

Faith never looks to circumstances, but trods onward with its steadfast gaze on Christ

"...Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"—2 Corinthians 3:17

The Baptist Examiner

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

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MEMORIAL  EDITION

TRIBUTE TO A QUEEN

By Milburn Cockrell

Editor's note: The following article appeared in the October 26, 1974, edition of The Baptist Examiner. Helen Virginia Gilpin went home to be with the Lord on the afternoon of May 8, 1995. She was 88 years of age at her passing. This editor contacted Brother Milburn Cockrell to request his permission to reprint this article. Brother Cockrell, along with the granting of his permission to reprint the article, also spoke in glowing terms of Mrs. Gilpin.

For every man who has climbed to the top of the ladder of success there has been a great woman holding the ladder for him. This is certainly true of Helen Virginia Gilpin, the wife of my beloved friend, John R. Gilpin. Too often the preacher is remembered by people, and his wife is either ignored or forgotten. My brethren, these things ought not to be. It is my purpose in this article to pay tribute to a queen. I say a queen because a man is the king of his home and his wife the queen.

The Early Years

At the time appointed by God, Helen Virginia was born to Everett and Mable Aylor in Burlington, Kentucky, in 1906. The Aylors were a fine Christian family. They were members of the First Baptist Church of Walton, Kentucky, where Everett was a deacon. This young girl was an heritage of the Lord, destined to play an important role in Baptist history and the preservation of the faith.

Helen was reared in the nurture and admonition of the Lord by her parents. She attended church with a young man named John R. Gilpin. Helen professed her faith in Christ the same night John's brother did. But as of yet, there was no romance between John and Helen.

College and Romance

Helen and John attended Georgetown College together in 1925-1926. It was during this time they



began to date. As time passed, she discovered him who was the fairest to her among all the young men of that day. Helen and John were united in holy matrimony by Elder O. J. Steger in Covington, Kentucky, June 15, 1927. Then and there she vowed as Ruth of old: "For whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God"

(Ruth 1:16). Helen has not failed to keep this vow.

Life as a Preacher's Wife

At the time of the marriage, Elder Gilpin was already the full time pastor of the Hickory Grove Baptist Church near Walton. In 1928, Elder Gilpin accepted the pastorate of the Rossmoyne Baptist Church of Cincinnati, Ohio. Helen and John labored in this field

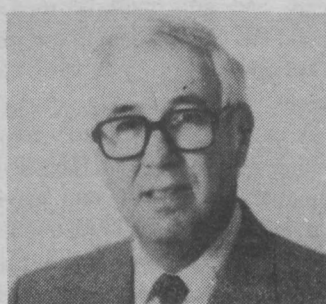
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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Eugene P. Helton

CONSIDER YOUR WAYS

"In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say,



The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built. Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways. Ye have

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FAITH IN CHRIST (PART TWO)

By Edward H. Overbey, Professor at Lexington Baptist College



II. Faith In Christ Is Life

A. Faith in Christ has everlasting life (John 3:36)

Physically dead men do not have a natural faith in the things of this world because they are dead and natural faith is a life function. Spiritually dead men do not have faith in Christ because they are dead and faith in Christ is life.

John 3:36 says "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." "Hath" is present tense. The one who believes on Christ as Saviour "hath" or has everlasting life because believing on Christ is everlasting life. The one who doesn't believe on Christ doesn't have everlasting life and never will as long as he doesn't believe in Christ as his Saviour.

B. I live by the faith of the Son of God (Gal. 2:20)

Paul gave his testimony in Galatians 2:20 in these words, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Christ lived in Paul through Paul's faith in Jesus Christ. Faith in Christ is life. The way Paul lived, that is, thought, spoke, and acted was due to Paul's depending on Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:21). For Christ to live in Paul, Paul must stay out of the way. To stay out of the way he depends on Christ to live in him. Christ does not physically or literally live in Paul but by

faith in Christ, Christ lives in Paul and every believer in Christ.

C. "The just shall live by faith" (Rom. 1:17b; Gal. 3:11)

God's family lives by faith in Christ. The object is not mentioned in this quote but the Bible makes it clear in the context. The object of faith is Christ for the purpose of salvation. Without faith in Christ a person doesn't live spiritually but with faith in Christ a person lives. Faith in Christ is life.

Faith in Christ to save from sin is the key to the Christian's life. Without it a person is not saved. Without it a person does not have spiritual life and cannot live for the Lord. Faith in Christ for salvation leads to love, meekness, long suffering, honesty, faith in other things that Christ teaches us, knowledge, temperance, etc. (II Pet. 1:5-7; Gal. 5:22-23). Unless one has faith in Christ as his Saviour from sin, these qualities of a new life will not develop. Depending on Christ is necessary for Christ to live in us and manifest the qualities of a Christlike life. As one depends on Christ for salvation and learns more about Christ through the Bible, the Christian's life develops step by step, and becomes more Christlike (II Cor. 3:18; Eph. 4:11-15). Other qualities may not always be present but faith in Christ is and must be always present. It is the key to the Christian's life (I Pet. 1:5; Luke 22:31-32; Phil. 1:3-6; Rom. 1:17b).

