

To be loved, love.

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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THE RICH YOUNG RULER

By Willard Willis

"And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal,



Do not bear false witness, De-fraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up thy cross and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions." (Mark 10:17-22).

The event which is before us occurred during an approximate two week interval which fell between the resurrection of Lazarus and the crucifixion of our Lord. It was between these two momentous events that the rich young ruler ran to Jesus and kneeled before him. The rich young ruler, of course, had no idea that the action he took would be recorded for all men and women in the world to read. Neal Armstrong lives rather close to my residence and I, on a recent occasion, saw him driving

his pickup truck out of his driveway and up the highway. I can say that I saw Neal Armstrong, a man who walked on the moon. The rich young ruler, on the other hand, saw and kneeled before that one who made the moon. I can go one better than that in that I can say that the one who made the moon died in my place at a place called Calvary. It is because of this fact that no one in the world is more blessed than I.

It is to be noted that the man to which our text relates, was a "young man". One, by an observation of his skin, hair and eyes, could see the fulness of youth. He was not only a young man, but he was, according to Matthew 19:20, a good man. He, in fact, had set very high standards for himself and he had been abiding by those standards. It is as stated in the following passage of scripture. "The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?" (Matthew 19:20).

It is more difficult for a young man to set high moral standards and keep them than it is for an older person. This is because a young man has much more get up and go

than an older person. The following passage of scripture advises each of us to flee youthful lusts.

"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." (II Timothy 2:22).

The subject young man, no doubt, had been taught and was endeavoring to abide by the following passages of scripture. "My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear to my sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil." (Proverbs 4:20-27).

The subject young man also (Continued on Pg. 2, Col. 1)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Eugene P. Helton

A MODEL WORSHIP SERVICE

Please read Nehemiah 8:1-12.

We have here in Nehemiah Chapter 8 what I believe to be a model to conduct a true worship service.

Many times people go to church and do not experience worship. Sometimes it is because they haven't prepared themselves to worship. All too often, we do not

free ourselves of the cares and frustrations of every day life sufficiently enough to experience worship. Many times the leader of an exercise at an attempt to worship does not bring about an environment or attitude of worship because of the absence of qualities within himself that would foster conditions permitting worship to take place. A bad spirit and/or

attitude in the pulpit will stifle worship every time.

A meeting of a local New Testament Baptist Church should be an experience of worship. Coming to church should be a blessing; not something to be dreaded. The church comes together to worship then goes into the world to evangelize and witness.

(Continued on Pg. 8, Col. 1)

GOSPEL RECEIVERS AND GOSPEL REJECTORS

By Charles Lybrook

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. 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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Romans 1:16).

Gospel Receivers: THEIR PRESENT BLESSINGS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS.

Gospel Rejectors: THEIR PRESENT CONDITION AND COMING DOOM.

First: GOSPEL RECEIVERS, THEIR PRESENT BLESSING AND FUTURE PROSPECTS.

(a) They are justified through Christ (Acts 13:39).

(b) They are saved by Christ (Eph. 2:8-9).

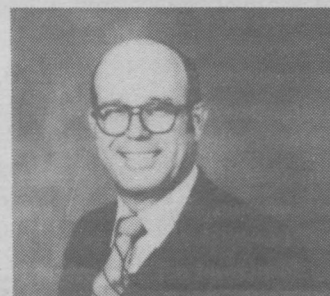
(c) They have everlasting life in Christ (John 3:16).

(d) They look for glory with Christ (Titus 2:13).

(1) JUSTIFIED THROUGH CHRIST:

Justification, Divine acquittal, (Job 9:2) asks the question "How then can man be justified with God?" and the one and only answer to that question is found in Jesus Christ... In Adam all have sinned and come short of the glory of God... death and sin have passed upon all men in that all have sinned. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:" (Romans 5:12). "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." (Romans 3:10-12). "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezekiel 18:4).

Man then is a fallen creature, he is lost in sin and separated from God, and bound for that hell prepared by God for the devil and his angels and all who forget God. But through Christ and His finished work, repentant believers are delivered from the guilt and penalty of sin... That is what Justification is... It is to be totally acquitted by the Divine lawgiver, by the Sovereign of the universe Himself... Paul (Continued on Pg. 6, Col. 1)



that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." (John 3:14-21).

"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).

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

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RICH

(Continued from Page 1)

had another feather in his cap in that he was "ruler" over other people. It is as stated in the following passage of scripture. **"And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"** (Luke 18:18).

The rich young man, then, even though he was a rich young ruler, still clung to his high standards of morals. He, in fact, had an excellent character and a promising future. It becomes quite obvious, due to the fact that he was a ruler, that he was endowed with great talents.

The story of this young man,

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

MARCH 12, 1994

PAGE TWO

Editor's Update

By Pastor Eugene P. Helton, Editor

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Today, February 7th, there is just a hint in the air of the coming of spring to Ashland, Kentucky. As spring brings an awakening of God's trees, grass and flowers; a similar awakening of zeal and enthusiasm is occurring here at Calvary Baptist Church. Our Lord is so good to us! He has turned us from discouragement to encouragement. Our winter of discontent is fast becoming a glorious awakening spiritual springtime. We have every intention to use this spiritual spring to plant much spiritual seed; and to water and look after our crop as we pass from spring to summer. Our prayer is that God will use our zeal, enthusiasm and what we hope will be an increasing degree of faithfulness to give us an increase.

With each edition of The Baptist Examiner, our favorable response mail has increased. We certainly do appreciate the encouragement that comes our way from your letters. It's a thrill to know that our efforts, feeble as they may be, are impacting so many lives in a positive way.

We're seeing new faces in our Sunday Morning Worship Service and our monthly Saturday Night Bible Study and fellowship at the parsonage. This past Sunday, February 13, our morning worship attendance was 31. Compared to an attendance of 12 in early December; 31 is a crowd. On January 29th, we had 17 in attendance at our monthly Bible study at the parsonage. The study is in the book of Daniel and the participation during the study is great. After the study we fellowship. The ladies prepare food; we eat; we talk; we laugh.

