

THE DIVINE PRECEPTS

By Arthur W. Pink

The actual word 'precepts' is found more frequently in Psalm 119 than in any other chapter in the Bible. Not only so, it occurs there oftener than all the other references in the Bible added together. It is very striking and profitable to trace through this lengthy Psalm the various references which are there made to God's "precepts." Here, as ever in



A.W. Pink

the Holy Writ, the order is perfect, and as we examine them it will be found their order is a progressive one.

The first reference is in verse 4:
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LOVEST THOU ME

By Fred Beard

Text: John 21:15-17

Jesus stood before His accusers; first a trial before Caiaphas, second before Pilate, been tried, found innocent, yet sent to the hill Golgotha, to be hung up, midway between heaven and



Fred Beard

earth. He has been beaten, bled, nailed and pierced with the sword. He has died, having been deserted by all but a few, four women and one of His disciples who was the same that wrote the account we are about to discuss.

Jesus was taken down from the tree, laid in a borrowed tomb and there He stayed for three nights and three days, but on the first day of the week when one of the women that had not deserted Him came to the sepulchre where He

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

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WHOLE NUMBER 2661

FINGERS

By H.C. McSwain

Ex. 8:19; Ex. 29:12; Ex. 31:18; Luke 16:24; John 8:6; Dan. 5:5; John 20:25

Exodus 8:19 "Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, this (is) the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said."

The word "finger" is used quite a number of times in the entire Bible. It is usually symbolic of something. For example, in the above text, it is symbolic of work. If we substituted the word work in the verse, it would make good sense.

We would relate the finger to

the hand and the hand to work. It may take on other forms of significance. It may be used to identify a relationship, it may suggest mercy or the lack of it; it may also be used as an instrument of accusation. From the seventeen times it is used in the Bible, I have picked six different examples to think about. First:

I. Finger (Work) of God

Exodus 8:19

"Then the magicians said unto Pharaoh, This (is) the finger of God: and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he hearkened not unto them; as the LORD had said."

The scene is the contest be-

tween Moses, God's representative, and Pharaoh, king of Egypt. This statement is made by Pharaoh's own palace magicians, after seeing the several miracles in the contest, and admitting this was a miracle beyond their capacity to replicate. It seems very decisive to me when one's own employees and counselors make such a definite, open and unsolicited admission to the king.

This reminds us that when God is at work, it will be seen, pointed out, and not necessarily by the Christian community. It

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CHILD MOLESTATION AND HOMOSEXUALITY

by Dr. Paul Cameron

Ann Landers' says the statement, "Homosexuals are more inclined to molest children sexually than heterosexuals," is false.

Three kinds of scientific evidence point to the proportion of homosexual molestation: 1) survey reports of molestation in the general population, 2) surveys of those caught and convicted of

molestation, and 3) what homosexuals themselves have reported. These three lines of evidence suggest that the 1% to 3% of adults who practice homosexuality account for between a fifth and a third of all child molestation.

Reports of Molestation by the General Population

In 1983, a probability survey of the sexual experiences of

4,340 adults in 5 U.S. cities found that about 3% of men and 7% of women reported sexual involvement with a man before the age of 13 (i.e., 30% were homosexual).

In 1983-1984, a random survey of 3,132 adults in Los Angeles found that 3.8% of men and 6.8% of women said that they had been sexually assaulted in childhood.

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SEVEN ADMONITIONS FOR THE TIME OF APOSTACY

by Waldo Whiddon

"JUDE, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called: Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multi-



Waldo Whiddon

plied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you,
(Continued on Page 7, Col. 5)

THE SQUEAKY WHEEL GENERATION

by Gene Abbott

Matthew 12:41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this



Gene Abbott

generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

Unless I have good reason to do otherwise, I use the immediate context of a passage as the prime guide to the understanding of a verse. This verse is surrounded with comparisons of the current people in a particular area to other people of a different time and place. The word "generation,"

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

SAMARITAN WOMAN REVEALS THE GRACE OF GOD

by Willard Willis

We read in John 4:4 that it was needful that our Lord go through Samaria. "And he must needs go through Samaria."

The question may be asked regarding why it was needful that our Lord go through Samaria. The answer is that His destination was not Samaria, but Jacob's well was there where He was to meet a sheep that was lost.

A good shepherd puts everything else aside when one of his sheep is outside the fold. He, the shepherd, will not stop in Samaria for refreshments, or sleep when the lost sheep is wandering somewhere outside the pasture. Furthermore, it was decreed from eternity past that this sheep should meet the Good Shepherd at about the sixth hour or about high noon on this par-

ticular day at Jacob's well.

On our calendar are days that have been set aside for the observance of the birthdays of various people and on God's calendar there have been days set aside for the salvation of the lost sheep. God has not only predestined the day and hour for the salvation of His sheep, but He has also predestined the place. In the instance

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SAMARITAN

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before us, the time was noon and the place was Jacob's well. It was for this reason that our Lord did not stop in Samaria.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Eph. 1:4).

"Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink" (John 4:6, 7).

If the Lord has paused in Samaria for some rest and refreshments, He no doubt would not have been so weary from His journey, but He placed the safety of the lost sheep before His own interests. In this, He is truly the

Good Shepherd who careth for the sheep.

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd" (John 10:16).

"...and it was about the sixth hour" (John 4:6).

The Jewish day began at six o'clock in the morning and ended at six in the evening; therefore,



Willard Willis

about the sixth hour, would have been a few minutes before or after noon.

It is important to note that the Shepherd did not wait until the cool of the evening to go after the lost sheep, but He sought her even in the heat of the day. The Good Shepherd will not be stopped or detoured by heat, wind, rain or anything else when the sheep needs Him. Let us bow our heads and hearts and say "thanks" to Him. May we ever worship Him in spirit and in truth, giving thanks to our great Shepherd who loves us so much.

"...Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well..." (John 4:6).

The Shepherd had been accustomed to sitting on a throne. And here we find Him sitting on a well. What a contrast! What condescension!

"There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water..." (John 4:7).

It was no accident that this woman arrived at the well at this particular time anymore than it was an accident that our Lord was there at that hour. Neither was it an accident that the disciples had gone into town. We can be fairly certain that they had asked the Lord to go into town with them, but He, no doubt, informed them that He would wait for them at the well. His reason, of course, for remaining behind was so that He could be alone with the lost sheep. One will find Christ alone with His sheep several times here in the gospel according to John. He was alone with Nicodemus, the blind man, the convicted adulteress and the man at the pool of Bethesda. It is important that the sheep be alone with their master so that they can speak eye to eye and heart to heart.

"...Jesus saith unto her,

Give me to drink" (John 4:7).

These are the first words of the Shepherd to the lost sheep. The sheep was lost, but didn't know it, so the Shepherd begins His conversation so as to point out the fact that she is in dire need of help from Him. It is as if He had said, "Give me one million dollars." The woman could no more give Him to drink than she could have given Him one million dollars, seeing that "...Give me to drink" refers to drinking of spiritual water rather than that which was literal.

"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:8).

"Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which ma a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans" (John 4:9).

Our Lord's request ("...Give me to drink") puzzled the woman. First of all, the object she was seeking was literal water, and not Christ the spiritual water. His request only filled her mind with questions regarding why He would make such a request. The woman had expected Christ to give her the old Jewish treatment of a cold shoulder, seeing that she was a Samaritan; therefore His warm attitude puzzled her.

"...How is it that thou, being a Jew, asketh drink of me..." I can ask approximately the same question of the Lord. Why are you mindful of me? There is nothing in me to merit your love and concern. I desire a cold shoulder. Why have you reached down your gracious hand to me? The answer to this mystery can be found in I John 4:19 where we read: "We love him, because he first loved us."

"Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water" (John 4:10).

"...If thou knewest..." Here lies man's problem. He is deaf and dumb when it comes to spiritual things. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14).

"...If thou knewest..." We who do know the gift of God, and the Giver, are the most fortunate people in the world. We may not be rich in this world's goods, but if we know the gift of God and the Giver, then we are richer by far than those who do not know him, no matter what their station or position in life

may be.

Those who know not the Son must be satisfied with Jacob's well. That is, with that which is only earthly. They who drink of this well will thirst again, for this water cannot quench man's deep spiritual need.

"The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?" (John 4:11).

Nicodemus said, "...How can a man be born again when he is old?... This woman said, "...Thou has nothing to draw with..." Both were unable to think on a spiritual level. Why was this? It was because both were spiritually dead.

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1).

She said, "...thou has nothing to draw with..." The Lord, had He chosen to do so, could have answered her as He did Nicodemus. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8).

"...Thou hast nothing to draw with..." (John 4:11).

The wisest carnal man on earth could have done no better than this Samaritan woman. He too would have said, in essence,

"...thou hast nothing to draw with..." The nail I am driving is that all of earth's universities can not raise man an iota into the spiritual realm. He remains totally dumb to spiritual things until God quickens (makes him alive). The new birth involves a "new creature" (new creation) and only God can create. The natural man can no more perceive of the things of God than a deaf mute can enjoy a fine speech or a blind man can enjoy an art gallery.

"...and the well is deep..." (John 4:11). Jacob's well was deep, but her need was much deeper than the well, and the grace of God which brought the gift and the Giver to her was deeper than both the well and her need.

All the water in Jacob's well, yea, all the wells of pleasure on earth cannot begin to quench man's deep, deep spiritual need.

"Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?" (John 4:12).

Jacob's well was very old. It was so old that even Jacob, his children and cattle had refreshed themselves by way of its cool water. We may add that the well our Lord spoke of was much, much older than Jacob's well. It had been dug back in the council halls of eternity. Jacob also drank of this well for he had received

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C.H. SPURGEON ON MAN'S DEPRAVITY

I've often wondered why so many professing Christians are seemingly willing participants in the spread of the psychological/self-love/self-esteem gospel. Perhaps it's because most have no idea of what the Bible teaches concerning man's total depravity and God's total sovereignty. Spurgeon's words of over a hundred years ago are just as applicable today: "There are some professing Christians who can speak of themselves in terms of admiration; but, from my inmost heart, I loathe such speeches more and more every day that I live. Those who talk in such a boastful fashion must be constituted very differently from me. While they are congratulating themselves, I have to lie humbly at the foot of Christ's cross, and marvel that I am saved at all, for I know that I am saved. I have to wonder that I do not believe Christ more, and equally wonder that I am privileged to believe in Him at all -- to wonder that I do not love Him more, and equally

to wonder that I am not holier, and equally to wonder that I have any desire to be holy at all considering what a polluted, debased, depraved nature I find still within my soul, notwithstanding all that divine grace has done in me.

If God were ever to allow the fountains of the great deeps of depravity to break up in the best man that lives, he would make as bad a devil as the devil himself is. I care nothing for what these boasters say concerning their own perfections; I feel sure that they do not know themselves, or they could not talk as they often do. There is tinder enough in the saint who is nearest to heaven to kindle another hell if God should but permit a spark to fall upon it. In the very best of men there is an infernal and well-nigh infinite depth of depravity. Some Christians never seem to find this out. I almost wish that they might not do so, for it is a painful discovery for anyone to make; but it has the beneficial effect of making us cease from trusting in ourselves, and causing us to glory only in the Lord."

(Copied from Biblical Discernment Ministries, Vol. 2, No. 5, May 1993).

