking note.

And if abortion is murder, and it is, then God has taken a lot of notes for many mothers of the United States in the last 20 years. Certainly no one else seems to be defending these poor little ones.

And wait until laws are passed making euthanasia legal. And I am persuaded it will happen. It has been on the ballot in at least one state that I am familiar with. The reasoning is something like this: we put dogs out of their misery and why do less for the old and suffering human? It does sound good, perhaps, but who is to make the decision and where will it stop? (Use illustration of pygmies in Africa that leave their old behind, with water and food for at least a few days.) If we pass such a law, will we eventually resort to infanticide and eliminate all children born with defects? Most assuredly it will happen with the liberals in charge.

II. SACRED BLOOD

Genesis 9:4 "But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat."

And what is so sacred about an animal that we are commanded not eat of its blood? Nothing. It is not the animal, but life itself. God was saying that life is a very sacred thing and we are to regard it so. He created life and He only gives it to His creatures. We are not to treat it with diffidence.

And today, are we totally disregarding this command? Yes, in many cases. This is one reason that we have many of the problems we have today. Every abortion is predicated upon the idea that the baby's life is not so important and not nearly so important as the comfort of the mother. And if we disregard this command, what is to stop us from disregarding all life or at least on a selected basis.

Something else of importance in this verse tells us that the life of the body is in the blood. How do you suppose that Moses knew that? Science did not accept it until many centuries afterwards.

The above verse was talking about animal life, but this is most certainly talking about human life:

Genesis 9:5-6 "And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Who so sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."

He says emphatically that we are not to arbitrarily take human

life. If we do, there are certain penalties. This certainly teaches the death penalty. Many have mistakenly said that putting the criminal to death is murder, based on their conception of the sixth commandment. However, this passage in Genesis certainly debunks that; for God cannot contradict Himself. The sixth commandment would be better translated as "don't murder", rather than, "don't kill."

I am sure that disregarding this clear command by God has caused our murder rate to go up. People who have little or no moral values are more likely to kill others, especially if they understand there will be little or no penalty. And don't forget, the "bad gene" theory. I can see a murderer now, upon being arrested and tried, saying to the court, it was not I that did that, it was my genes and you can put them in jail, and let me go. Sound absurd? Well, in our lifetime we have seen some things that are not any more absurd.

III. DECEPTIVE BLOOD

Genesis 37:31. "And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood;"

We have a part of the story of how Joseph's coat was dipped in some animal's blood and presented to Jacob, and he was made to believe that Joseph was eaten by some wild animal. I call this deceptive blood. He was deceived by the wrong kind of blood. He had no way of testing it to see if indeed it were actually Joseph's blood. Great numbers of religions and religionists are deceived today by "false blood." They are taking refuge in and trusting in the wrong kind of Savior. And how do we know the blood we trust in is the right blood? Well, there are several ways. One, the Scriptures say so. Two, personal experience says so. Three, the examples given in the Scriptures of the many who did trust in the blood of Christ would certainly reinforce that His is the right one and the only one.

IV. DEMANDING BLOOD

Genesis 42:22 "And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold, also his blood is required."

Reuben said that they would pay for their sin against Joseph because it was innocent blood. If this was true with Joseph then what about the blood of Christ?

Hebrews 10:29 "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

V. PROTECTIVE BLOOD

Exodus 12: 7,12,13 "And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. ...For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye

are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt."

VI. JUDGMENTAL BLOOD

Revelation 19:13 "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God."

This is not a pretty picture. The Son of God wearing blood soaked clothes. It is hard for us to imagine this as our conception of Him is the loving Christ who gave Himself for us.

What does it mean? It suggests judgment of those who refuse Christ.

VI. DRINKING BLOOD

John 6:53 "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."

Many years ago while residing in West Palm Beach Florida, I had a discussion with a Roman Catholic priest. I asked him if he took this passage literally, he answered in the affirmative. I accused him of being a cannibal. He became very angry. But by their doctrines, they stand convicted.

Are we to literally eat the body and drink the blood of the Lord Jesus? Well, His disciples did not do so and it does not make any sense to us, so it must be figurative. What does it mean? We must make Him an integral part of our life, we must acquire the sacrifice of Christ as our own.

VII. SAVING BLOOD

Romans 5:9 "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."

This says the blood of Christ is saving blood. His blood also justifies us and thus saves us. Really, it is his life that does all of this, but it is represented by the shedding of His blood.

VII. FORGIVING BLOOD

Hebrews 9:22 "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."

VIII. CLEANSING BLOOD

Revelation 1:5 "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."

There is nothing equal to the cleansing blood of the Lord Jesus. Men make all kinds of substitutes, but they will not cleanse even one sin.

