

*Take your choice, led by God or driven by the devil.*

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.*

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## KNOWING GOD'S WILL - PART III

By Ray Waugh, Sr.



As I understand the Word of God, it is most important that we know God's will for our lives. Too, it is important that we do God's will as we live our lives. God explains, "Ye are bought with a price, ye are not your own." God gives us two emphases as He advises us of this truth. In one, He says **"Ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's"** (I Cor. 6:20). In the other passage, God dramatizes for us a truth that most men and most women will not accept. He says, **"Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men"** (I Cor. 7:23). In the one emphasis, He advises us with a very positive word, "glorify God." In the other, He says, "be not servants of men." Yet, most of those who speak of themselves as Christians spend most of their lives following the teachings of men, rather than following God as a result of their understanding of His Holy Word, the Scriptures.

In another instance, God follows up on the above teachings with a further word, **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service"** (Rom. 12:1). This is the command that most who are called Christians reject as they spend their lives doing those things that are pleasing to themselves and to their families

and loved ones. He follows this very positive word with another negative one that is perfectly in line with the above, **"And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."** (Rom. 12:12). This, then, is the command that most who are called Christians cannot accept. Thankfully, our God continues further with a positive command, **"but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God"** (Rom. 12:2). In each of these instances, God directs our attention to the fact that our "doing His will" really is our "reasonable service."

How very often, however, it seems that we may know God's will, but because we are human, and because we have desires and designs of our own, we resist God's will. In our humanity, and in our shortsightedness, we may suppose that we are seeing clearly. In reality, when we do our will instead of what we know to be God's will, we demonstrate that we have not yet understood our God, and that we have not yet come to an actual

understanding of His Word. Truly, we have failed to comprehend that He is both sovereign and that He is omniscient. We spend our lives supposing that we are personally in charge of our lives, and we will not accept the truth that He has seen the end from the beginning. Once we come even to a measure of understanding in His Word, we should be ready to trust His judgment and His decision on any matter, and turn aside from what we may suppose is a much better way, as we see it from our human perspective.

### Knowing God's Will By His Word

We need to realize, then, that God's will can be known to each and everyone of us who know the Lord in saving faith. We can know the will of God first of all through His Holy Word. In 1st Peter 1:15, we read, **"As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation."** Understandably, this is the will of God for all of us who know the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior. Although we may know that our righteousness can be only in the

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## The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by C.D. Cole

### THE GRACE OF GOD - PART ONE

For every Christian God is to be thanked. Salvation is of grace both in its planning and working. God who made the plan also works the plan. And all is of grace, the unmerited and unmeritable favor of God. God is both the Architect and Builder of the house made of living stones. Christ said, "I will build My church." If we may change the figure, God sets the

gospel table and also gives appetite for the bread of life. The Holy Spirit fills the Father's house by compelling them to come in. This is not external compulsion, which would destroy human free agency, but an inward compulsion by which the sinner becomes willing. And this willingness is the result of the spirit's conviction of sin and His revelation in the sinner of Christ as

Saviour and Lord. In a word men believe through grace. When Apollos came into Achaia, bearing letters of recommendation to the disciples there, it is said that **"he helped them much which had believed through grace."** (Acts 18:27).

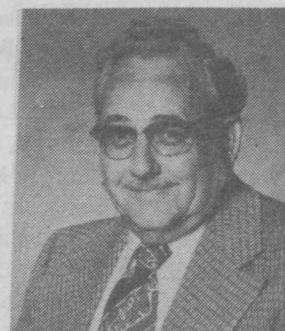
A man was once speaking of himself as a self-made man. One

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## WHAT ABOUT DEATH?

By Martin E. Holmes, Jr.

If my memory serves me right, November 23, 1974, I was sitting in Brother John Gilpin's office, in his print shop. I was to speak for him that Wednesday night at the Bible Conference at Calvary Baptist Church, and spend Thanksgiving Day with the saints of like precious faith enjoying the conference.



When Brother John and I visited we visited across many different topics. As we discussed, warmly and with full honesty of conviction, on life, death, and eternal values, that applied to the family of God, we found ourselves discussing death at great length. Brother John wasn't feeling physically up to par that afternoon. Fact if I remember right, it was just a few days before Brother John was ushered into glory and the presence of God. As we discussed physical death as it applies to the family of God, Psalm 116:15, where we read, **"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."** This Psalm is a part of the Hebrew hymn sung at the close of the Passover Service. This hymn begins with Psalm 112 and continues through Psalm 118. This made Psalm 116:15 more precious to us as we discussed its various meanings in our lives.

A week or so after this discussion with Brother John, my mind fastened to the thought of physical death, and I couldn't let it go. So I began to search some scriptures to see if I could come to an understanding of what it was that God wanted me to learn about death. Two verses of scripture seemed to stand out more than the rest on this subject. In I Corinthians 15:26, Paul states that death is our last enemy. The same Paul, by inspiration of the same Holy Spirit wrote in Philippians 1:21, **"For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."** The thought that troubled my mind was, if death is our last enemy then how is it gain to die?

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## EFFECTUAL REDEMPTION

By C.H. Spurgeon

I hold that Christ Jesus, when He died, had an object in view; and that object will most assuredly and beyond a doubt be accomplished. I hold (I am not afraid to say what I believe) that Christ came into the world with the intention of saving "a multitude which no man can number;" and I hold that as a result of this, every person for whom He died must beyond the shadow of a doubt, be cleansed from sin and stand washed in the blood before the Father's throne. I do not believe that Christ Jesus made any effectual atonement for those who are forever damned. I dare not think that the blood of Christ was ever shed with the intention of saving those whom God foreknew never would be saved, and some of whom were even in hell when He died.

Many people may be ready to dispute these things, but this is nothing to me. I shall at all times teach those things which I hold to be true without hindrance from any man.

If Christ Jesus has died for you, you can never be lost. God will not punish twice for one thing. If God punished Christ for your sins, He will not punish you. "Payment God's justice cannot twice demand, first at Thy bleeding Saviour's hand and then again at thine." How can God be a just God and a Saviour if He punishes Christ, the substitute, and then man, himself, afterwards?



## THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

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## WHAT ABOUT

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So, I began a very serious word study of the Hebrew and Greek language concerning the word death as used, both in the Old and the New Testaments. As I studied, prayed, for the guiding of the Holy Spirit, I found, in my studies of the word death, it has several primary meanings, three of which I want to present to you for your consideration.

First, all folk who are born on the face of the earth are born spiritually dead or, separated from God, with total inability to change their spiritually dead condition by self effort. In Psalm 58:3 we read, "The wicked are estranged from

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NOVEMBER 20, 1993

PAGE TWO

## Editor's Update

By Jack C. Whitt, Interim Editor

Greetings to one and all. Well, this edition should be reaching most of you around the first of January 1994. We are coming into a new year not knowing what the future holds, but we know the one who holds the future.

