

The wages of sin never go unpaid

MISSIONARY SOVEREIGN GRACE LANDMARK PREMILLENNIAL

The Baptist Examiner

Baptist Is Our Middle Name**Paid Circulation in All States and in Many Foreign Countries***"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" -- Isaiah 8:20.*

VOL. 65, NO. 19 ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, OCT. 9, 1993 WHOLE NUMBER 2667

"STEPS AND STOPS" - GOD DIRECTED

By John R. Gilpin, Sr.

"Thou hast enlarged my steps under me, so that my feet did not slip." (Psa. 18:36)

This is one of David's Psalms. I often wonder why the Holy Spirit saw fit to put it in II Samuel rather than record it in the book of Psalms. It is one of David's many Psalms that he wrote, and was a Psalm of deliverance written after God had been graciously good to him. It has been very impressive to me how he recalls that God has enlarged his steps, and it is because of this that his feet did not slip, as if to say that if it weren't for the Lord, he would have been in a backslidden condition.

I am satisfied that every one of us could say the same thing, and truthfully so, that if it had not been for the Lord, we all would be in a terribly backslidden state.

FOR GOD'S WORKMEN

Mr. Cunningham, a missionary of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, who was serving in South China, told of a native who came to him and said, "Why don't you preach something else? You have been preaching this Jesus for three days." "What do you eat for breakfast?" the missionary asked. "Rice," was the reply. "For dinner?" "Rice." "For supper?" "Why, rice." "What did you eat yesterday?" "What have you been eating for years?" the missionary inquired. "Rice," replied the astonished man. "Why do you eat rice daily? Why don't you eat something else?" "Because it keeps me alive."

"That is just the reason that we preach Jesus, because He is life to us, and we could not live without Him," explained the missionary.

---copied.

today. God had enlarged David's steps, and accordingly, David's feet had not slipped, and if it were not for the fact that God continually watches after us, every one of us would be slipping, and would be in a terribly backslidden condition today.

So if you are walking with the

Lord, and if God is using you, and if God is directing you in His service, there is not praise to yourself, and there is, in no sense, a way whereby you can take credit for the manner in which you are living and walking. Rather, all the praise and all the credit goes

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Today is the start of a new day. I can waste it or use it for good. What I do today is important because I'm exchanging a day of my life for it. When tomorrow comes today will be gone forever, leaving in its place what I have traded for living today. To others, I hope I have helped, not harmed; served, not angered; loved, not hated; So that my trade brings to me gain, not loss, success not failure, so I don't regret the price I've paid for living today.

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by John R. Gilpin, Sr.

THE THIRD SAYING OF THE SAVIOUR ON THE CROSS

"Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." (John 19:25-27)

It is often preached that Jesus died a martyr to His convictions. I read a sermon sometime ago which said in substance, that the

value of Christ's death was that it furnished us an example that we should be true to our convictions even though it might cost our life.

To me, this is not only heresy - it is blatant blasphemy. Jesus did not die a martyr; His was a voluntary death. If we had nothing more than His own words, we would be convinced that this is true. Listen: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself." (John 10: 17,18)

If you will note also Matthew's

By C.T. Everman

Before continuing the study in the book of Judges we need to stop and learn some lessons from Samson. Why did God give us so much about the life of Samson if it was not that we might learn from his experience? One thing we need to learn from Samson's story is that it is very dangerous to play or toy with temptations. The



C.T. Everman

Apostle Paul over and over warned of this. "Flee fornication" (I Cor. 6: 18). "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry" (I Cor. 10: 14). "But thou, O man of God, flee these things" (I Tim. 6: 11). "Flee also youthful lusts" (II Tim. 2:22). Too often, we toy with temptation, thinking we can handle it but soon find ourselves like Samson, a slave to that sin. In John 8:34 Christ said, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant (slave) of sin". In Romans 6:16 we find it said, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his ser-

STUDIES IN JUDGES

vants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness". We can see that this was true in Samson's life. Although Samson had such a remarkable beginning, his birth announced by the Lord Himself, reared by godly parents, empowered with strength no other man has ever known, yet ended his life as a slave doing the work of a beast of burden. Why was this so? Samson toyed with sin until it trapped him and he became its slave.

We hear today such statements as, "Everyone else is doing it so it must be alright", and "if it feels good do it". Samson practiced this in his day and we are doing the same today. As someone has said, "Without God, everything is permitted". God had given Samson gifts and talents which he used for his own lustful use instead of using them for the Lord. God has given each of us gifts and talents which we should use for His glory. "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (I Pet. 4: 10).

Before leaving the story of Samson we need to note that in spite of all of Samson's faults and

LITTLE WORDS

The Bible contains 810,697 words. This is about four times as many as are found in a book of average length. Although so long a Book and dealing with the greatest theme that can engage the mind of man, its vocabulary is singularly limited. Only 6,000 different words are used which is very small compared to the 20,000 employed by Shakespeare in writing his plays.

Not only is the vocabulary limited, however, but the average word in the Bible contains but five letters. Many of the short words in the Bible are, however, full of the deepest meaning and are worthy of earnest study. Such a one is the short five-letter word "grace," over which theologians have for centuries waged bitter controversies.

It is evident that the little words in the Bible not be lightly passed over and not only should the Bible be studied as a whole, but even the words themselves.

John R. Gilpin, Jr.

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Owned, authorized and published by Calvary Baptist Church, Ashland, KY Editorial Department, located in ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, where all subscriptions and communications should be sent. Address: P.O. Box 60, Zip Code 41105-0060.

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

Subscription rates are \$6.00 per year.

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Second Class Postage paid at Ashland, Kentucky.

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

THIRD SAYING

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place, saying, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. 26: 53)

You will notice that Jesus declared that He could call better than twelve legions of angels to His rescue. A Roman legion was variously estimated as being composed of between five and six thousand men. Since Jesus said that He could call better than twelve legions of angels to His rescue, this would mean that He could call better than sixty thousand angels to fight for Him.

In the Old Testament, in one night's time, one angel slew 185,000 of the Assyrian army. Listen: "And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the

camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand; and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." (II Kings 19: 35)

Since one angel slew 185,000 single handed in one night's time, then better than sixty thousand angels which Jesus could have called to His rescue could have wiped out the entire population of the earth. No, we are definitely convinced that Jesus was not a martyr. He did not have to die, He could have defended Himself, but He did die a voluntary death in our behalf.

Now, He Who gave Himself for us voluntarily, in His dying hour did not forget His mother. In the second chapter of Luke, she forgot Him and left Him in the temple lost for three day's time. Yet, here on the cross, Christ did not forget her, so that we hear Jesus committing her into the hands of John, the beloved disciple.