IX. REDEEMING BLOOD

Revelation 5:9 "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;"

Again, it is the blood of Christ that redeems, not some man made sacrifice, or ritual, or creed. There can be no substitute.

X. INEBRIATING BLOOD

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THE CROWD AT CALVARY

by C.D.Cole

Matthew 27:33, "And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha..."

INTRODUCTION: Let us go back to a little hill called Calvary and look on an "old rugged cross, the emblem of suffering and shame." Calvary is the name of the place outside Jerusalem where the Lord Jesus was crucified. It is the focal point of all history. For 4000 years longing hearts looked hopefully, through type and shadow, for the real Lamb of God to be slain. For 2000 years heavy hearts with a sense of sin have looked back to Calvary and found peace. Calvary stands alone as the one and only place where a righteous God will sheath His sword and spare the sinner. He can, in justice, spare the sinner because at Calvary He did not spare His Son. Calvary is the only place where sin has ever been adequately dealt with. It is Calvary or hell for every sinner.

Let us look at the crowd that witnessed that scene. Remember the old song: "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" Yes, you were there, or rather you are there even now, for Calvary stands in the midst of the swarming multitudes today. It seems that God so arranged it that every sort of person is typified in the different classes that watched Him die. There is a sense in which you are at Calvary now, and your condition is declared, your salvation is decided, your destiny is determined; by the attitude you take toward the cross of Christ and the Christ of the cross.

Let us study the groups that gathered at Calvary and see if we cannot find your crowd there. There was a person or group of persons there that day with whom you belong and whose fate you will share.

1. There were the Soldiers.

Look at them and their conduct. They clad Him in a mock robe of royalty, they spat in His face, pressed a crown of thorns upon His brow, they nailed Him to the tree. But beyond all that was your sins and mine. In the deep mystery of providence, it was you and I who spat in His face, clad Him in a mock robe of royalty, pressed a crown of thorns upon His brow, and nailed Him to the tree. We had a part in it for "he was wounded for our transgressions." This is the crowd we belonged to by nature. But grace has wrought in us and we no longer crucify Him afresh. Do not put all the blame on the soldiers of that day. They were but administering the wounds that our sins had caused.

They sat down and watched Him there. And you today sit and watch Him as you read this message of God, and some of you do not seem to care. What proof of human depravity that men can read the Gospel, hear it preached in sermons and yet politely go away as though it made no difference to them.

They also gambled for His seamless robe. It was bad enough to watch Him unmoved, but they gambled for His robe. The world plays its game today at the foot of the cross. If you are not a soldier of the cross you are a soldier

at the cross, gambling away your opportunity to be saved.

2. Then there were those who passed by wagging their heads. They did not crucify Him--they only passed by, reviling Him. It is fashionable today to pass by Calvary. From the blasphemer to the indifferent soul, men pass by the cross today. The Bible records three things of these passers-by:

A. They misquoted His claims. "Thou that destroyest this temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself." What Christ actually said was, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up," but He was speaking of His body.

B. They minimized His death. They said, "Save thyself; come down from the cross." They saw no necessity in His death. Modern critics see no need of Calvary, no need for atonement in His blood; and they decry it as butcher-house religion.

C. They mocked His deity. "If thou be the Son of God?" Modernists today doubt His deity and talk about the peril of worshipping Jesus. They see in Him a great teacher, and idealist, the crystal Christ; but not the Calvary Christ.

3. There were the chief priests, scribes and elders--the religious group. You would expect them to be quiet and dignified, but they behaved very badly.

4. There was the general crowd; termed simply, the people. "And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned." They looked but did nothing. Most people belong to this group. They look but neglect salvation. It is one thing to look at Calvary and another to look unto Christ on Calvary. They "smote their breasts and returned." They were impressed by what they saw; that awful scene of death and darkness made them smite their breasts, humbled by the awful solemnity.

5. There was the centurion. A. He feared greatly. Matthew 27:54, "Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly, this was

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BLOOD

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Revelation 17:6 "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration."

Here is a woman drunken on blood. How could that be? It has to be figurative. This woman, which represents a church of the worst sort, is seen as having killed many millions of the disciples of the Lord. Who has done that? Rome of course.

HOW TO

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thy, he should go several miles away before he stands up to preach, and then, when he stands up, he should say nothing. They

know us, brethren; they know far more about us than we imagine, and what they do not know they make up. At the same time, our walk and conversation should be the most powerful part of our ministry. This is what is called being consistent, when lips and life agree.