IF SOME ARE ELECT, WHAT IS THE GOOD OF PREACHING?

by Charles H. Spurgeon

Captious and cavilling persons will object, "You say that God loves His people, and therefore they will be saved; then what is the good of preaching?" What is the good of preaching? When I say that God loves a multitude that no man can number, a countless host of the race of men, do you ask me what is the good of preaching?

What is the good of preaching? To fetch these diamonds of the Lord out of the dunghill; to go down to the depths, as the diver does, to fetch up God's pearls from the place where they are.

What is the good of preaching? To cut down the good corn, and gather it into the garner.

What is the good of preaching? To fetch out God's elect from the ruins of the fall, and make them stand on the rock Christ Jesus, and see their standing sure.

Ah, ye who ask what is the good of preaching, because God has ordained some to salvation, we ask you whether it would not be a most foolish thing to say, because there is to be a harvest, what is the good of sowing? There is to be a harvest, what is the use of reaping? The very reason why we do sow and reap is because we feel assured that there is to be a harvest.

And if, indeed, I believed there was not a number who must be saved, I could not go into a pulpit again. Only once make me think that no one is certain to be saved, and I do not care to preach. But now I know that a countless number must be saved; I am confident that Christ "...shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days..." I know that, if there is much to dispirit me in my ministry, and I see but little of its effects, yet He shall keep all whom the Father has given to Him; and this makes me preach.

I come into this chapel tonight with the assurance that God has some child of His, in this place, not yet called; and I feel confident that He will call someone by the use of the ministry, so why not by me? I know there are not a few souls whom God has given me through my ministry, so why not by me? I know there are not a few souls whom God has given me through my ministry, not only hundreds, but thousands. I have seen some hundreds of those who profess to have been brought to God through my preaching at Park Street, and elsewhere; and with that confidence I must go

on. I know that Jesus must have a "seed." His people must increase, and it is the very purpose of the ministry to seek them out, and bring them into God's fold. Our Saviour tells us the use of the ministry is, that they may "...believe on me through their word."

There is one peculiarity about this. Christ says, "They '...shall believe on me through their word.'" Have you never heard people call out about running after men? They say, "You are all running after such-and-such a man." What then, would you have them run after a woman? You say, "The people go after one particular man." Whom else shall they go after? Some persons say, "We went to such-and-such a place, and the people there love their minister too much." That would be very dreadful, but it is not so. As for ministers being in danger of being ruined by too much love in any particular place, they get too much of the reverse somewhere else. If we get a little sweet, somebody else is sure to put in much that is bitter. Is it not singular that Christ should say, "They '...shall believe on me through their word'?"

Now, do God's people believe on Christ through the word of the ministry? We know that our faith does not rest on the word of man, but on the Word of God. We do not rest on any man, yet it is through "their" word; that is, through the word of the apostles, and through the word of every faithful minister.

SAMARITAN

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Jesus Christ as his Lord and Saviour.

The age of the well our Lord had reference to can be found in Ephesians 1:4-5: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestined us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

"Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:13-14).

"...Whosoever drinketh

of this water shall thirst again." This inscription can be written over all the wells of earth. The rich man had a big cup with which he drank deeply of the wells of earth ("...fared sumptuously every day"). Yet, in hell he cried for a drop of water to cool his tongue.

There are many who drink of a well which we may call the well of good works. Over this well can also be written the inscription, "...Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again."

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst..."

We find at least two dynamic truths here that are not accepted by the world. The first is that salvation is a gift and the second is that the gift is eternal. I have drunk of this well, therefore, I could call God a liar if I should one day find myself thirsting in the flames of hell. God, of course, is no liar.

"The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw" (John 4:15).

The woman is still ignorant of the gift and the Giver, but she does believe that He can supply the living water or she would not have said, "...give me this water..." Furthermore, she knows that she is not to pray or work for it, seeing that she says, "...give me this water..." She had not yet seen the difference between the spiritual and the carnal, seeing that she believed the living water would take the place of literal water. In other words, she did not understand that there is a carnal and a spiritual man. One thrives on heavenly water and the other still drinks of the wells of earth.

"Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither" (John 4:16).

The woman said, "...give me this water..." and He said, "...Go, call thy husband..." The words "...Go, call thy husband..." were spoken to her conscience. These were words of truth which were spoken so as to reveal her deep need. She must have stared at Him for a moment when He, by these words, opened up the secret chamber of her heart, yea, the secret chamber where the consciousness of her sin lay.

She said, "...give me this water..." and He said "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." God bids us to go and recognize our evil ways, repent and come to Him for complete forgiveness. Thus the "...come hither" speaks of the glorious grace of God that welcomed her, by way of the Son, into the Father's arms.

"The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly" (John 4:17-18).

Zacchaeus, the Lord's sheep, had become chief of the publicans. That is, he had become a very filthy sheep. He had gotten the dirt of the world all over himself. So was it with this woman. She too was chief among sinners in that she had had five husbands and the one she presently had was not her husband. She was very vile, but God's grace was greater. There is no one who is out of the reach of God's grace.

We also learn from John 4:17-18 that our Lord sees all and knows all. He knew the depths to which she had fallen. He knew the cost of bringing her from the deep pit, yet He did not draw back.

"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting" (Isa. 50:6).

"The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet" (John 4:19). Her eyes have finally been directed away from the well, bucket and rope to the person of Christ the Lord. She now looks at Him for He is her hope. He is the gift of God to her. In Him and Him alone is life. In fact, there is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved.

"I perceive that thou art a prophet." A prophet is God's mouthpiece or spokesman. She recognizes that He has come from God, but she has not yet recognized Him as the Messiah.

"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things" (John 4:25).

Her mind is now on a spiritual plane. Her thoughts and conversation have been elevated to God's thoughts. It is now time for the Master to grant to her the great privilege of knowing Himself, so He introduces Himself to her. "Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (John 4:26).

The Lord not only introduced Himself to her, but He also revealed Himself to her. I cannot believe that the introduction was without revelation.

We know that this woman drank of the living water or she would not have been used of the Lord as it described in John 4:39: "And many of the Samari-

ans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did."

SQUEAKY

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here might possibly refer to the people of a time, or (as some argue) this word might apply (sometimes, they say) to a specific age in this particular instance, and I'm taking this understanding of the verse to apply to the contemporary American society; although only by type. I am here to appraise this nation as it is today. Friends, we seem to be in a "peck-of-trouble," as a generation!

It is my understanding that we are accountable for all our actions, and this, I would think, includes those we choose to elect to office. This, I feel, is where many professing Christians drop the ball. I know of a preacher, professing to be a firm Biblicist, who had liberal political associations, and I suspect it was because of traditional family political ties. I am thankful most of the candidates I voted for were not elected; because (now) I doubt I can be held responsible for my vote. I did have some misgivings over some I voted for, however. Why did I vote for them, then? Not because of their party! No, it was a default vote. The opposing candidates looked even worse. Friends, we are truly in sad shape.

Those of us, in Illinois, were offered little option in either Senatorial or Gubernatorial races; because all these candidates were "pro-choice," if we're to accept this as a proper term. We had no "pro-life" candidates available in either race. This is why some of my votes were default votes. Fiscal responsibility would have become a minor concern, had there been an option on this issue. These candidates had all courted the "squeaky-wheel" vote. I suspect most readers have heard that expression that "the squeaky wheel gets the grease." I assume it is common in all parts of the country. It is a sorry situation that this thinking is in control of our government, at all levels. This may not be totally true in every location, but I'm certain it is generally true of local and national political offices on most issues.

Remember the Bork nomination for the Supreme Court? This was truly a moral rejection! Bork

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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

Were the Montanists true Baptists such as we would recognize today? What exactly must one believe to be a true Baptist? Did the Montanists meet these qualifications?

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

From the limited writings I have read concerning the Montanists, I would count them Baptists that we would recognize today, although I am sure there would be objection from some. Although there are some areas of belief upon which we and the Montanists would disagree, in the main we hold the same basic beliefs. Montanists derived their name from their leader Montanus who came from the Phrygian village of Pepuza.

Montanists believed and taught generally orthodox doctrine. Being deeply rooted in the faith, the Montanists accepted both Old and New Testaments. They were sound on the Trinity and its personalities. They rejected episcopacy and a bishop's claim to exercise the keys of power which rightly belong to Christ's church. They believed that only adults and not babies should be baptized. They demanded what their enemies called re-baptism. They demanded purity and holiness from their people in contrast to the laxity of the world and other churches. They shunned the world's ways and worldly education. They held to life in the Holy Spirit, while opposing paganism. They believed in church purity and strong discipline. Fasting, dieting, celibacy, and martyrdom were all emphasized. They also practiced examination and then baptism. No wonder they were not popular in the

general religious practices of the day.

Certainly most of the things I have mentioned would be necessary to be a true Baptist. In fact, many called Baptist today don't believe half of what I have stated that the Montanists believed. Were they perfect? No. Are all true Baptists in perfect agreement on every single thing and practice? No. I believe that the Montanists met the qualifications to be labeled "Baptist." Their primary reason for rising up and emphasizing all that they did teach was to battle the laxity of religious life in that time; the impurity, and straying from Scriptural principles. Would to God that we today, among our people, would have the zeal and vision of the ancient Montanists.

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I have in my library several history books, such as A Manual of Church History by A.H. Newman, A Concise History of Baptists by C.H. Orchard, A History of the Baptists by John T. Christian, Baptist History by J.M. Cramp, and The Trail of Blood by J.M. Carroll. While most of them speak favorably of the Montanist, none made it clear to me whether they were true Baptists. They are referred to as ana-baptists in the strictest sense of the word, because they considered all baptism alien except Montanist. Newman furnishes more detail about them and speaks the least favorable. Nevertheless, I can say with confidence that if they were descendants of the apostles and the church of Jerusalem, and held to the same doctrine and practice, then they were for sure true Baptists; for all true Baptists are linked to the first church that Jesus himself built.

Here are seven things that one

must believe to be a true Baptist. I. A spiritual membership-made up of properly baptized believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. II. Practicing the ordinances of baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper. III. One must be missionary-carrying out the great commission given by the Lord before He ascended unto the Father. IV. Holding to the doctrine of grace alone for salvation. V. Landmark-linked to the first church in Jerusalem organized by Jesus himself. VI. Having received organizational authority from a church of like faith and order. VII. Must hold to the doctrine of the local assembly-not a universal, visible or invisible so-called church, or a mystical body of Christ made up of all Christians in the world. Thank you for your question.

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I must confess that I know very little about the Montanists. According to J.M. Carroll in his little booklet, "The Trail of Blood", the nickname, "Montanist" was given the churches of the Lord during the third and fourth centuries. As they were individual and independent churches scattered in many places in the world there must have been differences as to their beliefs and practices. While in the main the churches were true to the faith, no doubt, some had departed from the faith and the candle stick had been removed. It may well have been in that day like today where all who are called "Baptist" are not true to what the name stands for.

In answer to the second question, a true Baptist is one who believes that Jesus is the Christ, that is he must be a child of God (I John 5:1). He must have "put on Christ by baptism" (Gal. 3:27). That baptism must have

been by the authority of a church which has received its authority through a line of churches back to the church which Christ built and gave the authority to baptize (Matt. 28:18-20). In order to recognize such a church today, J.M. Carroll in "The Trail of Blood" has given ten marks identifying such a church. There are other marks that could be added but a church must at least have these.