I have taken the opportunity to write in the "Editor's Update" column due to the new pastor/editor, Brother Gene Helton, not yet situated to do so as of this time preparing the paper (November 29, 1993). Brother Helton is now, as I write, in process of moving into the Church parsonage. I know many of you will want to know more about Brother Helton, and I'm sure he will want to meet many of you who are and have been acquainted with Calvary Baptist Church through the years. I might just say in brief, that Brother Helton is a retired Air Force man having spent 21 years in service and was a master sergeant. He also graduated from Lexington Bible College. He has pastored in other churches, most recently at Gethsemane Missionary Baptist Church in Marengo, Ohio. He's a thoroughbred Kentuckian who loves to preach the Bible, but is only an average singer and can't play a guitar. Just as good as Brother Helton is at preaching, so is his wife Connie, equally as good at cooking. We are looking forward to benefiting from both their talents.

We are looking to the new year with renewed hope that God will open doors for us and allow us to be used to spread the Gospel both near and far and that He will be glorified. We appreciate all of you who have prayed for us and we hope to be seeing many of you at the various conferences and meetings in the days ahead. And if we do not meet here below, we will meet you at His coming. May God Bless You All.

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the womb: they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies." In Romans 3:10-12 we read, "As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." In Romans 3:19 and 23 we read, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. (Vs. 23) "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" In Ephesians 2:1 we read, "Who were dead in trespasses and sins;" In John 8:43 we read, "Why do ye not understand my speech? because even ye cannot hear my word." All of these passages point out the truth, that, all who are born of women are born sinners, and as soon as they can, humanly speaking, understand right from wrong, they remain sinners by choice. In Ephesians 2:1 and 5 we are told,

man is born dead in trespasses and sins and John 8:43 we are told, these spiritually dead sinners cannot hear spiritual truth in that spiritually dead condition. The word dead, as used here, means a corpse, one without life. I worked in funeral homes twenty one years and in those years I learned a corpse can't hear, can't speak, can't feel, and can do nothing to get out of their dead condition. The same thing is true of the spiritually dead sinner. They are totally depraved or have total inability to change their dead condition by self effort. Some folk will tell you that you can be saved or born again, by your free-will. But your will is controlled by your nature. The spiritually dead are controlled by their old Adamic nature inherited from Adam, the federal head of the human race. The sinner's will is free to sin all it wants to; but it is not free to come to Jesus Christ to be born again by its own self effort.

Second, all who are quickened or made alive, out of their spiritually dead condition, by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:1,5) are given, by God's grace, the gift of faith and

are and shall always be born again. In Ephesians 2:8 we read, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." In Hebrews 12:2a we read, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." In Jonah 2:9, Jonah tried everything in the book, trying to bribe God to let him out of the belly of the great fish. Jonah would have been in that great fish permanently if he hadn't finally acknowledged that salvation is of God, it depends on God's grace and mercy and if he ever got out of that dreadful place God was going to have to do all of the work. This brings us to our second thought on death. When the spiritually dead sinner, who is totally unable to make himself spiritually alive by his free-will or self effort, are made spiritually alive by the Holy Spirit, given the faith to believe on or in the Lord Jesus Christ, (Eph. 2:1-9) they experience a death to sin. In Romans 6:1-18 Paul describes this experience of death to sin. Now I would not write out all of these verses at this time; but you should be reading this article with an open Bible in your lap, reading these verses for yourself. For those of you who will not do this, I will write out, for you, (Romans 6:1-4) where we read, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God

forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." So! It doesn't take a master mind to realize that Paul was speaking of spiritual death in I Corinthians 15:23 as being our last enemy. In II Timothy 1:10 we read, "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through our gospel:" In Hebrews 2:14,15 we read, "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; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Satan has never had power to bring about physical death. Read the book of Job, chap-

ters one and two. In Revelation 1:18 we read, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." In Job 38:17a we read, "Have the gates of death been opened unto thee?" God is the one who has numbered our days and holds the breath of our lives in his hands.

It is spiritual death we fear as our last enemy. Paul tells us in Philipians 1:21 "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Physical death is not to be feared. In I John 4:18 we read, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not perfect in love." If we are of His sheep we know what is out yonder beyond the cemetery. The undertaker will see to it that we get to the cemetery in grand style in a big black Cadillac. But who will meet us on the other side of the grave? This is where fear to the one who has not been born again by God's grace through the quickening work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ abolished spiritual death, the last enemy of his sheep. In Matthew 1:21 we read, "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Not Satan's people; but His people shall He save from their sins.

Our third thought on death is the way the word death is used, Revelation 20:14 where we read, "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." This thought, second death, caught my eye and I wondered how anyone could die twice? The child of God can only experience physical death once. If they die before Christ comes in the clouds or at the resurrection, they will be resurrected into new bodies never to die again. If they are alive when Jesus comes in the resurrection their old bodies will be changed into new glorified bodies, never to die again, according to I Thessalonians 4:13-17. Then this passage in Revelation 20:14 must apply only to those who die in their trespasses and sins. But how can they experience two physical deaths? What is Revelation 20:14 speaking of when it speaks of the second death? Let us go back to the context of Revelation 20:14 to verse thirteen where we read, in the middle of verse thirteen these words, "death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them:" Who are being spoken of here? Those sinners who have experienced

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## The Baptist Examiner Bible Study Lesson

By Clyde T. Everman, Deacon  
Calvary Baptist Church • Ashland, KY

### Genesis 1: 20-28

In the first four days of creation God created light, the firmament, dry land, and the lights to rule day and night. All was now ready for life to exist upon the earth. On the fifth day He created the fish and all the living creatures that live in the waters and the birds which fly in the above the earth (vv. 20,21). Note that every living creature that lived in the water was to bring forth "after their kind and every winged fowl after his kind." (v. 21).

God blessed them and told them to multiply and fill the waters and the earth (v. 22). As this was only the fifth day of creation and if the day was a million years long, as some claim, how thick the waters would have been with fish and the world with birds, as none died for millions of years. There was no death on the earth until after the seventh day when death came by Adam (Rom. 5:12).

### THE SIXTH DAY

Verses 23-31: We now come to the sixth day of creation. The higher forms of animal life, "the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good" (v. 25). Note there was not one kind of creature that over millions of years developed into the different kinds of animals but God created three classes of animals, the beast of the earth, cattle, and creeping things. Each of these were to

bring forth after "his kind". This statement, "after his kind" is enough proof to show that the theory of evolution is only the imagination of man. It proves that animals did not evolve from vegetable life, but that it took God's creative power to bring them into existence.

