

The religion that makes a man look sick certainly won't cure the world.

MISSIONARY

SOVEREIGN GRACE

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The Baptist Examiner

Baptist Is Our Middle Name

Paid Circulation in All States and in Many Foreign Countries

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

VOL. 65, NO. 22 ASHLAND, KENTUCKY, NOV. 20, 1993 WHOLE NUMBER 2670



I COUNCIL THEE

By Waldo Whiddon

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent." (Rev. 3:14-19).

These words of the Exalted Lord are to keep us from spiritual ignorance and bring healing where "wretchedness" is already present. We are warned here of an insidious disease which ourselves are not even aware of, namely, "self destruction." Why? Look again at verse seventeen, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." All those who

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KNOWING GOD'S WILL

By Ray Waugh, Sr.

Part I

The Lord willing, I should like to speak for a little while regarding our knowing God's will. The statement sometimes is made that "When we are saved, we are saved to serve." In reality, then, if we do not serve the God who saved us, there really is no need for us to continue living. We may just as well go on to glory.

It is quite probable that at some time in the life of all of us, there is the question, "What is God's will for me?" Even now, after some 50 years as one of the Lord's own by His Grace and through the faith that He has provided, I still must ask, "What is God's will for me, even today?" Occasionally, across these years, some have asked me what I saw with respect to "God's will" for their lives. Generally, I have fielded such questions, as it were, by placing the responsibility for the answer or the decision upon those who asked the question.

Having been in the ministry in a rather formal way for more than 45 of those more than 50 years, I have come to realize that there are many who suppose that they can make such decisions for others or provide

answers for those who ask the question. There are religious organizations for example and some "church organizations" who suppose that they have the capability of making such decisions for others. Needless to say, it is my humble opinion that all such organizations or church groups do err grievously.

If I am understanding the Scripture aright, the Apostle Paul speaks to this subject very clearly and very distinctly in, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth" (Rom. 14:4). There really is no way, then, that I can determine God's will for your life, and there is no way that anyone other than I can determine God's will for my life. I have no doubt at all regarding this. I believe that the Scriptures are most explicit. We find these words clearly stated, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17). Herein God provides us with positive proof, if you will, that He has a particular concern for each and everyone of His own. It seems to me that there is some

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STUDIES IN JUDGES

By C.T. Everman

Judges 20:28 - 21:25

"And the Lord said, Go up; for tomorrow I will deliver them into thine hand." (v. 28b)

The children of Israel with 400,000 men who drew the sword had gone to battle Benjamin. They had gone with self-confidence that they would win easily as Benjamin only had 26,000 men with swords and 700 with slings. This was done without the leadership of God. The men of Gibeah had committed a grievous sin in the "gang rape" and abuse of the concubine of the Levite, causing her death, but the children of Israel were not free from sin and God must teach them a lesson. In their first battle the children of Benjamin slew 22,000 of the Israelites. This made them wonder if they had done the right thing, therefore they went to the Lord and asked if they should go against Benjamin, after all, he was their brother. As they had not learned the lesson which God intended for them to learn He told them to go. This time they lost 18,000 men.

Now realizing their mistake, they went unto the house of the Lord. They repented of their sin, they fasted and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. They were now willing to listen to God and go under His leadership. The result of this battle was entirely different from that of the first two (read verses 29-48).

This time a different strategy was used. They first set an ambush similar to that which Joshua set against Ai (Josh. 8:4-28). The main army advanced up to Gibeah and the Benjamites came out of the city, thinking that again they would

kill a great number of Israel. This time Israel turned and ran drawing the men of Benjamin away from the city leaving it unprotected. When the men of Benjamin saw the Israelites fleeing they thought they had won the battle. They chased after the Israelites killing thirty of them. After drawing the Benjaminites away from the city, the Israelites took their stand at Baal-tamar. The 10,000 men who were in ambush now came up behind the men of Benjamin. They were now caught between the two armies and there was no retreat for them. Thus the Lord gave Israel the victory. **And the Lord smote Benjamin before Israel: and the children of Israel destroyed of the Benjamites that day twenty and five thousand and an hundred men: all these drew the sword.**" (v. 35)

Israel had "set liers in wait round about Gibeah" (v. 29). When the men of war had been drawn from the city, these entered the city, killing all with the sword and setting fire to the city. The smoke from the fire was a signal for the main army of Israel to stop running and take their stand. When the Benjamites saw that they were surrounded and their city was in flames "they turned and fled toward the wilderness unto the rock of Rimmon: and they gleaned of them in the highways five thousand men: and pursued hard after them unto Gidom, and slew two thousand men of them. So all which fell that day of Benjamin were twenty and five thousand men that drew the sword; all these were men of valour." (vv. 45, 46).

After this battle was over there remained of the army of Benjamin only 600 men. These fled to the rock Rimmon and were there four months. The men of Israel did not pursue these men but turned back to the cities of Benjamin and destroyed all and set the cities on fire. Of all the tribe of Benjamin there remained only the 600 men who fled to the rock Rammon.

Chapter 21

After the smoke of the battle had cleared away and Israel returned home they suddenly realized what they had done. God had promised to bless and led twelve tribes which would make up the nation of Israel. Now there was grave danger of

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by John R. Gilpin, Sr.

THE SIXTH SAYING OF THE SAVIOR ON THE CROSS

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." (John 19:30) Earth's greatest task was being completed. It is significant that it was finished alone. Several years ago, Mrs. Gilpin and I attended an indoor track meet held in the large Armory building in Cincinnati, Ohio. We saw that

night the best trained athletes of the country compete for world records. I shall never forget the hour when Harold Osborne, representing the Illinois Athletic Association, set a new world's record for the running high jump. The bands played, the audience went wild, and the pavilion was shaken with the applause of the crowd. What a contrast to the day in which

Jesus died!

Out in Chicago I saw a rodeo wherein a cowboy leaned from his horse to grasp a wild steer by the horns. In less than a moment's time, he had thrown and tied the steer unassisted, and when he arose and doffed his hat to the audience, the cheers shook the pavilion. Oh, how different is all this to the day

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
Jack C. Whitt
Interim Editor

Office Phone 606-325-2012

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.

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

Second Class Postage paid at Ashland, Kentucky.

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

SIXTH SAYING

(Continued from Page 1)

when Jesus died. Christ trod the wine press alone. We sing today - "Must Jesus bear the cross alone, and all the world go free?"

Whether that would be true today or not, it is true that Jesus bore it all alone the day He died. Yet, just before His death, with a shout of triumph that rent the whole earth, He said, "It is finished."