Did the Montanists meet these qualifications? At least some of the churches that were called Montanist must have had these marks or they would not been in the line of true churches which extend from the present time back to the first church at Jerusalem.

SQUEAKY

(Continued from Page 3)

avored morals and this squeaky-wheel mentality could not tolerate a moral judge being sent to the Supreme Court. Our current crop of liberals must have more and stronger immorality. Have you all heard of the NEA? Which one, do you wonder? It matters very little, for either is as reprobate as the other. Both seek to infiltrate the public minds with pornography and with immorality. Both are humanistic enemies of Christian principles. In case some readers aren't familiar with the NEA acronym, it can mean either National Education Association, or National Endowment for the Arts. Both organizations are controlled by liberal extremists. I think I'm licensed to term them extremists, since they will term me as guilty of attempting to curtail their right to free speech, when I only hope to prevent the use of tax-money to be used to promote their aims. I would not allow our taxes to subsidize planned-parenthood when they attempt to sell abortion as the cure for unwanted pregnancy. I would not allow taxes to subsidize teaching evolution or modern amorality, and I would not allow tax money to fund anti-Christian or pornographic art. Both of these organizations are dedicated to tax-expenditures with these profile types. The U.S. Congress has made a practice of funding these groups, knowing all these facts, because they are both "squeaky-wheels."

I've titled this as the "Squeaky-Wheel Generation" but I could just as well have named it the "age of mis-representation", for this is an equally true characteristic of our times. We are so subject to the whims of these noisy groups that we often find we must compete with them with equal cleverness. Think of our farmers. They've been victimized by extreme environmentalists. Remember the apple-

scare? There was much noise about apples being poisoned by spray. Our entire society has become enslaved to a condition we might call "situation ethics." I apply the term cautiously, here. This isn't quiet the normal way it is used. This is basically a term to be disputed, but it is influencing our entire way of life. In this mis-application, we have been led to presume we must react to an environmental situation; but it now appears to be apparent that no environmental crisis actually even existed. Due to situation ethics, it seems we're required to excuse this media injustice to agriculture; because environmental concerns are deemed to be of such grand magnitude that any action in that behalf is warranted. This is simply because environmentalism is a very loud squeaky-wheel. Ethics thus overcomes fairness, as a convenience.

To the extent that we can generalize, I'd say the farm community is one of the more honest in our present culture. This group has been victimized from every quarter, in the name of different squeaky-wheel movements. Farmers stand as obstacles (as does the church) to socialism, internationalism, and environmentalism. They find it necessary, to the extent we can generalize, to use some of the same tactics others use. They may sometimes overstate seriousness of drought or other natural disasters in hope of getting federal relief for loss of crops. In Illinois, this year, a dry season was said to have reduced farm yield a terrific extent. Unlike many groups, however, they could not take full advantage of the funded relief because they could not collect until the crops were harvested, so the loss could be evaluated in light of actual yield. They are held to the truth, while others are not. It was in the name of environmentalism that the apple farmers were victimized by the spray scare, and this victimization was greatly facilitated by the news media. There was no real basis for the claim of contamination, and news associations had no reason to think there was. They dramatized the event with no valid reason and are now being sued; but one network managed to escape successful suit before, after making spurious claims against a noted individual through clever control of court venue. I'd like to pause here, to inform the reader that (contrary to environmental propaganda) most of our scientists doubt there is really any "global warming," although this is often cited as a reason for certain concerns today.

With the AIDS scare, we find another example of a squeaking wheel. AIDS activists have

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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

Is an excluded person still a member of the excluding church? If not, would it be wrong for another church to receive such as a member, or use such in her services? Please explain somewhat in detail.

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Is an excluded person still a member of the excluding church? In my opinion yes. I believe an excluded person is excluded from taking any active part in church. In fact, he should be treated as a heathen man, a lost man if you please. If this is not true, the church that excluded him has no more control over him, therefore any law-breaking church can take him and treat him as any other new member. There are many law-breaking churches out there that are just waiting for us to exclude a member in order for them to steal them. This is somewhat

like me spanking my child and mother or neighbor grabbing it up in arms and loving it. This tells the child that daddy was wrong in disciplining him. So, when an outlaw church takes an excluded member from a sister church, she is saying the church was wrong in taking such action.

Is it wrong for another church to receive such as a member, or use such in her service? Yes! This makes such a church to be a law breaker, breaking all rules for fellowship with the church that has disciplined the person. Any church that fellowships the outlaw church or its pastor are in agreement with the outlaw church. The same goes with any church that will use an excluded member in any way. Beloved, a church cannot practice discipline and keep the church clean and pure if another church does not recognize her authority to discipline her members. All churches

should treat excluded members as if they were heathen, lost members, until they repent and make things right with the home church.

The reason we cannot fellowship other churches as we did twenty-five years ago is that many churches have turned outlaw and will not respect church authority. I would love to fellowship the churches I once fellowshiped with, but I am not willing to compromise the truth and my convictions.

I beg you brethren, if you have wronged a sister church; somehow, try to set things straight and apologize so we can join in together again and have the great Bible Conferences again. If we are in fellowship, we can join together in supporting missionaries, and using each other in revival meetings. Don't be an outlaw church or an outlaw preacher, let us work together.

only propose the issue to all readers and permit individual conscience to settle it. We appear to have a generation which is unable to discern and unwilling to examine. It may well be that television has spoiled us; but, even to the extent this is true, it would seem that moral degeneration has been the true root of our complacency.

What more should be said? I bring the readers back to the introductory passage. I stress the individual need for self-appraisal. We need to warn this generation. If we merely try to attract them to have numbers, we are using them. If we do not warn them, as Jonah (reluctantly) warned Ninevah, are we not failing in our mission? If we would promise them salvation without advising them of their potential, and without warning them of possible "cost" or expectations of their repentance resultant from their conversion, are we not lying to them? Is this not deceit? If we will say they are not under judgment (needing conversion) and endorse their activity, by default, are we not as guilty as they? I believe it is the mission of the church to bring forth the truth with honesty, rather than subtlety. I doubt that we can convince ourselves we are true Christians unless we do this and (frankly) I doubt that we would be, myself.

FINGERS

(Continued from Page 1)

may not be immediate but it will happen. Remember the Roman soldiers at the crucifixion? They said that He was the Son of God.

But what effect did it have on the king? It was a negative one. We would ask the question: how in the name of common sense, could a man have such a testimony and not only not believe it, but rather become more set in his willful way? Of course, we understand that God had decided on a specific role the king was to play in this test of wills, as we are told in the book of Romans:

Romans 9:17 "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."

But let's bring it down closer to home and ask ourselves: Discounting all the imperfections of all our members, is God at work or has He been at work in our churches and/or in the lives of the members? I think all would have to agree that He has, and or is, working in the majority of our membership. Oftentimes, we have some who attend but don't make an open profession, I am wondering if they would not agree that God is among us? If

so, will you not also agree that it is time for you to take a stand?

Some might plead that they are like Pharaoh, God has some unknown but devilish purpose for them. Can we really classify anyone as another Pharaoh? I doubt any of my readers would go so far as to say that God has pointed them out for some form of reprobation. I know of no responsible person who is willing to make that assertion about anyone.

II. The Priest's Finger (Identity)

Exodus 29:12

"And thou shalt take of the blood of the bullock, and put (it) upon the horns of the altar with thy finger, and pour all the blood beside the bottom of the altar."

This verse, along with other very similar ones, describes a specific sacrifice made under the law of Moses, consecrating the priests. The thing that captures our attention is that of the part the priest's finger plays. He kills the animal, and sticks his finger in the blood, then smears the blood on the horn of the altar with his finger. Later, in another part of this same ceremony, blood is placed on the tips of their ears, thumbs and big toes.

And what is the significance of all this? Why did not God say use a feather to place the blood on the horns of the altar, or a stick? It is a matter of identity. The priests were to identify with the blood of the animal. And we will find this same sacrifice is identified with Christ in the New Testament: Hebrews 13:11 "For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp" and Hebrews 13:13 "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach."

Why is it that some refuse to identify with the blood? Is it the reproach that Paul speaks of? We cannot hope to have salvation without personal identification with the blood of Christ. The ear, the toes, and thumbs also seem to say that identifying with the blood makes us accountable in regards to what we do, what we hear and where we go.

III. A Personal Letter From The Finger Of God

Exodus 31:18

"And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God."

Moses had been on the mount (Continued on Page 7, Col. 2)

SQUEAKY

(Continued from Page 4)

emerged and are demanding more expenditure for AIDS research. They claim it needs to be increased, although (I understand) we are already spending more for their pet program than is being spent for heart trouble or cancer. I would like to point-out that this is a disease rooted in immorality, and it doesn't matter all that much whether we blame it on "homo-" or "hetero-" sexual immorality. There appears to be no sensible doubt that it has been spread predominantly by promiscuous sexual contact. Yes, there may be exceptions, but promiscuity was the basis and seems most often to have been homosexual in nature. An irony is that these people will insist that "victims" must be protected and should not be required to make their disease known, although this practice will likely contribute the spread of that condition.

We've heard the enigma about the tree falling in a forest, when there was no one around to hear it. The follow-up question is

whether there was any sound, with the reason being that a scientific definition of sound requires there be something to receive the sound waves, or to hear the noise, in other words. Building upon this, let me say that the squeaky-wheel does nothing without agents to make it function with success. These ridiculous agencies must have some support. They have. They have the media to cause the noise to reverberate to the public. They have a public audience that is almost totally lacking in discernment, and we have an amoral Congress that will do their wishes to court their vote. The media, for whatever reason they might have, finds it to their liking to dramatize their case. Let it be known this same media will completely ignore any persecution of the church. I remember a news commentator (I think it was Chet Huntley) saying that they (the newsmen) had no axe to grind. I don't believe that for one instant. I could just as well have titled this "The Frustrating Generation"

The point I wish to make in all this is that we have developed a

culture that caters to, and even encourages, crisis management for those who will cause the greatest furor. Our very system is geared to mis-management. The prevalent political philosophy is to fool enough of the people enough of the time, to be re-elected: It isn't necessary to fool the entire public. It is especially sad that this philosophy has found a way into pulpits, for we find ministerial efforts being so evangelistic as to go beyond presenting the gospel. This gives rise to gimmickry! I won't be so judgmental as to claim every device is a gimmick. I will only say we must keep our outreach truthful, and I will stop there. Some, who I will refrain from identifying, will go to more extremes in bringing people in then I. Some will, of course be more critical of those than I am being here. The practice that I wish to deal with at this time is the practice of "a knowing compromise of the truth for the sake of an assumed public benefit." I do not wish, at this time, to become involved in identifying that practice with specific individuals, groups, or doctrines. In this thesis, I will

"SO HE BRINGETH THEM TO THEIR DESIRED HAVEN"

by C.D. Cole

Psalm 107:23-30, *They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters: These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven."*

INTRODUCTION: Our text is an inspired description of a voyage at sea. I am using it as a figure of the journey of life, in the hope that we may safely make that voyage and finally drop anchor at the desired haven and leave the ship for the shores of sweet deliverance.