My time is short; but I must say a word upon another point. I have said that the working of the Holy Spirit depends largely upon the man himself, but I am bound to add that much will also depend upon the kind of people that are round about the preacher. An open air preacher, who has to go out quite alone, must be in a very unfortunate position. It is extremely helpful to be connected with an earnest living church which will pray for you; and if you cannot find such a church where you labour, the next best thing is to get half-a-dozen brothers and sisters who will back you up, and go out with you, and, especially, will pray with you. Some preachers are so independent that they can do without helpers, but they will be wise if they do not affect solitude. May they not look at the matter in this way: by bringing in half-a-dozen men to go out with me I shall be doing good to these young men, and shall be training them to be workers? If you can associate with yourself half-a-dozen who are not all very young men, but somewhat advanced in their knowledge of divine truth, the association will be greatly to your mutual advantage. I confess to you all that, although God has largely blessed me in His work, yet none of the credit is due to me at all, but to those dear friends at the Tabernacle, and, indeed, all over the world, who make me the special subject of their prayers. A man ought to do well with such a people around him as I have. My dear friend and deacon, Mr. William Olney, once said, "Our minister has hitherto led us forward, and we have followed heartily. Everything has been a success; do you not believe in his leadership?" The people cried, "Yes." Then said my dear friend, "If our pastor has brought us up to a ditch which looks as if it could not be passed, let us fill it up with our bodies, and carry him across." This was grand talk; the ditch was filled, nay, it seemed to fill itself up at once. If you have a true comrade, your strength is more than doubled. What a blessing is a good wife! You women, who would not be in your right place if you began to preach in the streets, you can make your husbands happy and comfortable when they come home, and that will make them preach all the better! Some of you can even help in another way if you are prudent and gentle. You can tenderly hint that your spouse was a little out of line in certain small matters, and he may take your hint, and put himself right. A good brother once asked me to give him some instruction, and he pleaded thus: "The only instructor I have had was my wife, who had a better schooling than fell to my lot. It use to say, 'We was,' and 'Us did it,' and she quietly hinted that people might laugh at me if I did not attend to grammar." His wife thus became to him a professor of English language, and was worth her weight in gold to him, and he knew it. You who have such helpers ought to thank God daily for them.

Next to this, it is a very great

assistance to join in brotherly league with some warm-hearted Christian who knows more than we do, and will benefit us by prudent hints. God may bless us for the sake of others when He might not bless us for our own. You have heard, I daresay, the monkish story of the man who had preached, and had won many souls to Christ, and congratulated himself upon it. One night, it was revealed to him that he should have none of the honour of it at the last great day; and he asked the angel in his dream who then would have the credit of it, and the angel replied, "That deaf old man who sits on the pulpit stairs and prays for you was the means of the blessing." Let us be thankful for that deaf man, or that old woman, or those poor praying friends who bring down a blessing upon us by their intercessions. The Spirit of God will bless two when He might not bless one. Abraham alone did not get one of the five cities saved, although his prayer was like a ton weight in the scale; but yonder was his nephew Lot, who was about the poorest lot that could be found. He had not more than half-an-ounce of prayer in him; but that tiny fragment turned the scale, and Zoar was preserved. Add then your odd half-ounce to the mightier weight of the pleadings of eminent saints, for they may need it.

Dear brother open air preachers, I am not trying to instruct you; some of you could far better instruct me; and yet I do not know, for I suspect I must be getting rather old from what I hear. A woman, at the beginning of the year (1887), was trying to get something out of me, and she said, "I remember hearing your dear voice more than forty years ago." I said, "Hear my voice forty years ago! Where was that?" She said, "You were preaching at the bottom of Pentonville Hill, near where Mr. Sawday's chapel is." "Well," I said, "was it not more than forty years ago?" "Yes," she said, "It might be fifty." "Oh," I said, "I suppose I was quite young then?" "Oh, yes!" she said, "You were such a dear young man." That, of course, was a needless assurance; but I do not think she was quite so sure of my dearness when I told her that I never preached at the bottom of Pentonville Hill, and that fifty years ago I was only three years old, and that I thought it shameful for her to suppose that I should give her money for telling falsehoods. However, I shall presume upon the woman's statement tonight, and suppose myself to be that venerable person she described me as being, and I shall make bold to say to you: Dear brethren, if we are going to win souls, we must go in for downright labour and hard work.

And, first, we must work at our preaching. You are not getting distrustful of the use of preaching, are you? ("No") I hope you do not weary of it, though you certainly sometimes must weary in it. Go on with your preaching. Cobbler, stick to your last; preacher, stick to your preaching. In the great day, when the muster-roll shall be read of all those who are converted through fine music, and church decoration, and religious exhibitions and entertainments, they will amount to the tenth part of nothing; but it will always please God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Keep to your preaching; and if you do anything beside, do

not let it throw your preaching into the background. In the first place preach, and in the second place preach, and in the third place preach.