II Timothy 2:13 says, "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." If a professing Christian does not really believe then he will be treated by the Lord for what he is and will be sent to hell. Our Lord is faithful to all that He says. He makes no false professions. "He cannot deny himself." He cannot make a false profession on any matter. Therefore, He is faithful to all He has said. He will punish unbelievers as He has promised (II Tim.

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

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Editor

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CONSIDER

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sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord" (Haggai 1:1-8).

Let us notice first what the Lord said about the people. "...This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house

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JULY 1, 1995

PAGE TWO

Editor's Update

By Pastor Eugene P. Helton, Editor

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ!

God's work goes on at Calvary Baptist Church in Ashland, Kentucky. In just a little over a week from now, we will begin our Spring Meeting. It is my earnest and sincere prayer that we truly experience revival in this meeting. It seems to me that many, if not all, of the Lord's churches need a revival.

Our meeting will be past by the time you read this edition of *The Baptist Examiner*, but hopefully the good effects of the meeting will continue for a long time to come.

Our meeting will begin on Thursday evening, June 1st and continue through June 3rd. On June 1st and 2nd, Steve Kittle, Jonathan Gordon, and David Pitman, three Baptist pastors, will be here to preach for us and also to sing for us. Together they are a wonderful Gospel singing group called "Ministry." On Saturday, June 3rd, we will have an area wide singspiration and an area wide fellowship of people and churches of like faith and order. During the singspiration, Jennie Shore Watkins will be here to sing for us. Jennie loves the Lord and her singing brings glory to the Lord. Jennie is the wife of Pastor Ronnie Watkins of the East Corbin Baptist Church in Corbin, Kentucky.

I must close this writing now and go on hospital visitation. Until we meet again, may our Lord bless both you and your church!



should be built" (Haggai 1:2). In their words, we find in these people the sins of procrastination and indifference. Nothing has changed in the last 2,500 years, many of God's people, in church capacity, still respond the same way when challenged to build up the Lord's church.

The Lord spoke through Haggai the prophet saying "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in ceiled houses, and this house lie waste?" (Haggai 1:4). How often do God's people spend vast amounts of time and energy building up the things of this world and have little or no time for building up the Lord's church. Many of God's people build an ivory tower for themselves and then offer junk for Jesus when something is needed in the house of God.

Haggai says: "Ye have sown much, and brought in little." Words without deeds are hollow and empty. Faith without works is not real faith. "Ye eat, but ye have not enough." Many come to church and leave spiritually empty. Many will tell you what they believe in doctrine, but in practice

they deny the clear teachings the Lord left to guide His churches. "Ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink." We're not to just be drinkers of the Word of God, we're to be filled with it to overflowing in our lives; not hearers only but doers of the Word. "Ye clothe ye, but there is no warmth." Many play church on a regular basis then relegate the church to a lowly status when establishing the priorities of their lives. Far too many times the appeal of a materialistic world takes precedence over the needs of one's church. "Ye put wages into a bag with holes." This brings to mind the "use it or lose it" principle. Whatever God gives to a church in the way of facilities, money, talents, and gifts must be used to build His church. Not to use what God gives is to lose what God gives.

I must repeat the Lord's admonition spoken through Haggai the prophet: "Consider your ways." Are you serving the Lord, trying to build His church, or are you playing church, or playing with the church?

From the Word of God, I want to

give to each saint of God, blessed to be a member of one of the Lord's true churches, four things to consider.

1. "Hearken unto this, O Job: stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God" (Job 37:14). First let us give attention to the two words "stand still." Many times, we get caught up in the fast pace of the world we live in. We get so busy trying to achieve in a humanistic and for the most part a self-centered society, that we seldom have enough time to contemplate the wonder, the majesty and the greatness of God. Oh, that we could learn to truly come out of the world and "stand still" for long periods of time to "consider the wondrous works of God"—The work of creation. The beauty of the trees, the mountains and seas. The miracle of a new born baby. The new birth into the family of God of a wayward sheep. The wonder of His local church. After considering these, consider your own salvation, then declare to the world that you will serve Him and praise Him all the days of your life.

2. "Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you" (I Sam. 12:24). Oh the great things God has done for His saints and His churches; and how many draw back from serving Him according to the truth of His word and how hearts are divided, with the world receiving the larger part. "Count your blessings, name them one by one and it surely will surprise you what the Lord has done for you." This writer stands amazed when I consider all the great things God has done for me. This writer stands ashamed when I consider how little I've done in service for my Lord.

3. "For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds" (Heb. 12:3). Oh the unequaled suffering of the Saviour. Suffering enough to pay for all the sins of all the redeemed of all the ages. When wearied, consider him. Consider the feeling of rejection that He must have felt. Consider the loneliness of the cross. Consider the agony of Gethsemane. Consider the pain and suffering of Calvary. We surely will not faint, if we consider His life and His death.