On our Sunday morning radio program, "The Call to Calvary," I'm teaching through the book of Revelation. The program airs over 107.9 FM, WEMM Huntington, WV from 7:30-8:00 a.m.

Thank you for your prayers for Calvary Baptist Church and its ministries. We certainly have felt the effect and power of them. Please continue to pray for us.

Until next time, may our Lord bless you richly. We do love each of you in the Lord.

however, does not end here. He had another feather in his hat in that he was very rich. We, in fact, read from Mark 10:22 that "he had great possessions". We may say, then, that he lived in the "lap of luxury." People, therefore, respected him and looked up to him. One can be sure that people were glad when he glanced their way, or when he conversed with them. The single ladies, no doubt, if he was single, considered him to be the ultimate bachelor.

The Lord Jesus, during the time of our text, was on His way from Peraea to Jerusalem. It would appear, therefore, that the young man was from Peraea, since he ran in an effort to catch up with Jesus. The young man, no doubt, while Jesus was in Peraea, had heard Him teach and was very impressed by that which he had heard. He, no doubt, after Jesus had left Peraea, began to weigh some of the things which Jesus had said and decided to run and catch up with Him and ask Him what he could do to inherit eternal life. The young man, therefore, even though a ruler, ran

swiftly on the road that led from Peraea to Jerusalem. He may have passed many of his subjects as he ran along the road and others who were acquainted with him. They, no doubt, wondered why he who had "great possessions," was racing down the roadway. Most of us would be startled if we saw a rich man running and we knew that exercise was not his motive.

You will recall that Nicodemus waited until it was night before he sought an audience with Jesus. This rich young ruler, on the other hand, by the fact that he ran to Jesus in the brightness of the day, showed that he did not care for or regard public opinion.

The record shows that the rich young ruler did much more than to run in an effort to catch up with Jesus. He, in fact, after catching up with Jesus, fell before Him in a kneeling position. Those people, therefore, who did not know that Jesus was the Son of God, must have wondered why this rich young ruler would kneel before Him. They, after all, considered the rich young ruler to be far superior to

Jesus. They knew that Jesus did not even have a home of His own, so why would the rich young ruler bow before Him? They, in other words, saw the rich young ruler as having everything and Jesus as having nothing.

The rich young ruler, while kneeling before Jesus, looked up into the face of Jesus and said: **"Good Master,"** that is, "most excellent teacher." We have, then, the rich young ruler, up to this point, performing in a very excellent manner. He, in fact, was far ahead of most of the young men of his day and our day. He, however, by way of his next statement, showed how far he was from God. He, in fact, manifested his total depravity when saying: **"Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life."**

My first response relates to why was it that this young man who had **"great possessions,"** was so concerned about eternal life. Why didn't he sit back in his lap of luxury and enjoy himself rather than being so concerned about the life hereafter? Perhaps he was very concerned because the cemetery where his loved ones and friends were buried, was in full view from his residence. We don't know why the young man was concerned relative to the brevity of life, but we know that all would be wise to be as concerned as he was. I, in fact, find that a large portion of our population are not concerned about eternal life. You will find very few of them who would run ten feet in an effort to inquire about eternal life. They are too busy watching television, attending a movie, or a sports event. Others are always seeking better ways to sink their roots more deeply into this life. Most people today are like the rich man who, according to Luke 16:19, **"fared sumptuously every day."**

The rich young ruler, then, is to be commended in that he recognized the brevity of life and sought to do something about it. He, however, when asking, **"What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life,"** certainly showed that he needed to ask the question. He, in fact, by asking what he could do, showed that he believed that there was something that he could do. We, by comparing his words with those of the publican, as is recorded in the following passage of scripture, will see how great his need was. **"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful**

to me as a sinner." (Luke 18:13).

The rich young ruler, if he had approached the gate to the Temple, would have been asked by the priest, "Where is your sacrifice?" "Where is your innocent animal upon whose head you can place your hands so that, in type, your sins can be imputed to the animal and the animal's innocence to you?"

The young ruler did not seek grace and mercy from the Lord. He asked only that the Lord lay him out a plan for his life whereby he could work and earn eternal life. The young man, after all, had been very successful in all of his other endeavors.

Our Lord, as was His usual self, was master of the situation. His first words therefore to him, were, **"Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God."** (Mark 10:18). Jesus, as you will note, did not refer to himself as not being good, but He simply asked the young man why it was that he referred to Him as being good. Jesus, in essence, said to the young man, "Are you placing me on the same level with others whom you consider to be good people, or do you recognize me as being God in human form?"

One, by reading between the lines, will find that our Lord's words were designed to direct the thoughts of the young man to the person that He, the Lord from glory, really was, that is, the Messiah.

The Lord Jesus, in Mark 10:19, proceeded to lay out the law to the young man. The Lord said to him: **"Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother."**

The Lord, in referring the rich young ruler to the law, only referred him to those commandments that relate to man's dealings with his fellow men. The young man listened to these various laws, ran them through the computer of his mind, and then determined that he had kept each one of them. The result being that he felt he had eternal life in his back pocket, or locked up in his lock-box. He felt that all he needed to do was to continue doing as he had been doing.

The rich young ruler, even though he was very sincere, was in gross error. We should use him as an example to show that sincerity, if it is not based upon truth, carries no weight with God. We may say that the same applies with a teacher when she is giving a test to her

(Continued on Pg. 4, Col. 4)



The Baptist Examiner Bible Study Lesson

By Clyde T. Everman, Deacon
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God's question to Adam, "Where art thou?", caused Adam to confess that he was naked. Adam had on his fig leaf apron but he realized that would not cover his nakedness from God. Men today have on fig leaf aprons. One has on the fig leaf of baptism, another the fig leaf of church membership, another of good works, and many other aprons of which are man made. All of these will be transparent when viewed by God. The only covering that will cover man's nakedness is that which God has provided, the imputed righteousness of Christ.