The third saying of the Saviour on the cross was the fulfillment of Simeon's prophecy. When Jesus was presented in the temple at about eight days of age, Simeon, a devout follower of the Lord, spoke words of prophecy concerning Jesus, and ended this prophecy by saying to Mary: "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also." (Luke 2: 35)

Soon after Simeon's prophecy was given, Mary fled into Egypt in order to save His Life. This was her beginning of sorrows so far as Jesus was concerned. Later, she sorrowed when she was separated from Him for three days' time as a lad of twelve years of age. She undoubtedly wept when He staggered beneath the weight of the cross, and now that He is upon the cross Simeon's prophetic sword pierces her soul.

How she must have suffered. There was a relationship existing between her and Him which never existed between others. He was a part of her and she was a part of Him by natural birth. She planted the first kisses upon His brow which is now crowned with thorns. She guided the first infantile movements of His feet - those feet which are now nailed to the cross. Though His friends and the disciples have forsaken Him and the Jewish nation has rejected Him, still she stands by the cross to suffer with Him. She could not soothe His brow with her tender touch; she could not chafe His numb hands and feet; she could

not quench His thirst; she could only stand there suffering as Simeon had prophesied. Simeon's prophetic sword at last pierced her heart.

Since God saw to it that this prophecy was fulfilled, then He will bring all others to completion also. Not one of His prophecies shall fail in their fulfillment. Has He not said concerning sin: "And be sure your sin will find you out." (Numbers 32: 23) Has he not said that sin must be punished? Listen: "Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished." (Proverbs 11: 21) Has He not said that there is a day of judging? "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement." (Hebrews 9: 27) Has He not said that the unrighteous shall be cast into Hell? "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." (Psalms 9: 17)

These and all other prophecies will ultimately be completely fulfilled. The God who saw to it that Simeon's prophecy was fulfilled to the letter, shall likewise see to it that no Scripture shall fail.

This third saying of the Saviour on the cross teaches us that a saved man when he back-slides will come back. All of Jesus' disciples forsook him and fled when he was arrested. Jesus had said that they would do this. Listen: "Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night." (Matthew 26: 31) All of the disciples declared that this was not so. "Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples." (Matthew 26: 35) However, all of them did flee from Him. "Then all the disciples forsook him and fled." (Matthew 26: 56)

Now, John, the beloved disciple came back. Christ did not rebuke him; He did not condemn him for his cowardice; He did not censure him for running away; instead, He gave to John a commission that he was to take care of His mother.

The fact that John came back shows us that the saved man who backslides, always comes back to God. When Noah turned loose a raven and a dove from the ark, the dove came back. She did not want to soil her feet in the muddy water, and the putrefying carcasses floating around in the water did not appeal to her for food. Yet not so with the raven. Those old rotting, decaying, putrefying

carcasses were food for the raven. Dabbling around in muddy stagnant pools of water was his delight. The raven and dove illustrate church members today. When a saved man goes out in sin, like the dove, he will come back; but when an unsaved church member falls in sin, he continues in it just like the old raven. Though a saved man may fall into sin, unlike a hog, he will not wallow in it, but like a sheep that he is, he will get out as soon as possible. The fact that John came back tells us that the saints of God come back when they backslide. "O for a closer walk with God, A calm and heavenly frame; A light to shine upon the road that lead me to the Lamb! Where is the blessedness I knew, when first I saw the Lord? Where is the soul-refreshing view of Jesus and His word?"

What peaceful hours I once enjoyed! How sweet their memory still! But they have left an aching voice the world can never fill. Return, O holy dove, return, sweet messenger of rest, I hate the sins that made thee mourn, and drove thee from my breast. The dearest idol I have known, whate'er that idol be, help me to tear it from thy throne, and worship only thee. So shall my walk be close with God, calm and serene my frame; so pure a light shall mark the road that leads me to the Lamb."

This third saying of the Saviour on the cross shows Jesus' prudence. Listen: "Behold, my servant shall deal prudently." (Isaiah 52: 13) In all of his life's experience, Jesus constantly dealt with prudence, just as Isaiah had prophesied concerning him.

No one perhaps ever understood Jesus as well as His mother. No one of His disciples loved Jesus as much as John. Hence, Christ's mother and John would be fit companions for each other. Jesus' half-brothers were evidently unsaved - hence, they were not spiritually fit to care for Jesus' mother. Since John loved Jesus perhaps more than any of the rest of the disciples, then the only one into whose hands she should have been given, was John. The very fact that He placed her in John's hands to be her guardian, showed the prudence of the Lord Jesus.

This third saying of the Saviour on the cross likewise shows us that Mary is not to be worshipped. Jesus spoke to Mary even on the cross as "woman." He did not call her mother. The Lord Jesus was omniscient, that is, He knew the future, and He

knew what was to come to pass. He knew that the awful, blasphemous, heretical system of Mariolatry, which is the worship of Mary, would some day be erected. I am sure that He refrained from speaking to her as "mother" since He did not wish to countenance the worship of Mary as the "Mother of God."

What a monstrous heresy is this when one of the great false religions of the world was erected, namely the worship of Mary. It is contrary to the express words of Jesus, for He Himself said, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and HIM ONLY shalt thou serve." (Matt. 4:10):

Sometime ago in an art museum, I saw a picture which represented Christ, with an angry scowl upon His face ready to destroy the sinner, and picturing Mary with a smile, interceding with Christ in behalf of the sinner. That's Mariolatry - that's heresy of the worst type - it's blatant blasphemy. Jesus is the only intercessor to come between God and man. Listen: "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ." (1 Tim. 2:5)

The only one that can come between the soul and man and God, is Jesus.

In fact, Mary herself was a sinner. "And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come." (John 2:1-4)

This Scripture reveals the fact that Mary was a sinner. In fact, Mary needed to behold Jesus herself in order to be saved. Though she was His mother in the flesh, He was her Saviour in the spirit, and she needed to behold Him to be saved. Jesus said to her "Woman, behold thy son." (John 19:26).

I tell you, beloved, no one needs Mary, but all need Jesus. Sometime ago, I read a sermon in which a priest depicted the heinousness of sin. He described it as a dread disease - as a terrible malady - as a thing men should shudder to see. Then he said, "Is there no remedy? Yes, God has provided such." He went on to

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"That remedy is penance." Penance is not a remedy, nor is Mary a remedy, nor is church membership a remedy - the only remedy is the Lord Jesus Christ. Listen: "And without shedding blood is no remission." (Hebrews 9:22) "And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin." (I John 1:7)

This third saying of the Saviour on the cross shows the universal need. Jesus said to his mother, "Woman, behold thy son." (John 19:26). This is what was needed; it is what you need; it is what I needed the day that I was lost in sin; it is what the world needs. The universal need of this world is not good works, nor religious ordinances; rather it is that men shall behold Jesus as Saviour. Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29)

When the children of Israel were coming out of Egypt and were bitten by the serpents as punishment for their rebellion against God, Moses was told to make a brazen serpent and put it on a pole in the presence of all Israel so that they might see it, and on beholding it, they would be healed. That Brazen serpent to which the Israelites were to look, is a type of the Lord Jesus. Listen to Jesus' own words relative to it: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:14,15).