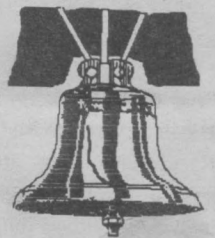
4. "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" (Deut. 32:29). Some day each of us who belong to Him must come face to face with Jesus Christ our

Saviour and give an account of our lives after the hour of grace. How we should long to hear the words, "Well done thou good and faithful servant." Have you considered your appearance before the Judgment Seat of Christ? Have you considered the questions and the admonitions? Have you considered your answers? We surely must begin thinking about that time and that event.

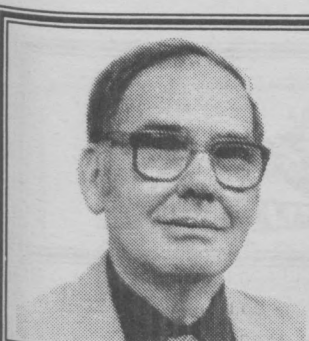
In light of these four considerations, I ask you once again to "Consider your ways." Are you working to build your church? "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord" (Haggai 1:7-8). If you want to please the Lord and bring glory to the Lord, then work to build His churches.

May our Lord bless you as you serve Him!

LIBERTY



"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage...For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Galatians 5:1, 13-14).



The Baptist Examiner Bible Study Lesson

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

Direct All Questions & Comments to: Clyde T. Everman • 108 Burdsall Ave. • Ft. Mitchell, KY 41017

The Covenant Renewed Genesis 17:18-27

At the news that Sarah his wife would bear him a son, Abraham **"fell upon his face and laughed"** (v. 17). Falling upon his face was an act of worship; the laughter was one of joy at the news of Sarah bearing a son. But then Abraham thought of his son Ishmael whom he no doubt loved very dearly. Was he to be left out of the covenant? He pleads for Ishmael, **"O that Ishmael might live before thee!"** It may have been in Abraham's appeal a desire to have God substitute Ishmael for the promised "seed." God's answer was not long in coming, **"And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac ('laughter'): and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him."** There was to be no substitute to God's plan, not Ishmael the son of **"the bond woman,"** the son of **"born after the flesh,"** **"but he of the freewoman was by promise"** (Gal. 4:22-24).

Nevertheless Ishmael was not to be forgotten. As Abraham's son he would be blessed by God and become a great nation. Although God's children make

mistakes, yet God in His loving providence overrides their mistakes and in His loving mercy brings blessings.

Now the communion comes to an end and God leaves Abraham (v. 22). Taking God at His Word, Abraham's response was immediate obedience. **"In the self-same day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son. And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him"** (vv. 26-27). Abraham fulfilled the command of God not only for himself and Ishmael but for all his house. In circumcising all the men of his house the same day was an act of faith on Abraham's part since it no doubt left all the males of his house unable to function for several days therefore leaving his home and his possessions without protection. He must depend wholly upon God.

It has been said that "Abraham believed when he knew not how," in referring to God's promise of a son by Sarah. The apostle Paul wrote of Abraham, **"And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead...neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb; He staggered not at the promise of God**

through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform" (Rom. 4:19-21).

Before leaving chapter 17 we need to review some of the things which were revealed to Abraham in this encounter with the Lord. We today need to learn the same lessons. As we learn more and more about God, our faith will be stronger and our lives will be fuller and richer. The following is taken from "Genesis: Devotional Commentary" by W. H. Griffith Thomas:

"1. A new view of God's character—God reveals Himself to Abraham as a God of might and power (v. 1), and, as such, able to fulfill all his hopes. God does not wish His children to be content with anything else than His fullest blessings, and for the accomplishments of this **'He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.'** The various passages in the New Testament where we read that 'God is able' call for earnest meditation.

"2. A wider view of God's purpose—Abraham little realized the far reaching extent and universal scope of God's purpose

concerning him. He was now taught this as he had never been taught before, in great wealth of detail and definiteness of meaning. It is always we who have our view of God's mind for the world extended and deepened and so 'think His thoughts after Him.'

"3. A clearer view of God's will—God's will for us, as it was for Abraham, is loyal obedience. As the little child said of the angels in heaven who do God's will there, 'they obey without asking any questions.' This, and this alone, is the secret of power in daily living.

"4. A fuller view of God's grace—The whole chapter is full of grace. It was grace that prompted, planned, and provided these blessings for Abraham. It was grace that condescended to Abraham's weakness, limitations, and faults. It was grace that persisted with Abraham in spite of every check and drawback, and it was grace that perfected everything concerning him. God is still 'the God of all grace,' and it is the believer's joy to experience the 'unsearchable riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.'



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

"Men who are not governed by God will be ruled by tyrants" --William Penn

"The Holy Bible is the Greatest Gift God gave to man" -
-Abraham Lincoln

"That Book [the Bible] is the rock on which this Republic rests" --Andrew Jackson

"It is impossible to enslave mentally or socially a Bible-reading people. The principles of the Bible are the groundwork of human freedom" --Horace Greeley

"If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will...prosper. But if we and our posterity neglect the instructions and authority in this Book, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overtake us and bury our glory in profound obscurity" -
-Daniel Webster

FAITH (PART2)

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2:11-13).