The sixth saying of the Saviour on the cross tells us that Jesus' sufferings were completed. Appropriately Jesus had been designated "the man of sorrows." These began and continued from His childhood. I remember seeing

several years ago a great picture representing Christ working in the carpenter shop of His foster-father. At the close of the day, with the sun shining full in His face, He arose from His bench and stretched Himself as one might when tired. With the sun coming through the window upon His face, this caused a shadow resembling the cross to appear upon the wall behind him. According to the artist's conception, His back was turned to it. His mother, standing by, looked agast as she saw the silhouette of the cross. When I saw this picture, immediately I resented it, for this is not the gospel. It isn't the cross, and at the same time, His mother never realized that He was to be crucified until He was actually hanging on the cross. Jesus always knew that He was to die for the sins of the world. The Psalmist would have Him say: **"I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up."** (Psalms 88:15)

In the very beginning of His ministry He said to His mother, **"Woman, what have I do with thee? mine hour is not yet come."** (John 2:4) "Mine hour" is a reference to the time when He should be in the hands of men. It was the hour that He looked forward to from before the foundation of the world - His hour of suffering. Just a little later, still in the very beginning of His ministry, you hear Him say, **"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up."** (John 3:14) The lifting up to which he referred was that of the cross. Along toward the middle of His ministry, you hear Him use a similar expression when He says, **"When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."** (John 8:28)

Then along toward the last of His ministry, you hear Him speak thus again: **"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."** (John 12:32)

At the time when the mother of James and John came making an ambitious request of Jesus, you hear Him say: **"Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with."** (Mark 10:38) The "cup" to which he referred, and the "baptism" of which he spoke, was none other than Calvary. He Himself foretold His death and resurrection to the disciples long before it came to pass. **"From that time forth began**

Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and he suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." (Matthew 16:21)

The Scriptures even indicate to us that at the Mount of Transfiguration, the subject of conversation between Him and Moses and Elias was that of His death. Listen - **"And behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem."** (Luke 9:30, 31)

Now these sorrows that had begun and continued from childhood, and toward which Jesus had looked forward, and for which purpose He came into the world, are ended. His physical suffering had been excruciating. The terrible experience in Gethsemane whereby He sweat great drops of bloody perspiration, is now ended. His appearing and His mock trials before the Sanhedrin, Caiaphas, Pilate, and Herod, are all a thing of the past. His scourging at the hands of Pilate when His body was torn into shreds, with the cruel lash that fell across His back. Even His mockings of the soldiers when they placed the robe on His back, and the crown of thorns upon His brow, is forgotten. His journey to Calvary carrying His own cross, and the fact that He fell beneath it, is all passed. Even the nailing of His body to that cruel cross and the fastenings of that blessed flesh to Calvary, the instrument of torture - even this is now forgotten. The taunts of the priests, the jeers of the crowd, and the profanity and revilings of the thieves, even these sufferings are ended.

Doubtlessly that which caused the greatest of all anguish was for the Father to hide His face from Him. But even this cloud which overshadowed the earth and which caused the Father's face to be hid from Him, even it, with its suffering, is ended. Will you stand beside the cross again and hear Him whisper from His parched lips, "I thirst"; yet now His thirstings are over. He Himself declares, "It is finished", for His sufferings are all ended.

Perhaps next to the Father's hiding His face from Him, the suffering which pained Him greatest was His conflict with Satan. The seed of the serpent bit deeply into the flesh of Jesus, and Satan bruised the heel of the Son of God. All of these briefly indicate somewhat His sufferings. As we would gaze

at Him, remembering that His physical sufferings are excruciating, yet nothing to compare with the anguish of His soul, we would ask in the words of the prophet Jeremiah - **"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger."** (Lam. 1:12)

Now the sufferings are all over. The Lord has bruised Him. Man and Devil have done their worst. The cup of God's wrath has been drained. The storm of God's anger is passed. Since the darkness has ended, you hear Him say, "It is finished." He is no longer the "man of sorrows," for now His sorrows are over. Yes, His sufferings are ended.

This sixth saying of the Saviour on the cross also shows us that Satan's power was destroyed. When Jesus said, "It is finished," He meant that His sufferings were not only ended, but Satan's power was destroyed. The Devil thought the cross was his victory, but in reality it was his defeat. **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."** (Hebrews 2:14)

Jesus' death sounded the deathknell to the Devil's power. As Jesus anticipated the cross, He said: **"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of the world be cast out."** (John 12:31) The "prince of this world" is Satan, and, the cross meant his defeat. Today Satan should be treated as a defeated enemy. He has no claim on Christ, and likewise he has no claim on God's children. In view of this fact, beloved, James 4:7 is true. Listen: **"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."**

Whatever power he has over your life and mine is the power of a usurper. When Jesus said, "It is finished", among other things, He meant that Satan's power was finished and his dominion was destroyed.

The sixth saying of the Saviour on the cross likewise meant that the sacrifice for sins was accomplished. This was Jesus' mission. It was the reason He came to this world. He did not come to set up an earthly government, nor to teach social customs, nor to establish institutions for social, moral, and political welfare; but He came to be a sacrifice for sins. Listen to

these Scriptures: **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."** (Luke 19:10) **"This is faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."** (1 Tim. 1:15) **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that he might receive the adoption of sons."** (Gal. 4:4,5)

An Old Testament story illustrates this truth so perfectly. When the people had all been bitten by the snakes in the days of Moses, God told Moses to make a brazen serpent which was exactly like the snakes that had been biting the people - in shape, size, and color; yet different in one essential, that it contained no poison. This, of course, was a prophecy of Jesus. All of Adam's descendants have been bitten by the old serpent, even Satan, and he has placed the poison of sin within our moral and spiritual blood. Jesus is identical with us except that there was none of the poison of sin within Him. As Moses was told to put this serpent of brass on a pole in sight of all the camp, so Jesus was to be lifted up on the cross. That serpent of brass was God's remedy for the serpent bitten people - it was a cure from the serpent's bite. It meant that God had effected a plan whereby they could be healed in their serpent bitten condition. When you see Jesus on the cross, you can know that God's plan of salvation is complete. He came to be a sacrifice. This was His mission; it was His purpose, and now it is accomplished. When you hear Him say, "It is finished," you can know that Jesus who was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, has now completed His sacrifice.