All the Israelites were to do was to look to that serpent, and that is the universal need of this world is to look to the Lord Jesus Christ. When I think of this, I am reminded of the dying priest who lay aside extreme unction in the hour of death and said, "Tua herajesu," which means, "Thy wounds, my Jesus." This is the world's need. Oh, that you, wherever you are - in a millionaire's home, or in the home of a relief worker, in a hovel of sin, in a haunt of vice, or in your automobile, or wherever you are, that you would look up to behold Him and to see your need of Jesus.

The third saying of the Saviour on the cross is an example as to how children should honor their parents. Jesus was obedient to his parents throughout all His life, so far as the Scriptural record

indicates. Listen to this experience of Jesus with His parents when they had lost Him in the temple: "And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart." (Luke 2:48-51)

As He had always been obedient, now in the end, He honors His mother. How this needs to be emphasized today, that children should honor their parents. The great American home is a thing of the past. Parents have taken the place of the children, and the children have taken the place of the parents. However, as Jesus told us by His example, so should children honor their parents. One of the signs of the times just preceding Jesus' second coming, is that men shall be "disobedient to parents." (II Tim. 3:2) Listen to these Scriptures: "Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old." (Proverbs 23:22) "Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." (Exodus 20:12)

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise." (Eph. 6:1,2)

I remember as a lad hearing a preacher tell of a father and mother in the hills of North Carolina sacrificing to send their son to the University. One day the father decided he would surprise his son by going to the university town to pay the son a visit unexpectedly. The lad was in the presence of a number of his fine young college friends, and he refused to recognize his old country father, pretending that he did not know him, sending the old man back to the hills with a broken heart. This wasn't the way Jesus treated His mother. He cared for her until the end. Yet, the way in which this son treated his father, is the way many are treating Jesus today.

What a contrast to the lad who went to Emory College at Oxford, Georgia, to school. His old mother back home gathering

berries, sold chickens and eggs, and took in washings to pay her son's way in college. At the time of graduation, after he had insisted again and again on it, she came dressed in her mountain clothes to see him graduate. When he received a medal of scholarship - the highest which his class could give him, he walked down where the mother was standing, and pinned the medal publicly on her. Bishop Chandler then in charge of the college, said the applause of the congregation held up the commencement for five minutes. This, too, is the way Jesus cared for His mother. It is the way you ought to care for Jesus. I beg you to pin your honor on the Lord Jesus Christ. Receive Him now as your Saviour.

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failures this did not frustrate the purpose of God. In His providence He used Samson's failures to accomplish His purpose. "So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life" (Jud. 16:30). So Samson did what had been done, that which the Angel of God had told his mother, "He shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines" (Jud. 13:5). We also see that at the last when Samson repented of his sin and "called unto the LORD, and said, O LORD God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes" (v. 28), that God in His mercy answered Samson's prayer. As the apostle John wrote, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:9) We find Samson's name in Hebrews 11 along with the other men and women who were men and women of faith. Samson dies as a man of faith.

The writer of the book of Judges, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in the first 16 chapters has given us the spiritual downward trend of the nation of Israel in the times of the judges. Like a spiral staircase, the nation descended down this staircase, rebellion, judgment, repentance, and restoration. Around and around, ever downward they departed from the true God. In these 16 chapters we are shown that each time the people repented of their sin, God in His mercy and grace raised up a leader to deliver

them from their oppressors. In the last 5 chapters we have a different approach. Here we have no account of oppression from outside enemies but we have given us the spiritual conditions in Israel during this period. In the first 16 chapters the statement is made at the beginning of each cycle concerning the Israelites, "did evil in the sight of the LORD". In the remainder of the book this has been changed to, "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (17:5, 21, 25, see also 18:1 and 19:1).

In these chapters we are given two stories which describe the downward trend of Israel's departure from God. Though these stories are given near the end of the book it would seem that the events must have occurred at a much earlier time. It has been suggested that they took place during the time of Othneil, the first of the judges, due to the presence of Jonathan, grandson of Moses, in 18:30, the presence of Phinehas, son of Eleazar in 20:28. Also, the ark is said to be in Bethel (20:27-28). These two stories are given to show how the nation of Israel departed from God to serve idols. As we study these two accounts we need to remember this was written for our learning and we need to realize that our nation is going down the same path of spiritual apostasy, moral decay, and political chaos.

The first story, given in chapter 17:1-13, tells the sad story of one man and his family that departed from God and from truth of His Word. This man, Micah (17:1), attempted to worship God, but in doing so, abandoned the revealed Word of God and tried mixing some of the pagan religious ideas into his worship. In doing this he departed from the revealed will of God. In this story Micah committed at least three sins.

"And he said unto his mother, The eleven hundred shekels of silver that were taken from thee, about which thou cursedst, and spakest of also in mine ears, behold the silver is with me; I took it. And his mother said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my son" (17:2).

Micah's first sin was stealing. He stole a large sum of money (1100 shekels of silver) from his mother. But fearing the curse which his mother had pronounced upon the thief he confessed to the theft and returned the money. His mother, in turn pronounced a blessing upon her son and "dedicated the silver unto the

LORD", for the son "to make a graven image and a molten image" (v. 3) She then "took two hundred shekels of silver and gave them to the founder, who made thereof a graven image and a molten image (v. 4). Those images were placed in the house of Micah.

Micah's house now became "an house of gods" and he now also made "an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest" (v. 5). Micah, the thief, had now become a very religious man. He had a place of worship in his own house, he had his own images and a ephod and teraphim. He also had his own priest, one of his own sons. We need to note that Micah was attempting to worship the true God, not the false gods. By the use of his idols he was trying to worship God. What was wrong with his system of worship? There were several things wrong. One, he had taken the things used in the worship of the false gods and mixed them with the worship of the true God. The heathen worshipped their gods by means of idols. Micah was attempting to worship God by means of his idols, forgetting God's command, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth" (Ex. 20:4). Why does God forbid worship of Him by images? It robs Him of His glory. No one can know what God looks like. John Calvin said: "A true image of God is not to be found in all the world and hence His glory is defiled, and His truth corrupted by the lie, whenever He is set before our eyes in visible form. Therefore to devise any image of God is itself impious; because by this corruption His majesty is adulterated and He is figured to be other than He is".

While we today have not made a visible image to worship but many are worshipping an idol made in their own mind. When we worship a god that we have created in our own mind we are worshipping an idol. Men today are bringing God down to their own level, making Him a weak god whom men can resist and overcome. God has revealed Himself in His Word and we are to get our understanding of Him through His Word.