D. The Greatest Is Love (I Cor. 13:13)

Even though the key to the Christian life is faith in Christ for salvation, another very important quality is love, love for God, for other Christians, for lost people. Compared to faith and hope, love (translated "charity" in I Cor. 13:13) is the greatest. In what way is it the greatest? Not for salvation, for the Bible says **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved"** (Acts 16:31). He does not say, "love the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." As we have seen, faith has no merit in itself but only in its object Christ. Faith does not work but stops working and depends on Christ and His work to save. Faith by its nature is not great. Repentance by its nature is not great either. However, love is great and greater than faith and hope. Love is the fulfilling of the law (Matt. 22:36-40; Rom. 13:8-10). Love works and does things that are meritorious. The law is summed up in one word—love. The church at Corinth was divided over several matters. They did not love each other as they ought to. Each was seeking his own glory. They needed to be reminded concerning love. This was especially needed in their case that they might serve the Lord in unity, that is, love the Lord and love their fellow church members.

III. Faith In Christ Begins With Regeneration

A. John 5:24

Regeneration is the beginning of spiritual life. The one who has faith in Christ to save has life; the one who has not faith in Christ to save does not have life. Life and faith in Christ go together because faith is life. When life begins, faith in Christ begins. One cannot have spiritual life and not have faith in Christ. Since this is true, regeneration is the beginning of spiritual life and faith in Christ. If one is born again or regenerated he has faith in Christ; if one does not believe in Christ he is not regenerated. One is either dead or alive; there is no middle ground. The dead person spiritually does not have faith in Christ; the spiritually alive per-

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A person falls into temptation because he is unwilling to stand up against it



The Baptist Examiner Pulpit Forum

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



Why is December 25th set as Christmas when October 17th is much closer to the actual birth of Christ?

CLYDE T. EVERMAN

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"And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10, 11).

"This day"—What day? Was it December 25th? Was that day in October, March, or some other month of the year? The Holy Spirit did not give us the month of the day in which the Saviour was born. It is not the day that He came that is important, but the fact that the Saviour was born. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners..." (I Tim. 1:15), is the important thing to remember.

As to why December 25th was chosen for "this day" is not known. As was stated, the Holy Spirit did not indicate anywhere in the Scripture that the day of the Saviour's birth was to be observed. For the first 300 years of church history His birthday was not observed by the church. According to history, it was Constantine the Great who started celebrating a day for the day of Christ's birth. It would seem that he chose December 25th as that day because he wanted to form a union between paganism and Christianity, since the Babylonian religions observed pagan rituals to the sun god which they worship. In order to bring about this union Constantine took on the pagan rituals and idols and gave them Christian names. Christ was presented as the "Sun of righteousness" (Mal. 4:2), replacing the sun god of the pagans.

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As December 25th was the day of celebration of the winter solstice (the time of year when the days begin to lengthen and there was a "regeneration of nature"), which was, to the pagan world, the birthday of the gods. While this day continued to be observed by the Catholic church as the birthday of Christ the true churches did not do so.

After the Reformation, many of the Protestants as well as the Baptists opposed the observance of the birth of Christ. The early settlers of America considered Christmas as a "popish" holiday and was not to be observed.

To quote from a sermon of C. H. Spurgeon delivered on December 24, 1871: "We venture to assert, that if there be any day in which we may be pretty sure that it was not the day on which the Saviour was born, it is the 25th of December...Regarding not the day, let us, nevertheless, give God thanks for the gift of His dear Son."

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Your question is an interesting one, but it doesn't really go far enough. I would ask, "Why observe any day?" Nowhere in the Bible are we given either a date or instructions that we should celebrate the day Christ came into this world by way of a virgin. When He took on human form to live as a man so he could die for us as our sacrifice, He did not begin to exist then. He has always been and will always be. He is God. We have no date for the birth of Christ because there was none. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God...And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Fa-

ther,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:1, 2, 14). The only date that we are to remember—not celebrate as a holiday—is the day of His resurrection. (Actually the day after when it was discovered that He had raised.) That day, the first day of the week, is to be remembered every week, not once a year.

Christmas and Easter are pagan holidays, set up by the Roman Catholics and utilizing pagan days. God's people have no business joining in with the world, religious organizations and others in celebrating these days.

It is true that October would be closer to the true time when Christ came into this world in this manner. The shepherds would not have been out in the fields in December since it is the rainy season and they kept them in during that time.

I have known many sound preachers and good people who will not leave these pagan seasons alone, and frankly I don't understand it. Why do they want to join the ungodly world in this obviously pagan celebration. To equate a "Santa Claus" with the power of a sovereign God is beyond my imagination.

To answer your question, December 25th is not the day, October 17th could be, but no one knows, nor will anyone know because God chose not to tell us.