Believe in preaching the love of Christ, believe in preaching the atoning sacrifice, believe in preaching the new birth, believe in preaching the whole counsel of God. The old hammer of the gospel will still break the rock in pieces; the ancient fire of Pentecost will still burn among the multitude. Try nothing new, but go on with preaching, and if we all preach with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, the results of preaching will astound us. Why, there is no end after all to the power of the tongue! Look at the power of a bad tongue, what great mischief it can do; and shall not God put more power into a good tongue, if we will but use it aright? Look at the power of fire, a single spark might give a city to the flames; even so, the Spirit of God being with us, we need not calculate how much, or what we can do; there is no calculating the potentialities of divine truth spoken with the enthusiasm which is born of the Spirit of God. Have great hope yet, brothers, have great hope yet, despite yon shameless midnight streets, despite yon flaming gin palaces at the corner of every street, despite the wickedness of the rich, despite the ignorance of the poor. Go on; go on; go on; in God's name, go on, for if the preaching of the gospel does not save men, nothing will. If the Lord's own way of mercy fails, then hang the skies in mourning, and blot out the sun in everlasting midnight, for there remaineth nothing before our race but the blackness of darkness. Salvation by the sacrifice of Jesus is the ultimatum of God. Rejoice that it cannot fail. Let us believe without reserve, and then go straight ahead with the preaching of the Word.

True-hearted open air preachers will be sure to join with their preaching very much earnest private talk. What numbers of persons have been converted in this Tabernacle by the personal conversation of certain brothers here, whom I will not further indicate! They are all about this place while I am preaching! I recollect that a brother was speaking to me on Monday night, and suddenly he vanished before he finished the sentence which he was whispering. I never quite knew what he was going to say; but I speedily saw him in that left-hand gallery, sitting in the pew with a lady unknown to me. After the service, I said to him, "Where did you go?" and he said, "A gleam of sunlight came in at the window, and made me see a face which looked so sad that I hurried upstairs, and took my seat in the pew close to the woman of a sorrowful countenance." "Did you cheer her?" "Oh, yes! she received the Lord Jesus very readily; and just as she did so, I noticed another eager face, and I asked her to wait in the pew till after the service, and I went after the other--a young man." He prayed with both of these, and would not be satisfied until they had given their hearts to the Lord. That is the way to be on the alert. We need a body of sharpshooters to pick out their men one by one. When we fire great guns from the

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HOW TO

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pulpit execution is done, but many are missed. We want loving spirits to go round, and deal with individual cases in the singular by pointed personal warnings and encouragements. Every open air preacher should not only address the hundreds, but he should be ready to pounce upon the ones, and he should have others with him, who have the same happy art. How much more good would come of preaching in the streets if every open air preacher were accompanied by a batch of persons who would drive his nails home for him by personal conversation!

Last Sunday night, my dear brother told us a little story which I shall never forget. He was at Croydon Hospital one night; as one of those appointed to visit it. All the porters had gone home, and it was time to shut up for the night. He was the only person in the hospital, with the exception of the physician, when a boy came running in, saying that there was a railway accident, and someone must go round to the station with a stretcher. The doctor said to my brother, "Will you take one end of the stretcher if I take the other?" "Oh, yes!" was the cheerful reply; and so away went the doctor and the pastor with the stretcher. They brought a sick man back with them. My brother said, "I went often to the hospital during the next week or two, because I felt so much interest in the man whom I had helped to carry." I believe he will always take an interest in that man, because he once felt the weight of him. When you know how to carry a man on your heart, and have felt the burden of his case,

you will have his name engraven upon your soul. So you that privately talk to people, you are feeling the weight of souls; and I believe that this is what many regular preachers need to know more of, and then they will preach better.

When preaching and private talk are not available, you have a tract ready, and this is often an effectual method. Some tracts would not convert a beetle: there is not enough in them to interest a fly. Get good striking tracts, or none at all. But a telling, touching gospel tract may often be the seed of eternal life; therefore, do not go out without your tracts.

I suppose, beside giving a tract, if you can, you try and find out where a person lives who frequently hears you, that you may give him a call. What a fine thing is a visit from an open-air preacher! "Why," says the woman, "there is that man come to see you, Bill; that gentleman who preaches at the corner of the street. Shall I tell him to come in?" "Oh, yes!" is the reply; "I have heard him many times; he is a good fellow." Visit as much as you can, for it will be of use to yourselves as well as to the people.