### THE ORIGIN OF MAN

Genesis 1:26-30: "And God said, Let us make man—." We now come to the climax of creation, man. "Let us make man" speaks of the Trinity of the Godhead. Who was the Creator? God spake, (Heb. 11:30) Christ the Son made (John 1:3, Col. 1:16, 17), the Holy Spirit moved, brooded, as the Hebrew word means (Gen. 1:2; Psa. 104:30; Job 26:13). We can lay aside all theories as to how man came into being. Verse 27 tells us, "God created man in his own image." For emphasis, in this verse the word "created" is used three times. Not only was man created by God but he was made in His image, "in the image of God created he him." "Image" does not have reference to the body. For God has no body. God is spirit. (John 4:24). It has reference to man's soul. He was free from sin. He was pure and spotless, and in this way he was like God, made "after our likeness." After the fall that likeness was lost. The Bible now speaks of three types of humanity: Adam's which was innocent (Gen. 1:27), ours, which is sinful (Psa. 51:50), and Christ's which

is holy (Luke 35). It has reference to the position in which God placed man, Man's dominion extended over all life, fish in the sea, fowl of the air, every living thing upon the earth (v. 28).

"God created man—." The word "created" means something has been made out of nothing. Only God can create, man can make things but he can not create. The word "created" is used three times in Chapter one to tell that God made something out of nothing. On the first day He created matter, "the heaven and the earth" (v. 1). On the fifth day He created the animal life, those of the sea and of the land, after its kind (v. 21). On the sixth day he created man, "God created him: male and female created he them." (v. 27).

Verse 28: "And God blessed them and God said, unto them. Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish (fill) the earth - ." Here a very important institution is brought into being, the institution of marriage. "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth." Gives us the primary purpose of marriage. The institution of marriage is more fully described in chapter two. Man was to "subdue" the earth which means he was placed in charge over all the earth, and was to have dominion over all living creatures, "fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (v. 28).

To Be Continued.

## Don't Be Afraid To Say "AMEN"

*A good sound Christian while on vacation in a community that had no Bible-preaching evangelical church to attend on Sunday deemed it best to visit a liberal, ritualistic church. During the rector's discourse the minister quoted the Bible. The visitor shouted out loud, "Amen". While going through some religious ceremonies the rector again resorted to reading the Scriptures, and again the stranger gave another "Amen". About this time an usher came to the visitor and said, "What are you shouting about?" The man responded, "I've got salvation." Very calmly the usher said, "Well, shut-up, you didn't get it here."*

## WHAT ABOUT

(Continued from Page 2)

enced physical death. Where are their bodies? In the cemetery or a physical grave. Where are their souls? In Hell. Then the old physical body must come out of it's physical grave, as a body as complete as when it went into it's physical grave, or more so. The soul will be, by God, brought up out of Hell, and the old physical body and the lost soul are reunited to stand before the Great White Throne Judgement to be judged by God, who will be using the sixty six books of His Word as His basis of judgement. Then, as he pronounces their final judgement both body and soul will plunge into the Lake of Fire to

experience, for all eternity, the second death in the Lake of Fire.

In these three ways the word death is used, did you notice the one thing in common all three had? Our eternal sovereign God controls the time of physical death, the time and way of spiritual life unto death to sin, and the final plunge of sinners into the Lake of Fire. This is why I can quote I John 4:18, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out all fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not perfect in love." Now if he first loved us and scattered his love abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us. (Romans 5:5) why should we fear death in any shape or form. Some will argue, but we are just human. I know that. But we are still born again sheep of God put into the family of God, loved by the Father and indwelt by the Holy Spirit who sheds God's love abroad in our hearts.

If God, in his love, grace and mercy, chose me in Christ before the foundations of the world, died for me at Calvary, called me by His Holy Spirit, gave me the faith to believe, indwelt my heart and shed abroad in my heart his love how can I fear any kind of death? Paul tells us, when a loved one dies we are not to sorrow as those who have no hope. What about death? It is as natural to life as being born, living, breathing, eating and drinking. We don't fear these other things, then why should we fear death, whether it be spiritual, physical or any other kind of death? Our loving heavenly Father is in control of it all as to its time, place and any other circumstance surrounding it.

But! As an unbelieving sinner, you are living in the midst of spiritual death. John 3:16, you are in the state of perishing. In John 3:18 you are condemned by God already, and in John 3:36 God's wrath already rests and abides on you. You may or may not experience physical death, but; you will experience the second death if you die or come to the White Throne Judgement in that lost and undone condition. When you plunge into the Lake of Fire you will experience God's eternal retribution with weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth. Do you know and understand where you stand, personally before God right now?

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## WHAT THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT DO!

Daniel P. Moynihan

The following quotation is from one of American's leading urban sociologist, also an advisor to two Presidents, and now a Senator from New York.

"What the government cannot provide? It cannot provide values to persons who have none, nor who have lost those they had. Government cannot provide a meaning to life. It cannot provide inner peace." (Wall Street Journal, 06/20/69)



## The Baptist Examiner Pulpit Forum I

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT  
THE BAPTIST EXAMINER, P.O. BOX 60, ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060

### Explain "baptism for the dead" in I Corinthians 15:29.

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"Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?" (I Cor. 15:29).

To understand this passage, of which there are many and varied interpretations, we need to see how baptism is in connection with the resurrection of the dead.

In the first part of the chapter, Paul is telling the Corinthians that the gospel which he had preached and that they had received and believed, consisted of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. He then asked the question, "how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead" (v. 12). He is saying the resurrection of Christ is a foundation doctrine of Christianity and if there is no resurrection of the dead, "then is Christ not risen" (v. 13). He said that if this be so, then his preaching and their faith is vain.

In verse 29 he is showing how useless their baptism would be if there was no resurrection. As baptism is a symbol or figure of the gospel, it pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. So we see it concerns a death, a burial, and a resurrection. This is why sprinkling could never be a baptism, as it can never be a figure of a burial and a resurrection.

Paul is telling those who hold to the belief of no resurrection that in their being baptized, they professed faith in the gospel of which the resurrection is one of the leading doctrines. The argument Paul uses is that if they denied the doctrine of the resurrection, they were tearing down the very nature of Christianity. By embracing this false belief, they dashed all hope which they

had expressed by their baptism.

W.E. Vine, a noted Greek scholar, notes that there was no punctuation marks in the original and if the first question mark is placed after the word "baptized" this would be, I believe give the true meaning and is consistent with the Scripture. It would then read, "Else what shall they do which are baptized?" It is for (i.e., in the interest of the dead). If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them?" He is saying, what is the value of being baptized if there is no resurrection of the dead. In stead of identifying the believer with the risen Christ, baptism would have no meaning at all, either for Christ or for the one being baptized, for all is ended at death. "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (v. 18). "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. BUT NOW IS CHRIST RISEN FROM THE DEAD AND BECOME THE FIRSTFRUITS OF THEM THAT SLEEP." (I Cor. 15:19, 20).