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Let me begin by saying that the actual birth date of the Lord Jesus is not vital to honoring and glorifying Him. No where does the New Testament give us the date, nor are we told to observe a celebration of His birth. Even though I believe that October 17th is much closer to the birth date of the Lord Jesus than is the pagan date of

December 25th, I oppose the celebration of Christmas for several reasons.

First, the holiday or festival was not observed in the early churches as were other observances. Later when the observance was introduced in the fourth century, many opposed it. Even Origen objected to the celebration for he felt that Christ should not be honored as a mere earthly ruler.

Second, the first mention of the observance did not begin until the time of Constantine around 325 A.D. The day would catch hold and become widely popular while adding many pagan customs and articles such as the tree, the yule log, decoration, etc. down through the centuries.

Third, it was in 354 A.D. that December 25th was designated the day of celebrating Christ's

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December 25th is the traditional date that religion has set forth to celebrate the birth of Christ. I do not believe that this is the actual date of His birth. In fact, I do not find any positive injunction for God's people or the Lord's church to celebrate His birth. Christ gave us two ordinances to remember Him, namely, Scriptural baptismal immersion as a memorial of his death, burial, and resurrection and the Lord's Supper which causes us to remember His sinless body and blood given for us.

Actually it was Julius I, Pope of Rome in 305 A.D. who decreed that December 25th was the most probable time of the birth of Jesus Christ. The Scriptures do not disclose to us the exact day of His birth. The days of Saturnalia in the month of December were Roman feast days. The Romans engaged in the customs of much eating and games, exchanging of

gifts, decorating of homes, placing lighted candles on trees, and other activities. Catholicism simply incorporated these customs into their regular order of worship and tradition.

Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is no longer in a manger. Some would no doubt like to keep Him there! This is a satanic diversion from Calvary. It is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ that saves us not His birth, even though His birth was truly a miracle.

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Calvary Baptist Church
Ashland, KY



To be honest, I do not know why December 25th is set to be the birth of Christ. Neither do I know if October 17th is closer to His birth. It would seem a lot of guess work must be used to answer this question. According to what I have read and heard of the word, Christmas is made up of two words: Christ and mass (which means a mass of religious service). Its first mention is believed to have been around 325 A.D. with Constantine and his formulation of the Catholic Church.

There is no indication of the early Christians celebrating the birth of Christ as a religious observance, however, once it was introduced, it spread throughout the world and was celebrated by both Christian and non-Christian alike.

There is good reason to believe that December 25th probably originated with a pagan holiday along with some of its customs of celebration (i.e. the evergreen tree and the exchanging of gifts). Because of this some Christians do not celebrate Christmas.

I do not believe Christians should make this issue a matter in which to break fellowship over. However, in my opinion Chris-

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WILL WE KNOW EACH OTHER IN HEAVEN?

By Pastor Jim Orrick, Storms Creek Baptist Church, Ironton, Ohio

"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (I Cor. 13:12).

Death often invades our ranks and takes our loved ones from us. With sad hearts we bid them farewell and make the sad journey to the cemetery to commit their bodies back to the earth. In such times of sorrow we find comfort in knowing that our loved ones who have died in the Lord have gone to be with Him in heaven. **"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord"** (II Cor. 5:8). They have gone before us into that place Jesus has gone to prepare for His people. The question is often asked, "Will we know each other in heaven?" This is a question I hope to answer in this article.

Who Will Be In Heaven?

There are several classifications of beings who will be in heaven. First, the Triune God—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—will be there. Surely none would doubt that God will be there because heaven is where God dwells. **"And hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive"** (I Kings 8:30b). Also note Psalm 115:3.

Also, the angels who kept their first estate will be in heaven. At the present time there is a great deal of interest concerning angels. How strange that so many who are willing admit the possibility of angels and to show great interest in them yet will not admit that there is a God and acquaint themselves with Him! The word "angel" means "messenger or agent." In Bible times, God often used them as messengers of blessings or as agents of judgment. Note Matthew 1:20-24 and II Kings 19:35. Matthew 8:11 speaks of angels in heaven. They will surely make good company for all who will be there with them.

I believe that all who died before what we call accountability and all of the severely retarded will be there in heaven. I admit that there is much that I do not understand about this; however, I do not see how God could receive glory by sending such persons to hell. They must somehow be provided for in the atonement that Jesus made for sin. A comforting passage along this line is II Samuel 12:1-23 that tells of the sickness and death of David's baby. For days, David poured out his heart to God in prayer on behalf of the baby, but the baby died. After the baby died David did something that his servants did not understand. **"Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat"** (II Sam. 12:20). When his servants inquired about his strange behavior, God inspired him to say something that has been a great source of comfort to many parents who have lost a child in death. **"And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me"** (II Sam. 12:22-23). David was a saved man. He was going to heaven, and he knew that there he would be united with his baby.

The saved of all ages will also be in heaven. **"And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it"** (Rev. 21:24). Today we live in a land of separation, but someday there will be a great reunion after which there will be no separation. **"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord"** (I Thess. 4:16-17).