Gen. 3:13: God asked the woman, "What is this that thou has done?" Eve's answer was to lay the blame upon the serpent. "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." Who was responsible for the Fall? Actually and principally Satan was responsible and God charged him with it. (Gen. 3:14; II Cor. 11:13). Eve, who was deceived by Satan was responsible and God charged her with it (Gen. 3:1; I Tim. 2:14). Morally and representatively Adam was accountable and he was charged by God with it. (Gen. 3:17; Rom. 5:12).

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE FALL

God pronounced sentence upon each of them. The serpent who was used by Satan to deceive Eve received a curse "above all cattle, and above every beast of the field, upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life." (v. 14). The serpent, a creature of grace and beauty now becomes one that is lower than any of the other animals. It must crawl in the dust. Each time we see a snake it should remind us of the Fall of man.

In verse 16 the sentence is pronounced upon the woman. We might note that while the serpent and the earth was cursed (vv. 14, 17), neither the woman or the man were cursed, yet they both must suffer. The woman must suffer as wife and mother. While motherhood - a most sacred function was allotted to her yet it was to be linked with sorrow, "in

sorrow thou shalt bring forth children." (v. 16). Also her husband was to "rule over thee." (v. 16).

In verses 17-19 we are given the sentence that was placed upon the man. It was threefold: (1) He was to have "sorrow" (v. 17). Because Adam listened to Eve instead of God, a curse was placed upon the ground, "cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life," "man is born unto trouble; as the sparks fly upward" (Job. 5:7). (2) All the days of his life he must toil, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground." (v. 19). Before the fall the man's work of dressing and keeping the garden was an easy and pleasant task, where the ground brought forth abundantly, now it brings forth only as man toils in the sweat of his face. "Thorns, also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." (v. 18). We have thorns and thistles as a result of sin. Therefore thorns represent sin. Remember as Christ bore our sins He wore a crown of thorns (see Pastor Helton's sermon, "The Three Nails and a Crown of Thorns"). There will come a time as prophesied by Isaiah 55:13. When, "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree."

The third part of man's sentence was DEATH. "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (v. 19). "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;" (Rom. 5:12). "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb. 9:27). This death was not only a physical death, which is the separation of the soul and the body, but is a spiritual death, the separation of the soul from God.

THE FIRST PROPHECY

But in the midst of this gloom and despair there came a promise of deliverance, the first prophecy concerning the way of salvation.

The seed of the woman "shall bruise thy head, (Satan's) and thou shalt bruise his heel." (v. 15). The seed of the woman - the pure, the sinless man was to gain victory over the one that has caused the fall. Note it was to be the seed of the woman not the seed of the man. This speaks of the virgin birth of Christ. He was born without a human father. That One was to be victor over Satan. The bruising of his head means the taking away from him his power and authority (see Heb. 2:14; Rev. 1:19; 11:15). "Heel" refers to the humanity of Christ. "Bruised" refers to His death upon the cross, (see Isa. 53:5-10).

Revival Meeting

When you hear the gospel message,
And your heart begins to beat,
Don't just sit there in your pew,
Get up.
Get on your feet.
You heard how Jesus came to earth,
He left His heavenly home,
To live, to die, to suffer death,
So He could claim His own,
About the way He came to save,
The weak and lost to seek,
And when you give your heart to Him,
Your soul He's sure to keep.
-Big Al

(Editor's Note: "Big Al" is Al Woods, a Deacon of The Gethsemane Baptist Church, Marengo, Ohio. He served his church and this pastor wonderfully well during the nine years I pastored at Gethsemane.)

THIS IS GOOD NEWS

By Jack Whitt

"As cold waters to a thirsty soul so is good news from a far country." (Prov. 25:25) I'm sure all of us know how satisfying and rewarding is a cold drink of water when we become very thirsty. I can recall as a young teenage boy, working in the hay fields on a hot day, that thirst for water was a common thing, after a few hours of labor. How refreshing it was when the water jug was passed around. In a comparative way, Solomon gives illustration, in our text verse to the fact that good news is satisfying and refreshing to the human soul. Everyone loves good news. Young or old, rich or poor, good news gladdens the heart and lifts the spirit. Good news makes our day go better, our outlook becomes brighter, and sometimes we may even smile a little extra and show a little more kindness for the benefit of those around us.

All this sounds good, positive and inspiring, you may say, but where do we get the good news? We pick up the daily paper and read where man may face extinction in a few million years due to some kind of gene deficiency someone recently discovered. A new study reveals global warming may change the earth's temperature by 1.003 degrees by the year of 2050. And then, what about television? How much good news can be found by turning on the tube? There's Oprah with her scenario of guests which may include; a white supremacist, a black extremist, some guy with his head half-shaved, a hat pin stuck through his nose, a tattoo on his bare chest which reads; "born to kill" and he's holding hands with some other guy equally as well-dressed. At the end of this gallery sits a neat, well dressed man in a business suit, proclaiming family values, morality, and Christian virtue. And guess who the audience is agreeing with? You're right. The couple with the hat pins stuck through their noses. We may find similar scenarios on any number of T.V. programs, popular of our day. With but few exceptions, the medias of today, portray morality, family values, and Christianity as being too extreme, old-fashioned, out of date, and fanatical. I have used a bit of satire in some of the foregoing to describe human tendencies of our day. Much more could be said of the news of corruption in government and the spiritual

wickedness in high places. But let us leave off from the discouraging bad news, and change to the brighter, more positive. Let us now focus on the title that heads this article: "This is Good News."