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Beginning in verse 12, Paul, as his manner was, presents the doctrine of the resurrection in the form of an argument. He would present the objection then answer that objection with the utmost eloquence in scriptural reasoning. Starting with verse 20, Paul interrupts his own argument to present the fact of the matter of the resurrection of the Lord, and that we also shall be resurrected as He was because of who He, (Christ) is and what He did. Then in verse 29 he concludes his argument by asking the question, what is it that they are willing to, seeing many of their brethren and sisters methodically tortured and put to death for the cause of Christ, take

their place on the front line of the battle and identify with Christ as they did, by being publicly baptized? Paul was not teaching that people could be baptized for the benefit of someone who was dead. That would be completely contrary to Bible teaching. You must ask yourself, what purpose would such an act serve? Who would Paul, through the inspiration of the spirit, just out of the clear blue, inject a thought that had never been discussed before; and not follow up with an explanation? The following two verses will help to explain the meaning of verse 29. Not only were they in jeopardy, but Paul and 11 the remaining apostles were also in constant danger of death. Paul's question to be reasoned is this... why is it that the disciples of Christ continue to be baptized and take up the fight of faith in the place of their brethren who have done the same and died because of it if there be no resurrection of the dead? "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Thank you for your question.

#### DEATH ENDS IT ALL

A fellow stopped me one day and said, "I don't believe in the Bible and life hereafter like you: I believe that death ends it all." I replied, "I also believe that death ends it all. Death ends your ambitions, all your friendships, all your earthly joys, all opportunities for you to seek peace with your Maker.

While on the other hand it will end all my troubles, all my disappointments and sicknesses. Death will be the door to a glorious life with Christ in heaven."

## Scriptural Essentials

By Richard E. Farnham

Much of the present world embraces Christianity. Yet there are many views concerning salvation in Christ and which church is correct. No wonder many are confused about what is the truth concerning the Christian faith. We would like to address the questions concerning Salvation, Baptism, and the Church.

The Bible teaches very clearly, that to be a Christian, one must be in Christ. First of all, before the foundation of the world; God the Father chose a people to be in His Son Christ Jesus. Eph. 1:3,4 expresses this very well: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Jesus Christ, who is the second person of the Triune God, became flesh and dwelt among us. (John 1:14). He went to the cross to redeem His people from their sins. The Bible teaches clearly that Jesus Christ took the sins of His people, those chosen from before the foundation of the earth, and made their sins His very own. God the Father poured out His wrath upon His Son, because of His peoples sins. (2 Cor. 5:21). "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." God's people's sins were imputed to Jesus Christ, and His righteousness was imputed to His people. He was resurrected from the dead, that we might have life. We must be given life by the Holy Spirit, hear the Gospel preached, and believe on Him, who to know a right is life eternal.

While our Saviour was on earth He established His church. The word "church" in the original Greek is "ekklesia", which means "a called out assembly." A group of people assembled in a local place. The word was never used to denote a building or a denomination. A building is only the place where the Church meets. Denominationalism was born when men became power hungry and wished to dominate others. Our Saviour established His assembly on Himself, and promised that the forces of evil would not prevail against it. Matt. 16:18. In Col. 1:18 we read: "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things, he might have the preeminence." Our Saviour gave authority to His Church before He ascended up to heaven. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 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." (Matt. 28:18-20).

The pattern of the New Testament Church is one of succession. The Church was formed during the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ out of those baptized by John the Baptist. Since our Lord and His disciples were baptized by John, John's baptism is scriptural baptism. After the crucifixion and resurrection, the Lord ascended into heaven and the Holy Spirit baptized the Church on the day of Pentecost. The Church was on that day empowered and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The Book of Acts lays out the pattern of one church establishing another. The church at Antioch sent the Apostle Paul to preach the Gospel and to establish churches. He went forth in the power of the Holy Spirit, and under the authority of the Antioch Church. "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia." (Acts 13:2-4). We believe that this same pattern exists unto this very day.

How then can we identify a New Testament Church today? The answer is by their doctrine, and the practice of that doctrine. Some of these are: The absolute sovereignty of God, Total Depravity of man, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Irresistible Grace, Perseverance and Preservation of the Saints, Church Succession, and John's Baptism. Members of the Lord's Church should be careful to maintain good works, and live a holy life in Christ Jesus.



## The Baptist Examiner Pulpit Forum II

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

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

### Explain the "wise" and "foolish" virgins in Matthew 25:1-13. What does "oil" represent here?

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There are several different opinions on this portion of Scripture. However, the most common view is that the five wise virgins are saved, and the five foolish virgins are lost. I do not accept this view. The Kingdom of Heaven is likened to all ten virgins. All ten are called virgins by Christ. They all went forth to meet the Bridegroom, all were waiting with lighted lamps. Five did not bring extra oil for their lamps. Perhaps they did not think they would have to wait long, or they forgot to bring the extra oil. They all slumbered and slept, and when they awoke the lamps of the foolish were going out and they had no extra oil to refill them. Oil represents the Holy Spirit, in the Old Testament Exodus 30:22-33. In the New Testament Luke 10:34. If oil represents the Holy Spirit and all ten had oil and five did not have enough oil, did the foolish lose their salvation? I think not. Jesus said in John 14:16, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."

I believe all ten virgins were saved. The word virgin signifies people morally chaste and pure, note Matthew 1:27 and I Corinthians 7:25, 28, 34. It is applied to saved people, and never to lost people. I believe the wise virgins represent the Bride of Christ, the true church, I believe the true church is of course, a Baptist church since that was the only one Christ organized. I believe the foolish virgins are saved people who are not in a true church, but rather in man made churches started without authority from a mother church with God given authority. They will not be in the Bride, but rather will be guest at the wedding.

Some will argue, but verse 12

of the twenty-fifth chapter of Jesus said, "I know you not." He meant that He did not recognize them as His Bride. In Matthew 7:23 Jesus said to those works for salvation people, "I never knew you." What He meant was that He did not know them as recipients of grace. He is Omniscience, He knows everything. The end is coming, the rapture is near, we need to be ready. We need to be saved, we need to be Scripturally baptized, we need to be in the right church that was started right and is teaching the truth of the Word of God.

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Our kind of Baptist are divided into two camps on this parable. The one holds that the wise virgins represent those who are faithfully serving in a New Testament Baptist church and will be those who will be in the bride of Christ. Those who hold this position believe that the foolish are those who have not been faithful thus disqualifying them for that position. There are good arguments for this position and when it is preached as such, their points are Scriptural ones indeed. I have heard very good messages preached from this position that have blessed my heart; but I do not hold to this position.