Will We Know Each Other In Heaven?

There are several reasons why we are sure that we will know each other in heaven. First, we will know each other there because of the way God has made us with the ability to think, reason, and remember. A farmer can separate a cow from its calf, and for a few days the cow will search the pasture, calling for her calf, but soon she will forget, and things will return to normal. The same thing is true of many other animals in the animal kingdom. But humans do not forget their loved ones that are taken from them in death. A young couple can lose a baby; years can pass, but even when they are feeble with age, tears will come to their eyes when they think of the little one that was taken from them so long ago. We would be on the same level with the beasts of the field if we soon forgot our departed loved ones and had no desire or hope for a reunion with them. If we will not know them in heaven, then why has God given us such undying memories of our departed loved ones?

We can be sure that we will know one another in heaven because we are all members of God's family. Here we have our family reunions, and we may not know all of our cousins and their families, but we know all of our brothers and sisters. In Christ, all who believe are brothers and sisters and we will surely know each other at that great family reunion that will one day take place in heaven.

Certain Scriptures assure us that we will know each other in heaven. In Matthew 17:1-4, Jesus took Peter, James, and John up a mountain where Moses and Elijah appeared to them. By this time, Moses had been dead approximately 1500 years. Elijah had gone to heaven approximately 800 years before without dying. Yet the disciples knew who they were. The same will surely be true of us when we get to heaven; we will know all of the saints, even those we never met in this life. Today, even with all of our imperfections we know one another. If we know one another in this life, surely we will know one another when we are in the land of perfect knowledge. There is an old song that declares:



We shall come with joy and gladness
We shall gather 'round the throne;
Face to face with those that love us,
We shall know as we are known:
And the song of our redemption,
Shall resound through endless day,
When the shadows have departed,
And the mists have rolled away.
We shall know as we are known,
Never more to walk alone,
In the dawning of the morning
Of that bright and happy day:
We shall know each other better,
When the mists have rolled away.



But you will not be in heaven with your loved ones who have died in the Lord unless you receive their Saviour as your Saviour. Only those who are forgiven of their sins and washed in the blood of Christ will be with Jesus and His saints in eternity.

FAITH (PART2)

(Continued from Page 3)

son does have faith in Christ. This is proved by the Scriptures. John 5:24 says, **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."**

"Believeth" is a present participle in the Greek which indicates that the time of the believing is the same time as the main verb which is "hath." "Hath" is present indicative. "Hath" in modern English is "has." What does the one believing have? He has everlasting life. He didn't have everlasting life before he believes nor does he obtain it sometime after he believes but he has everlasting life the moment he believes and not a moment sooner. This verse goes on to describe this beginning of faith and life or regeneration as passing "from death unto life." "Is passed" in the Greek is present perfect indicative, which means it is a completed action in present time. The regeneration or new birth or beginning of spiritual life is described as passing "from death unto life." It was a completed experience at the same time the person believed and has everlasting life.

God the Father is the One mentioned in this verse that the person is believing. God the Father, God the Son and God the Spirit all teach the same thing, that Jesus is the only Saviour from sin. He died and arose again that the one who believes on Him might be saved.

B. John 3:36

John 3:36 says, **"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."** This verse is similar to John 5:24. "Believeth" is a present participle which means it is taking place at the same time as the main verb, "hath", which is present indicative. This means that the moment one believes, he has everlasting life. This verse goes on to say that the one not believing will not see everlasting life, that is, as long as he not believing but the wrath of God is

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abiding on him all that time he is not believing. It is obvious from this verse that a believer in Christ has everlasting life the moment he believes and not a moment sooner. The moment he believes life or regeneration begins.

C. John 1:12

John 1:12 says, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." The word "believe" is a present participle which indicates the believing is at the same time as God gave power to become sons of God. God giving power to become a son of God is the new birth.

Believing begins with regeneration. They are at the same time but the regeneration is the cause of the believing. There is no interval of time between them.

Since reference has been made to the significance of the present participle in several verses, it is fitting to quote from a standard Greek grammar. Writing concerning the significance of the present participle, Dana and Mantey state, "Simultaneous action relative to the main verb is ordinarily expressed by the present" [A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament]. This is a common principle that is found in all the Greek grammars.

D. Acts 16:14

Acts 16:14 says, "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul."

Regeneration is spoken of here when it says, "the Lord opened" Lydia's heart. This is the cause of her attending to the gospel being spoken by Paul. Her attending to the message spoken is at the same time as God's opening of her heart. The Greek bears this out. Her attending to the message was her believing it.

E. Regeneration and Conversion

Regeneration is the beginning of life and conversion is the beginning of life. Both terms refer to the beginning of life. They take place at the same time. Both refer to works of God within the

person. However, to theologians regeneration is a word used of the work that the Holy Spirit does in giving life and conversion is used of the immediate response within the person to the regenerating work of the Spirit. This conversion response is repentance and faith. Even though the Spirit's work of regeneration is first and the cause of conversion they both come at the same time. There is no time period between regeneration and conversion. Because a person is born again he believes, he begins to live a righteous life, he begins to turn from sin, he begins to have Christian love. All of these qualities begin at the new birth. There is no time between the new birth and the qualities of the new life beginning. The new birth is the cause but these effects come at the same time (I John 2:29; 3:9; 4:1; 5:1, 4, 18).