What power there is also in a letter to an individual! Some people still have a kind of superstitious reverence for a letter; and when they get an earnest epistle from one of you reverend gentlemen, they think a great deal of it; and who knows? a note by post may hit the man your sermon missed. Young people who are not able to preach might do much good if they would write letters to their young friends about their souls; they could speak very plainly with their pens, though they might be different in speaking with their tongues. Let us save men by all the means under

heaven; let us prevent men going down to hell. We are not half as earnest as we ought to be. Do you not remember the young man, who, when he was dying, said to his brother, "My brother, how could you have been so indifferent to my soul as you have been?" He answered, "I have not been indifferent to your soul, for I have frequently spoken to you about it." "Oh, yes!" he said, "you spoke, but somehow, I think, if you had remembered that I was going down to hell, you would have been more earnest with me; you would have wept over me, and, as my brother, you would not have allowed me to be lost." Let no one say this of you.

But I hear it observed that most fellows, when they grow earnest, do such odd things, and say such strange things, and let them do strange things, if these come out of genuine earnestness. We do not want pranks and performances which are the mere sham of earnestness; but real white-heat earnestness is the want of the times, and where you see that, it is a pity to be too critical. You must let a great storm rage in its own way. You must let a loving heart speak as it can. If you are zealous, and yet cannot speak, your earnestness will invent its own method of working out its purpose. As Hannibal is said to have melted the rocks with vinegar, so earnestness will one way or another dissolve the rocky hearts of men. May the Spirit of God rest upon you, one and all, for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen.

CROWD

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the Son of God."

B. He said that certainly this was a righteous man; he called Christ, the Son of God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man."

6. Then there was the dying thief. Here is one case of deathbed repentance. Luke 23:39-43, "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

A. He took the place of a sinner.

B. He called Jesus "Lord."

C. He trusted him for salvation saying "remember me."

Can you see more clearly today where you stand? Be sure of one thing... you are there. You are part of the crowd at Calvary.

THE FAKE AND FRAUD OF CHRISTMAS

Sermon by Charles Half

The apostle Paul in writing to Timothy says in II Timothy 4:1-4: "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. For 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."

My friends, that time is here now when people are turning away their ears from the truth and have turned unto fables, that which is not true. I often wondered why the apostle Paul made the statement, "Be instant in season and out of season" but after careful study I believe I understand what he meant by "in season and out of season." "In season" is when the people like it and "out of season" is when they don't like it, and with many people the word of God is out of season! It is not liked very much. Nevertheless the apostle Paul said, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season." That is, give it to them when they like it and when they don't. Preach the word when they smile and when they frown. Therefore, I want to honestly and earnestly present the truth and nothing but the truth.

A great many people ask why do I continue to bother the doctrines of men. "Don't you know you can't stop preachers from preaching what they are preaching?" Well I can do like a man told his wife about a calf that was running away with him. He couldn't stop the calf, and his wife told him to turn him loose, but he said, "I may not can stop him but I can slow him down."

I mean, to tell you that I am trying to preach the truth and call the people's attention to the mistakes preachers are making. Many honest souls are being misled and when these honest people learn the truth, they are going to demand of the preachers that they preach the Bible as it is written. We won't stop them but we will slow them down. You can do as a lady told me a few days ago. She said, "I realize I can't stop the church I am a member of from teaching false doctrine, but I can stop myself and come out of it and not take part in it." That is the way to do. If you can't stop them, you can stop yourself.

Does Christmas really celebrate the birthday of Jesus? Was He born on December 25th? Did Paul, the apostles, and the early Church of the New Testament celebrate Christmas? Do you know what the bible says about the Christmas tree?

Christ Not Born In Winter

Stop and think! Very few know why we do the things we do -- where our customs came from! We were born into a world filled with customs. We grew up practising them, taking them for granted, but never questioning why!

Let me read from Luke 2:8, "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night." Now this one text alone is practically sufficient evidence that we might know that Christmas, or the birth of Christ, could not be December 25. This verse tells us that shepherds were in the field and their flocks were pasturing there the night of the birth of Christ. As the shepherds

were watching their flocks, the message came to them of the birth of Jesus. Now it is a well-known fact that December is the rainy season in Palestine and the sheep are kept in the fold at that time of year.

Jesus was not even born in the winter season! When the Christ-child was born "there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night" (Luke 2:8). This never could have occurred in Palestine in the month of December. The shepherds always corralled and brought their flocks from the mountain sides and fields not later than October 15, to protect them from the cold rainy season that followed that date.

Heathen Custom

But what about Christmas? The word "Christmas" means "Mass of Christ," or, at it later became shortened, "Christ-Mass." It came to us as a Roman Catholic mass. And where did they get it? From the Heathen celebration of December 25th, as the birthday of Sol the Sun God! It is, actually, an ancient rite of Baalism, which the Bible condemns as the most abominable of all idolatrous worship!

It is not so much as mentioned anywhere in the New Testament. It was never observed by Paul, the apostles, the early true Christian church!