This parable is located amidst other parables that, I believe, make reference to the saved and the lost. In verse twelve of Matthew twenty-five, Jesus speaks of those who are not known of Christ. "But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not." Jesus knows His sheep, even those who are unfaithful in their service to Him.

In verse thirty of this chapter, notice what he says to the unprofitable servant, "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weep-

ing and gnashing of teeth." Certainly, this does not mean that this servant was saved.

So as we look at this parable in its context I believe that the saved and the unsaved are represented in it. Also, in verse eleven, the foolish virgins are shut out. "Lord, Lord, open to us." God's people are not shut out of the wedding ceremony. Those who are not in the bride will be invited and welcomed guest.

As to the oil. Oil often times represents the Holy Spirit. Here, I believe that the grace of God in all respects is meant. In II Timothy we read, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (II Tim. 3:15).

It is not we who make ourselves wise unto salvation. Neither is it we who enable ourselves to be of faith, but rather He who works in us and gives us the will to serve.

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I am inclined to believe the "wise" referred to in the text before us are the saved, and the "foolish" are the lost. I believe this point can be proven by the contrasts throughout the scripture between the wise and the foolish.

Notice the contrast the scriptures make in the relationship between the wise and the foolish. "The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools." (Prov. 3:35). "There is treasure to be desired and oil in the dwelling of the wise; but a foolish man spendeth it up." (Prov. 21:20). These two verses place the wise and the foolish at opposite extremes. The wise are to inherit glory, they have treasures, and have the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Yet, the fools on the other hand are to

be left in their shame and poverty.

Paul writing to the Ephesians told them not to act like fools, ie, like lost people. Listen to the word of this Beloved Apostle, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise." (Eph. 5:15). Keeping in the context of this passage of Holy Write, one can only believe that the "fools" are the lost and the "wise" the saved. Paul from verse one to verse seventeen is setting a contrast. He endeavors to contrast the children of God with the "sons of disobedience", "light" with "darkness", and the "fruit of the Spirit" with "unfruitful works of darkness."

I believe our Lord, in our text in Matthew 25, was also conveying the same contrast. He was contrasting the saved with the lost, the superficial professor with a heartfelt possessor. He likened the saved to the wise. They who were to be translated into the kingdom of heaven. They who were to be at the marriage in heaven (Notice, He did not say these wise virgins were to be in the bride). On the other hand, the foolish were lost. They were not guest of the bride, "...the doors were shut," verse 10 says. Yes, the fools were left outside the Kingdom. They were lost. Jesus passed the death sentence on them when He said, "...Verily I say unto you, I know you not." (Verse 12). I do not believe Jesus would or could ever tell one of His blood bought brethren He did not know them.

In reference to the "oil" in the text before us, I believe Christ is referring to the Holy Spirit. This truth can be seen by the fact the lost did not have any oil. They were without the Spirit. Therefore, they were none of His (Eph. 8:9). They were without an anointing. They were void of the Spirit -- the only one who can make a fool wise.

Throughout the word of God "oil" is symbolic of the Holy Spirit and His anointing. Notice a few verses that validate this claim. "And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him." (Lev. 8:12). "...hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Heb. 1:9). "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me..." (Lk. 4:18). "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause his is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb. 2:11). Through these verses we

see the connection between oil and the Holy Spirit. The anointing, ie, the setting apart, the dedicating, the consecrating, and the sanctifying, is a work done by the Spirit and represented by the oil.

The foolish virgins had no power, no light, and no hope. All they had were empty vessels. They were left in that condition. My prayer is that when the Lord comes you will not be found in the same condition as these five fools.

I pray I have been of some help. May the Lord richly bless you.

#### You Didn't Ask, Seek, nor Knock

I got up early one morning  
and rushed right  
into the day;  
I had so much to  
accomplish  
That I didn't take time  
to pray.

Problems just  
tumbled about me,  
And heavier  
came each task;  
"Why doesn't  
God help me?" I wondered;  
He answered:  
"You didn't ask."

I wanted to see  
joy and beauty,  
But the day toiled on,  
gray and bleak;  
I wondered why  
God didn't show me;  
He said:  
"But you didn't seek."

I tried to come into  
God's presence;  
I used all my keys  
at the lock.  
God gently and  
lovingly chided,  
"My child,  
you didn't knock."

I woke up early  
this morning  
And paused  
before entering the day;  
I had so much  
to accomplish  
That I had to  
take time to pray.

- Author Unknown



## THE GRACE

(Continued from Page 1)

who heard him in his boasting, said, "It's quite noble of you to say so. Most men would have blamed their luck, or their wives, or even laid the responsibility on the shoulders of the Creator." It seems natural and easy for a man to worship his Maker, and therefore, the self-made man naturally worships himself. But every believer is a grace-made man. Paul, as a Christian, delighted to say, **"By the grace of God I am what I am"** (I Cor. 15:10). In an experience of grace, the Holy Spirit, by the convicting power of the Word, gives the sinner a sight of self, and then relieves the resultant distress by giving him, through the Gospel, a sight of Christ. An old Puritan once cried out, "Oh, where had I been if I had not spied out Christ?"

The Greek word "charis" occurs in the N.T. more than one hundred and fifty times and is usually translated "grace" in our English Bible. It is not easy to take a word employed so many times and with such a diversity of application and develop a doctrine that will be uniform and consistent. Moreover, all the truth about grace cannot be compressed into a single sentence. Grace is one of the Divine perfections or attributes in the nature of God which is exercised in the salvation of sinners. Great and good men have grappled with the subject of grace in an effort to define and describe it. May we prayerfully ponder some of them:

**Dr. Dale:** "Grace is love which passes beyond all claims to love." Grace is not the sinner's due; it is not something he earns; it is not something he can lay claim to.

**Alexander Whyte:** "Grace and love are essentially the same, only grace is love manifesting itself and operating under certain conditions, and adapting itself to certain circumstances. As, for example, love has no limit or law such as grace has. Love may exist between equals, or it may rise to those above us, or flow down to those in any way beneath us. But grace, from its nature, has only one direction it can take. Grace always flows down. Grace is love indeed, but it is love to creatures humbling itself. A king's love to his equals or to his own

royal house, is love; but his love to his subjects is called grace. And thus it is that God's love to sinners is always called grace." This quotation deserves repeated readings.