Where does one find good news? May I say, there is good news for all who eagerly and sincerely seek it. It is good news you will not hear from Dan Rather, Connie Chung, Ted Koppel or Larry King Live. The good news I speak of is of the future. It is looking forward, not backward. Forward lies the answer and onward is the goal. Whether it is for hope, for joy, for consolation. It must be the eye of faith that looks into the future and sees a brighter day. As we look into the future, we see sin cast out and righteousness reigning. All those things we read about and hear about, the things that defile the body of flesh will be destroyed.

The thoughts of the future may well relieve the darkness and gloom of this present day. Listen to the inspired words of the Apostle Paul as he wrote these words for our edification: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8:18). The joys of heaven will surely compensate for the sorrows of earth. The well known hymn entitled: "This World is Not My Home," goes on, "And I can't feel at home in this world anymore." I believe this song speaks the hearts of many of God's saints today. But I would say, take courage weary pilgrim, Christ is your refuge. The waiting will not be long till you are in His loving presence. Listen: "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." (Rom. 8:22,23). We, who are the redeemed by the precious blood of the Lamb have a Blessed Hope that is sure and steadfast. It is this hope that will lead us through trials and temptations, through

(Continued on Pg. 5, Col. 4)

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

MARCH 12, 1994

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

What is the proper Christian attitude towards a homosexual? Give some details.

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"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; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?" (Matthew 5:44-46).

I would begin by asking three questions that we must understand in order to see the Christian's proper attitude toward homosexuality.

First: is homosexuality acceptable as an alternative life-style to large groups of people in our society here in America and most other "civilized" nations? Absolutely! Our government even through legislation and propaganda at all age levels pushes the idea that homosexuality is "normal" and simply an alternative life-style, in spite of what the Bible teaches.

Secondly: is the homosexual life-style then acceptable to God in these so called modern and enlightened times? Absolutely not! God says that homosexuality is an abomination. In the Old Testament God says, "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination." (Leviticus 18:22). Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because of their wickedness which included sodomy. God speaks

against this perversion in Romans 1:26-27. Many Scriptures condemn this perversion. This life-style has always been against and unacceptable to God and His plan for mankind. Therefore, this activity is unacceptable to His children who keep His commandments if they love Him.

Thirdly: do I and every Christian then hate and reject homosexuals? No! I hate and reject their ways and practices, but not them as individuals. They, like all sinners, oppose themselves and are at enmity with God. He hates their ways. The Old Testament penalty was death. The penalty today is still death and the second death. My attitude is to be compassionate for their souls, not their ways, I freely admit this is difficult and next to impossible without God's love and the power of the Holy Spirit. God is able to save homosexuals and change them as He can any other sinner lost and doomed with no hope. Just because homosexuality may seem more unacceptable to us than some other kinds of sins we as human beings find more palatable, does not mean that God views one sin more acceptable than another. Sin is sin. The soul that sinneth shall indeed die apart from God's graciousness. We should have compassion on the homosexual and treat them accordingly as we would any lost person.

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The Lord said of Sodom and Gomorrah. "Their sin is very grievous." Again it is said of homosexuals, "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient." (Rom. 1:28). Or as the

Amplified Bible gives this verse, "God gave them over to a base and condemned mind to do things not proper or decent but loathsome." In order to have the proper Christian attitude toward the homosexual we must first realize that his way of life is not an "alternate life style", but is a grievous sin, a loathsome sin. We must not condone him in his sin or overlook it. In the sight of God it is "a very grievous sin," an abomination before the Lord. It was such a sin that the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah by fire because the cities were wholly given over to that loathsome sin.

Yet, we must realize that God can and does save homosexuals. In I Corinthians 6:9-11 after listing many types of sinners, including that of homosexuals ("abusers of themselves with mankind"), it is said, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (v.11).

As homosexuals are listed along with fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, thieves, drunkards, and such (I Cor. 6:9,10), our attitude toward them should be the same as with these. What was the attitude of the Apostle Peter to those who crucified our Lord? He told them, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." (Acts 2:23). What was Stephen's attitude toward the Jews to whom he was preaching? "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." (Acts 7:51). Listen to what Paul told Elymas, the sorcerer, "O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right way of the Lord?" (Acts 13:10).

Our attitude toward the homosexual, like Peter, Stephen, and Paul, should be to tell them in plain and in no uncertain terms that what they are doing is sin. This may offend some as

Stephen's speech did, "They were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth." (Acts 7:54). But some may be like those who heard Peter, "be pricked in their heart" and like them be made to cry, "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37).

Stephen's bold stand against sin cost him his life there on the spot. Later, Peter and Paul were likewise put to death for their stand. We are not likely, in this present age, to receive a like death, but even if we did, should we not have the same attitude as did they? As Paul wrote Timothy, "Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." (II Tim. 4:2).

RICH

(Continued from Page 2)

students. One of her questions might be, "Who was the first president of these United States of America? Let us suppose that one of her students, in all sincerity, answered, "Abraham Lincoln". Would she accept sincerity over truth?

The rich young ruler, according to Matthew 19:20, said: "...What lack I yet?" He, in other words, was asking if there was any other area in his life that needed some work in order to assure himself of eternal life. The Lord's response to his question is as follows: "Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up thy cross, and follow me." (Mark 10:21).

The Lord, by way of this statement, said much more than that which meets the eye. He, in fact, advised the rich young ruler that he, in order to inherit eternal life, would be required to keep the entire law of God. The entire law required that he love God more than anything else in life. It required that he love God far above his "great possessions". The rich young man, however, after hearing that which Jesus had to say, in a sense of speaking, drove away with a sorrowful heart in his maroon sports car. It is as stated in the following passage of scripture. "And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions." (Mark 10:22).

The young man, then, by his action, showed that he was guilty of the sin of covetousness. His

life was a direct contradiction to the following passage of scripture. "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry." (Colossians 3:5).

The rich young ruler, if he never repented and believed on the Lord Jesus, knows today that he made a terrible trade when he traded his eternal soul for a trunk of gold. He has been dead for about two thousand years and his "great possessions" were either confiscated by the Romans, or someone else has spent it all. I doubt that he spent it all before he died.