It is quite common to compare the journey of life to a sea voyage. We have it in our hymnals and in all the world of poetry. The comparison between a voyage at sea and the journey of life is very striking. I do not recall that life is ever compared to a journey by land, the sea voyage is much more apt. We travel, some do, in three natural elements today: land, sea, and air. I'm a land lubber, I'm neither sea-minded nor air-minded, so far as means of travel are concerned.

Our journey through life is much more like a voyage by sea than by land or air. Life, like a sea voyage, is a great adventure. How much mystery there is about it! How much mist and fog! How numerous are the perils to which we are exposed! And how pathless is the sea we traverse. Journeys by land are over well-marked roads, but not so on a sea voyage, there are no paths across the ocean.

Life is full of loneliness, like the wide, wide sea. We who have not crossed the ocean are apt to think the sea is covered with ships. In the harbors we see them jostling one another, but one may cross the ocean from New York to Europe without ever

sighting a ship. And there is a loneliness in our individual experiences as though we were a ship at sea. All alone in the world, alone even while we walk the crowded streets of the city. In our deepest experiences, whether of joy or sorrow, we are alone. We have heartaches, and hopes and thoughts that nobody shares with us, they do not even know of them. Every individual sails the sea of life in his own frail bark. Changing the figure, there is a room in our lives into which we never invite anybody, nobody save the Lord and Saviour. In the Roman Catholic confessional, the kneeling penitent whispers into the ear of the priest, father confessor, things not even told to wife or husband. And so those who have Jesus Christ for their High Priest, pour into his ear, things that nobody else will ever hear.

I. We are all voyagers, we are all headed towards some sort of port. How quickly the days and weeks and months and years go by! How soon grey hairs appear! Job compared the journey of life to the swift ships. Life was slower in Job's day than ours and the ships were slower too. So life today can be compared to the swift ships that plow the high seas. We are all on our way to some supposed haven. We have no continuing city here. We are on the move and there is no stopping place. Whether asleep or awake, we are living out our allotted days on earth. The place that now knows us will shortly know us again no more forever.

But this aspect of life gets little attention today. The masses are making the best of this life, getting all they can out of it. We live in utter forgetfulness of the life that is to come. The end of this life is a forbidden subject with most people, they deliberately ignore the end of the way. But whatever our circumstances, however vigorous our physical frame, however strong our will, we are going on and will soon reach the end of life on this earth. There will soon be a hole dug for you and for me. Medical science has raised the average length of life, but it is still true that men live no longer than they did generations ago. It is still true that if we reach the age of fourscore years, "their pride is but labor and sorrow, for it is soon cut off and we fly away." We might as well face the fact, life is a voyage and our ship of life is headed toward some kind of port. We cannot go on forever, the voyage will end. We may exercise our will over

in the advertising business?"

But you are! Every day you advertise something, unconsciously or otherwise. What is it?

A daring aviator was doing some fancy sky writing over a large city sometime ago. He was spelling out the name of a popular cigarette in smoke letters half a mile across. The entire city stopped and gazed gapingly heavenward.

One little tot, looking at the growing letter, exclaimed in awed voice: "It's God!"

But his companion was heard to reply, "Naw, it ain't. If it was God He wouldn't be advertising cigarettes!"

And God's people will be very careful about advertising cigarettes, cigars, tobacco, liquor, beer and all such like. For there seems to be little difference between the man who walks the streets bearing an advertisement on his back and the person who smokes tobacco or drinks intoxicants. Each is advertising.

But there are other things which folks advertise -- bad temper, unkind words, selfishness, deceit, dishonesty, and many kindred traits.

Yes, it's a pertinent, proper question to ask ourselves, now, this moment: "What am I advertising?"

--The Gospel Messenger.

some people, but when death summons us, whatever our wealth, our learning, our influence, or force of will, we shall have to obey Him.

Here's a thing I wish I could get everybody to seriously consider, to what haven is your ship directed? To what destination are you traveling? The ocean of your life will some day be crossed, where will you land?

I have never crossed the ocean, I have never been on a ship long enough to get seasick. But those who have, say there are two stages of seasickness. The first stage is when you are pretty sick, so sick you are afraid the ship will go down; the other stage is when you are awfully sick, so sick you are afraid it will not go down, you really want to die, you are so sick. And so, on the ship of life there are times when one is so sick of life that he wants to die. I suppose most of us have had experiences on the sea of life, when we felt that if all the voyage is going to be just like that, we would be glad for the voyage to come to an end. Some of you have had such a stormy voyage and you have longed for the ship to come to port somewhere.

There may be somebody today who is tired of life, but you have no home to go to. Your soul is orphaned, and you know nothing of homesickness for the fatherland. You are weary of life, but

do not know where to go.

II. Psalm 107:30, *"So he bringeth them unto their desired haven."* What is your desired haven? To what land will you emigrate? If you could have your heaven made to order, what kind of a place would it be? A missionary who had spent years in India under scorching sun came home to America; there was such beauty and comfort everywhere, he remarked to someone: "It may be that heaven will be better than this, but for the moment this is good enough for me." Yes, there are times when earth seems good enough, but all of us have had enough of earth to know that it is not the desired haven. There are too many broken homes, too many blasted lives, too much wreck and ruin all about us, to find any paradise on earth. We have to sail for another country.

What is your desired haven? What would fulfill your ideal? What kind of people would you want there? How many would you gladly leave behind? How much baggage would you carry? And how much would you label, "Not wanted," and even forget to bring it on board?

I tell you somebody I would like to leave behind. He is called "the old man" in the Scripture. I don't think I could have any heaven with him present. A preacher tells of a member he once had who had the habit of climbing up the "miff-tree." He learned to leave him up there, because when he brought the step ladder to help him down, he would use it to climb another tree. One day the preacher said to his wife, "Suppose you and your husband take your church letters and go somewhere else and be happy." She shook her head and said, "I fear, pastor, it would be as our former pastor used to say, we should take our miserable selves with us." Yes, our miserable selves, that's the trouble

with all of us.

What is your greatest trouble in life? Your circumstances? No. Is it somebody who is hard to live with, a husband or wife? No. Your chief trouble is in your own breast, and so is mine. The land to which we are going must be a land where the old man will never be known.

My desired haven is a sinless land. I want to reach the place where there will be no sin in me and no sin around me.

My desired haven is the land of which it is written, *"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat,"* Revelation 7:16. This is the land where there are no climatic difficulties, where everlasting wealth obtains, where there are no cemeteries, and no broken hearts.

Where is there such a place? Not in America, or Europe, or Australia, or Africa, or Russia. It is not on this planet.

III. I must tell you of a ship and pilot that will take you to this desired haven. There is a liner guaranteed to transport all who desire to go from this sin-stricken world to the desired haven. And there is a Pilot who has never lost a passenger. There is a heaven bound ship. That is what salvation is. And Jesus Christ is the Pilot and owner of this ship. The ship is all paid for and the passage has been paid for as well. I see marked on the side of the ship the name GRACE. Do you ask the fare? Nothing at all, the ticket is marked. Isaiah 55:1, *"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."* You get the ticket for nothing when you

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A DEBTOR TO MERCY I AM!

(Tune: How Tedious and Tasteless the Hours)

A debtor to mercy I am!

Of covenant mercy I sing!

Through faith in my Savior, the Lamb,
My praises to God I must bring.
God's mercy preceded my birth,
And followed me all of my days;
Though I have no merit, nor worth,
My whole life His mercy displays.

When lost in rebellion and sin,
God's mercy protected me then;
and since I have been born again
In all things His mercy is seen!
My daily provisions, I know,
Come from my God's bountiful hand;
In happiness here, or in woe,
My God will His mercy command!

When sorrows and sins are no more,
And I'm with my glorified King,
I will my God's mercy adore,
Forever and ever I'll sing --
A vessel of mercy I am!
I'm saved by the mercy of God!
Rich mercy through Jesus, the Lamb,
Who bought me with His precious blood!

Don Fortner

SO HE

(Continued from Page 6)

Pilot is dependable and the ship is seaworthy. The passage is going to be stormy, but the ship is safe and all passengers are safe.

I heard of an old man of melancholy mood. His only pleasure was in being melancholy. You see people like that. But he was sound in the faith. He knew the Lord and although he did not show it in his face, he rejoiced in Christ. Somebody went to him for advice about his soul's salvation. He had believed in Christ but did not know whether he was saved or not. "I have so much trouble, so much difficulty in my business, so much trouble with my children, so much trouble with this old body. I wonder if I am really a Christian. If I were, it seems I would be free of all these things." The old brother said, "Did you ever cross the ocean?" "Yes." "Did you have a good passage?" "No, a dreadful passage." "What was the matter with you?" "Well, it was terribly stormy." "Did you get off the ship?" "Oh no, I had to stay on." "You had your ups and downs?" "Yes, I did." "But," he said, "you did not have your ins and outs, did you?"

Being a Christian will not insure smooth sailing on the sea of life. But Jesus Christ our Pilot, and His ship our salvation are equal to all the storms of life and will bring every trusting soul to his desired haven.

What a troubled world this is. Find me, if you can, a bit of tranquil water anywhere. There is no smooth sailing anywhere on the sea of life. But there is a desired haven where Christ will bring us. I end with a prayer which I wish might be the prayer of everyone:

Jesus, Saviour, pilot me,
Over life's tempestuous sea;
Unknown waves before me roll,
Hiding rocks and treacherous shoal:
Chart and compass come from Thee,
Jesus, Saviour pilot me.

As a mother stills her child,
Thou canst hush the ocean wild;
Boisterous waves obey thy will
When thou sayest to them, Be still!
Wondrous Sovereign of the sea,
Jesus, Saviour, pilot me.

When at least I near the shore,
and the fearful breakers roar
Twixt me and the peaceful rest,
Then, while leaning on thy breast,
May I hear thee say to me,
Fear not, I will pilot thee.

FINGERS

(Continued from Page 5)

for over a month and after God had finished communing with him, God gave him a table with the ten commandments written on it, written by the finger of God. Did God literally write on this tablet? I see no reason to believe otherwise; however, even more importantly is that God wrote a personal letter expressing His rules and regulations for conducting our lives toward Him, and others. To put it another way, it helps keep our daily lives free of most of Satan's entanglements.

But to think that God, the Architect of the universe, would take time off from running it and write us something of such a personal nature, is mind boggling. And He expects us to pay attention to it.

As little as we think about it, most of our problems as a nation, come directly or indirectly from disregarding these rules.

IV. The Finger From Hades
Luke 16:24

"And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame."

The finger from Hades reminds us there is a place called hell and we must shun that place and we can do so. There is no reason to go there. (Can any sane person think of a good reason to end up there?)

And this finger reminds us that hell is a place void mercy or kindness. Not even so little (or much) as a drop of water. Certainly, the amount of water a finger can offer is very, very little. In hell, a drop would be comparable to a barrel of water. There is neither a drop nor a barrel.

This finger reminds us that Dives' imagination was in good working order but focused on the wrong thing: Lazarus' finger. In real life, it was the same, I doubt seriously that he ever thought about Lazarus' finger and we know for sure he did not think about his mouth or stomach or to put it more succinctly, about his welfare. But now, he would gladly settle for Lazarus' finger and what it might afford him. In Hell, people have very few choices, whereas here, we do have many more.

V. The Double Ended Finger
John 8:6

"This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with (his) finger wrote on the ground, (as though he heard them not)."