This sixth saying of the Saviour on the cross also indicates an end of our sins. In the Old Testament when the priest acted in behalf of the children of Israel, offering a sacrifice for them, their sins were merely covered over and held in abeyance. This is much the same procedure as when we renew a note at a bank from time to time, merely keeping the interest paid up, but never able to pay the principal. In the Old Testament none of the sacrifices that were ever offered could blot out the sins of the people. Now that Christ was on the cross, and especially since you hear Him say, "It is finished," we know that this means an end to all the believer's sins. The sins of

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SIXTH SAYING

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the Old Testament saints which had been covered over through the centuries, are now laid on Christ. Yes, and all the sins of all future believers were likewise laid on Him that day. Listen to these Scriptures: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:6) "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by those stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter 2:24) "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." (1 Peter 3:18)

We likewise have a marvelous illustration to this truth in the Old Testament. On the great day of atonement, Aaron, acting as priest for the people, confessed over the head of the scape goat the sins of the children of Israel. Listen to the description of this in God's Word: "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness." (Lev. 16:21,22)

Then after Aaron had confessed the sins and the iniquities and the transgressions of the children of Israel over the head of the scape goat, it was given into the hand of someone who was especially consecrated for the task, who lead the goat out into the wilderness where the goat was turned loose. I can imagine the man to whom was delegated the task of leading the goat in to the wilderness, watching the goat after he had turned it loose, knowing that it would soon die, perhaps of starvation or be killed by some ravenous beast. Realizing that it was bearing the sins of the people which had been confessed over it, he came back to the camp of Israel to report that he had done the task, and that the scapegoat had carried their sins away. On the cross of Calvary, God did exactly what Aaron did on the day of atonement; He

confessed over Jesus all the sins and the iniquities and the transgressions of the people of God of both the Old and New Testament, and Christ bore their sins just as the scapegoat figuratively carried the sins of Israel out into the wilderness. Thus beloved, the cross of Christ is the grave in which we bury our sins. That's why it is true that Isaiah 38:17 says: "For thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back."

Yes, the cross of Calvary means the end of our sins, and when Jesus said, "It is finished," He meant that our sins were all finished.

The sixth saying of the Saviour on the cross likewise indicates that the requirements of the law were all fulfilled. Man could not fulfill the law, but Christ did. You hear Him saying: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." (Matthew 5:17)

Paul, in the light of His crucifixion, tells us how Jesus fulfilled the law. Listen: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13)

Beloved, since Christ fulfilled the law, and all its requirements were met in Him, then the place for man who could not live up to nor fulfill the law, is to be in Christ. Listen: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." (Romans 10:4)

In view of the fact that when Christ said, "It is finished," the law was fulfilled, then there is nothing for man to do whereby he can be saved. If Christ finished the plan of salvation by fulfilling the law, then there is nothing that man can do whereby he may merit heaven by his own deeds. Since Jesus said, "It is finished," then there is no room for man to do anything whereby he may be saved.

Long years ago a crowd of folk said to Jesus, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" (Jn. 6:28). And to this questions, He answered, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." (Jn. 6:29). By His statement He declared that there are no works for the sinner to do; there is only one work, and that is the work of faith, to accept the finished work of Christ at the cross. You may ask, "What must I do to be saved?" I must tell you that there is nothing,

IN GOD WE TRUST

"It is impossible to rightly govern the world without God and the Bible."
- George Washington

We've come a long ways from the old days when our government and it's institutions openly admitted that we needed God to have this nation work.

In our public life we either ignore God or are open hostile to Him. Symbols that remind us of God are not allowed in public places. Our teachers may not say His name. TV names Him frequently, but usually as a curse.

It's not unusual for a nation to ignore God. The story of nations is a story of unbelief. Usually, as a nation prospers the people ignore God and as it falls on bad times the people return to God.

We ignore God and His commandments at our peril. Families, institutions, and whole cultures crumble when they ignore God. Our complex problems of crime, drug abuse, broken homes, teen age pregnancy, AIDS, abortion, child abuse, homelessness... all are rooted in our choice to ignore God.

God is going to have the last word on our nation. God will destroy us if we continue in our sin. His desire throughout the history of nations and for our nation today is that we repent, turn to Him and truly trust Him. To trust God is to take Him at His word, accept His Son Jesus Christ and obey His commandments.

God, in His mercy, has provided a solution to our personal and national sins. He sent His only Son Jesus to come and die for us, so that everyone who believes in Him has his sins washed clean, and becomes a permanent member of the family of God.

And when we are God's children, we learn what a relief it is to trust in God. Living by God's desires we learn how to govern ourselves, our families, and our nation.

If you are ready to trust God with your life, here is a prayer to get you started: Dear God: Forgive me and forgive our nation for trying to live without You. I accept and believe that your Son, Jesus Christ, came to earth to pay the penalty for all our sins. I repent of my sins and ask that you will help our nation to also repent. Please make me a member of your family in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord: Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy." (Ps. 33: 12,18)

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John 3:36)

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

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ing, positively nothing; Jesus Christ did it all almost 2000 years ago. He did all that could be done for man's salvation, and in view of the fact that He fulfilled the law which man could never fulfill, then there is nothing man can do by his own deeds whereby he

might be able to gain heaven. Even Paul would declare for our edification in this respect, "And ye are complete in him." (Col. 2:10).

I realize that there are many who say in substance, "I do not (Continued on Pg. 8, Col. 3)

GOD BLESS
OUR COUNTRY

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

NOVEMBER 20, 1993

PAGE THREE

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit Forum I

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Who are the great cloud of witnesses in Hebrews 12:1?

JOHN
PRUITT

Rt. 1 Box 452B
Williamson,
GA
30292

PASTOR:

West Griffin
Baptist Church
Griffin, GA



The context of Hebrews 12:1 carries us all the way back through the entire book of Hebrews. It has to do with the great work of redemption, and the benefits thereof. One of those benefits is faith. But one must understand that faith is not blind: faith is based on firm promises which have been proven. God many times over proved to Israel that He would bless the ones who blessed them, and curse the ones who cursed them. He also proved that He would bless and reward their obedience and bring judgment upon them for their disobedience. He promised them redemption through the sacrifice of His Son, and instituted a ceremony to give them a description of how it would work.

However, there remains the unseen factor. That is, faith must be based on a promise of things to come. We believe that God will do what He has promised to do. The Psalmist expressed this truth quite profoundly when he wrote in Psalm 119:81, "My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word." Then in verse 89 we read and learn that the promises of God are immutable; "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven."

This brings us back to Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Then what is to follow is a great host of men and women who trusted and obeyed God, based on His promises, "God testifying of His gifts..." As I said before, faith is not blind, but it is based on the unseen: that is, it is based on promises of things to come. Our whole system of religion is a

system of faith. We read in Hebrews 10:38, "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him."

Now it is said of the list of faithful in Hebrews 11:39, "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise." God was pleased by their faithful obedience; but though they never actually saw the Messiah with their own eyes, they trusted He was yet to come. These are the great cloud of witnesses in Hebrews 12:1. They are our examples in faith. The record of their faith in the unseen promises should encourage us in faithful obedience. Let us as they did, "Lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith."