It appeared, for a time that the rich young ruler, due to his great concern, would step out of the darkness of error into the glorious light of truth which is in Christ Jesus the Lord. He, after all, had manifested a great concern by running for some distance and then kneeling down before the Lord Jesus. He, however, after hearing Jesus faithfully deliver the truth to him, stepped back into the darkness and went his way.

It will be found that there are many today who call Jesus, "Good Master", that is, "most excellent teacher." They, however, are like the rich young ruler in that they will not repent of their sins and believe on Him as their only hope of eternal life.

Many may question the Lord's right to ask the rich young ruler to give up all of his wealth and then follow Him. Let it be remembered, however, that our Lord gave up all of His heavenly riches and came to this planet to save poor sinners like us. It is as stated in the following passage of scripture. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." (II Corinthians 8:9).

Brother Jack Whitt,
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Pastor/Editor of
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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit Forum II

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

Should a preacher be ordained just because he is a preacher and wants to, or should he not be ordained until called to some special service of some kind? Give some details as to this.

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PASTOR:

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I see no reason to ordain a preacher until he is called to pastor a church, or called to be an assistant to a pastor. Sometimes the pastor might not be able to perform his duties and the assistant pastor must take over, therefore, he needs to be an ordained preacher.

A missionary should be ordained, that is, one who the church would send out to represent the church with authority to baptize and perform the work of preaching the gospel, and baptizing those that are saved into the mother church.

It used to be the custom of churches to license those who feel the Lord has called them into the ministry, that is, after questioning the called one as to what he believed, and what he would preach. Perhaps, he might need to be taught some things in order to be sound enough to be qualified to be a preacher, and in order to be given a license to preach. Usually the questions asked one before he is licensed to preach is along the line of those who will be ordained. Some will lay hands on those they license while others are licensed by a vote of the church, then a license is filled out and handed to them. No, I do not think that a preacher should be ordained just because he has been called to preach. There are too many preachers ordained and turned loose to start free lance churches that produce free lance baptism, and if the one with free lance baptism is called to preach and ordained, he does not have Scriptural baptism or Scriptural ordination. This has caused a mess among Baptists and deception has run amuck. I believe this foolishness is an abomination in the sight of Almighty God.

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TEACHER

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The following Scriptures will assist us in answering the question as stated: "Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) A teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity." (I Tim. 2:7). "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying of the hands of the presbytery." (I Tim. 4:14). "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure." (I Tim 5:22). "Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands." (II Tim. 1:6).

The above Scriptures given by inspiration through the Apostle Paul to the young pastor, Timothy, affirms ordination as being Scriptural and proper under the right conditions. First of all however, it is under the authority and scrutiny of a local New Testament Church. If a man who is a member of a church feels led of God into some special work, and he asks to be ordained, it would be up to the church to render the decision to grant the request based upon two factors: (1) Does the work require ordination?, (2) Is the suppliant qualified for the work? I Tim. 3 gives the requirements for only two offices of the church which are; bishop (pastor), and deacon. Ordainment to these offices are in order. Some churches may require ordainment to other ministries such as an evangelist (apart from the pastor), it is a church prerogative in such cases. I believe God can and does call men to preach who may never seek ordination. On the other hand if a church feels uncomfortable with an unordained

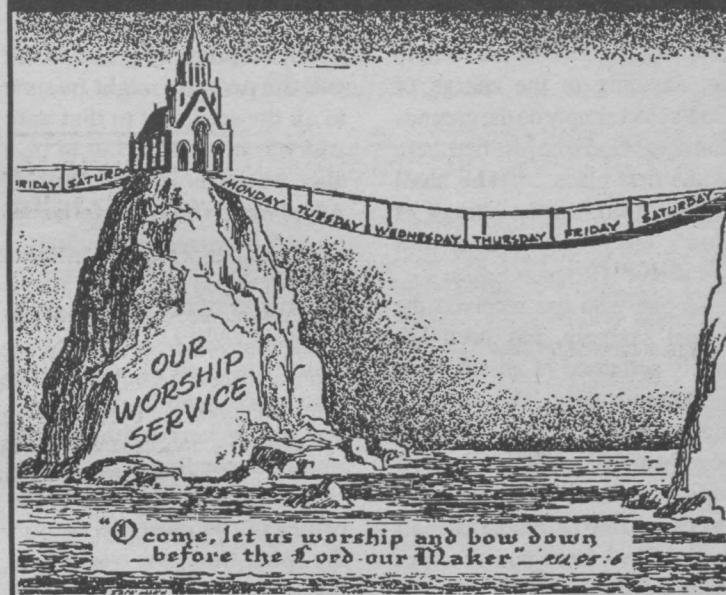
preacher, then ordain him. It is most important that any preacher feel the compellment to preach. Preaching is more than seeking a title or position in a church.

In summary to the question may I say, ordination by a church is an act of importance. Good judgment should be used by the church in approving any man to preach since he represents and reflects the belief of the church. Such things as his conduct, character, faithfulness, knowledge of the Bible, compassion for souls ought to be considered (qualities all of us should have). Referring back again to one of the above text verses, (I Tim. 5:22), "Lay hands suddenly on no man." I believe this means a man ought to prove himself first to be qualified before approval is given by the church, whether it be ordainment or otherwise.

It should be remembered that a true preacher is first called and ordained of God. This is more important to recognize than the rite administered by man. There is a great need for preachers and other church workers in a wide scope of ministerial work. Most certainly therefore, churches should be alert to both men and women (within Scriptural bounds) seeking to aid in the work of the church.

Send comments
and
suggestions
for
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STRENGTHENING THE SPAN OF LIFE



GOOD NEWS

(Continued from Page 3)

valleys of despair, even the shadow of death. I ask, is this not good news? We are His purchased possessions, is this not good news? And nothing can ever change this most blessed condition, once administered at the hand of God.