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit Forum I

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER, P.O. BOX 60, ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060

Explain Zechariah 11:7; especially as to the two staves, and as to "Beauty" and "Bands."

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Zechariah II is a Messianic prophesy concerning first, the coming of Christ to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, (Matthew 10:6), and then the rejection of those who rebelled and rejected Him at His first coming. At the beginning of Jesus' ministry here, He gave His disciples this commission; but at the end of His earthly ministry He tells them to "go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," and "the middle wall of partition between us" was broken.

The one staff named "Beauty" means grace. Though they, the Jewry being ignorant of God's righteousness; and were "going about to establish their own righteousness"; and had "not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God," there remained "a remnant according to the election of grace: Acts 13:46 reveals the breaking of the covenant with Israel as a nation. This verse says, "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." See also Romans 11:7-10.

The other staff named "Bonds" means, binders according to my Cambridge Bible center reference, or union according to the AMPLIFIED Bible. God's promise was to feed the poor of the flock of the slaughter. In His sermon on the mount, (Matthew 5:3) Jesus gave a promise to the poor in spirit, that they would be happy and inherit the kingdom of

heaven. He told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Christ came to bind His remnant elect to Himself, by becoming the Lamb. John the Baptist introduced Him as "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29).

But Christ came unto His own and His own received Him not. "But as many as received Him, (the remnant) to them gave he the power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." The two staves were broken indicating that the prophecies in Isaiah 6:9-12 and Psalms 69:22,23 as quoted in Romans 11 would be fulfilled, and they do in fact continue to be fulfilled "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," Romans 11:25-29.

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"And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands; and I fed the flock." (Zechariah 11:7)

This entire chapter speaks of Israel's rejection of Christ, the Messiah at His first advent. He is pictured as the Good Shepherd. Also in this chapter Israel accepts the Anti-Christ. Both of these events, however, are necessary in God's plan and ultimate blessing of the remnant of Israel.

In verse 7 is a picture of the Good Shepherd tending the flock destined for slaughter, particularly the poor of the flock. I believe the poor of the flock are the wretched, afflicted, pious, believers among the sheep. The Lord personally tended them Himself. This is repeated twice in the verse for emphasis.

The Good Shepherd, although He will be rejected, has Israel's

good in view as to their undeserved covenant care. He uses two staves (rods, staffs) in carrying out his covenant promises to Israel as a whole. One of them is to protect, while the other is to draw straying sheep back into the fold.

The first stave, or staff is called "Beauty" which means, among other things, "graciousness." The Lord shows graciousness to His covenant people in protecting them. Just as one of the shepherd's staves was used to beat away wild animals, so the Lord's staff of graciousness delivers His people from their enemies.

The second stave, or staff is called "bands". The word means literally "binders". It expresses ties that unite people; hence "unity". Like the crooked staff used to retrieve a wandering sheep, the Lord's staff of unity retrieves wandering ones and unifies and edifies His people. He knows them each one. This work of the Good Shepherd is spoken of in John 10:14 where are told, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine."

We know Him and He knows us. Marvelous! One day the remnant of Israel (spoken of as all Israel at that time) will know this Shepherd even as we know Him today and are protected and kept by His Shepherd's staves.

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Looking at chapter 11 as a whole we see it as a parable foretelling that which concerns God's dealings with Israel during and after the first coming of Christ. The first six verses foretells of the wrath of God against Israel which was fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem after the rejection of Christ by Israel. Verses 7-14 tell the reason of the wrath of God. It

was because of the rejection of His Son by those whom He came to save and bind unto Himself. Verses 15-17 foretells of the rise of the "idol shepherd" and of his destruction.

"And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock. And I took two staves: the one I called Beauty; and the other I called Bands; and I fed the flock" (Zech. 11:7).

This verse tells us of God's concern for His people Israel. The two staves like the "rod and the staff" in Psalm 23 are tools which the shepherd uses in the care of his sheep. Beauty, meaning "graciousness" represents the grace of God in sending His Son into the world to save His people. Band meaning "union" represents God's purpose to unite His people Israel unto Himself. When Christ came to earth the first time He came with grace, but He was rejected by His own people Israel. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:11,12). The "poor of the flock" are the ones who received Him at His first coming, and since. They are the "remnant according to the election of grace" of Romans 11:5. These are the ones whom Zechariah said had been fed and would be fed.

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"And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock. And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands; and I fed the flock." (Zechariah 11:7)

The above verse has reference to the work of Christ in His position as Shepherd of His people. The shepherds of Israel, as they did so many times before and afterward had become a people more interested in traditions and vain glory rather than serving in a spiritual manner. Verse seven shows us the vanity of man and the truthfulness of the meditorial work of a shepherd, which of course involved looking after and caring for all of the sheep. Wealth and position has no bearing as to

how they are provided for, but they are all loved with a tender and caring love that only Christ the Great Shepherd can give. Note that the poor of the flock are mentioned in this verse. The rich and the prestigious do not have center stage but the poor who are faithful and who long for the Shepherd's gentle nudge of the staff to guide them.

The two staves that are mentioned in this verse are representative of God's grace as to salvation and also make reference to the Shepherd's work. It is interesting to note that a Shepherd has only one staff that he guides the sheep while this verse has reference to two. The Psalmist referred to them in Psalms twenty three, verse four, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Christ while directing His people, does so in both a firm and gentle way.

The stave called beauty represents the gentleness of our Great Shepherd. He came to Israel in a gentle way giving them the law, giving them under shepherds to lead them in His paths; yet they were found walking contrary to them. The under shepherds had become fleshly minded devising their own doctrine and were leading God's people in the wrong direction causing them to sin against God. Oh, beloved, how God has been merciful to His people. He, by His mercy and kindness, has given us the plain truth of His Word, yet many times we are found walking contrary to it.

The stave called bands is also a representative of the firmness and gentleness of our Shepherd. It was never God's design for sheep to run wild grazing where they will and doing and thinking on their own. Satan, the destroyer of God's sheep is the originator of the doctrine of wild sheep. The religious world will say go where you will, do what you will, worship where you will, it doesn't matter. What folly. Our Shepherd in His mercy has designed that we be banded together. This was true in the Old Testament and is true today. He established His church, a Sovereign Grace Landmark Missionary Baptist church that His people be banded together eating the same food and fellowshiping together. May God help us to follow His leadership and be found walking in His paths.

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER, P.O. BOX 60, ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060

A church has a Bible institute service on a week night, not the mid-week service; men and women are therein trained in doctrine, practice, cults, etc.; Would it be all right for the women to speak out and ask questions in such?

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men were to be trained, the women were to be trained. This is a time of learning for the men, for the women. The Bible says for the women to learn in silence.