JOHN
LENEGAR

126 N.
Washington St.
No. 5
Delaware, OH
43015

PASTOR:

Walnut Creek
Missionary
Baptist Church
Delaware, OH



"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us," (Hebrews 12:1)

I believe the "great cloud of witnesses" spoken of here, are the Old Testament saints spoken of in Hebrews Chapter 11. They are part of the family of God, just as the New Testament saints are part of the family of God. They are our examples, our encouragement, and hence, our witness to live a life of faith as did they. They and their individual examples are our motive to perseverance in our Christian life. Hence, they are called a "cloud of witnesses."

Do they see us running our individual course in the Christian life today? No, I believe not.

Could these witnesses be all Christians and loved ones gone on before us who today watch our progress in the Christian life? Again, no. I do not believe so. That certainly would not be a blissful state to see back here on earth. To see individuals fail, sin, or move away from the Lord, as often happens, would certainly not add to the saint's joys who have gone on before us. I do not believe that the saints who have go on before us look over the ramparts of heaven and watch our progress while cheering us on.

The saints of Hebrews Chapter 11 are a cloud of witnesses in that they are examples to the many aspects and characteristics of the Christian life, or life of faith. They witness to the spiritual aspects of faith which reflect the fact that spiritual faith is active, not passive. Their lives witness to us the many trials and problems along with the joyous victories that true faith and living by faith bring. They are our examples. Romans 1:17 says, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith."

May we learn and profit much from this cloud of witnesses that are listed for our benefit, example, and comfort. By their example we may do the same.

CLYDE T.
EVERMAN

108 Burdsall
Ave.
Ft. Mitchell, KY
41017

DEACON:

Calvary
Baptist Church
Ashland, KY



"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." (Heb. 12:1)

"Wherefore", in view of what was said in Chapter 11, in that chapter we have a list of men and women whom we refer to as the "heroes of faith." These ran their race, depending upon God to supply their needs. There can be

no doubt but they, along with all, who in ages past lived lives of faith, are the "great cloud of witnesses". What is meant by the word "witnesses" is the question. The word can be used in two different ways. It can mean to behold, to look at, to watch, to observe. It can also be used to bear testimony, to testify to something being true. If the word is used in the latter sense, those listed in chapter 11 are really ones who testify to the truth that faith is "the victory that overcometh the world". They are the ones who can testify to the keeping power of God through all their trials. While this seems to be the meaning of the word as used here. But it would also seem that the writer of the book of Hebrews had in mind the Greek games where a great multitude of spectators would sit in seats in the amphitheatre where they could observe and cheer the runners on. It was not unusual for the apostle Paul to refer to these games to illustrate some spiritual truth. "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain." (I Cor. 9:24).

While the "great cloud of witnesses" are the faithful who are now in heaven, those who have given witness to the power of faith, they are also now spectators who are now in the stands watching and cheering on those who are now running the race of faith. As the home team is said to have the advantage by having the spectators cheering them on to victory, as we run the race we need to realize that we have the "home team advantage", we have a "great cloud of spectators" watching and urging us to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

DOUG
NEWELL

Rt. 1 Box 170-H
South Shore,
KY 41175

PASTOR:

Beauty Ridge
Missionary
Baptist Church



The great cloud of witnesses are those spoken of in the preceding chapter. One should always remember, that Paul and the other writers of the Word of God did not write it in chapters and verses. This was done by those who translated from the original manuscripts. Often times

people will miss a very important point or message due to the fact that they will stop reading at the end of a chapter. Note that this chapter begins with the word wherefore. This indicates to us that a thought is being continued.

Chapter twelve begins with the thought of looking at the faithful ones in chapter eleven as witnesses to our lives and uses them as examples to follow after.

Let us also remember that we are being observed from heaven by God, angels, and saints who have gone on. This should inspire us to live as godly as we can for the glory of God.

I COUNCIL

(Continued from Page 1)

have fallen prey to this evil condition, become more and more incapable of hearing the truth. The Spirit of God does no longer reach the heart of a self-satisfied Christian. His emotions are stirred only by the preaching of the precious Word. He receives the Word of God and says immediately, "Yes, Lord, I have seen myself in the mirror of your Word, there must be a change in my life. And yet everything remains the same. What self-deception!

Whoever is spiritually satisfied with himself and says, "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," has a completely false conception of his inner situation. Those who are spiritually self-satisfied are content to acknowledge their faults and sins without removing them. This is particular danger for all those who are serving the Lord full time, who are confronted with the word of God continually, day in and day out. We receive the Word, and we can see exactly what is wrong with us, but we never go farther than confessing our sins with our lips. This, beloved reader, is repentance without really turning away from the sins concerned. We say, "O Lord, I want more of you, please help me to see you more in prayer etc. But nothing alters in our lives because we, "... goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was." (James 1:24). Oh, dear reader, we offer too many excuses for not serving God properly. Such as, "I can't, I have too much to do. I have no time. I am too tired, etc." This, beloved, is the behaviour of the spiritually self-satisfied person, "I am rich, and have need of nothing..." Spiritual self-satisfaction stifles all inner growth of the Christian. (Continued on Pg. 5, Col. 2)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

Is there a distinction between "life" and "abundant life" (John 10:10)? If so, what is it, and how is abundant life received?

DAN
PHILLIPS

868 Bethel Drive
Bristol, TN
37620

PASTOR:
New Testament
Baptist Church
Bristol, TN



Genesis 2:7 says, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

Life began here when the Lord our God breathed into the nostrils of the first person, the first man and he became a living soul. Here, is where eternal life began. This life is forever. Man will either live in heaven or hell forever. The life that will be lived in hell will be a measurable life. Revelation 20:14-15 says, "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. An whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

Man will live a dying death forever in the burning flames of an eternal hell. A million years, multiplied millions of years in hell and still dying, Beloved, there is no end of this dying. Think on this, how horrible.

We live on this earth only a short time compared to eternity which is forever, life on this earth is not abundant. Life in hell is not abundant. Abundant life is that life that Paul speaks of in II Corinthians 5:8 which says: "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." Abundant life is to be with the Lord, to be like Him, to have the mind of Christ, to be heir and joint heir with Christ, to have peace that passeth all understanding.

Abundant life will be far, and beyond our expectation, we cannot find words that could possible describe the Gloryland state of which we shall share with our blessed redeemer. Are you ready to receive Him as your personal Saviour? If the rapture would

take place today will you be caught up to meet Him? I am, I hope you are. I am looking for this abundant life.

I COUNCIL

(Continued from Page 4)

How can we get out of this dangerous self-satisfaction? Everything the Lord wants to give us to help us out of this dilemma is on a voluntary basis. He does not force anyone to take His advice, but simply says as the good shepherd to the self-satisfied in verse eighteen; "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich." (Rev. 3:18).