The idea Jesus was born December 25th is one of the fables the Apostle Paul prophesied (II Tim. 4:4) would deceive the world in these latter days.

The plain truth is, Christmas is not Christ's birthday at all! And this festival, important as it seems to so many, is not of Christian, but of pagan -- Babylonish -- origin! But does that make any difference? Isn't it a right to go ahead and observe it anyway? Isn't the "Christmas Spirit" a good and splendid thing, regardless of how it got started? We shall see!

Any encyclopedia, or any other authority, will tell you that Christ was not born on December 25. The Catholic Encyclopedia frankly states this fact.

With this I would like to read to you some facts taken from the Catholic encyclopedia on "Christmas": "Christmas was not in the early church. Birthday observances were forbidden. Bible proof of the date contradicts December 25; reference to birth of Mithra - son of light." Then it goes on to compare the birth of Mithra with the birth of Christ and says that there is no proof for December 25 as the birth of Christ. Mithra is the pagan god of Persia. I wish that sometime you would read this from the Catholic encyclopedia for yourself, since the Catholic Church has had a great deal to do with handing this down to us. You would see all the disagreements that had to be ironed out in changing this day from a heathen festival to a Christian holiday. The birth of Christ has been celebrated April 5, December 26, etc. In fact there are so many days that have been used at different times that one writer says that every month of the year has been used and proof offered to prove that that was the date of the birth of Christ.

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WHAT WOULD HE THINK OR SAY

There was no room for Him in the inn,
That's why He was laid in a manger;
And to this world of lost, sinful men,
Unto this day He remains a stranger.

Now once a year they become quite merry,
And celebrate His birthday-or so they claim;
But the rest of the year they seem in a hurry
To dishonor Him and blaspheme His name.

Oh, they like to think of Him as a babe,
But they have no love for Him on the cross;
That He would come to die and to save
Seems quite foolish to those who are lost.

Yes, the gospel is hid to those who perish,
For Satan has surely blinded their eyes;
This world of sin they love and cherish,
And their lost condition do not realize.

But scattered among them are His dear sheep,
'Twas for them He was born, for them He died;
He kept the law which they could not keep,
And to their sins was His blood applied.

So thankful am I that my Saviour came
To this wicked, sin-cursed earth;
Oh, praise His precious, holy name,
I'm thankful for His virgin birth!

But 'tis not my Saviour's desire or plan,
That with His birthday I be concerned;
'Tis, instead, His solemn command,
That I watch and wait for His return.

Yes, He tells me to be watching and waiting,
And I wonder what He would think or say,
If He should return and find me celebrating,
With the world, it's pagan holiday.

By Kathryn Parrish

THE FAKE

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I'd like to read from "Anniversaries and Holidays" by Hazeltine, p. 162 -- "Christmas, originally 'Christes Masse'... The date of Christ's birth is not known... in the 4th century Pope Julius established December 25... The selection of that day was due largely to the fact it coincided with that of the greatest pagan festivals which celebrated the winter solstice -- the birthday of the new sun about to return to the earth."

ORIGIN OF CHRISTMAS

Now regarding the origin of Christmas. They chose to set apart December 25 as the holiday commemorating the birth of Christ. As I go into this and think of the various stories connected with this, and some of them conflicting stories, I am reminded again that every good gift that God has had for His people, Satan has always had a substitute all prepared to try to keep men from accepting what God would offer them.

Now let us go back into history, prior to the birth of Christ. We go to the history of the city of Ninevah -- part is history and part is tradition, but history bears out the fact that the founder of Ninevah was a great ruler and his wife, Semiramis actually overshadowed him in power and rulership. After his death she took over the rulership, and her conquests were much greater than his. If you look up her name in the encyclopedia you get a great deal of interesting information about her. She was a great historical character, but much about her life is myth. She was a great leader when it came to establishing things and putting up highways over the mountains and doing things for her people, so that she attracted a great following and had the respect of the people.

After her husband had been dead for some time there was born to her a son. She claimed that her husband had become the sun god and that his spirit had come back and shadowed her and hence the miraculous birth of Tammuz or Adonis, her son. Adonis was the Egyptian name for Tammuz. This story was taken up by her followers and broadcast throughout the land that this son, Tammuz, was a supernatural son of his father, who was now the sun god. Now his birth was reputed to have come about December 24. Some said December 23, some December 22, and some December 24. But it was at that time of year commonly called the winter solstice.

Now this boy, according to the popular belief of that time, was the son of the sun god and had a miraculous birth, then add to that the fact that this was the time of the year when the days became longer and you can see the whole story. Remember also that Baal worship the worship of the sun -- existed at that time. The sun was god.