The scene is one of the Pharisees bringing a poor woman to Christ, stating she had been caught in the very act of immorality. She did not deny it. The question was: What would Christ do about it? Would He pass judgment on her? or, take no stand at all?

But He does not answer their question, rather, He stoops down, and, using his finger as a pen, and the ground as paper, He writes on it. I don't think He wrote anything of any importance. It seems to have been used as a diversion. This seemed to make the Pharisees think they had him on the defensive. They pressed. He stood up and announced that she was to be stoned but with one stipulation: The one who was to hurl the first stone was the one who had never sinned in any way and especially, had never committed this particular sin. And then He stooped down again, and again wrote in the sand (vs. 8). It appears what He wrote may have had something to do with the reaction of the Pharisees. Something certainly caused them to reconsider the whole matter, for they slowly slunk away and disappeared in the early morning shadows.

As to what He wrote, we can only guess. Some have suggested He wrote the ten commandments; others, that He wrote the sins of the Pharisees; others, that He wrote the name of the man who was caught with the woman. But whatever it was, it hit the mark. And we can be sure our sins are not writing in sand but on the Divine Records of heaven by the Finger of God Himself.

So far as we know, this is the only thing or only time that we know of that Christ wrote anything and we don't know what it was He wrote.

Though His finger is pointed at the ground, and not at the accusers of the poor woman, nevertheless, they got the message. Do you dear reader, get the feeling that His finger is pointed at you?

VI. The Finger Of Faith

In recounting the resurrection story, John tells us about a disciple called Thomas. Many of the women had seen the resurrected Savior, and all the disciples had seen Him, except Thomas. And he was very emphatic what proof it would take to satisfy him: John 20:25, "The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Would you believe the words of this dear fellow? He says that his faith is wrapped up in his

eyes and finger! Only will he believe if his eyes sees the scars and his finger touches those scars. Don't you think if we had a photo of Christ showing His scars, surely, all would believe? Does your faith depend on sight and feeling?

And only a short while afterward, Christ granted him the opportunity to fulfill his demand: John 20:27, "Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust (it) into my side: and be not faithless, but believing."

But it would appear his fingers were frozen to his side: John 20:28, "And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God."

So far as we can tell, he did not even attempt to put his finger in the scars. Our faith has to be in a Savior, not in our touch or sight.

VII. The Scary Fingers

Old Belshazzar was a man for many seasons and most especially the season of revelry. He and many of his royal friends, wives, and concubines, were having a big "sin-a-bration" and seeing who could sin the most in the shortest time with the least effort. He seemed to have won thumbs down. His prize winning seems to have been that of calling for the gold and silver drinking vessels or cups, that had been taken from the temple in Jerusalem years before, by his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar, and then drinking toasts to the idols that were popular in Babylon. As a direct result of this drinking bout, Daniel tells us: Daniel 5:5, "In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote."

From Daniel's description, we know those finger's scared the old king sober. He immediately called for all the wise men of his kingdom and eventually, Daniel also, Daniel told him the words Mene, Mene, Tekel, Uphkarsin, meant he had been weighed in the balances of God, found short and his kingdom was to be given to another. God's scales are demanding. His judgment severe. And in this fellow's case, not only severe, but soon.

But what caused God to come down so hard on him? Maybe the drunkenness? the immorality? It would appear that when he decided to bring the silver and golden goblets and drink toasts to the idols of Babylon, that was the point of no return. He seemed to be trying to do the most defiant, rebellious, hateful thing that he and the Devil could possibly dream up. He succeeded.

What is that point of no return

for me or you? I don't know but neither did Belshazzar. But no responsible person would advise anyone to presume on the mercy of God. And all that have neglected their souls, have and continue to do just that. Why not come to Christ now?

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and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.' (Jude 1-4).

In Jude we have a picture of apostate Christendom, depicting conditions existing just prior to the time, we believe, of our Lord's return. There is also a bright side to this epistle, for Jude gives us the picture of radiant sanctity on the part of those who are loyal to the faith, and seven admonitions as to the course that should be taken in the days of unbelief.

I. Absence of faith. "...earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (v. 3). By "the faith" he means the great cardinal doctrines of the gospel. Several of these important beliefs are brought out in this epistle of Jude. Among them, the "Trinity of the Godhead," verses 1, 20. The Deity of Christ, v. 4. Security of the believer vs. 1, 24. Sanctification v. 1. Personal devil, v. 9. Existence of angels vs. 6, 7. Future retribution, verses 6, 7, 13. The Holy Spirit, verses 19, 20. The second coming of our Lord, verses 14, 15.

Beloved, this faith has been deposited with saints. True Christians are depositories of the faith, not church councils, priests, popes or scholars. The safety of the faith therefore rests not in any organization or ecclesiastical authorities. It is primarily in the experience of individual Christians. Let believers therefore make sure that they hold the truth consistently. "Contending for the faith," does not mean to be contentious. The first step in contending for the faith, and the best defence of the gospel is the living out of Christ's teaching. The faith needs no swords to fight for

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BISCUIT WORSHIP

By W. B. Davidson

The purpose of this article is to call attention to the idolatry of the Mass as practiced by the Roman Catholic Church. In the observance of the Mass by the Catholic church the laws of God and man are disregarded and idolatry in its worst form is practiced. We are aware that a mere statement of these things being true is not sufficient to convince men and women, but proof must be submitted. In the following we shall seek to present proof of what we have said.

The Roman Catholic church disregards the teachings of the Bible each time she observes the Mass. The proof of this statement is to be found in the little booklet entitled "The Mass Book," published by the Pauline Press, 401 West Fifty-ninth Street, New York. From page eight we quote the following in part: "The Holy Mass is the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, which is offered to the Heavenly Father on our altars under the species or appearance of bread and wine."

According to the Catholic church, the Mass, as celebrated by her, is a repetition of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Each time the Mass is observed the people are taught to believe that Christ is offered again as a sacrifice for their sins. If this is true, then Christ has suffered many times since the foundation of the world, but it is not true. Hebrews 9:24-26,28 says: "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself...So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation".

This passage of Scripture plainly teaches that Christ was: "...once offered to bear the sins of many..." In the observance of the Mass the Catholic

church disregards this, the Bible teaching on the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The Roman Catholic Church violates the second commandment each time she observes the Mass. Exodus 20:4-5 says: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them..." but according to the "Mass Book" page 22, we read as follows: "The solemn moment has arrived. The Priest takes in his hand the bread, and lifting his eyes to heaven to show that this great wonder is worked by the power of God, he says the very words of our Lord at the Last Supper: 'This is My Body.' The bread at that moment is changed into the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ. The Priest falls on his knees in deepest reverence and then holds up the Sacred Host for the people to adore."

Worship A Biscuit

Where can you find more unadulterated idolatry than in the observance of the Mass in the Catholic Church, where people as well as the priest worship a piece of bread! The second commandment is violated when the people make a piece of bread and worship it as Jesus Christ.

The Roman Catholic Church perverts the plain teachings of the New Testament concerning the Lord's Supper, according to Matthew 26:26-28, which follows: "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks and gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it: For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for the remission of sins."

By every law of interpretation this passage means that the bread and the wine represented or symbolized the body and the blood of Jesus Christ, for such is the accepted meaning of other passages where the same expressions are used. In John 10:7, Jesus says: "...I am the door of the sheep." Would anyone attempt to prove that Jesus was a literal door, a door made of wood or stone? We understand that Jesus was using figurative language and He meant to teach that He was the way of approach to God. In another place He said: "...no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

In John 15:1, Jesus says: "I am the true vine..." No one understands Him to mean that He is a grape vine. We understand

Him to mean that we are to get our life and strength from Him just as the branches get theirs from the vine. Jesus is the source of eternal life.

When Jesus said: "...this is my body..." He meant the bread represented His body. He was alive and in His body and the bread that He held in His hand was held by a member of His body. How then can anyone interpret the words: "...this is my body...this is my blood..." to mean the actual, literal, flesh and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ?

Cannibalism Practiced

The Roman Catholic Church is guilty of cannibalism each time she observes the Mass, if her interpretation is correct. If the bread and wine are actually changed into the flesh and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ after the priest says the words: "This is My body," then she makes her god and then eats him! If we accept their own teachings, the Catholics make their own god, then worship him, and finally eat him!

The average Catholic believes that the bread and wine used in the sacrifice of the Mass actually become the flesh and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ only because he has listened to the priest and has not done any reading or thinking for himself. There are no people on earth that are in greater need of the Word of God than the Roman Catholics.

The Catholics are taught that when they receive a piece of the bread that the priest claims to have been changed into the flesh and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ, that they are receiving Jesus Christ into their lives. How anyone can believe that a man can change or create the Lord Jesus Christ out of a piece of bread is beyond human reason--it is preposterous!

A Pitiable Sight

Some time ago we had an occasion to witness in a Catholic church the service known as the "Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament." In this service we saw six men bowing before a golden vessel in which was claimed to be the flesh, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ; but in reality there was only a piece of bread!

As we witnessed the scene, our heart was deeply stirred with pity for them. We were reminded of the passage of Scripture found in II Corinthians 4:3-4 which says; "...if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them,"

What a pity it is that the peo-

ple are so blinded to the truth that they will bow down to a piece of bread and adore (worship) it. What is the difference in worshipping a piece of bread after a priest has said a few words over it, and in worshipping a piece of wood or stone after some workman has carved it into the image of a man or an animal? There is no difference, it is idolatry in its worst form.

The Roman Catholic Church practices idolatry each time she observes the Mass, and those who take part in its observances are guilty of idolatry. Catholics are lost and need to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour who put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and is coming again to them that look for Him.

We have no ill will towards Catholics as individuals; our attack is against the system as taught and practiced by the Catholic church.

The leaders of the Catholic church have much for which they must answer to God. They have led millions to hell and they are still doing it! Oh, that God might use this article to open the eyes of some of those who are in position to lead others from darkness to light and from the kingdom of Satan in the kingdom of His dear Son!

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it, as much as for saints to live it.

II. Remember the prophecies, verses 17, 18. They told you there would be mockers in the last time. This is one of the surest signs of the last days. Blasphemy in the pulpit is the course of the present hour. It does not mean that faith has failed. It is a sure vindication of the Scriptures. They are being fulfilled before our eyes. Therefore, our confidence in the Bible should be all the more secure. "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (II Pet. 3:3-4). "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;" (I Tim. 4:1-2). "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men

shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy." (II Tim. 3:1-2). "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many." (Matt. 24:11-12).

III. Build yourselves up. "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost." (Jude 20). But-tress yourselves in the most holy faith. Let no means of grace be neglected. Beloved, mason-work yourselves, so to speak, with the Spirit level. Be sure, every day, that some effort has been made to strengthen the foundation of your faith. "Study to show thyself approved unto God." (II Tim. 2:15). Do not be content with what you know today. Press on, and remember that ours is holy faith! Its precepts are holy, its ordinances are holy, and above all, beloved, it makes the life holy.

IV. Pray in the Holy Ghost, v 20. Beloved, I have found it to be so true that there is no stronger fortress against the in rush of error than true humble prayer. Prayer in the Holy Spirit is more than ordinary prayer. Christians who are living editions of the prayers of the Holy Spirit are not easily taken in. Let us never forget that there is no better security from the in rush of error than true prayer. Real prayer is opposing a great spiritual force to the onslaught of evil and asking God to put into operation the work done by His Son on the cross, which was not only the redemption of man, but the defeat of the prince of this world. Another reason why Satan hates God.