(I). FIRST: Buy of me gold tried in the fire. What does He mean by this? In the Bible gold always points to the glory of God, which became visible in the Lord Jesus Christ. "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty." (II Pet. 1:16). This majesty or glory of the Son of God was purified through the fire of suffering on Calvary's Cross. The glory of God in the person of Jesus was proved to be genuine by its complete surrender on the accursed cross. This glory which has been tried by fire is also mentioned in Rev. 21, in connection with the New Jerusalem. "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." (Rev. 21:23). This is that gold, beloved, when the Lord Jesus says; "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire." (Rev. 3:18). The question; "Where can we buy this gold?" "How much does it cost?" You can only buy the glory of the Lamb with your self. If you will not give of your own nature, how can you partake of the nature of Jesus? He said Himself very clearly on this subject; "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

(Luke 14:33). Beloved reader, think about it for a moment. If you do not want to let go of certain things, you will pray in vain. Your prayers will be to no avail. If it is your sincere wish to be like Jesus, however, and you are willing to pay the price, and you say to Him, "Lord, I give myself to you, my whole being," then you will receive this "gold," that has been tried, His glory, "that thou mayest be rich." Oh, my beloved reader, this is another sort of riches, different from the self-satisfaction which says; "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." Then you will be rich in the Lord Jesus Christ, and therewith in God. "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." (Collos. 2:9). You will have His nature, and be full of His Spirit, full of His thoughts, so that Christ thinks, sees, hears, speaks and acts through you.

(II). SECOND: Whiteraiment, that thou mayest be clothed. In addition to the gold you are also told to buy something else from Jesus Christ, "... and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear..." (Rev. 3:18). This "whiteraiment" is nothing other than the Lord Jesus Himself, for He is made unto us righteousness. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (I Cor. 1:30-31). "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof." (Rom. 13:14). Why? So that we may be clothed and the shame of our nakedness for the most part is spiritual indifference and indolence through which Christians no longer radiate the glory of the Lord, but produce a stuffy atmosphere of their own nature.

(III). THIRD: Anoint thine eyes with eyesalve! To everyone who lulls himself to sleep in spiritual self-satisfaction, the Lord has to say that he is blind. "... and

knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." (Rev. 3:17-18). What is this eyesalve? The Bible itself is a commentary on the Bible, and so we find in Solomon's writing, "Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, ..." (Song of Solomon 1:3). Christ is the balm of Gilead.

When the Lord tells you to anoint your eyes with eyesalve, this means you are to appropriate the redeeming power in His name. Then, instead of destructive self-satisfaction the opposite will increase in you. This will keep you from over-estimation of yourself, and in accordance with your recognition of your inner plight, you will receive an increasing knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. The result? You will no longer look with pleasure at yourself and your work, but at Him who died and rose again for you. Let me say in conclusion that if we are ailing at all spiritually, it may be that we are self-centered, with self-deception. Let me admonish you, come and buy of Him gold, that has been tried in the fire, white raiment and eyesalve. It will only cost you the price of yourself. To do this you will remain no longer, "Wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Either saved or lost, dear friend, this message is for you. Amen.

We Need Help.

We are trying to locate a Baptist Church of like faith (Memorial Heights Baptist Church) in the area of Madisonville, Tennessee (50 mile or so range) for two of our members that have moved to that area. If anyone knows of a church, please contact Elder Gordon Buchanan, (912) 987-0724 or Mrs. Shirley Mann, (912) 987-4158.

Thank You.

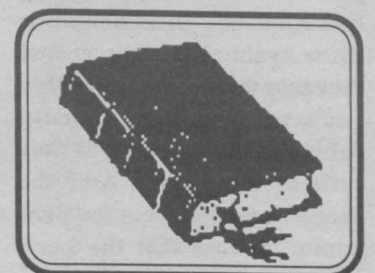
Should You Go First

Should you go first and I remain,
To walk the road alone,
I'll live in memory's garden, dear,
With happy days we've known.
In Spring I'll wait for the roses red,
When fades the lilac blue,
In early Fall when brown leaves call,
I'll catch a glimpse of you.

Should you go first and I remain,
For battles to be fought,
Each thing you've touched along the way,
Will be a hallowed spot.
I'll hear your voice,
I'll see your smile,
Though blindly I may grope,
The memory of your helping hand,
Will buoy me on with hope.

Should you go first and I remain,
To finish with the scroll,
No length'ning shadows shall creep in,
To make this life seem droll.
We've known so much of happiness,
We've had our cup of joy,
And memory is one gift of God,
That death cannot destroy.

Should you go first and I remain,
One thing I'd have you do,
Walk slowly down the path of death,
For soon I'll follow you.
I'll want to know each step you take,
That I may walk the same,
For some day down that lonely road,
You'll hear me call your name.



THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
NOVEMBER 20, 1993

PAGE FIVE

STUDIES

(Continued from Page 1)

one tribe becoming extinct. Who did they blame for this? Who do men always blame when things go wrong? It was God. They said, "O Lord God of Israel, why is this come to pass in Israel, that there should be today one tribe lacking in Israel?" (v.3) Why God, did you let this happen?

Israel now had a problem. When they were gathered at Mizpeh before going to war against Benjamin they had taken an oath that no man of them would give his daughter unto Benjamin to wife. Now that they had slain all the women and children how were the 600 Benjamites to find Hebrew wives? What was to be done to prevent complete extermination of the tribe of Benjamin? Some one must have thought of a solution. While at Mizpeh before the war they had made another vow. It was that if any one refused to go to war with them he would be put to death. When they numbered the people it was found out that none of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead had come to fight (v. 9).

Why not solve two problems at one time, "Kill two birds with one stone?" They would punish Jabesh-gilead for not helping in the war and at the same time provide wives for the Benjamites. So the congregation selected 12,000 men "and commanded them, saying, Go and smite the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, with the women and the children. And this is the thing that ye shall do, Ye shall utterly destroy every male, and every woman that hath lain by man. And they found among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred young virgins, that had known no man by lying with any male: and they brought them unto the camp to Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan." (21:10-12).

The congregation of Israel now made peace with the 600 Benjamites who had escaped to the rock Rimmon. "And Benjamin came again at that time; and they gave them wives which they had saved alive of the women of Jabesh-gilead: and yet so they sufficed them not. And the people repented them for Benjamin, because that the Lord

had made a breach in the tribes of Israel." (vv. 14,15).

In verse 15 like that of verse 3 the children of Israel is blaming God for the trouble that they are in, "because that the Lord had made a breach in the tribe of Israel."

By bringing the young women from Jabesh-gilead provided wives for four hundred of the men of Benjamin, but there were two hundred left without wives. How could they provide wives for these? "Then the elders of the congregationsaid, How shall we do for wives for them that remain, seeing the women are destroyed out of Benjamin And they said, There must be an inheritance for them that be escaped of Benjamin, that a tribe be not destroyed out of Israel" (vv. 16,17).