F. Various Terms and Regeneration

Different terms are used for the beginning of spiritual life in the New Testament. The Lord uses terms referring to natural life to teach us about spiritual life. These terms are used figuratively when used of spiritual life which means that only the point He is referring to in the beginning of spiritual life is like the beginning of natural life.

Just because physical life has a beginning in the mother, that is, conception, and a beginning of coming out of the mother, birth, nine months later, is no grounds to suppose that the soul receiving new life is like this.

To read more into these terms is not correct. The context should determine our understanding of the new birth. These terms all refer to the beginning of spiritual life. The natural life and spiritual life are different in many ways. The time of the conception of natural life in a human being and the birth of the human being is nine months. There is no period comparable to this in the spiritual birth. The Scriptures we have noted make it clear that the passing from death to spiritual life is an instantaneous thing. Spiritual conception and birth take place at the same time. There is no nine months between them. The Bible tells us that we who are saved will get a new body but this body is described as different from a natural body in a number of respects. For example, our natural body is developed from infancy to maturity over a period of about twenty years. The new body has

no period of development like this. It is changed from a natural body to a new body in a moment and twinkling of an eye. It does not have to develop then over a period of time. Yet the same word for body is used for both but they are quite different. The context makes this clear. What is true of a new body is true also of a new birth of the soul. Another difference between the natural birth and spiritual birth should be noted. The body and soul are both given at the same time in the natural birth but in the new birth our soul is regenerated in this time but our new body comes at the time of the second coming. Context determines this not the literal meaning of the words for the beginning of natural life. To make the beginning of the natural life to be a carbon copy of the beginning of spiritual life will lead one to many false doctrines and many flat contradictions of the Scriptures.

An example of what I am saying is found in John 3. Jesus used the Greek word *gennao* in John 3:3 for "born." Literally this word refers to the natural birth of a human being when his soul and body come from the mother into this world. This word is used in Luke 1:57 where it is translated "brought forth." It is referring to the natural birth of John the Baptist. It is a common word for the natural birth. For this reason Nicodemus thought that the birth Jesus referred to in John 3:3 would involve coming from his mother's womb, body and soul. But, Jesus showed from the context that he was using this word figuratively of the beginning of new life in the soul by the power of the Holy Spirit and involved hearing about Jesus Christ and believing on Him as one's personal Saviour. The context makes this clear. To imagine this birth is a carbon copy of the natural birth is to completely misunderstand John 3.

The word *gennao* can also mean "conceive," that is, the beginning of life in the mother nine months before birth (Matt. 1:20). It can also mean "begat" and refer to the begetting of the man (Matt. 1:2).

**Forsaking
All
I Trust Him
• FAITH •**

WHAT WE ARE DETERMINES WHAT WE SEE

By Jack Whitt

"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee" (Job 42:5). Does the title of this article sound a strange statement? Allow me to give some clarification through illustration in the following manner: A dedicated lover of classical music may sit in quiet solitude for hours enjoying a symphony by Chopin, while the same music may be meaningless or even irritating to another. An artist may see and appreciate certain detail and colors in an oil painting that the casual observer would not notice. In a more common illustration, a wife notices when something is out of place in the living room while the husband cannot see it. These are but a few simple illustrations on "what we are determines what we see."

Now let us consider our subject from a spiritual reality. Some people see a church as a place of worship, to hear God's Word and to share in Christian fellowship and love. Others have no concern for God and His house. A difference of opinion! Yes, but O what a difference, and O what a difference of consequence. It is the difference between life and death, between heaven and hell. Just as the artist sees and appreciates an oil painting, we must see and appreciate Jesus. No one can take a casual glance at Jesus and expect to see Him in all His glory and redeeming love. Neither can he expect to enter the gates of heaven without knowing "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him" (Ps. 2:12b).

Lord, help us as you did Job, to not only hear with the ear, but to see with spiritual eyesight that, "WHAT WE ARE DETERMINES WHAT WE SEE."

THE MASTER POTTER

"Is life really worth the living?"
Sometimes we are tempted to say.
But God is the Master Potter
And we are only the clay.

Perhaps it seems hopeless,
Yet we must fit into His plan.
So let's be yielding and supple
To every touch of His hand.

We cannot see in the future,
The part we are destined to play;
Would the pattern be ugly and broken,
If we should be taken away?

So, let us trust in the Potter,
He knows much better than we,
How precious each tiny atom,
To the finished product will be.

Though the trials of life encompass
Seem more than we can bear,
Perhaps we're now in the furnace,
To test the strength of the ware.

But when the firing is over,
And the finished object we see,
We'll know that the Master Potter
Understands far better than we.