V. "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." (Jude 21). Here, he is saying; keep yourselves in the consciousness of God's love. The passage does not mean, keep on loving God, but, rather, keep yourselves in the fact that God loves you. Our love to God, beloved, is too fickle to depend on. It is too often down in the valley, if you please, and full of misgivings. The more we know of the doctrines of grace, the less we will think and talk of our love, and the more of His. God's relationship does not change.

Study much the love of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, and in the time of mystery and apostasy you will be kept. Doubt, and your life will always be in the dark. How shall we keep the consciousness of His love? Even as the child keeps the sense of its mother's love, simply by obedience. Our lord said; "...I do

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REVELATION

By Willard Willis

"And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and read the book, neither to look thereon" (Revelation 5:4).

John, when referring to the fact that no man was found worthy to open and read the book, neither to look thereon, was including himself. He, after all, also heard the proclamation made by the angel. The following statement made by John shows how he felt about his own sinful condition.

"If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (I John 1:10).

I don't believe that John was weeping because he believed that no one would be found to open the book. He, no doubt, was weeping because of the depth of sin to which he and all the rest of Adam's children had fallen. He was weeping because that he, nor any other human was found worthy to open the book or even look upon it. He, however, was fully convinced that the Lord Jesus was qualified and able to open the book.

"And one of the elders said unto me, Weep not: behold the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof" (Revelation 5:5).

The lion is the terror of the forest. The Lord Jesus is the lion who has conquered death, hell and the grave. He is the lion who has put Satan to flight. Satan, in fact, did not, on any occasion, overcome the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus, in every case, was "more than a conquerors through him that loved us." We, therefore, have no reason to weep, unless our tears be tears of joy.

"...the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David..." (Revelation 5:5)

The angel, when picturing before John the "Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David", was declaring the fulfillment of the promise which God had made to Abraham. David had died, but God saw to it that from the root of David, that is, from David's lineage, the Messiah would come. Joseph and Mary, after all, were the roots of David too. The Lord Jesus, however, was and is, the "Lion of the tribe of Judah". No one else ever measured up to this title. He has earned this title, since He has conquered every foe that was set before Him, even the enemy of death.

"And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had

been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth" (Revelation 5:6).

John, as he sits in God's theatre on the isle of Patmos, is now shown a new scene. The scene is that of the throne, the four beasts, the elders and a Lamb, as it had been slain. The Lamb, even though it had been slain, was standing. The indication was that a great battle had been fought and the Lamb had been slain. The iron jaws of death, however, could not hold the Lamb captive. There was the print of a spear in the side of the Lamb and prints of nails in His hands and feet, but He was standing.

All observed that the Lamb had seven horns and seven eyes. They knew that His seven horns spoke of His almighty power in evicting the enemy and that the seven eyes spoke of His infinite wisdom and knowledge. They, therefore, when observing the Lamb, knew that there was no power in heaven or earth that could alter His purpose. They knew that no one could stay His hand or say unto Him, "What doest thou"? They knew that due to His seven eyes, there was nothing that was hidden from Him. They knew that He knew and knows all things that are past, present and future. None of us know what tomorrow will bring, but He knows. He, in fact, has decreed that which will occur tomorrow.

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

The trees in the garden of Eden could not conceal Adam and Eve from the eyes of our God. No human eye saw Cain kill Abel, but God saw it all.

"...the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." (Rev. 5:6).

The Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God, is omnipresent in that His Spirit of power, knowledge and wisdom are not limited, but reach throughout heaven and earth.

"And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne" (Revelation 5:7).

The Lamb, before marching to the throne and taking the book from the right hand of Him that sat on the throne, proved that He was qualified. The Lamb, by way of nail marks in His hands and feet and a spear mark in His side, proved that He was qualified. Many sit by the fireside and talk about things which they plan to do, but in many cases it is only talk. The Lamb, however, did all that He had purposed to do. Many, for example, talk about keeping the law, but the Lamb kept the law to the letter. Some may talk about conquering death,

but the Lamb did it. He, therefore, was fully qualified to take the book from the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne.

"And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints" (Revelation 5:8).

The "four beasts" (living ones) were full of eyes so that they knew in detail regarding the accomplishments of the Lamb. They, due to being full of eyes, saw Him in eternity past when He consented to save those that God had elected and assigned to Him as their Savior. They saw Him when He was born of a virgin. They saw His spotless life, His sufferings, His death, burial and resurrection. They, therefore, were fully qualified to praise His matchless name. They and the elders, by ways of harps, proceeded to praise Him.

The Lamb, in the text which is before us, represents all the redeemed of the ages. The four beasts and the elders also represent all the redeemed, since the golden vials which each had, was "full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints". The reference to "the saints", no doubt, is a reference to all the saints of the ages. The saints of the ages, on a multitude of occasions, have prayed "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven". The saints, however, did not live long enough to see an answer to their prayers. The text which is before us, however, shows that their prayers will not have been forgotten. The Father has stored up the prayers of the saints in golden vials-vials full of sweet odours of prayers which enter up into His nostrils. Each prayer, as John observed, was to be answered by way of the breaking of the seven sealed book. Our Redeemer, of course, has already purchased the lost possession to which the seven sealed book relates. The breaking of the seven seals relates to the Lamb's taking possession of the lost inheritance.

"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" (Revelation 5:9).

The Lamb, according to the text which is before us, is worthy to take the book and to open its seals because of the fact that He has been slain. The slain Lamb, in fact, is the only means of approach to God that we poor sinners have. The slain Lamb is the

anchor of our hope and the very foundation on which we build. The slain Lamb made an end of sin and brought in everlasting righteousness. He was able to perform such a feat because he honored the law to the letter and satisfied Divine justice. He paid the ransom price.

The Lord Jesus, when He was here in person, was all that He is revealed to be in the text which is before us. He, in fact, had more rank than any man who ever lived. Never, however, did a man with so much rank and honor, receive so little recognition. People, in fact, according to Isaiah 53:3, hid their faces from Him. He, of course, when here in person, was just as worthy to be praised, as He is in the text which is before us, His worth can be clearly seen from the following passage of Scripture.

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25).

He is able to save to the uttermost because He, the slain Lamb, removed every obstacle which could have kept us from God. There is nothing today or out there in the future which can separate us from the love of God and it's all because of the slain Lamb. The worthy Lamb, in other words, has provided a full and complete redemption for all who believe in Him.

"And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:10).

The phrase "made us" has much to say to us. It has been said that one can't make a silk purse from a sow's ear, or win the Kentucky derby with a donkey. The Lord Jesus, on the other hand, has made kings and priests out of us good-for-nothing sinners. He has done so by imputing His perfect righteousness to us. The following passage of Scripture declares that we are His workmanship.

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

The fact that the beasts and elders said, "we shall reign on the earth", means that they, when on earth, were faithful members of our Lord's churches. The Lord's Bride, after all, is a chaste virgin, or pillar and ground of the truth. All believers will be saved from hell, but there is a special reward for those who are faithful members of our Lord's churches. Our Lord made this fact very clear in His messages to all of the seven churches in Asia. He, time and again, emphasized that only the faithful will reign

with Him on the earth.

"And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Revelation 5:1-12).

Each Sunday morning throughout America there are thousands upon thousands of voices that sing praises to the Lamb that was slain. Each Sunday morning there are thousands of hymns sung from churches in our cities, villages, valleys, mountains, etc. We, if we could consolidate all of these singers into one choir, would have a most glorious and joyful sound. It would be a sound that would acknowledge His power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory and blessing. We, of course, by our songs, would not be adding anything to Him, but only acknowledging all those things that are due Him, or that He is worthy of. It is also true that the thousands of angels, beasts and elders, by way of their praising Him "with a loud voice", add nothing to Him, but simply acknowledge that He is worthy of all those things mentioned. The following passages of Scripture show that this is not the first time the angels have sung His praises.

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:13,14).

"And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Revelation 5:13).

All creatures were affected by the fall of Adam and Eve. All creatures, therefore, echo the

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WE COVET YOUR PRAYERS

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REVELATION

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praise that the angels, beasts and elders sound forth. Our soldiers, after taking back France from the Germans, received great honor as they marched through Paris. Every living creature in France was indebted to our soldiers. The Lamb of God, in like manner, will receive great honor from all, since He will have taken back that which was lost through Adam and Eve.

"And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever" (Revelation 5:14).

The beasts say, "Amen", that is, they give their hearty approval to the praise being given to the Lamb. They, after all, are full of eyes, that is, full of knowledge and wisdom regarding the qualifications of the Lamb. The elders, who represent themselves and all the redeemed, give a hearty thanks to the Lamb. They do so by falling before Him and worshipping Him.

It is said that they worship Him that liveth for ever and ever. The word "liveth" is in the perfect tense and means that there is nothing that can alter His eternal existence. We, in fact, know from Hebrews 7:25 that "he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them".

May we, with the angels, living ones, elders, and every creature, also praise the Lamb that was slain—the Lamb that liveth for ever and ever. Let us not keep quiet, but let us go into all the world singing His praises.

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always those things that please Him." (John 8:29).

VI. "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." (Jude 21). This statement refers to the final consumption of the mercy of Christ, which will be revealed at His second coming. This is our blessed hope. Looking only at the past, or present, is sure to lead into materialism.

To be absorbed in the present world, discounting the future, is the spirit of this age, and that is the primary cause of apostasy. We drift into lethargy, and that

should not be. We must have the backward look at the cross. Looking at what was already done at Calvary, not what is yet to be. He is not going to the cross again. He has already done all that is necessary to please the Father, and to guarantee our hope for the future by looking at the finished work on the cross at Calvary. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." (Isa. 45:22). Yes, we have assurance in the backward look at the finished work. We also need to be mindful of the upward look toward the throne of grace. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. 12:2). But without the forward look, beloved, there is still danger of despondency. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:13-14). Beloved, we must look ahead with unwavering faith. If you have been born again, you have that faith. It is a gift from God.

VII. Save something out of the wreck. Yes a man's life is a shambles without Christ. "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 21-23). There are two classes with which we must deal described here. On one class we should have great compassion for they have been misled, and should be pitied and dealt with in tenderness. There are others whom we must deal with in fear, pulling them out of the fire and having a care lest our own lives become spotted in our contact with them.

Beloved, I believe that a safely guarded prayer life, with plenty of study would be a real safe guard for us against the pollution of apostasy. Keeping our eyes on Calvary is a sure way to battle against apostasy, also. Dear saint of God, let us work together, worldwide, pray together the same way, trusting that we don't fall into this erroneous state that exists today—apostasy. To those out there who may not know Jesus as Lord and Saviour, let me

say, if there is anything worse than that of apostasy, it is being lost, and to not know Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour! Seek Him, you will find that He is ever near. Amen.

CHILD

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Since 92% of the assailants were male and only 1% of girls had been assaulted by females, about 35% of the assaults were homosexual.

The Los Angeles Times surveyed 2,628 adults across the U.S. in 1985. 27% of the women and 16% of the men claimed to have been sexually molested. Since 7% of the molestations of girls and 93% of the molestations of boys were by adults of the same sex, about 4 of every 10 molestations in this survey were homosexual.