Because of the oath which they had made at Mizpeh that they could not give daughters to the Benjamites for wives. Then some one thought of a plan in which they could get around that oath. Each year there was a feast of the Lord held in Shiloh. And during this feast it would seem that their daughters would dance and make merry. The men of Benjamin were told to hide in the vineyards and when the young ladies came out dancing each man was to come out and catch one of the daughters for his wife. (vv. 19-22). "And the children of Benjamin did so, and took them wives, according to their number, of them that danced, whom they caught: and they went and returned unto their inheritance, and repaired the cities, and dwelt in them. And the children of Israel departed thence at that time, every man to his tribe and to his family, and they went out from thence every man to his inheritance" (vv. 23, 24).

So ends what is said to be one of the ugliest stories in the Bible. Where did Israel go wrong? What started this downward trend? The answer is found in 17:6; 18:1; 19:1 and again repeated in the last verse of this book: "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes." (21:25) Where did Israel go wrong? It was when they left following the Word of God and went their own way. When one forsakes God and His Word regardless whether it be an individual or a nation it leads to moral decay. Note this was what led to adultery of the concubine, and homosexuality. The men of the

city desired the Levite, not his concubine. In Romans I it is said that acceptance of homosexuality is an evidence that the people have rejected the truth of God and have turned to "vile affections" (dishonorable passion). The cities of Sodom and Gibeah are examples of this. Is not America going down the same path to destruction in that she is more and more accepting that which God has called unnatural and unseemly (shameful)?

We might note that this sexual sin led to other steps downward in moral decay. It led to the death of the concubine, the slaughter of the tribe of Benjamin, the massacre at Jabesh-gilead, and the kidnapping at Shiloh. The book of Judges is the story of a people who started outright. But through disobedience to God's Word went steadily down the path of sin and decay. We find in Judges 2:7 it is said, "And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord, that he did for Israel." But then it is said, "And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim." (Jud. 2:10,11). The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel and He sold them into the hand of their enemies (3:8). Each time they would repent and cry unto the Lord and He would hear their cry and He would send a deliverer to deliver them. Over and over this was repeated. Each time they went farther and farther from the Lord.

What happened in Israel happened more than three thousand years ago and one may wonder why we spend so much time studying their history. But a close parallel can be seen with what is taking place in our day. In those days "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Is that not what men are doing today? The Apostle Paul wrote, "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. — Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, — Neither let us tempt Christ —. Neither murmur —. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they

are written for our admonition, —. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." (I Cor. 10:6-12).

One warning we need to take from the book of Judges is that regardless how great God has blessed us in the past He will judge us when we turn from Him. God has made America a great nation and has shed His grace upon her, but how long will it be before He pours out His wrath upon her? What caused Israel's trouble? "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim: And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, — and followed other gods, — And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel. —" (Jud. 2:11-14). Has not America done the same as did Israel?

While the book of Judges was written as a warning to us it was also written "for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." (Rom. 15:4). While a grim picture is shown of Israel who forsook the true God and followed after the pagan gods, going into moral decay, it also shows us the holiness and mercy of God. At mount Sinai God had given then His law and He had made it very clear that they were not to make or serve any other gods. When they disobeyed this command, God delivered "them into the hands of... their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies." (2:14) But when they repented of their sin and turned back to the Lord, He, in His love and mercy, "raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them." (2:16) Over and over this cycle was repeated. Each time God stood ready to deliver Israel from their enemies.

Where did Israel go wrong? It was when they turned from following the Lord. Where did America go wrong? Is it not in the fact that God has been left out of the home, the school, the church, and the government. There was a time when that which is stamped upon our coin, "In God We Trust" meant just that.

We need to remember, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." (Psa. 33:12). Also that, "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." (Prov. 14:34).

My Thoughts of Life

*"A penny for
your thoughts",
A friend once said to me,
'It's better if
you do not know',
I answered jokingly."*

*I had spent a lot
of precious time,
Thinking of
foolish things,
Of hours with
my worldly friends,
Of the pleasure
that it brings.*

*But my thoughts
were awakened,
I was given a
change of mind,
No longer Satan
led me on,
And held me in his bind.*

*Now I pray
to the Father,
and thank Him
for His Son,
And for the Spirit
who guides me,
Until lifes race is won.*

*Now all the pennies
could not buy,
My time
with Him alone,
Who gave His time
and life for me,
My sins to atone.*

-Mrs. J.P. Morgan

**Do you have a poem
or thought
to share?**

**Send to:
The Baptist
Examiner
P.O. Box 60
Ashland, KY
41105-0060**

KNOWING

(Continued from Page 1)
evidence, also, in the word, **"Ye (that is, whoever is a believer) shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you (to be) free"** (John 8:32).

We know the truth and are free!

This matter is settled, for time!

As many others who have ministered in some measure, I have a number of books that deal with this subject. Some of them, I have perused for many years. One, in particular, was given to me before I was saved. Understandably, it meant very little to me in those distant days in the 1930's when I was in school. Since I was saved in February of 1939, however, this little volume has meant much. Just within the last few months, I have perused its pages once again. I often have contemplated the truths that the author expressed to the best of his ability. Thankfully, this dear brother who has been gone from these earthly shores for many years did his best to direct my attention to the fact that I was responsible to God and not to him or to anything that he may have penned or preached. One thing in particular was sincerely impressed, we should never get too old to want to know the will of God for our lives.

Men such as Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and Joshua never ceased to seek the will of God for their lives. David had been a most faithful young man and a fighter for God in his youth. Yet, even then, he sought to know the will of God for his life. As a mighty King who sometimes manifested his humanity in a manner much too graphic, there came moments when he was apart from everything and everyone, yet seeking to know the will of God. Even in his old age, he sought the will of the Lord with respect to the building of the Temple. He learned that it was God's will that Solomon, his son, would follow through with the responsibility. David did not argue with God or beat on the gates of heaven "demanding his rights."

Daniel, as you may know, likewise had been a faithful young man. Nevertheless, it was in his old age that he learned that it was God's will that he test his faith against the hunger of some rather violent lions. Even in this, God, I believe, has a message for each of us. In standing his ground, as it were, as he knew and as he understood the will of God at the

time, Daniel had to stand alone. His faithfulness to what he knew to be the will of God for his life brought him face to face with those hungry lions, but he did not lose his godly composure. Rather, on the morning after his trial and his testing, we have his words: **"Then said Daniel to the King, O King, live forever. My God has sent his angel, and has shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before him innocence was found in me; and also before thee, O King, have I done no hurt"** (Dan. 6:21-22).