Men will use all kinds of excuses to get around specific instructions in God's Word. Let us all be instructed and be obedient to God's Word. No, I do not believe that it would be all right for women to speak out and ask questions.

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I Cor. 14:34 "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law." I Tim. 2:11 "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection." I Tim. 2:12 "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."

Considering these verses I take the stand that women are not to preach, speak, or teach in the assembly or worship service of the church; the authorized times the church has set for formal worship, preaching, prayer and study. If members of the church gather in an informal meeting to study the Bible I personally have no difficulty with this. I realize many brethren may disagree with me on this.

I would assume in our question the term "Bible Institute Service" would be a formal meeting authorized by the church. If such is the case I would not be in favor of the women speaking.

Building boys is better than mending men.

A few years ago we had a school called New Testament Baptist Academy. We advertised it on the radio and the paper. We started out with a good number in attendance, but when we began to teach the doctrines of grace and church truth, the woman's place in church, our attendance began to drop. We continued the classes for a few years and presented a certificate at the end of each year. Finally, the attendance dropped off to the extent we dropped the classes.

Since there were both women and men in the classes, some thought it not good to have the women to ask questions, but since the building is not the church, and we were not gathered as a church, we knew that there would be many questions to be asked since some had never heard of the doctrines we were teaching. We knew that in order to get the truth over and the people to have a good understanding of what we were teaching, the women must ask questions. This does not rule out the teachings of Paul found in I Corinthians 14:34-40 and I Timothy 2:8, 11-12.

I do not believe in a Universal Church. We were not meeting as a church, but rather a school teaching the doctrines of the Bible. Do I think it is all right for women to speak out, or ask questions in this type of meeting, yes.

*Please,
Remember Us In
Your Prayers*

Let me say, first of all, I believe in church authority. A church may change the prayer service from Wednesday night to Tuesday night. Or, they may change time of service from 7:30 to some other hour. No one can tell them that they cannot. The majority of the church rules in such cases. The pastor may advise and suggest but cannot hinder the church from doing what they desire to do. The pastor may suggest or advise as to some other way or time, but the final decision is in the hands of the church.

If a church decides to have a Bible institute service on a week night other than the regular prayer service night, then the church may do so. This special service is under the direction of the church. This meeting is under the authority of the church. It was decided upon by the church. The subjects for training and study decided upon by the church. I cannot see any difference in this meeting than any other meeting.

The question mentions that the service is on a week night. I would love to know what difference this makes, whether it is a week night or the weekend. The church is not to depart from the scripture. The church is not to disregard what the Bible has to say about the matter of women keeping quiet in the church. I Cor. 14:34 says, "Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak;..." Also we read in I Timothy 2:11, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection." This special meeting was for the purpose of instructing men and women. The

STUDIES

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Another thing wrong with Micah's worship, it was a self-made worship to a self-made god. He admits this in 18:24, "Ye have taken away my gods which I made". Micah's place of worship was in the wrong place. The place that God had designated for the place of worship was at the tabernacle and it was at Shiloh. This was only a short distance from where Micah lived, therefore he did not have an excuse that it was too far for him to go to Shiloh to worship. He disobeyed God by setting up a shrine in his own house. Micah set up a false priest. God had appointed that the priesthood should come from the tribe of Levi and as Micah was an Ephraimite his son was not in line to be a priest. What was wrong with Micah's system of worship? Every thing, his priest, his place of worship, his blending of the worship of false gods with that of the true God. Why did he do this, he was an Israelite and should have known what his God had commanded? The answer is found in the next verse: "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (17: 6). Micah did that which was right in his own eyes. The lesson we are to learn from this is, if we do that which is right in our own eyes we will end up doing that which is wrong in the eyes of the Lord. When Micah rejected God's commands for his standard of worship and set up what was right in his own eyes not only did he go astray, but it led others to do likewise.

As we study the account of the worship of Micah can we not see the same thing being done in America? Is not everyone doing that which is right in his own eyes? Have we not taken many of the things used in the worship of the false gods and blended them into our worship of God as did Micah? Is he any more guilty of false worship than are we?

Before proceeding with the study of Micah we need to take a look at his mother. When she got her money back from Micah, she said, "I had wholly dedicated the silver unto the LORD from my hand for my son, to make a graven image and a molten image: now therefore I will restore it unto thee" (17: 3). From this we see that she, like Micah, was attempting to worship God by using the methods of the heathen, by the use of idols. She also, like Micah, was a thief for she

"wholly dedicated the silver unto the LORD", yet she kept most of it for she only "took two hundred shekels of silver and gave to the founder" to make the images. "Like mother, like son". Micah stole from his mother, his mother stole from God.

"And there was a young man out of Bethlehem - judah of the family of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there. And the man departed out of the city from Bethlehem - judah to sojourn where he could find a place: and he came to mount Ephraim to the house of Micah, as he journeyed" (17: 7,8).

Here another man enters the picture. He is a Levite living in Bethelham - judah. It would seem that he was unemployed for he leaves the city seeking "a place" (i.e., a place of service). In his journey he comes to the house of Micah. When Micah asks him, "Whence comest thou?" (v. 9). His reply was that he had come from Bethlehem - judah and that he was seeking a place of service (v. 9). Micah extended to him a "call" to be his priest and upon the offer of a salary, ten shekels of silver a year and a suit of apparel, and food (v. 10), the Levite accepted the "call". "And Micah consecrated the Levite; and the young man became his priest, and was in the house of Micah". Micah has now done "that which was right in his own eyes". He said, "Now know I that the LORD will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest" (v. 13). How wrong he was!

The account of the unemployed Levite brings out the degree of apostasy that existed in Israel, not only among the people but also with the Levites, the spiritual leaders of Israel. The fact that he was unemployed brings out the fact that support for his tribe was lacking. Under the law of Moses the Levites were to be supported by the other tribes. The Levite was willing to accept the job offered by Micah in spite of knowing that the law of Moses forbid the worship of idols. The Levite not only sinned himself, but he also contributed to the depth to which Micah departed from God and His Word. Not only had Micah set up the wrong place to worship, but he worshiped in the

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STUDIES

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wrong way, by means of idols, but now he was encouraged to do so by a Levite, one who should have been one to give him spiritual guidance back to the worship of the true God. Do we not have a parallel situation in our day. Do we not have pastors of churches that are leading the people down the same path of apostasy which Micah took?

STEPS

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to God, because if God did not enlarge our steps, every one of us would be a terrible backslider today.

Man cannot direct his steps. We read: **"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."** (Jer. 10:23).

In the light of this text, as well as in the light of my own experience - and I might also add - in the light of my observation of others, I insist that man cannot direct his steps. There is a reason why that is true. I believe that God expects to direct our steps in view of our inherited depravity.

The Word of God tells us that spiritually we are blind. How can a blind man direct his steps?