I say again, there is good news in abundance to those who know where to find it. It is in the Word of God. Listen again as we read: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whether the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Heb. 6:17-20). Yes, God's Word is good news, but it is only good to those who have fled to Him for refuge. There can be found no consolation to unrepentant sinners. Thus I would urge all to give serious thought to their soul's condition. To such as these would I implore to seek refuge, not in this world, which must one day perish, but in Christ alone you must flee. But to the saved of God, I say, take courage and be strong, trust in Him who loves you and has chosen you by His mercy and grace. "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about

His people from henceforth even for ever." (Ps. 125:2). What encouragement it is to know God surrounds His people.

No doubt all of God's people become discouraged and are at times in despair. It is a common dilemma because we are yet in the flesh and we see so much in the world that causes us to sorrow. But this gives all the more reason for our clinging to the assurance and hope we find in God's unchanging Word. It is also more reason for good Christian fellowship to increase, to appreciate more our brothers and sisters in our churches, as we meet to worship and praise God. Our churches are a haven where we can find mutual love for each other and a place to come apart from the often hectic day to day routine of life.

What then is the good news? It is the news we find in the Word of God. It is the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that is able to save the vilest of sinners. Our text verse again says: "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." There is a far country where someday all God's people will dwell in peace and everlasting joy. Best of all it will be where Jesus is. Friend, this is good news for the thirsty soul. In closing, I quote a short passage from a book written by Charles Spurgeon: "This world is but a narrow span, and you will soon have passed it. Time, how short—Eternity, how long! Death, how brief—immortality, how endless!" TRULY THIS IS GOOD NEWS!

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
MARCH 12, 1994
PAGE FIVE

GOSPEL

(Continued from Page 1)

challenges the whole universe to lay anything to the charge of God's elect simply on the grounds that it was God who justified them in the first place... "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." (Romans 8:33).

So one who has received the gospel savingly, has been Divinely acquitted of all sin, past, present and future... What a standing (made just as though he had never sinned). "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." (Acts 13:38-41). So what do we find? Just this, that any and all sinful and undeserving sinners, can by grace, be acquitted of every sin ever committed, because Jesus, the Christ of God, has paid the debt in full and God is satisfied... On the ground of blood atonement, God is satisfied... "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;" (Ephesians 1:7). "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." (Romans 5:9).

Christ and Him crucified is the only righteous ground for the justification of any sinner... When a guilty sinner receives the gospel, receiving Christ into his heart as Lord and Saviour, he is, on the merits of Christ's finished work on Calvary... His death, burial and resurrection, justified, acquitted, why? Because, judically Christ assumed his guilt and paid the price of his redemption... And the sinner, in turn, had Christ's righteousness judically imputed to him. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." (Romans 3:28). "Therefore being justified by faith, we have

peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:1). "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all." (Romans 4:16).

Secondly, Gospel receivers are not only justified through Christ, but also SAVED BY CHRIST. "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversion in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us; Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. 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." (Ephesians 2:1-9).

Where salvation is concerned then, Jesus Christ, the only Begotten Son of God, is (1) THE ONLY DOOR... "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." (John 10:9). (2) The only Saviour... "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12). (3) His grace is sufficient... "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." (Acts 15:11). (4) His blood avails to put away all sin. "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." (Romans 5:9). "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself,

now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Hebrews 9:24-28). (5) He saves to the uttermost. "But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Hebrews 7:24-25).

Thirdly, Gospel receivers are not only justified through Christ and saved by Christ but they also have everlasting life in Christ. "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). "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (1 John 5:9-13).

Fourthly: Gospel receivers look for and are assured of glory with Christ. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself

for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." (Titus 2:11-15). "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Philippians 3:20-21).

Oh, that blessed hope of the home over there... Dear reader, do you have that hope... the hope of heaven? Do you know that your name is written there? Can you say with the Apostle "... for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." (II Timothy 1:12b). "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." (John 14:1-3). "The Father's house", His dwelling place, and the final abode of the saints... His home and the home of His children... Oh, the bliss of heaven... How beautiful heaven must be, fair home of the happy and free ... that beautiful place is described in Revelation 21: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with him, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these

words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." (Revelation 21:1-7). Dear reader, examine this chapter, see for yourself who will make up that heavenly city... there will be for them complete satisfaction... The psalmist said... "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." (Psalm 17:5). Job said, "If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands." (Job 14:14-15).

In the likeness of their Saviour the saved will bask in the sunlight of God's love forever, worshipping Him and serving Him and fellowshiping with Him and with each other forever... Pity the poor sinner who lives for this life only and then is cast into hell... And with that thought we come to our second point.

(2). GOSPEL REJECTORS: Their present condition and their coming doom... And as God makes short work of these, so shall we... We have warned, we have warned, we have warned, and soon, very soon, the day of salvation shall be gone, and this world with it's God dishonoring course shall have spurned the Christ of God one moment too long, and it will be even as Revelation 22:11 proclaims "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: And he which is filthy, let him be filthy still:" But what is the present state of the Gospel rejector?

(1) Judically, they are condemned already. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (John 3:18-19).

(2) Spiritually, they have no life. "The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death." (Proverbs 21:6). "It

(Continued on Pg. 7, Col. 1)

GOSPEL

(Continued from Page 6)

was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found." (Luke 15:32). "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sin;" (Ephesians 2:1). "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;" (Colossians 2:13). "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." (I Timothy 5:6).

(3) Actually, they are under wrath. "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). "Go ye, inquire of the Lord for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us." (II Kings 22:13). "But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath," (Romans 2:8). "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." (Ephesians 5:6).

(4) They shall be damned eternally, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26). "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works... and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Revelation 20:12-15). "Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart. But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at

the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." (Psalms 73:1-3). "And they say, How doth God know? and is there knowledge in the most High? Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream when one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image. Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins. So foolish was I, and ignorant: I was as a beast before thee. Nevertheless I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee. But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works." (Psalms 73:11-28).