Were we to inquire of most theologians and most preachers and pastors from a personal or individualistic perspective, we doubtless would learn that most of them are of the opinion that when we are saved, we are saved to serve. Still, as we take the time to analyze the religious situation as it exists around us, we discover that there are some ritualistic and formalistic groups - as well as some that profess not to be ritualistic or formalistic - that have various priestly and closed orders in which men have written laws that supposedly spell out what they speak of as "God's will for others." All who know the Lord Jesus Christ in faith, however, should be aware that above and beyond all of "the commands of men," each redeemed individual is to be a personal witness to the saving grace of our God.

This, it seems to me, is made to be evident in many Scriptures. Just recently, I was speaking to a young man who is extremely desirous of giving every person with whom he comes into contact the benefit of the doubt regarding his relationship with God. Of course, I could not argue with such an attitude for God is very explicit that we are not to be in "the judging business" (cf. Mt. 7:1). I did express to him, and he seemed to understand, that the difference between him (one who has been saved) and them is the fact that he has peace with God; whereas some of these who apparently have no relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ do not have any peace of mind or any real peace in their lives. He knows many of these who are involved in "other religions" - sometimes very strange ones - and recognizes that though some of these may seem to be content with their religion some of the time, they do not have peace of mind or what I like to call **"the peace of God which passes all understand-**

ing" (Phil. 4:7).

In every generation for the last 15 centuries or so, unfortunately, there have been multitudes who have so despised the Holy Word of God and the commands of God that they have given themselves to "tending gardens" in Monasteries or in convents, or spending their lives indulging in ritualistic prayers that have been designed by some mortal man or some mortal men. Despite God's very clear command that we are to be **"ambassadors for Christ, as though God does beseech you by us... be ye reconciled to God"** (2 Cor. 5:20), these commit their lives to serving "the laws of men" rather than being ambassadors or witnesses for Christ. Jesus spoke to some in another day who were involved in such, **"Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."** (Mk. 7:7). Tragically, though all of the redeemed are commanded of God to witness - **"Let the redeemed of the Lord say so..."** (Ps. 107:2) - some of these who are involved in ritualistic and formalistic religions of one sort or another actually commit themselves to "vows of silence." Needless to say, these know absolutely nothing about God's will for their lives.

Were these who are caught-up in or brainwashed by such desperate and unscriptural practices permitted to read the Word of God, some of them doubtless would come to a new understanding. As the man, Luther, these would learn by the reading of their own Bibles that have been approved by their religious hierarchies that **"salvation by grace through faith"** (Eph. 2:8). Instead, these give themselves to the religious rituals, prayers, and writings of men, along with some of the commands of men. As a result, our Lord's words, **"In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men"** (Mk. 7:7) condemns all such religion.

Were these permitted to freely read and to freely know the Word of God, some of them might well discover that Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life" and that **"no man comes to the Father"** except by Him (See John 14:6). They, thereby, would learn that salvation is not in a religious ritual or in a religious organization - not even in that which some speak of as "The Church"! After coming to a saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, some of these might then go on to dis-

cover the will of God for their lives. Too, these would then be able to realize that the Word of God regarding their responsibility as persons would involve them in some of the final commands of our Lord: **"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world..."** (Mt. 28:19-20). **"Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth"** (Acts 1:8).

Sadly, however, many theologians have forsaken their own "confessions" of yesteryears. Today, instead of supposing that "salvation is by grace through faith," as we have earlier noted, these have forsaken the Word of God, their own early beliefs, and the teachings of their spiritual forefathers. Resultantly, we often hear their cries today that "one (must) has to serve in order to be saved." Some have even closed their ears and their hearts to the words of "The Westminster Confession of Faith" that had become a way of life as early as 1643 A.D. Therein, we find this testimony, "The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts; and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word... But the principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of Grace."

The man, John Gill, a Baptist of the time, and one who is highly respected by some even today, was much indebted to this Confession. This "Confession" is most specific regarding "salvation by grace through faith." It continues, after one is saved, it is then that he serves. Sadly, however, most religious groups of our day have rejected "The Westminster Confession" in whole or in part. Therefore, salvation is thought to be earned, at least in part, by what one does or what one can do, rather than salvation being "the gift of God" by "the grace of God."

The Will of God for Jesus

So, the first thing we need to do with respect to the will of God for our lives is to look at the life of

Jesus. In the fourth chapter of John's Gospel and the 34th verse, we read, **"My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."** The word "finish" in this scripture is most important. When Jesus set **"His hand to the plow"** (cf. Lu. 9:62), there was one thing that was ahead, and that was "The Cross of Calvary." There, He would pay the penalty for our sins. There, he would die in time in order that all who will believe might have eternal life.

At the age of 12 years when Jesus told His parents that He must be about His Father's business, that distant "Calvary objective" was in view. When He made the wine for the wedding when He was about 30 years of age, that objective still was in view. When Jesus rode into town on the colt of a donkey that had never been ridden, that objective was even more dramatically present for He said to the people, **"I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out"** (Lu. 19:40). That objective - that of which He spoke as being "My meat..." - certainly was still in view in that hour when Jesus cried, **"Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine be done"** (Lu. 22:42).

Impossible though the words may seem to be to us mere mortals, we find the one who effected the miracles of the wine, healed bodies, and stilled waves making a further statement that is beyond our comprehension. There, in the 5th chapter of John's Gospel and in the 30th verse, we find this Jesus crying, **"I can of mine own self do nothing."** In the midst of men who sometimes may suppose that they are totally or completely responsible for what they do personally and individually, this may seem to be a very strange statement. If we can comprehend its impact from the Scriptural perspective, nonetheless, we shall realize that this word documents the unity of the Trinity and the triune effort of God.

That is, when Jesus was working the Father was working, along with the Holy Spirit. This truth is especially emphasized with respect to the resurrection of our Lord. Jesus explains with regard to His dead body that He **"had"**
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KNOWING

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power to take it again" (See John 10:18). In Romans 6:4, we learn that Jesus "was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father." Then, in Acts 13:30, we learn by the testimony of the Scriptures that Jesus was "quickened by the Spirit." The wondrous truth, as I have noted elsewhere, is that "God raised Him from the dead" (Acts 13:30).

Very simply, beloved friends, in whatever Jesus was involved, the Father and the Holy Spirit likewise were involved. We need to realize from His words, "I can of mine own self do nothing" that whatever He did was done in concert with the Heavenly Father and with the Holy Spirit. We see this truth manifested wonderfully even in the hour of His immersion in the river Jordan, when the Holy Spirit alighted on His head in the form of a dove, and the Father said from Heaven, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." When one worked, the three worked. When the three worked, one worked. Needless to say, this is a concept that has to be very confusing to our mortal minds.

"We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery!"

"Even so, the things of God knowest no man!"