**Alexander Maclaren:** "The word grace is a kind of shorthand for the whole sum of unmerited blessings which come to men through Jesus Christ. Primarily, it describes what we, for want of a better expression, have to call a 'disposition' in the Divine nature; and it means the unconditioned, undeserved, spontaneous, eternal, stooping, pardoning love of God. But there are no idle dispositions in God. They are always energizing, and so the word glides from meaning the disposition, to meaning the manifestations and activities of it, and the grace of our Lord is that love in exercise. And then, since the Divine energies are never fruitless, the word passes over further, to mean all the blessed things in the soul which are the consequences of the Promethean truth of God's loving hand, the outcome in life of the inward bestowment which has its cause, its sole cause, in God's ceaseless, unexhausted love, unmerited and free." This quotation must be studied to get the most out of it.

**Phillips:** "Grace is something in God which is at the heart of all His redeeming activities, the downward stoop and reach of God, bending from the heights of His majesty, to touch and grasp our insignificance and poverty."

In analyzing all these definitions and descriptions of grace, we find that the word is applied to three things in the Scriptures. First, God's attitude or disposition of love and favor towards a sinner is grace. It is said that Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. God's attitude towards him was a disposition of favor and love was grace. Second, when God does something for the sinner's good, that is grace. **"By grace have ye been saved."** (R.V.) Third, the effects or fruit of the inwrought grace in the believer is also called grace. The graces or virtues in the saints are produced by the grace of God working in them. The disposition of the Macedonians to give so liberally is called grace (II Cor. 8:1); and the money given for the poor saints at Jerusalem is also called grace (II Cor. 8:19). The changed lives of the people whom Barnabas saw at Antioch is called the grace of God. Acts 11:23.

*"Grace! 'tis a charming sound,  
Harmonious to the ear; Heaven  
with the echo shall resound, And  
all the earth shall hear."*

### HOW TO BETTER UNDERSTAND GRACE

Perhaps the best way to understand the meaning of grace is to see how it is contrasted in the Bible with other things:

1. It is contrasted with law in its origin and nature.

**"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"** (Jno. 1:17). Moses was the voice of law; Christ was the spokesman for grace. It is the nature of law to make demands; it is the nature of grace to bestow blessings. The law is a ministry of condemnation; grace is the ministry of forgiveness. The law puts man at a guilty distance from God; grace brings the sinner nigh to God. The law condemns the best man; grace saves the worst man. The law says, "Do and live;" grace says, "Believe and live." The law demands righteousness; grace provides righteousness. The law curses; grace redeems from the curse. As long as a man is under the law he is lost; the only way to get out from under the law is through faith in Christ, **"who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth"** (Rom. 10:4). **"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace"** (Rom 6:14).

2. Grace is contrasted with sin in its issue. Sin reigns unto death; grace reigns unto eternal life (Rom. 5:21). Sin gets its damning power from the law (I Cor. 15:56); grace robs sin of its damning power by giving Christ for the satisfaction of the law (I Cor. 15:57). The one and only source of real danger is from violated law; the one and only way of escape is through a satisfied law. Christ satisfied the law for His people, that the law might be satisfied with them.

3. Grace is contrasted with works in the plan of salvation. **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast"** (Eph. 2:8,9). Salvation is by the grace of the Creator rather than by works of the creature. Salvation by grace precludes the idea of any works either great or small, moral or ceremonial. Salvation by grace excludes boasting and gives all praise to God. "Grace first con-

trived the way to save rebellious man: And all the steps that grace display which drew the wondrous plan."

4. Grace is contrasted with debt or obligation as to the moving cause of salvation. **"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for (unto) righteousness"** (Rom. 4:4,5) The thought here is this: the man who draws wages for his work does not have any grace shown him, but a debt or obligation paid to him. There is no grace where a man gets what he deserves or earns. Grace excludes the principle of debt or obligation. Salvation by grace means that God is not obligated to save. If there is obligation to save then salvation is not by grace as the moving cause. It was grace in God, and not a debt He was under, that caused Him to provide salvation for sinners. Toplady well says: "The way to heaven lies not over a toll-bridge, but over a free-bridge; even the unmerited grace of God in Christ Jesus. Grace finds us beggars but leaves us debtors." "High as the heavens are raised Above the ground we tread, So far the riches of His grace Our highest thoughts exceed."

### GRACE IN THE TRINITY

All three persons in the Godhead are equally gracious towards sinners. The grace of the Father, Son, and Spirit are equal in degree and extent, but distinct in operation and administration.

1. The Father is the fountain of all grace. He proposed the fact and plan of grace. He formulated the covenant of grace, and devised the means "whereby His banished should not be expelled from Him." He made choice by grace of the subjects of grace, and then in fulness of time sent His Son into the world to be the medium of grace.

2. The eternal Son is the channel of grace. The only way the grace of God can reach the sinner is through the Lord Jesus Christ. Let no rejector of God's Son think himself to be the beneficiary of God's grace! His work reconciled grace and justice, as it is written, **"Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."** (Ps. 85:10).

John Bunyan, blissfully lost in the contemplation of the matchless grace of the Son of God, cried

out in these words: "O Thou son of the Blessed! Grace stripped Thee of Thy glory; grace brought Thee down from heaven; grace made Thee bear such burdens of sin, such burdens of curse as are unspeakable; grace was in Thy heart; grace came bubbling from Thy bleeding side; grace was in Thy tears' grace was in Thy prayers; grace streamed from Thy thorn-crowned brow! Grace came forth with the nails that pierced Thee! Oh, here are unsearchable riches of grace! Grace to make sinners happy! Grace to make angels wonder! Grace to make devils astonished!"

3. The Holy Spirit is the administrator of grace. Without the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit in conversion no sinner would ever become a beneficiary of grace. He takes of the things of Christ and gives them to the sinner. He quickens all the souls of the Father's choice, and leads to Jesus Christ all the sheep for whom the dear Shepherd laid down His life. John 10:11. He conquers the stoutest hearts, and cleanses the foulest spiritual leper. He opens sin-blinded eyes and unstops sin-closed ears. The blessed Holy Spirit reveals the grace of the Father and applies the grace of the Son. "We may listen to the preacher, God's own truth be clearly shown; But we need a greater teacher from the everlasting throne; Application is the work of God alone."

(To Be Continued)

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## KNOWING

(Continued from Page 1)

Lord Jesus Christ who "... his own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree..." (I Peter 2:24), we do have our God's further command, "we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness" (I Peter 2:24). The purpose of our knowing the will of God and the purpose of our doing the will of God, then, is that we can be better as the children of God tomorrow than we have been today. God is advising us that as long as we live, we should be better — especially in our own sight, since our God sees all of the redeemed as sinless — than we were the day before.

This doing the will of God, then, is something that we may do today, but it should be something that we really do better tomorrow. In Ephesians 5:18, God explains that we should "be filled with the spirit." Already, when we were saved, we received the Holy Spirit of God. Even now, the Holy Spirit abides within and witnesses "with our spirit that we are the children of God." (Rom. 8:16). Jesus Himself advised His disciples, "I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the comforter (Holy Spirit) will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you... When He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of himself, but... He shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John 16:7, 13-14).