In a random survey of British 15-19 year olds, 25% of the boys and 9% of the girls claimed to have been approached for sex by adult homosexuals, and 2% of the boys and 1% of the girls admitted to succumbing.

In science, a review of the professional literature published in a refereed scientific journal is considered to be an accurate summary of the current state of knowledge. The latest such review was published in 1985. It concluded that homosexual acts were involved in 25% to 40% of the cases of child molestation recorded in the scientific and forensic literature.

Surveys of Those Convicted

Drs. Freund and Heasman of the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry in Toronto reviewed two sizeable studies and calculated that 34% and 32% of the offenders against children were homosexual. In cases they had personally handled, homosexuals accounted for 36% of their 457 pedophiles.

Dr. Adrian Copeland, a psychiatrist who works with sexual offenders at the Peters institute in Philadelphia, said that, from his experience, pedophiles tend to be homosexual and "40% to 45%" of child molesters have had "significant homosexual experiences."

Dr. C.H. McGaghy estimated that "homosexual offenders probably constitute about half of molester who work with children." Other studies are similar:

--Of the approximately 100 child molesters in 1991 at the Massachusetts Treatment Center for Sexually Dangerous Persons, a third were heterosexual, a third bisexual and a third homosexual in orientation.

--A statewide survey of 161 Vermont adolescents who committed sex offenses in 1984 found that 35 (22%) were homosexual.

--Of the 91 molesters of non-

related children at Canada's Kingston Sexual Behaviour Clinic from 1978-1984, 38 (42%) engaged in homosexuality.

--Of 52 child molesters in Ottawa from 1983 to 1985, 31 (60%) were homosexual.

In England for 1973, 802 persons (8 females) were convicted of indecent assault on a male, and 3,006 (6 of them female) were convicted of indecent assault on a female (i.e., 21% were homosexual). 88% of male and about 70% of female victims were under age 16.

Because of this pattern, Judge J. T. Rees concluded that "the male homosexual naturally seeks the company of the male adolescent, or of the young male adult, in preference to that of the fully-grown man. (In 1947) 986 persons were convicted of homosexual and unnatural offences. Of those, 257 were indictable offences involving 402 male victims... The great majority of (whom)... were under the age of 16. Only 11%... were over 21."

"(T)he problem of male homosexuality is in essence the problem of the corruption of youth by itself (i.e., by other boys) and by its elders. (And thereby)... the creation... of new addicts ready to corrupt a still further generation of young men and boys in the future."

What Homosexuals Admit

The 1948 Kinsey survey found that 37% of the gays and 2% of the lesbians admitted to sexual relations with under 17-year olds, and 28% of the gays and 1% of the lesbians admitted to sexual relations with under 16-year olds while they themselves were aged 18 or older.

In 1970 the Kinsey Institute interviewed 565 white gays in San Francisco: 25% of them admitted to having had sex with boys aged 16 or younger while they themselves were at least 21.

In the Gay Report, 23% of the gays and 6% of the lesbians admitted to sexual interaction with youth less than 16 years of age.

In France, 129 convicted gays (average age 34 years) said they had had sexual contact with a total of 11,007 boys (an average of 85 different boys per man). Abel et al reported similarly that men who molested girls outside their family had averaged 20 victims each; those who molested boys averaged 150 victims each.

Summary. About a third of the reports of molestation by the populace have involved homosexuality. Likewise, between a fifth and a third of those who have been caught and/or convicted practiced homosexuality. Finally, a fifth to a third of surveyed gays admitted to child molestation. All in all, a rather consistent story.

Teacher-Pupil Sexual Interaction

Nowadays parents are labeled bigots for fearing that homosex-

ual teachers might molest their children. But if homosexuals are more apt to molest children and are in a position to take advantage of them, this fear makes sense. Indeed, accounts of disproportionate homosexual teacher molestation appear throughout the scientific literature.

The original U.S. Kinsey study reported that 4% of the noncriminal white gays and 7% of the non-criminal white lesbians reported that they had their first homosexual experience with a "teacher or other caretaker." None of the heterosexuals were recorded as having a teacher as their first sex partner.

In England, Schofield reported that at least 2 of his 150 homosexuals had their first homosexual experience with a teacher, and an additional 2 reported that their first homosexual contact with an adult was with a teacher. One of the 50 men in his comparison group had also been seduced by a homosexual teacher, while none of the men interviewed claimed involvement with a heterosexual teacher.

In the 1978 McCall's magazine study of 1,400 principals, 7% reported complaints about homosexual contact between teachers and pupils, and 13% reported complaints about heterosexual contact between teachers and pupils (i.e., 35% of complaints were homosexual). 2% "knew of instances in which teachers discussed their homosexuality in class."

Of 400 consecutive Australian cases of molestation, 7 boys and 4 girls were assaulted by male teachers. Thus 64% of those assaults were homosexual.

In 1987, Dr. Stephen Rubin, associate professor of psychology at Whitman College, conducted a 10-state survey and found 199 sexual abuse cases involving teachers. 122 male teachers had abused female pupils, and 14 female teachers had abused male students. In 59 cases, however, male teachers had abused male pupils, and in 4 cases female teachers had abused female students (overall 32% were homosexual).

A 1983 survey asked 4,340 adults to report on any sexual advances and any physical sexual contact by elementary and secondary teachers (4% of those who were teachers in the survey claimed to be bisexual or homosexual). 29% of the advances by elementary and 16% of the advances by secondary school teachers were homosexual. In addition, 1 of 4 (25%) reports of actual sexual contact with an elementary school teacher were homosexual. In high school, 8 (22%) of 37 contacts between teacher and pupil were homosexual. 18% reported having had a

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homosexual teacher (8% of those over the age of 55 vs. 25% of those under 26). Of those reporting a homosexual teacher, 6% said that the teacher influenced them to try homosexuality, and 13% of the men and 4% of the women said that the teacher made sexual advances toward them.

Summary. Whether examining surveys of the general populace or counts of those caught, homosexual teachers are disproportionately apt to become sexually involved with children.

Proportionality: The Key

Study after nationwide study has yielded estimates of male homosexuality that range between 1% and 3%. The proportion of lesbians in these studies is almost always lower, usually about half that of gays. So, overall, perhaps 2% of adults regularly indulge in homosexuality. Yet they account for between 20% to 40% of all molestations of children.

Child molestation is not to be taken lightly. Officials at a facility which serves about 1,500 runaway youngsters each year estimate that about half of the boys

have been homosexually abused and 90% of the girls heterosexually assaulted. Investigation of those suffering severe chronic mental illness implicates child molestation as a primary cause (45% of Bigras et al's patients were homosexually abused).

If 2% of the population is responsible for 20% to 40% of something as socially and personally troubling as child molestation, something must be desperately wrong with that 2%. Not every homosexual is a child molester. But enough gays do molest children so that the risk of a homosexual molesting a child is 10 to 20 times greater than that of a heterosexual.

Goals of the Gay Movement

The gay movement is forthright about seeking to legitimize child-adult homosexual sex. In 1987, *The Journal of Homosexuality*, the scholarly organ of the gay rights movement, published "Pedophilia and the Gay Movement." Author Theo Sandfort detailed homosexual efforts to end "oppression towards pedophilia." In 1980 the largest Dutch gay organization (the COC)

"adopted the position that the liberation of pedophilia must be viewed as a gay issue... (and that) ages of consent should therefore be abolished... by acknowledging the affinity between homosexuality and pedophilia, the COC has quite possibly made it easier for homosexual adults to become more sensitive to erotic desires of younger members of their sex, thereby broadening gay identity." In 1990 COC achieved a significant victory: Lowering of the age of consent for homosexual sex in Holland to 12 (unless the parents object, in which case it goes up to 15). In the U.S. and Canada, the North American Man-Boy Love Association marches proudly in many gay pride parades with the stated goal of removing the barriers to man-boy sex. Note the phrases, "oppression towards pedophilia" and "liberation of Pedophilia." It is clear that those who advocate the legalization of sex between adults and children intend to argue that such conduct is a "civil right," deserving of the same legal protections afforded to other minorities. A large proportion of Americans regard that argument as a mere pretext to giving "sexual predators" free reign to take advantage of vulnerable children.

Conclusion

Not only is the gay rights movement up front in its desire to legitimize sex with children, but whether indexed by population reports of molestations, pedophile convictions or teacher-pupil assaults, there is a strong, disproportionate association between child molestation and homosexuality. Ann Landers' claim that homosexuals molest children at no higher a rate than heterosexuals do is untrue. The assertion by gay leaders and the American Psychological Association that a homosexual is less likely than a heterosexual to molest children is patently false.

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DIVINE

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"Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently." The Holy Spirit begins by emphasizing their authority. They are not to be treated lightly, but kept diligently. They are not the counsels of a fellow mortal, but the decrees of the eternal and all wise God. They are not merely commanded to our notice, but we are commanded to keep them.

The next reference is in verse 15: "I will meditate in thy precepts..." This is what we must do if we are to keep them. They need to be frequently pondered, lest we "...let them slip" (Heb. 2:1). A very search-

ing word is this. We love to "meditate" on God's promises, are we equally fond of meditating upon His precepts? The answer to that question reveals the state of our hearts. We are, if really anxious to please Him.

Next in verse 27, we read, "Make me to understand the way of thy precepts..." The order is still progressive. As we meditate on God's precepts we begin to feel there is a breadth about them which we do not altogether grasp; as David says later on. "...thy commandment is exceeding broad" (vs. 96). God's precepts are many sided, of wide and varied applications. Thus, meditation thereon brings us to realize the need for Divine instruction--for guidance as to the application of them to all the varied details of our lives.

Then, in verse 40, "Behold, I have longed after thy precepts..." That does not come first. If we are honest, we have to acknowledge with shame and sorrow, that we were far from longing after God's precepts at the beginning of our Christian lives. By Divine grace we were constrained to fear and respect them; but oftentimes we had a secret wish they were not there. But as we meditate upon them, as we pray over them, ask God to make us understand the way of them--i.e., the peace and blessing which ever attend the diligent keeping of them--we come to long after them.

"And I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts" (vs. 45). This is another decided advance; here the Psalmist contemplates the blessings consequent upon setting his heart on God's precepts. How different was the view he took from that which is ever entertained by the carnal mind. The natural man supposes that the keeping of God's commands means a foregoing of his freedom; that it means a fettering of him with a lot of restrictions which will rob him of his liberty. How this proves that Satan has blinded his mind (II Cor. 4:4). It is not the man who obeys God, but he who disobey Him, who is in the bonds of iniquity. The very freedom which the sinner thinks he is enjoying by indulging his fleshly propensities, is only additional proof that he is the bondsman of sin. Love of self, love of the world, love of money, love of pleasure, are the tyrants which rule over all who are away from God. The more we are serving God, the greater is our freedom.

"This I had, because I kept thy precepts" (vs. 56). As one of the best of the Puritan expositors, Manton, said, "Many of the sentences of this Psalm have no other connection than the pearls strung on a string, though some are as links on the same chain, fastened one to another by

an apt method of order." The sentence quoted at the beginning of this paragraph seems to be quite independent of the previous verse, as the sudden outburst of a gracious heart engaged in meditating on the fruit of obedience--"this I had, because I kept thy precepts." David does not tell us what he had--quickening, confidence, deliverance. "this I had..." --each obedient believer may fill it in for himself--God's approval and blessing, peace of conscience, mind and heart.