The Word of God insists that we are spiritually deaf. Can a deaf man direct his steps?

The Word of God insists that we are spiritually lame - that we are impotent, exactly like Mephibosheth, of whom we read in the Old Testament, who was lame on both feet. Do you expect a lame man to direct his steps?

The Word of God goes so far as to say that we are INSANE - that we don't have our right mind. No man has his right mind until he comes to know Jesus Christ as his Saviour. The Apostle Paul refers to this very fact and tells us that we don't even have our right mind until God has saved us, for he says: **"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."** (II Tim. 1:7).

Beloved, you don't even have a right mind until you are saved. Therefore, how could an insane man direct his own steps. Every one of us is spiritually insane. We are victims of spiritual insanity. Can you expect an individual who is out of his mind spiritually to direct his steps? I ask then, when the Bible insists that the unsaved man, as a result of his depravity, is spiritually blind, spiritually

deaf, spiritually lame or impotent, and is spiritually insane, how could you expect a man to direct his steps?

Suppose you were to see a man out on the street who is blind, and deaf, and lame, and insane. I ask you, would you ask that man to lead you across the street? Would you even want that man to walk down the street with you, from one intersection to another? Would you want that man to drive an automobile in which you were riding? Would you want him to be a driver of a bus of which you were a paying passenger? I say to you, a man that is blind, and deaf, and lame, and insane is in no sense capable of directing his steps, and the Bible tells us that due to our depravity, all of us are spiritually blind, and spiritually deaf, and spiritually lame, and spiritually insane; therefore, there is not one of us that is capable of directing our own steps.

I think how many churches there are who have an unsaved man for a pastor. They remind me of a poem I read years ago in high school of a vessel that was manned by a dead man, and that had a crew of corpses. I often think of that poem and compare it with lots of churches I know today. They have a dead man spiritually in the pulpit, they have dead deacons, and they have dead church members, and the leading officers of the church are dead too. Beloved, how could you expect a church to prosper and to be blessed under such conditions?

I tell you, it is mighty hard for even a saved man to direct his steps with God's help. If a man is unsaved, whether he be a preacher or as a member of a church, he certainly could never direct his steps to please God.

Every once in a while I get provoked with the leadership of our nation and I express myself very pertinently, yet I shouldn't do that. I shouldn't blame the leaders of our country. We should not expect those of high places in the leadership of America to do any better than they are doing, for the simple reason, that we ought not expect anything of an unsaved man.

I say to you, man cannot direct his own steps. That is why it is that a church with an unsaved pastor can't expect to prosper and be blessed. That is why it is that a nation with an unsaved leader can't be expected to do that which is right. Beloved, man cannot direct his steps.

I often think of Clara Booth Luce, when she was a Congress-

woman. After she had been in Washington a few days, somebody asked her impression, and she made one of the smartest assertions that I have ever heard from the lips of a politician when she said that it was the only mad house in the country that was run by the inmates.

I think that Clara Booth Luce told the truth. She said it in a joking manner, yet actually what she said was the truth - our nation is managed, just like a group of inmates trying to run an insane asylum. What can you expect of our nation from a crowd of people that know not the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour? What can you expect of them so far as our nation is concerned? The Bible says it is not in the power of man to direct his steps. An unsaved preacher can't direct his steps. A church that is led by an unsaved preacher, or a church that has unsaved deacons, can't expect to be blessed. A nation that has unsaved people directing and leading them in the events and affairs of public life, should not expect anything good to come from such leadership. I tell you, beloved, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

God orders our steps. We read: **"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; and he delighteth in his way."** (Psa. 37:23).

I am glad that our steps are ordered by the Lord. You can turn all through the Word of God and you will find that it is recorded again and again how God orders our steps.

Notice again: **"A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps."** (Prov. 16:9).

It is true that we think in our hearts we are doing the things that we are doing, but actually it is God that is directing our steps. Man thinks he can walk in his own way, and man thinks in his heart that he is devising his own way and that he is making the plans for his life, but after all is said and done, it is the Lord that is directing his steps. I tell you, it thrills my heart and blesses my soul just to realize that it is God that orders our steps.

That is not only true of the saved, but it is true of the unsaved as well. I turn to God's Word and I find that God called Cyrus by name two hundred years before he was born, and God said that He was going to direct his steps two hundred years before he was ever born into the world. Listen:

"Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right

hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of Kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut. I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: He shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the Lord of hosts." (Isa. 45: 1,13).

Beloved, I tell you, man cannot direct his steps, for God's Word definitely tells us that God orders our steps every day.

I don't know whether you agree or not, but you might as well face it - God ordered your steps today from the time you put your toes out on the floor until you got to the house of the Lord. You couldn't have gone any place else today, for God directed your steps, and ordered your path, that you are here at this place.

God not only directs the saved, but He directs the unsaved man, too. We read in God's Word how God directed a man by the name of Josiah, and his name was called three hundred years before he was born. Listen:

"And he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord; Behold a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee." (I Kings 13:2).

This prophet of God says that three hundred years from now David is going to have a child and his name is going to be Josiah and he is going to take false prophets and offer them as a sacrifice upon the false altar of Jeroboam. The very thing that was spoken came to pass in the life of Josiah.

I tell you beloved, God orders our steps. He ordered the steps of this unsaved man Cyrus, for He even called him by name and told what he was going to do two hundred years before he was born. He ordered the steps of this man Josiah, for He even told what Josiah was going to do three hundred years before he was born.

I'll go further and tell you that God ordered your steps long before you were born. Listen:

"Now God himself and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you." (I Thess. 3: 11). **"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."** (II Thess. 3:5).

Notice, Paul says by inspiration that God directs our steps from day to day. Doesn't it help you to know that God directs your steps?

I might go further and say that God not only directs your steps, but He directs your stops also. He tells you when to step and He also tells you when to stop. It just thrills my heart to know that my life is in the hands of an omnipotent, sovereign God, who knows all things from the beginning, and who can speak to Cyrus, an unsaved man, two hundred years before he is born, telling Cyrus what he is to do and directing his steps; who can speak to Josiah three hundred years before he is born and tell him what things to do, and the same God orders our steps and our stops today.

God numbers our steps. Sometimes my legs get mighty tired and I wonder just how much longer I can keep going. Then I realize that it is the Lord that has numbered my steps.

How many steps have you taken in life? How many steps are you going to take between now and the time you leave this world? I don't know, and neither do you, but I tell you one thing, God has numbered your steps.

Beloved, God knows the number of hairs in your head. God also knows the number of sparrows that fly in the air. Not one of them can fall to the ground without the omnipotent Heavenly Father taking note of the falling sparrow.

Yes, beloved, God knows the sparrows, He knows the hairs of your head, and thank God, He knows the number of steps which you are going to take.