Jesus Himself tells us in another place, "And lo, I am with you forever, even unto the end of the world (age)." (Mt. 28:20). Since God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are One, we can know that the Holy Spirit will be with us forever and forever. Jesus Himself explains that He never will forsake us. According to the Word of God, then, the Holy Spirit will be our comforter forever, and when He is removed from the earth, we shall be going with Him (See 2 Thess. 2:7 and I Thess. 4:13-18). As the children of God, and through the study of the word of God, along with our prayer and meditation in the Word of God, we can be "filled (daily) with the Spirit of God" (Eph. 5:18). Through our waiting upon the Lord in faith and in hope, and in fear, we can be "filled with the

Spirit of God," more so today than we were yesterday. This, I would suppose, is all a very real part of that passage, "Be ye Holy, for I am Holy" (I Pet. 1:16).

As those who know the Lord in saving faith, we can know that the will of God is that we should "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature..." (Mk. 16:15). I may not have explained it previously, but the little word "Go" that has been translated from the Greek, *POREUOMAI*, with "into all of the world" has a larger meaning. God's emphasis is not toward our reaching some distant land or some distant people. Rather, the Greek word really emphasizes that as we go about our daily responsibilities, as we go into our villages, as we go into the highways and the byways, and as we are going into one another's house or place of business, we should be going with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We need to realize that this emphasis is not limited to preachers, evangelists, and teachers. Neither is this emphasis limited to foreign missions or even home missions, as men have developed these religious practices for many generations. Rather, we need to realize that every child of God is called to be a witness. Jesus, I believe, made this truth plain when He sent forth "the woman at the well" and she returned from her city with those who accompanied her, and to whom she had cried, "Is not this the Christ?" (See the fullness of this word in John 4:1-30). The Apostle Paul dramatizes this truth with his own explanation, "Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20). This word, we can know was all-inclusive with respect to testimony. Paul had addressed this letter and this word to "the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the saints that are in Achaia." (2 Cor. 1:1).

If we fail in this responsibility, we can know that we have not followed the will of God for our lives. If, somehow, we permit ourselves, as the children of God, to be so misled or brainwashed by preachers, pastors, evangelists, teachers, denominational executives or administrators, foreign or home missionaries that we suppose that God has given this responsibility to others, then we have violated His Word. We have

failed to heed the Word of God, "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." (I Cor. 7:23). When we follow the teachings of men and fail to heed the Word of God, then we are resistant to the will of God.

By the will of God, we can know that each one of us is called to be an ambassador of Christ Jesus. You have the responsibility, and I have the responsibility of testifying or witnessing daily to the fact that as the children of God, we have been saved from our sins. We have the responsibility to inform all of those with whom we come into contact in the normal course of our lives that Jesus died for our sins on Calvary's cross, that He was buried, and that He arose from the dead, that He has ascended back to Heaven, and that He one day will return for us. Though our God will make His will known to us on a daily basis, we can know by His Holy Word it is God's will that we should be His witnesses, and that continually.

### Knowing God's Will By Prayer

Knowing God's will by His Word and as His witnesses also involves us in a continual need to maintain a very close relationship with the One about whom we are witnessing and for whom we are witnessing. We recall that when Jesus was here upon the earth and living among mortal and dying men, He did a lot of witnessing regarding His Heavenly Father. In several instances, we learn that He was here to do the will of His Heavenly Father. When He was but twelve years of age, His distressed parents found Him among the leaders of His people answering and asking them questions. Already, it seems, He was aware that He had a holy responsibility for which He had come. We can believe, then, that already because of His great wisdom, He had been in regular relationship with His Heavenly Father.

We learn that a little more than eighteen years later, after He began his ministry there in Cana of Galilee, that He often took time to continue that relationship with His Heavenly Father through that procedure that we speak of as prayer. Very early in His ministry, we find our Lord Jesus doing just that. In Mark 1:35, we read, "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there

prayed." In Luke 5:16, we learn, "And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed." Climactically and wonderfully, we learn in John 17:1 & 2, "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him..."

We find that praying was especially important and precious to Jesus in his moment of what we might speak of as His eternal stress, that some often reference as "His passion." We read, "Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder." (Mt. 26:36). This is where He cried to His Heavenly Father, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Mt. 26:39). Finally, from the Cross, we hear Jesus cry, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" and "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit..." (Lu. 23:34 & 46).

This Jesus, the Son of God and God the Son, who Himself was so involved in praying in order that He might continue to know and to do the will of His Heavenly Father, has advised those of us who know Him in saving faith that we too must pray. In Matthew 5:44, He says to us, "But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you..." In Mark 13:33, He warns us, "Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time (the time of the end) is." Then, in one of the closing moments of our Lord's dealing with His disciples here upon the earth, He advises them, "Pray that ye enter not into temptation." (Lu. 22:40). Praying, then, must be a practice of ours as the children of God, if we are to know the will of God and if we are going to do the will of God.

The Apostle Paul joins in with Jesus in his recommendation, "Pray without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:17). And James, our Lord's brother, indicates that this is God's will for us with his word, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that

ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). He follows soon afterward to explain, "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain; and it rained not on the earth... and he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." (James 5:17-18). We have touched upon only a few passages of Scripture, and there are many, many more that we could reference. In every instance, we would see the importance of praying as we study the life of Jesus and His disciples. so, if we are to know the will of God for our lives, we, too, must pray.

Such is God's design for service! Such is God's will, for our lives!

Both as a fellow Christian and as a pastor, I have known the importance of prayer. Always, I have had to confess my own evident inadequacies. Most of these, of course, doubtless were already known by my fellow Christians and my fellow church members. As another mortal who is set apart by God because of the salvation that He has provided, nonetheless, I may on occasion have responsibilities that for a moment may seem to set me apart in some special way. I must realize, however, that every other redeemed person really has a similar experience of responsibility toward God and toward his fellowmen.

If my reading of the Scriptures is correct, the Apostle Paul emphasizes time and time again that our God is no respecter of persons. That is why we may read, "But of these who seemed to be somewhat (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me; God accepteth no man's person)..." (Gal. 2:6). In Romans 2:10-11, this same Apostle stresses, "But glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; for there is no respect of persons with God." And Peter elaborates, "And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" knowing "that

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## KNOWING

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ye were not redeemed with corruptible things..." (1 Pet. 1:17 & 18).

Therefore, in my humanity, I can and must know that my inadequacies and my faults are many. And with the Apostle Paul, I must cry, "There is none righteous, no not one..." (Rom. 3:10). Too, with Isaiah of old I must cry, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags..." (Isa. 64:6). Then, with David, I must ever pray, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according unto thy loving kindness; according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions." (Ps. 51:1).