But that which is germane to the present inquiry is what is said upon the subject of our present study: "...I kept thy precepts." Once more we may observe the striking and progressive order: First, commanded to keep the precepts because they are from God; now a keeping of them. How blessed, but how searching the order; second, meditating therein; third, praying for light thereon; fourth, longing after them.

"I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts" (vs. 63). Surely this is so plain, and the point taken in advance of the previous references is so obvious that no interpretation is needed. Commanded to keep God's precepts, meditating in them, praying over them, loving them, keeping them, now having fellowship with kindred souls! The one who, by grace, keeps God's precepts desires and seeks fellowship with others in whom he observes the fear and love of God.

"The proud have forged a lie against me: but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart" (vs. 69). There is opposition now, and it is very striking to note the point at which this is introduced. There is no hint of opposition until after this keeper of the Divine precepts became the companion of God's people! But mark how this only deepens his resolution, "...I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart."

"Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without cause: but I will meditate in thy precepts" (vs. 78).

Here we see how the opposition the Psalmist encountered only served to make him renew his meditation; as his enemies assailed him, he felt the more need of further meditation. Thus God makes the wrath of man to praise Him and turns the attacks

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EASY BELIEFISM

by Paul Jackson

The latter part of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century brought about a tremendous increase in the number of Protestant assemblies in America. The numbers on the rolls of these assemblies grew at a rapid pace. Their methods of growing far surpassed the limits of Biblical teachings.

During this period of time the Baptists depended completely on God saving and adding to the church as He saw fit to do so. This was not enough. The Baptist associations and conventions formed committees to study how they may grow and keep up with the pace of the Protestants. Out of these committees came many programs for growth. These programs, like the Protestants', far exceeded the limits of Biblical teachings, and brought to the Baptist people many "gimmicks" that would assure the increase in their rolls.

The "easy beliefism" programs taught Baptist churches methods to get "souls" into the church building; methods to get "souls" down the aisle; methods to get "souls" into the baptismal waters; and methods to keep "souls" happy while they sit in the pews just as lost as they were before they were "programmed" into the church.

All this has come down to today when Baptist churches have so many problems in them because of these "souls". The prob-

lems are causing Baptist pastors to drop out of the ministry in alarming numbers. It has become impossible to deal with the numbers of lost people on the church roll who have a hatred for the Word of God. A Baptist pastor must compromise the Word or settle for a life of heated persecution.

Teaching people that they have complete control over their salvation is "easy beliefism". Anything done in the name of religion is accepted as belief in Christ today. It has become so rampant that one can find very few who do not have their name on a church roll, and if their name is on a church roll or a religious assembly roll, they are considered Christian. This does not make Christians! This does not get people saved!

Baptists need to get rid of the deadwood and get back to trusting God to save and add to the church as He sees fit. The Bible says, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them three thousand souls...and THE LORD ADDED to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:41;47).

"But now hath God set the members EVERY ONE OF THEM in the body (church), as it hath pleased him" (I Cor. 12:18).

I pray one can see how this program of "easy beliefism" has deleted God from religion and put man in complete control. God help us!

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of the enemy into blessing for His people.

"They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook not thy precepts" (vs. 87). The opposition has grown fiercer; Reader, do you know anything about this from personal experience? If you do not, there is something wrong in your life. The reason why many Christians escape antagonism is because their daily walk is not so regulated by God's precepts. It still stands written, "Yea, and all that will (are determined to) live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Tim. 3:12)! The world loves its own; but it hates those ways that contradict theirs.

"They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook not thy precepts." That is the acid test of a genuine work of grace in the heart—how we conduct ourselves in the face of opposition and persecution. It does not take much to turn a mere professor aside; a few sneers and frowns, or a shrug of the shoulder is enough, and the white-washed worldling goes back to his people, "...when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended" (Matt. 13:21). But where God has placed his fear in the heart a man will stand and withstand, even though there was not another kindred soul in all the world to stand with him.

"I will never forget thy precepts: for with them thou hast quickened me" (vs. 93). Here the Psalmist is heart expressing his appreciation of and his thankfulness for the Divine precepts; and that because of the value of them, what they had done for and meant to him. The term "quickened" here probably includes the initial act of his regeneration, and the subsequent renewals, revivings, refreshings he had received from God's precepts. As he recalled the blessings they had brought to him, he resolves never to forget God's precepts. This more than meditating upon them. As the result of that, they have become so a part and parcel of his innermost being he would never forget them.

"I am thine, save me; for I have sought thy precepts" (vs. 94). This is very striking and marks a further decided advance. Here the Psalmist not only makes his conscience of

God's commands an encouragement to seek help from Him when he is in straits, but to grant an appeal thereon. Has not God said, "...them that honour me I will honour..." (I Sam. 2:30)? Here is David pleading the principle of that promise before the throne of grace. If we take care of our duty, God will take care of everything else.

There are yet none other verses in this Psalm containing references to the Divine precepts, but these we will leave the student to follow out for himself. As they are carefully weighed it will be found, like those which we have already considered, the later ones also follow a progressive order, and experimental order, which evidences a steady advancement in the spiritual life. Though at first glance this may not be perceived, prayerful meditation thereon will reveal a steady advancing through the whole series of the Psalmist's mentionings of the Divine precepts.

What we have sought to bring before our readers in this article is but an illustration of a principle which is exemplified all through Scripture, and we may add, all through nature; for the God of revelation and the God of creation is one and the same. And he is a God of order. Not only is each word of Holy Writ given by inspiration of God, but the exact position occupied by every single statement therein evidences the perfect wisdom of its author. Just as in the natural realm there is first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear, so it is in the spiritual life; and so it is in the Word. Each phase of Divine truth is unfolded in an orderly manner, according to the law of progress, even moving towards a climax of consummation. This illustration upon the Divine precepts of Psalm 119 is only one from hundreds of examples which might be cited. Others will be found in the same Psalm. May the Lord stir up both writer and reader to a more diligent and prayerful searching of the Scriptures.

LOVEST

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had laid, she found Him to be risen and she went and told the disciples. Jesus appears in the midst of the disciples later on the same day that He arose. He comes again after eight days and speaks again with His disciples. Later, He again appears unto His disciples at the sea of Tiberias, after they had fished the whole night long and caught nothing. He stood over on the shore and told them to cast their net over

the right side. Then they were not able to haul in the nets for the load of fish therein. And John says to Simon Peter, "it's the Lord standing there", and Simon Peter dives overboard and swims to shore. He couldn't or wouldn't wait for the others. When they all came to shore, they sat down and ate of the fishes and of bread. "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? he saith unto him, Yea Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him, the third time, Simon, Son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep." John 21:15-17.

The Lord Jesus asks a question, that is a very important question. And I ask of you even now, "do you love the Lord Jesus?"

"Lovest thou me", says Jesus. Now Jesus knows if you love Him or not. It's not a question that the Lord God needs an answer for. Peter knew that. Peter knew that Jesus was the Lord God, and that He knew all things. He knew of the predestination rooster. The one that would crow at the very precise time that Peter would have denied the Lord the third time. He had told them that He was to die, be buried and that He would arise on the third day according to the Scriptures. He had done it all, and had just now shown the divine power that was His in knowing where the fish were going to be. That's why Peter answered as he did, "Thou knowest Lord, Thou knowest."

Oh yes, God knows if we love His Son and the Lord Jesus knows if we love Him. When I ask you, "do you love Jesus?" I don't ask you to tell Jesus, God. Don't tell me, tell yourself. We need to know, do we love Jesus?

You know we can say that we love the Lord, and love Him not. Many the man and many the woman that have been taught that they ought to love Jesus. Oh yes, ought to, but being taught doesn't make it so.

Going to church out of a sense of duty is not loving the Lord, and its not loving the Lord's church either. Too many people have a misconception of what

true love is.

We live in a time when the word love has been mistreated, mislead, abused, and all but destroyed in its true meaning.

God said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." (Luke 10:27).

Paul said to the Jews, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:10).

Heartfelt love to someone that means more to you than life itself, more than any other, more than even yourself. That's true love. That's God's love, and that kind of love is not learned, it's not bought, it's not earned.

But it is of the utmost importance that we know that we love Jesus. For without love, true love toward Jesus, we are not children of the Father.

Jesus said in John 8:42, "If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me."

Children love their parents. It's a natural bond between father and son, father and daughter. There is love there even without the caring for, even without the giving, even without the show of affection. There's still a love bond.

That's how it is with children of God. Those that God chose to be conformed to the image of Christ, those that He gave to the Son, and the Holy Spirit watches over them; he quickened. These have a supernatural love for Jesus. A love that is not understood by nor sought after by the natural man. But marveled at, and so very endearing to the child of God. Because without that love there is no salvation.

The Word of God says to us in I Corinthians 16:22, "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." (Separated from us when the Lord comes).

Paul was writing to the Church at Corinth. He knew that there were some there who knew not the Lord and not knowing Him, had no love for Him.

It's so important that we love Jesus, but we will only love Him as he first loved us and gave Himself for us. If we have no love for Jesus, then we are lost and of all man most miserable.

How do we know that we love Jesus? What are the signs of true love for Christ? Do you think about Him?

Loved ones are ones we think about, when we are with them and when we are apart. Do you like to hear about Him? You will

not hear about Him in the world. Only amongst the brethren do you hear about Jesus.

Do you like to read about Him? What is your reading material? The Bible is about Jesus cover to cover. Do you like His friends? Are you ill at ease around Christians; but more open and comfortable around the lost? Friendship with the world is enmity with Christ. Are you defensive about His name and His divinity? Do you like to talk of Him? Prayer is our way of talking with Jesus. Do you pray? Do you love Jesus?

Jesus asks this question of Simon Peter, who was to feed His lambs and His sheep, "Lovest thou me?" The Lord asks of each and every one of us, "Do you love the Lord Jesus?"

Are you a child of God? I pray you are. But only you know for sure. Can you say truthfully "I love Jesus". May God bless.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Landmark Missionary Baptist Church of P.O. Box 7, Hwy. 174, Holly Hill, S.C. 29059 is seeking a pastor. Any interested preacher may write to the church directly or call Brother Preston Carson at 803/496-7989 or 803/553-8331 (work).

JESUS TRANSFORMS

In his earthly ministry Jesus was famous for his ability to transform the ordinary facts of life and nature into revelations. He would take a man sowing seed, a woman kneading dough, a shepherd watching his sheep, a man building his house, and turn these ordinary events into eternal parables of truth. He took the everyday common things and made them extraordinary.

Sin put Jesus on the cross, yet he used this cross to save man from sin. The cross was man at his worst, but through it Jesus revealed God at his best. He transformed the world's darkest hour into the world's brightest period. Our Lord even took the tomb of death and made it glow with life and hope.

Everything is different now because Jesus came into the world. He transforms our dead souls, our dead hopes, even our dead bodies and makes them all alive. The Lord said it well: "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). He gives us the power to become sons of God. He can lift us into a nobler life and make us new creatures, able to do and be what we could not imagine or hope to be apart from him. Isn't that GOOD NEWS?

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