I want you to see, friends, in all this the counterfeit in advance of the virgin birth of Christ. I want you to see how Satan had anticipated the birth of Jesus. Satan himself planned all this doctrine so that when Jesus actually did come according to the prophecy of Isaiah, immediately

individuals would be tempted to discount it and say, "Oh, yes, it is just the same doctrine and the same story as that of Semiramis and Tammuz." And so Satan had it all planned. He had a heathenish doctrine all worked out, and then when Christ came to earth with a truly miraculous birth, it would bear little weight and be called another deception. So Satan had it all planned.

SCRIPTURE SILENT

There is not one word in the New Testament, or anywhere in the Bible, telling us to observe Christmas. The Christians of the first century, under the inspired teachings of Peter, and Paul, and the apostles, never observed it. There is no Bible authority for its observance, strange as it may seem.

I would like to read again from the Catholic Encyclopedia, under the caption CHRISTMAS. "Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the Church... the first evidence of the fest is from Egypt... Pagan customs, centering around the January calends, gravitated to Christmas." And, further, we find this truth acknowledged: "In the Scripture, sinners alone, not saints, celebrate their birthday."

Encyclopedia Britannica has this: "Christmas (i.e., the Mass of Christ). Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the church." It was not instituted by Christ or the apostles, or by Bible authority -- it was picked up afterward from paganism.

The Encyclopedia Americana says: "Christmas. It was, according to many authorities, not celebrated in the first centuries of the Christian church, as the Christian usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons, rather than their birth" (The "Lord's Supper," which is instituted by New Testament Bible authority, is a memorial of the Death of Christ). "A feast was established in memory of this event (Christ's birth) in the fourth century. In the fifth century the Western Church ordered it to be celebrated forever on the day of the old Roman feast of the birth of Sol, as no certain knowledge of the day of Christ's birth existed."

Now notice! These recognized historic authorities show Christmas was not observed by Christians for the first two or three hundred years -- a period longer than the entire history of the United States as a nation! It got into the Western, or Roman church, by the Fourth Century A.D. It was not until the Fifth Century the Roman church ordered it to be celebrated as an official "Christian" festival!

HEATHEN RELICS

There are a great many things that come in connection with the celebration of Christmas. For instance the Christmas tree and the decorations. This text in Jer. 10:2-4 is interesting in this connection and I would like to read it here: "Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are vain; for one utteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not." This sounds like the decorating of a Christmas tree, doesn't it? What

does history tell us is the origin of the Christmas tree and its decorations? Let me read from the "World Book" on Christmas "The giving of presents, the use of holly, mistletoe, Yule logs have all descended from the days of Paganism... When the pagans of northern Europe became Christians they made their sacred evergreen trees a part of the Christian festival and decorated the trees with gilt nuts and apples in admiration of the stars." Another writer makes the statement that these various worshippers worshipped the stars and planets and they colored these decorations on the trees to typify the planets and the stars and then hung them on the tree, representing the planets' motion around the sun. The text in Jeremiah brought out the same idea -- be not dismayed at the signs of the heavens, the planets and the stars, for the heathen are dismayed at them. They couldn't understand them as they worshipped them.

The custom of having the tree came in because so many of those old religions honored the tree in their worship. In Egypt the palm tree was honored and signified the year because it was supposed to develop one new leaf each month. When the tradition came in amongst the Anglo-Saxons they transferred the sanctity to the fir and the evergreen trees, pointing heavenward and because it never dies.

There is something also that we should consider about mistletoe, because it is used in connection with the Christmas season. In the old Anglo-Saxon time they made their way into the woods and would cut off some of the mistletoe, and it was brought back with a great deal of solemnity and was supposed to protect those who took any of it and it would bring great happiness to them. The use of holly came in also. This also has a heathen origin in the sense that it was called the holy plant and then later called the holly plant. The little fruit was added because at that time the plant did not have the little red fruit, and the worshippers tried to add to its beauty by the adding of red berries. It seems that the whole intent of tree and floral decorations dates back to the use of trees in connection with the worship of their pagan gods. Over and over the Bible refers to Israel going into idolatry and worshipping in the groves, and when a reform was brought in, these groves were ordered cut down. The Anglo-Saxon worshipped Saturn, and their worship was carried on underneath the trees. They would build up a great booth and there would worship the god of Saturn. So the tree found its way into the English and German celebration in honor of Christmas.

SANTA CLAUS

Now what about Santa Claus? How did that come about? It is something that we have always talked about, but where did it come from? This statement is taken from Holidays and their Customs, p. 453 (By Eichler) -- "Santa Claus coming down the chimney seems to come from the English custom of sweeping the chimney clean each New Year's." There is something else that I should bring in here and that is that New Year's and Christmas are identical in their origin. It was a custom, as a matter of good luck, to sweep out the chimney and Santa Claus came down the chimney.