Now, my dear reader, from this statement made by the Psalmist in Psalms 73:18 we can deduce that the wicked are to be pitied rather than envied, for they are only ripening for ruin... The prosperity of the wicked is short and uncertain... The high places in which Providence sets them are slippery places... Their destruction is sure and sudden, and very great... They flourish for a time, but are undone for ever... It is God's doing, therefore it cannot be resisted... "Thou castest them down"... it is swift; "For how are they brought into desolation as in a moment!" It is a total and final ruin: "They are utterly consumed with terrors." Their

prosperity is therefore not to be envied at all, but despised, and verse 20 says as much...

Oh my dear reader, "how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Hebrews 2:3a). We shall not... But rather one shall have the plight of the Gospel Rejector...

- (1) Condemned.
- (2) Dead Spiritually.
- (3) Under the awful wrath of God.
- (4) Damned eternally...

Dear reader, where do you stand? Are you a Gospel Receiver or a Gospel Rejector? Are you saved or are you lost? Have you, under the mighty power of God been convinced of your sins... Have you repented (turned from them unto Christ)? Can you say with the Apostle Paul "Nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." (II Timothy 2:12b).



Read
the Word
each day.

"More things
are wrought by
prayer than
the world
dreams of."
- Tennyson

"Therefore I say unto you,
what things soever ye
desire, when ye pray,
believe that ye receive
them, and ye shall have
them." - Mark 11:24



A Woman's Touch

By Wendy Barkman



Greetings from Sister Wendy! Looking forward to beautiful spring weather? Thought so. I too am excited about spring, excited about another opportunity to share a small portion of my manuscript with you. May the Lord use my feeble efforts for His glory and honor.

Precious In His Sight

Gen. 29:16-17, 23-25, 30-35, 30:9-21, 31:4, 14-17, 33, 33:1-2, 7, 34:1, 35:23, 26, 46:8-15, 18, 49:31; Ruth 4:11

We are all quite familiar with the rivalry between the sisters, Rachel and Leah. Rachel was the younger and more beautiful of Laban's two daughters, and she became the favorite wife of Jacob. Her older sister Leah, however, was not considered to be as attractive. Jacob's love for the beautiful young Rachel was so great that he willingly worked seven years, serving her father Laban. At the end of seven years, when Rachel should have become the wife of Jacob, Laban's oldest daughter, Leah, through the deception of her father, became Jacob's blushing new bride. Of course, we know the rest of the story. Jacob served Laban for another seven years; Rachel became the second, and favorite, wife of Jacob. The Lord blessed Leah with four sons; Rachel was barren. Jacob had let it be known that Rachel was the one he loved. Two sisters, one husband, favoritism, and one barren womb, all spelled trouble for Jacob and his

family. Thus, the rivalry between Leah and Rachel. Rachel wanted to bear Jacob's children; Leah wanted his love and affection. The end result was that Leah bore six sons (Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun) and one daughter (Dinah). The Lord blessed Rachel with two sons (Joseph and Benjamin). Their handmaids Bilhah and Zilpah bore Jacob's other sons (Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher). Leah was buried in the family tomb (cave of Machpelah); Rachel was not. What do we learn from all of these facts concerning these two sisters, the wives of Jacob? One has only to look at the descendants of each woman to see who was favored and cared for in a special way by the Lord. Through Leah's son Levi, were born Aaron (the priesthood), Moses, Miriam, John the Baptist. Through Leah's son Judah were born David and his family (Israel's royal family), and of course, the Lord Himself. While Rachel's beauty won her Jacob's heart, his love, it was God's grace and mercy that allowed Leah the privilege to become an ancestress of the Lord. Though Leah was rejected by Jacob, she was certainly shown favor by God. She was precious in His sight. Christ Himself was rejected by the world, but was "...chosen of God and precious." (I Peter 2:4). The Lord exalts and defends those who are His (Psalm 89:17,18).

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
MARCH 12, 1994
PAGE SEVEN

MODEL

(Continued from Page 1)

Looking now at Nehemiah 8:1-12, let us examine this worship service:

I. The Preacher

Verse 1 tells us that Ezra was the preacher on this occasion. He was a man of God. Verse 9 identifies him as **"...Ezra the priest the scribe..."** He knew the scriptures. He was a ready man of God. **"This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he was a ready scribe in the law of Moses..."** (Ezra 7:6).

II. The Place of the Meeting

In verse 2 we read **"...Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation..."** It was a congregation or an assembly. A visible local body meeting to hear the Word of God from a visible local preacher. An Old Testament type of a New Testament local church worship service.

They met **"...before the street..."** (Verse 3). A church can be a true church and meet in the open air, in a tent, in a house or in a conventional church building. The people are the church and wherever the people meet, the church is meeting. That is if the people constitute a true local New Testament church of our Lord Jesus Christ. When I was a young boy, I can recall many times seeing and hearing preachers of the gospel preaching on the street with a crowd of people gathered around. In most cities today, a permit would be required to practice street preaching and probably, I suspect, would be denied in most instances.

"And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose:" (Verse 4). We see here one more similarity to a local New Testament Baptist Church worship service.

III. The Hearers

"And all the people gathered themselves together as one man..." (Verse 1). We see a harmony here. We see "the unity of the Spirit." We see "one mind in Christ." True worship can only take place when God's people come together in "the unity of the Spirit." Churches need to be unified. Worship cannot take place where there is division and disunity.

They were numerous, **"...both**

of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding..." (Verse 2). I've heard it said by some conservative, fundamental baptists: "We have too much truth to ever grow; people won't come to the truth we have." I would say to these folks: "If God can teach me these truths, He can teach them to others as well." If we take the attitude that no one wants to hear God's truth, then surely no one will. Could it be the problem is not in the message, but in the messenger.