We read: **"For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin?"** (Job 14: 16).

God knows not only what you are doing, but what you are going to do and God has your steps numbered.

Listen again: **"Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps?"** (Job 31: 4).

You can't read these verses of scripture without knowing that God knows all the steps that you take. Those of us who go through a busy life certainly take a lot of steps, and I imagine you and I will have to take a lot more steps in the days to come. You mothers with babies, I imagine you make a lot of steps running after your children in a day's time. You don't know how many steps you have made, and you don't know how
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many you are going to make tomorrow, but I want to tell you, God has numbered our steps.

God also has numbered our months, and days, for we read: "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." (Job 14: 5).

This tells us that God has numbered the days and months in our life, and God has set a boundary beyond which we cannot go. When we come to that boundary, we are going to stop; we are not going to go one step farther.

I say then, the God who numbered the sparrows and the God who numbered the hairs on our head - that same God has numbered our days and our months, and even our steps, so that we are truly in the hands of God.

Doesn't this help you to realize that you are in God's hands today? The same God that holds the sparrow in His hand, whose little heart can't flutter and whose wings can't cease to move, and whose little body can't fall to the ground without the omnipotent sovereign God of the universe taking note of it - that same God has numbered our months and our days and our steps.

Beloved, this calls for thought and for positive faith and trust on the part of every one of us. I can look back across life's experience and I can see the steps that I have made, but I can't tell what the steps I take will lead me unto. However, one thing I do know is this, that the same God that led me in the the past is going to lead me in the future, because He has already numbered my steps. It is my business and it is your business as a child of God to look up into His face and implicitly trust.

God preserves our steps from our enemies. You say, "Brother Gilpin, are you going to talk about your enemies today?" Yes, I think I will.

"Brother Gilpin, you know that a child of God ought not to have any enemies. A child of God ought not ever make anybody mad. You ought not have any enemies." Beloved, I like the words of the little poem which says: "He has no enemies, you say! My friend, the boast is poor. Of duty that the strong endure, Must have made foes! If he has none. Small is the work that he has done; He has bit no traitor on the hip, He has cast no cup from tempted lip, He has

never turned the wrong to right, He has been a coward in the fight."

I say, beloved, if a man stands for the things of God and for the Word of God, he is going to have enemies, and the Word of God tells us that God preserves our steps from our enemies.

Listen: "They gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul." (Psa. 56:6). "They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down; they have digged a pit before me into the midst whereof they are fallen themselves." (Psa. 57: 6).

David says that his enemies have prepared a net for him, and that they digged a pit for him to fall into, but they are going to fall into the pit which they digged for him.

I can look back across the years and I can see how God has taken care of this preacher, and how God has looked after him. I can see some individuals that have dug a pit for my feet and I can see those same individuals that have fallen into the pit that they digged for me.

Beloved, what a God we serve! What a sovereign, omnipotent God we serve - a God that takes hold of us who can't direct our own steps, and directs our steps for us, and numbers those steps we take; that same God preserves our steps from our enemies.

I sat down recently and I said, "Lord, how many times has this been my experience? How many times has Psalm 57: 6 been fulfilled in my own life?" You know, beloved, I just simply couldn't recall the number of times that God has fulfilled it in my own life. I can think of one individual who truly despised and hated me, if ever a man did, yet I can see him down on his knees begging me to come, visit him.

Beloved, that is just one instance, but I can tell you dozens of them - how God takes care of His own, and watches after them, and how the individuals that prepare those snares, fall into their own pit. I tell you, we have a God who numbers our steps, who sees to it that our steps are taken day by day, and who preserves us from our own enemies.

I say, beloved, we have enemies that affect us for a while. I know that sometimes these enemies cause us difficulties. An enemy is about like a sandbriar in your sock. A sandbriar irritates and hurts you for a little while, but you take your sock off and get

the sandbriar out and it is over with. An enemy is about as important as a sandbriar in your sock. How I thank God that the God that orders our steps, and numbers our steps, also preserves our steps from our enemies.

Our steps should be patterned after the word of God. We read: "Order my steps in thy Word; and let not any iniquity have dominion over me." (Psa. 119: 133).

I have no business to make plans unless those plans are in harmony with God. I have no business at any time to take any steps in any direction unless my steps are in harmony with God. It makes no difference what I think - the question is, what does the Word of God tell us?

Some people will pattern their steps according to sentiment, but that is not right. You ask an individual for a verse of Scripture that will justify women speaking in public and some of the other things that they believe, and they will say, "I can't give you any verse of Scripture, but that is the way we have done it for years."

Let me tell you, beloved, we ought not order our steps according to sentiment, but according to Scripture. It is so much easier to be sentimental than it is to be scriptural.

We ought not to pattern out steps by that which is popular. If I would say that Baptists, Protestants, Catholics, and other religions should try to agree and see how we could get together - if I were in such an Ecumenical position, I would at least be taking a popular position. But our steps aren't to be ordered on the basis of what I think, or on sentiment, or on the basis of popularity. We ought not order our steps on the basis that "everybody else is doing it."

Every once in a while when it comes up to Christmas time, somebody will say, "Brother Gilpin, I am satisfied that what you say is true about Santa Claus and Christmas, and the fact that it is of heathen origin, but after all, we all have a little heathenism in us, and everybody else is doing it, so why not just forget about what you have to say, and what you believe and go on?"

What does the Bible say in that respect? Listen: "Thou shall not follow a multitude to do evil." (Ex. 23:2).

Beloved, I have no business to follow the world to do evil.

Then when Easter time comes, people say, "Brother Gilpin, is it

Musings of an Errant Preacher

*Shall I dazzle with word and wit,
Or tickle their ears with humor a bit?*

*Shall I speak softly, as to caress,
Or preach loudly, to impress?*

*On the negative I won't dwell,
No one wants to hear about Hell.*

*I'll be positive, cheery and bright,
They don't want to hear of their awful plight.*

*I know what I'll do, I'll quote some Greek,
That'll sweep them off their feet.*

*If I deliver my sermon just right,
I might get a better job offer tonight.*

*You know, if my hair is neat, and I'm
Dressed just right, I might persuade
Some to choose Christ tonight.*

*That old grace preacher told me I should quit,
Man, he don't know what a gold mine I've hit.*

*If I don't exactly tell them the truth,
They won't hold me libel, after all,
They never study their Bible.*

*If with my sermon, I don't give them a licking,
Who knows? I might get invited for chicken.*

- Ted Gower

true that when you were a boy the way that they celebrated Easter was far different from today, but times have changed. You ought to go along with the crowd."