And so there was have the his-

tory of Santa Claus. There is a great deal in old writings regarding St. Nicholas. He was always surprising people and giving good gifts to them. There is one story that is told, just for an example I give it here, of three virgins who were unable to get married. They were orphans and therefore they had no dowry money. So St. Nicholas heard about this and one time as they were in their room mourning about this, he came flying along and there in three bags of money and they were married and lived happily ever after.

TRADITIONS VS. SCRIPTURE

The real origin of Christmas goes back to the ancient Babylon. It is bound up in the organized apostasy with which Satan has gripped a deceived world these many centuries! In Egypt, it has always been believed the son of Isis (Egyptian name for "Queen of Heaven") was born December 25th. Paganism celebrated this famous birthday over most of the known world for centuries before the birth of Christ.

December 25th is not the birthday of Jesus, the true Christ! The apostles and the early true Church never celebrated Christ's birthday at any time. There is no command or instruction to celebrate it in the bible -- rather, the celebrating of birthdays is a heathen, not a Christian custom, believe it or not!

The Bible condemns the observance of days, months, and seasons. "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." (Gal. 4:10, 11).

DO YOU LIE TO YOUR CHILDREN?

Thus the year, parents punish their children for telling falsehoods. Then, at Christmas time, they themselves tell their little children this "Santa Claus" lie! Is it any wonder many of them, when they grow up and learn the truth, begin to believe God is a myth, too?

Some will argue for the "keeping of Christmas" on the ground of "giving the kiddies a good time." But why do this under the cloak of honoring the Saviour's birth? Why is it necessary to drag in His holy name in connection with what takes place at that season of carnal jollification? Is this taking the little ones with you out of Egypt (Ex. 10:9, 10) a type of the world, or is it not plainly a mingling with the present-day Egyptians in their "pleasures of sin for a season" (Heb. 11:25)? Scripture says, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). Scripture does command God's people to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4), but where does it stipulate that it is our duty to give the little ones a "good time"? Do we ever give the children a "good time" when we engage in anything upon which we cannot fittingly ask the Lord's blessing?

XMAS CARDS, AN ABOMINATION

What about sending out "Christmas cards" with a text of Scripture on them? That also is an abomination in the sight of God. Why? Because His Word expressly forbids all unholy mixtures; Deut. 22:10, 11 typified this. What do we mean by an "unholy mixture"? This: the linking together of the pure Word of God with the Romish "Christmas." By all means send cards (preferably at some other time of the year) to your ungodly friends, and Christians too, with a verse of Scripture, but not with "Christmas" on it. What would you think of a person advertising a dance, and at the bottom of the card have John 3:16 on it? You would go up in holy smoke. What would you think of a moving picture show advertising a midnight jamboree, and at the bottom of the invitation was I Peter 1:18-19? You would cry, "Holy horror!" wouldn't you? But, my friend, Christmas is a demon holiday, and a Christmas card with a verse of Scripture on it is an abomination in the sight of God. The Lord says in Ezekiel 20:39, "Pollute ye My holy Name no more! It is a terrible and an ungodly thing to link the Precious and Holy Name of Christ with this demon holiday."

MERRY MAKING AND GIFTS

But when it comes to the most important part of all, in this Christmas observance, the Christmas shopping season -- the buying and exchanging of gifts -- many will exclaim triumphantly, "Well, at least the Bible tells us to do that! Didn't the wise men give gifts, when Christ was born?"

The wise men gave their gifts to Jesus; not to one another, and even this did not happen on the birthday of Jesus. So there is no connection between Christmas and the birthday of Jesus in this respect.

But what are we to do? If we fail to send out gifts, our friends will think hard of us," probably deem us stingy and miserly. The honest course is to go to the trouble of notifying them -- by letter if at a distance -- that from now on you do not propose to send out anymore "Christmas gifts" as such. Give your reasons. State plainly that you have been brought to see that "Christmas merry-making" is entirely a thing of the world, devoid of any Scriptural warrant; that it is a Romish institution, and that now you see this, you dare no longer have any fellowship with it (Eph. 5:11); that you are the Lord's "free man" (I Cor. 7:22), and therefore you refuse to be in bondage to a costly custom imposed by the world.

Let us as born again Christians use our money this season of the year, not for foolish and unnecessary presents, but to spread the gospel message to a lost and dying world.

Oh, Christian, I beseech you, turn from the world and its holy days, touch not the unclean thing; associate not the birth of the Holy Son of God with the fables of the world and apostate Christendom. Hear His pleading voice, "Be ye separate, O my people."

CAN YOU IMAGINE THIS?

America escaping hell when she has forgotten God? "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psa. 9:17).