They were attentive. **"...from the morning until midday, all the people were attentive unto the book..."** (Verse 3). This wasn't a brief devotional exercise. This looks more and more to me to be a fore-runner of a local New Testament Baptist Church worship service. They paid attention. Worship can only take place when edification takes place. Edification can only take place when we give our full attention to the Word of God.

They were reverent, **"...when he opened it (the book), all the people stood up:"** (Verse 5). Reverence for God, for the Word of God, and in the house of God are essential for worship to take place.

They were responsive, **"...and all the people answered, Amen, Amen..."** (Verse 6). A Baptist Church worship meeting shouldn't be a tomb of gloom. Men speak up! If the preacher is preaching glorious truths from God's Word, then say Amen! Our services may become more spiritual; why we might even get excited enough to tell some lost sinner about Jesus our Lord. **"...they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground..."** (Verse 6). Their response was to worship. Oh Lord please grant to us the attitude and spirit of worship.

IV. The Preachers Manner

He began by blessing, i.e., praising the Lord, **"And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God..."** (Verse 6). Worship takes place when we praise the Lord in Word and song. Good scriptural music prepares the heart to worship.

This preacher was conscious of: (1) The greatness of the occasion. To come out of the world to meet with God's people in worship is the nearest we can come to Heaven and still be on earth. (2) The greatness of God. When pondering the greatness of God, we become less proud and more humble. (3) The greatness of the

message. The story of Jesus is like no other. How the world needs to hear it. (4) The great need of the people. Everyone we come into contact with has problems, burdens and concerns. Shouldn't we treat people as our Lord treated people during his earthly ministry. Oh dear Lord please, "Let others see Jesus in me." (5) The great responsibility that was his. The highest calling there is; preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The preacher stuck to The Book, **"... they read in the book..."** (Verse 8). Good Bible preaching makes for good worship.

He spoke distinctly, **"they read in the book...distinctly..."** (Verse 8). Pulpit preaching should be done with words comprehensible to those who hear. They should be spoken in audible and clear fashion. Never should the words be on a level above the group hearing the message. Worship is sometimes snatched from the grasp of those who desire it by the inability of a speaker to communicate.

He explained the text, **"...they... gave the sense..."** (Verse 8). As the Holy Spirit leads the preacher expounds God's Word; in simple words teaching great and wonderful truths; bringing understanding to those who hear, **"...they...caused them to understand the reading..."** (Verse 8). When the sense is given and understanding takes place then worship can result.

V. The Effect Produced

The people wept, **"For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law..."** (Verse 9). The Word of God effects change. It brings conviction of guilt. It brings salvation. It brings sanctification. It brings the good news of justification. It tells of Jesus. The Word of God may make us weep. That in itself may be a part of worship.

The people rejoiced. **"And all the people went their way...to make great mirth because they had understood the words..."** They left the meeting rejoicing for having heard and understanding the Word of God. What a wonderful spirit and attitude to take with us when we leave the worship service.

The people ministered; their instructions were: **"send portions, unto them for whom nothing is prepared:"** (Verse 10). In verse 12 we see that they gladly did so. We see a great local church principle here. Come and worship;

Go and minister.

Dear Christian friends, let us not just go to church. Let's go to church to worship. Having done so, let us go on our way ministering and rejoicing.

OUR NEED OF CHRIST

By Pastor Robert Barkman
Gethsemane Missionary
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"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (II Corinthians 4:3-4).

Please note in the above text the titles "them which believe not" and "them that are lost" refer to the same group of individuals. Being "lost" and "believing not" go hand in hand.

What does the Bible mean when it says a person is "lost"? It is simply saying that this individual is separated from the Lord Jesus Christ. This separation is pictured as a sheep that has been separated from his shepherd. (see Luke 15:4-7). Just as a sheep needs a shepherd; so too, we all have need of Christ.

Sheep need their shepherd to lead, feed and protect them. As lost mankind, each of us need Christ to lead us in the path we are to take in this life, feed us with His Word, and protect us from the world, Satan and our flesh.

What does our text teach us when it describes an unsaved individual as "believing not"? Biblically, believing refers to the act of trusting or relying upon something. To believe in Christ, means we are turning our entire life over to Him for safekeeping and use; we are totally submitting ourselves to Him, trusting He knows what is best for each of our lives. We are trusting He will take care of our past, present and future sins and our past, present and future needs. We are relying upon Him to do what we cannot do ourselves, save us from our sins.

True belief involves a change in attitude about ourselves and Christ. If true belief is present in our life, we will see ourselves as sinful and in need of a Savior; we will see our need to turn from our sins and obey Christ. Our attitude

about Christ will change also: instead of seeing Christ as a "good man" or a great prophet or the Savior of mankind; we will see Christ as the very Son of God who came to die for each of us as individuals.

Oh dear one, is Christ your Shepherd? Do you have a personal relationship with Christ? Is Christ currently leading and guiding your life?

Friend, do you believe in Christ? Have you totally submitted to Christ as Lord of your life? Has the blood of Christ cleansed you from all your sins? Have you ever experienced a change in your attitude about who Christ is and what He has done for you?

If you can say NO to any of these questions, you can be certain you are still in a lost and unbelieving state. What must you do to receive the salvation God graciously gives?

The Apostle Paul answered this very question in Acts 16:29-31: **"Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved..."**

MARK TWAIN'S ADVICE

Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) was never known for piety. But he advised a group of young unmarried men to seek their future wives in the prayer meetings. The prayer meeting is a revealer of interest and of character. And the prayer meeting does something to the one who follows it.

Also young women might be well advised to get their husbands out of the prayer meetings - not of those who have gone because of their interest in the girls but because of their interest in God.

One of the reasons for staying away from bad places is because bad people meet there, and if better people go there, they mix with the bad ones. How many blighted lives have come from a mixing with the wrong people at the wrong place!