Listen, beloved, I am serving an unchangeable God. I am not serving a God that changes with the winds. I am serving a God that is unchangeable, and that God orders my steps, He numbers my steps, He preserves my steps from my enemies, and He tells me that I am to pattern my steps according to the Word of God. I have no business to pattern my steps on the basis of what I think, nor on the basis of sentiment, nor on the basis of popularity, nor on the basis that "everybody else is doing it." nor on the basis of what Grandma believed. Rather, our steps ought to be patterned after the Word of God.

If you can find it in the Bible, do it; if you can't find it, don't do it. I find that Jesus' steps led Him

down into the Jordan River to be baptized by a Baptist preacher. I took the same steps that Jesus took. I found a Baptist preacher, and had a Baptist Church to authorize my baptism, and I was baptized like Jesus was. If I were you, I would look to Jesus' steps, and see that they lead right here to the church of God on the Lord's day. If you read anything in the Bible Jesus did, I would say that however His steps led, you ought to follow in the steps that He has given to us in His Word. Your steps ought to be ordered by the Word of God.

We read: "For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." (1 Pet. 2: 21).

Did you ever read the book, "In His Steps," by Charles M. Shel-

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Silsbee, Texas will be holding their annual Bible Conference on October 15, 16 and 17.

Meals will be served during the meeting at 5:00 p.m. and also at 12:00 noon.

Brothers Doyal Thomas, Jack Green, Oscar Mink, John Suarez, Arthur Blevings, Larry Wilson, Garland Johnson, Laird Baldwin, Homer Laurence, Jack Whitt, George Henry, Richard Boyer, A.D. Jones, and others are slated to speak.

For further information phone
Pastor Walter Herin at (409) 385-9344.

STEPS

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don? If you have never read it, you ought to. This book tells about a preacher who was preparing his Sunday sermon, which he preached from this text of Scripture - I Peter 2: 21.

He emphasized walking in the steps of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it revolutionized a whole town. An editor of a paper heard the sermon and he said, "If I am going to walk in His steps, and if I am going to do what Jesus would do, how about those newspaper ads for whiskey? I can't carry them." The result was that the paper came out the next day with a new form and new appearance, without the whiskey ads. It was thus with all the business and social like of the town.

I tell you, beloved, if you are going to walk in the steps of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is going to make a change in your life and mine.

*If we let God guide,
He will provide.*

Let's sum it up; we take our steps, but we don't direct them. We can't. Our God orders our steps. He numbers our steps. He says that we should pattern our steps after the Word of God, and He says that we should follow the footsteps of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Oh, may it please God to take hold of us and let us realize how important it is that we walk in the steps of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As the old song says: "Oh, how beautiful to walk in the steps of the Saviour. Stepping in the light, stepping in the light." May God help you to trust the Lord, and may God direct your steps!

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AMERICAN WOMEN PRACTICE 'CHILD SACRIFICE,' SAYS LAND

American women have practiced "child sacrifice to the gods of convenience, materialism and career advancement by killing 40 million babies since 1973," according to Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission.

In an unusually harsh attack on modern society, Land told students at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary that the United States has entered a "post-Christian culture in which there is no Christian memory - not even a Christian echo." He called American culture "neo-Pagan" and attacked the notion that the Supreme Court should determine "what's right and wrong."

Land blasted court rulings designed to protect the religious neutrality of the public schools and urged students to spread religious messages in schools. "While we hear this is offensive to non-Christian people, I say, 'So what!'" remarked Land. "That's protected speech under the First Amendment. Therefore, if God's name uttered in profanity is protected speech, even though it is offensive to believers, then God's name invoked in a prayer is protected speech, even if it offends non-believers."

In an April 14 Baptist Press interview at the Wake Forest, N.C., school, Land implored SBC ministers to get more involved in politics. "Our pastors need to preach to the issues and tell Southern Baptists that they must vote based only on their loyalty to Christ," said Land. He accused many Baptists of voting based on party affiliation or geographical

location and added, "Some are even venal enough to vote based on economic benefit."

Concluded Land, "Clearly we are in the midst of God's judgment, and I believe that by the end of this decade, we will have determined whether or not we are going to reassert Judeo-Christian values or be cut loose by God and allowed to sink and submerge into a pagan abyss that will bring about an evil marriage between technical and scientific expertise and spiritual ignorance."

With a membership of 15 million, the SCB is the largest Protestant denomination in the country. The denomination, now in the hands of fundamentalists, has rejected its historic stand in favor of separation of church and state.

Copied from Church and State, a very liberal paper written from their slant.

Thank you!

We say it so often

- when a waitress gives us good service
- when a customer buys our product
- when someone gives us a helping hand

Sometimes we show as well as say our thanks

- when we leave a small tip
- when we send a little gift to a friend or hostess
- when we give that warm, sincere hand-shake

I'd like to show my appreciation to you by telling you something that is of far greater value. It is simply that the greatest gift in the world can be yours for the asking. That gift is the friendship of my best friend - Jesus Christ. He took away my sin and guilt and gives me joy and peace. I serve him with loving obedience and find in Him my life, my hope, my everything!

He invites you, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)

He saves; He keeps; He satisfies!

Introducing Him to you is the best way that I can say

Thank you!

- A Letter to the Editor

Editor,

Because these environmentalists have blocked desperately needed infrastructure projects on the grounds that these projects would cause a supposed or actual risk to some animal species, can the present flooding problems in the Midwest be laid directly at their feet?

Have they in their new list of values on the species of nature, taken man from the top of the list and placed him last so that every declared endangered species, even vermin, can be protected without regard for man's survival? Aren't we headed in that direction? According to the testimony of these Earth Firsters, YES.

These environmentalists have the proverbial cart before the horse. The Almighty created the earth for man's benefit not man for the earth's benefit. If these policies of these people are carried out as presently planned, it will lead to the deaths of several billion people in the world and 200 million in the United States. (see the May 1, 1987 issue of Earth First, page 32). They are the wolves in sheep's clothing mentioned in the New Testament, the most heinous mass murderers of all time. Will you be one of their victims? YES.

Have both the Catholic and Protestant clergy in our beloved country been flagrantly violating the First Commandment by the replacement of the God of love in their lives with the pagan god, GAIA? (reflections of the abominations of ancient Israel).

Is the reason we are facing extinction due to the massive violation of the First, Fifth, and Sixth Commandments by our beloved people, the churches, and our governments?

If these environmentalists are successful in the establishment of the POST INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY, will this kill off the goose that lays the golden eggs? YES.

Will culpable flooding in the Midwest be the straw that breaks the camel's back?

Will that slumbering giant, the American people, finally awake?

If we, the people, can't prevail on the governments of the world to abrogate these malthusian environmental laws, these most heinous mass murderers of all time will bury us all.

O Lord, may we finally bring these terrible people down, for their own good as well as ours, before they destroy our beloved country and the world?

The nation's conscience,
Cornelius U. Morgan
2953 Duncan Lane
Baltimore, MD 21234

Send Letters to the Editor to:
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