In addition to "I can of mine own self do nothing," our Lord continues on to say, "As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father who hath sent me." (John 5:30). Again, we see the unity of the Trinity; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Herein, too, we see the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit acting as one. It really is no marvel, then, that Jesus should pray in finality, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they: also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." (John 17:21).

The Mind of Christ for Us

Then, in the 2nd chapter and the 16th verse of 1st Corinthians, we read, "For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ." When we come to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are to be

as the Lord. That is, "our meat" should be "to do the will of Him who sent us" or who sends us. As the Lord Jesus Christ, we need to "seek to do the will of the Father." If we truly "have the mind of Christ," this is very clear.

Peter emphasizes this truth in a most beautiful way. Peter's comprehension seems to be very distinct and most complete. He tells us, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he who has suffered for us in the flesh has ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God" (I Peter 4:1-2). Very simply, we are to set our goals or our objectives, but we are to do so in concert with our Lord's design or in accord with the will of God for our lives.

We are not to set our goals or our objectives to do our own will. Rather, as Jesus, we are to set our goals and our objectives to know and to do God's will. When we do this, the pattern is set as completely for us as it was for the Lord Jesus Christ. Our purposes then will be worked out by God the Father, by God the Son, and by God the Holy Spirit for us, just as they were worked out for Jesus when He was here upon the earth in His fleshly form. Just as certainly as Jesus "finished His task," so we - as we know and do the will of God - shall "finish our task" for God and for our Lord.

As saved or redeemed individuals or persons, we may be "new creatures" or "new creations" in Christ Jesus. Nevertheless, our flesh still is wholly corrupt. We see this truth dramatized for us by the Apostle Paul. After some 30 years of preaching and teaching and crusading in the Roman and the Jewish worlds, he explained, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Rom. 7:18). After a bit more testimony in this direction, we hear his climactic cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death (sin)? (Rom. 7:24). So, until we are "clothed upon with our house which is from heaven" (See II Cor. 5:2), until our corruptible bodies are made incorruptible (See I Cor. 15:54), and until that moment when "in the twinkling of an eye" we are "raised incorruptible" (See I Cor. 15:52), we

cannot really serve our Lord in the flesh.

Jesus Himself chose a very special moment to dramatize for us the truth, "The spirit truly is ready (willing), but the flesh is weak" (Mk. 14:38). Peter, James, and John were able to testify to this truth in a most crucial moment in their lives. They literally slept through the most important prayer that the universe has ever known. Even while Jesus "sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Lu. 22:44), the Apostles slept soundly!

Tragically, too, some people conclude that when they are saved, it means nothing other than that they have been saved from Hell. In most instances, as it has been my experience, those who are of this opinion conclude that there is nothing more for them to do. These have forgotten the command to witness. These, needless to say, have forgotten that very crucial and most important word, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth that the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Rom. 10:9).

(To be continued
in next Issue.)

SIXTH SAYING

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think that Christ could have finished the work on the cross. I must do my part, and by my good deeds I shall eventually get to heaven." All this reminds me of a Christian farmer who was concerned about the soul of an unsaved carpenter. The latter insisted that he must do something whereby he could be saved. This Christian farmer had him make a gate, and after it was hung, he called the carpenter to see it. The farmer picked up an axe and said he was going to add a few cuts and strokes to the gate. The carpenter said, "The gate is all right, I did all that was necessary." With a few quick heavy blows of the axe, the gate was completely demolished. On seeing this, the carpenter said, "You have ruined my work," to which the Christian farmer replied, "That's exactly what you have been doing all through the years by seeking to add to the work of Christ your miserable additions - by such you have ruined the work of Christ." Oh, how I would to God that this truth might enter your depraved heart and that you might realize that when Jesus said, "It is fin-

ished," that the requirements of the law were all fulfilled and that in view of this, there is nothing we can do to gain heaven. All we can do is trust the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I remember an experience of several years ago when but a boy preacher how that a miner attended an evangelistic meeting, and after the service, being deeply convicted, he remained to talk with the preacher. At 10:30 the preacher suggested leaving in view of the fact that the man did not seem to grasp the truth, but the miner insisted that they study the Scriptures a while longer, saying, "It must be tonight." At twelve o'clock he was saved. After he had been in the mines at work two hours in the next morning, he was crushed in an explosion. Another miner listening through a crack in the coal, heard him say, "Thank God, it was settled last night." "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (II Cor. 6:2)

My prayer for you is that you will likewise receive Jesus. I would beg you then to receive now the finished work of Jesus Christ at the cross. Look no longer to your efforts, but depend now upon His finished work. God bless you!

COVETOUSNESS

By C. T. Everman

"But covet earnestly the best gift." (I Cor. 12:31). "Wherefore brethren, covet to prophesy." (I Cor. 14:39)

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maid servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's." (Ex. 20:17).

In the two passages quoted from I Corinthians we are told to covet. In the passage from Exodus we are told not to covet. Is there a contradiction? Certainly not! As has often been said, "There are no contradictions in the Word of God." To see that there is no contradiction between these passages we must first see what is meant by the word "covet" and second, what is being coveted.

According to Webster's Unabridged Dictionary the word "covet" means (1) to desire, or wish for, with eagerness; to desire greatly. (2) to desire inordinately; to long for (that which another person has). W.E. Vine in his Dictionary of New Testament Words states that the Greek

word "zeloo", translated "covet" means; "to have a zeal for, to be zealous toward, whether in a good or evil sense."

From these definitions we can see that it depends upon what is coveted whether it would be good or wrong to covet. The Apostle Paul told the church at Corinth, in seeking spiritual gifts they were to desire or "covet earnestly the best gifts." (I Cor. 12:31). As the gift of prophesy was one of the better gifts they were told to "covet" or desire to receive the gift to prophesy (I Cor. 14:39).

The Bible, in most passages, uses the word covet to mean a desire for something someone else has, or for something one has no right. To covet for those things is sin. But there are passages where it means there are some things which it is correct to desire (covet) things as Paul wrote to the Corinthians. Yes, there are things for which we should covet (have a zeal for). We should covet a closer walk with our Saviour. We should covet a fuller knowledge of the Word of God. We should covet any thing that would make us better servants of the Lord. The Apostle Paul asked the church at Colosse to pray that "God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds." (Col. 4:3) Paul said to the church of Thessalonians, "brethren pray for us." (I Thes. 5:25) Did not Paul covet (desire) the prayers of these brethren that God might lead him? The writer of Hebrews coveted the prayers of the saints, "Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly." (Heb. 13:18). Would it be wrong for us to ask the same of our brethren today? To covet the prayers of our brethren would that not be an "earnest desire" or "wish" that they pray for us?

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P.O. Box 60
Ashland, KY
41105-0060