Yes, it is incumbent upon each one of us who knows the Lord in saving faith, that we know His will for each of our lives, and that we do the best that we can to do His will as we understand it. We shall have moments, perhaps, when our old humanity and our human desires will so color our thinking and even our praying that we shall have difficulty understanding even the simple truths of the Word of God, since it is only by the Spirit of God that they can be understood, we shall find ourselves failing. The Apostle Paul may have been touching upon this truth when he wrote, "For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Rom. 7:19). There will be times, then, when we shall fail in our understanding of the Word of God as we read it. We shall sometimes fail in our praying to our God perhaps because of the weight of our mortality, but we can be assured of the final victory if we continue on in faith and in faithfulness as we understand His will for our lives.

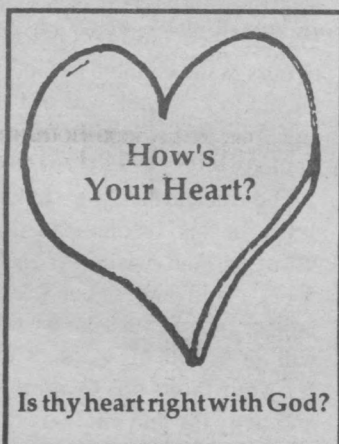
Then, one day, when we are in the presence of the saints of all of the ages, and in the presence of our ascended Savior, we shall understand in fullness, "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). In that wonderful hour when we join our Savior in the realms of glory, "...we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2). Then we shall be able to look back and under-

stand what He has been telling us each day since He has saved us from our sins; namely, "... all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28).

Knowing God's will now as best we can, then, is extremely important. As we have seen, it is essential that we study God's Word, if we are to know His will for our lives, and if we are going to do His will. also, it is essential that we maintain a personal relationship with our God by means of our prayer which really is our daily and momentary conversation with our God. This, I believe, is the emphasis that the Apostle Paul is calling our attention with his word, "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17).

If our Lord provides me a few more moments of time in my mortality, and if He provides that I might continue to have a measure of sanity, one day I shall continue and perhaps conclude this series on "Knowing God's Will." By His grace, I shall do that with a final word in which I shall speak of "Knowing God's Will By Experience." When I was a young man, more than 50 years ago, our God reached down and saved me. Then, for a time He had to guide me hour-by-hour and day-by-day and week-by-week and month-by-month because I had no Philip, no Peter, and no Paul to counsel me. As a dearly loved brother of another generation used to say, "I literally was shut-up to the Word of God." That I have made many mistakes along the way goes without saying, but through it all God has made His will known to me, and I have attempted to do His will as I understood it. Without exception, thankfully, as I look back on both failures and successes, I can know that Romans 8:28 has been an effectual word in my living, and in a very real sense a guiding word that has enabled me to "keep my hand on the plow."

(To Be Continued.)



## That Mean Ole Mother of Mine

I had the meanest mother in the world. While other kids ate candy for breakfast, I had to have cereal, eggs, or toast. When others had cokes and candy for lunch, I had to eat sandwiches. As you can guess, my supper was different than the other kids, also. But, at least, I wasn't alone in my sufferings. My sister and two brothers had the same mean mother I had.

My mom insisted upon knowing where we were at all times. You'd think we were on a chain gang. She had to know who our friends were and what we were doing. She insisted if we said we'd be gone one hour or less... not one hour and one minute. I am nearly ashamed to admit it, but she actually struck us. Not once, but each time we did as we pleased. Can you imagine someone actually hitting a child just because he disobeyed? Now you can begin to see how mean she really was.

The worst is yet to come. We had to be in bed by nine each night and up early the next morning. We could not sleep till noon like our friends. So while they slept... my mother actually had the nerve to break the child labor law. She made us work. We had to wash the dishes, make beds, learn to cook, and all sorts of cruel things. I believe she laid awake at night thinking up mean things to do to us.

She always insisted upon our telling the whole truth and nothing but the truth even if it killed us... and it nearly did.

By the time we were teenagers, she was much wiser and our life became even more unbearable. None of this tooting the horn of a car for us to come running. She embarrassed us to no end by making our dates and friends come to the door to get us. I forgot to mention while my friends were dating at the mature age of twelve and thirteen, my old fashioned mother refused to let me date until age fifteen and sixteen. Fifteen, that is if you dated only to go to a school function. That was twice a year.

My mother was a complete failure as a mother. None of us has ever been arrested for beating his mate. Each of my brothers served his time in the service of this country. Whom do we have to blame for the terrible way we turned out? You're right, our mean mother. Look at all the things we missed. We never got to march in a protest parade, got to take part in a riot, burn draft cards, and a million and one other things our friends did. She forced us to grow up into God-fearing, educated honest adults. Using this as a background, I am trying to raise my three children. I stand a little taller and I am filled with pride when one of my children calls me mean. Because you see, I thank God He gave me the meanest mother in the world.

## A MESSAGE OF GRACE

Paul Jackson  
IGNORANCE

"And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." (Luke 19:41-42).

It has been said, "Ignorance is bliss!" But in the case of this poor blind city in our text, ignorance is fatal. Ignorance to the things of God is fatal to all who fall into its prey.

Jesus told Jerusalem if she had known where to seek for peace, she could have found it, but because she was ignorant, she was now blind to it. This is vivid evidence that God is sovereign above all our comprehension. All one can pray for is that God would have mercy in the day of grace.

What was this city ignorant about? And why was this city blind? The answer to the second question is easy; this city was blind because she had rejected the Messiah whom she could not recognize as the Son of God. The first question is a little more difficult. There were two things Jerusalem did not know. The first thing she didn't know was that Titus would overtake her and in one generation would destroy her citizens. She was enjoying a false sense of security in her ignorance. She was sinning her way into desolation. There are many, even today, who are just like her. They live in ignorance and do not know that the god of this world is slowly overtaking them and in due time will destroy them. It does little good to warn them because of their ignorance. God told Jerusalem, "Your house is left unto you desolate." Jesus says of the ignorant, "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

The second thing she didn't know was that this Messiah, whom she had rejected, could save her from eternal doom. Concerning her ignorance, Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And YE WILL NOT come to me, that ye might have life." (John 5:39-40). She was so blind that her blindness would send her into desolation. There are so many today like her. They do not know that Jesus of the Bible can save them from eternal damnation. Out of total ignorance, men today look to everything but Jesus and His sovereign grace. Men want to work their way to Heaven. This is clear evidence of their ignorance. Their ranks grow by legions and become more ignorant by the day. Ignorance is not bliss, but fatal.