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Happiness comes when we stop wailing about the troubles we have, and offer thanks for all the troubles we don't have

CHRISTIAN JOY

By Edwin B. Fountain, Garfield, Georgia

"The sorrows of the mind
Be banished from this place;
Religion never was designed
To make our pleasures less."
So sang a poet; and even though
it sounds sentimental, it is Scriptural and should give joy to every Christian. The Christian has every reason to be cheerful and our great and heavenly calling gives us the right and we are enjoined by God's Word to rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

The Nature of Christian Joy

Someone has said of joy that it "is a passion of the mind which produces gladness and exultation." But Christian joy is a spiritual elevation of soul, and has its foundation in spiritual knowledge. That spiritual knowledge is a knowledge of ourselves as sinners and an experiential and saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christian joy is a result of faith, an active faith. A faith that trusts in God, a faith that knows in the heart that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28). A faith that believes Him completely when He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (John 14:6). When He says, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). "...whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst" (John 4:14). "I am the good Shepherd" (John 10:14). "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). Christian joy is a result of faith in what Peter had to say of Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16).

Christian joy is enduring in its character. Not that we do not from time to time allow this great joy to become clouded but the source, the medium and occasion of Christian joy always remains. Christians have a joy that no enemy can destroy: there is no sickness that can annihilate it for a Christian joy simply buds in the grave and blossoms in eternity with Him who is the giver of this great and enduring joy.

Peculiar Characteristics of Christian Joy

It is the "joy of the Lord." And it is to His joy that He calls us. The exhortation of the Scripture is constantly that we should re-

joice in the Lord and in our salvation. Philippians 4:4 says "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice." And in Psalm 33:1 "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright" and in Psalm 97:12 "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness."

We are His from before the foundation of the world and in His time He calls us to Him. He calls us to His joy that He may impart it to us by His salvation. He calls His joy repentance, and brings it about; He calls His joy, peace, and bestows it; He calls it holiness, and makes us holy. His joy is the fruit of His own Spirit, which He gives to all His children. Galatians 5:22 says "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith."

Our joy is not only from Him but in Him. "And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (Rom. 5:11).

Christian joy is joy resembling our Lord's joy. God's peace is given to the believer so says Philippians 4:7 "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Our Redeemer said, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:11).

Our Lord through Paul prays that we fulfill His joy, "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded..." (Phil. 2:2).

That which makes us holy is the nature of Christ that is imparted to us when we are saved and when we have His nature in us, Christ is in us and we are in Christ. His joy is therefore an integral part of our life and living. His nature which is holy makes us holy. His joy is our joy. His joy should give us an ineffable happiness.

The Important Influence of Christian Joy

"The joy of the Lord is your strength." As health is the source of strength so the joy of the Lord is our spiritual strength. The joy of the Lord gives vigor and vitality to the soul and new powers to

the mind. Our joy is in our salvation and when we are saved—born again—we become a new creature with a new spirit and a new heart and a new mind and a new and great joy. We are placed on the higher ground, the place of power, of victory in the Lord. The joy of the Lord is the source of the Christian's strength.

But it has duties. If we love Him, and so have joy in Him then we will keep His commandments. We should run with pleasure to do His will, we should realize how easy our yoke is and how light the burdens of this life are.

This joy from our Lord bears an important influence on all our difficulties. Crosses can be taken up with ease. Enemies can be overcome. "...With God all things are possible..." (Matt. 19:26), and in Mark 9:23 we read "...All things are possible to him that believeth." To believe is to be full of joy, to believe and be filled with joy is to be filled with power that overcomes all difficulties.

His joy influences our suffering. Psalm 27:13 says "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living." We can rejoice because, though the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day. It is this joy of the Lord that should fight against depression and despondency. Because of His joy we can turn to Romans 8:18 "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." Our joy outweighs our sorrows and sufferings.

There is even joy in death. Like Paul we should grow spiritually until we can say with Paul, "That to live is Christ, to die is gain" or "absent from the body, present with the Lord." When our hearts and our flesh fail there is none, or nothing on whom we can depend except our God and the joy He has given. Christ is the strength of our hearts and our portion forever.

We must therefore cultivate this joy by reading the Word; by prayer, by close communion with our Lord.

We must appreciate it for only the children of God possess it.

We must learn to exhibit it.

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A Woman's Touch

By Wendy Barkman



Widows

(Part VII)

Seven Husbands (Matt. 22:23-32; Mark 12:18-27; Luke 20:27-38) - The Sadducees, religious leaders of Jesus' day, came to Jesus with a question concerning the resurrection. The Sadducees themselves denied that there was a resurrection, but presented Jesus with this hypothetical situation, based on the law of Moses (Gen. 38:8; Deut. 25:5). Their story involved seven brothers and one wife. One brother married, then died, without having fathered any children. According to the law, this woman married her husband's brother, who also died, leaving her a widow for the second time. The narrative continues with the woman having been the wife of all seven brothers and ends with her death. Their question to Jesus, though insincere, concerned the resurrection and whose wife, of these seven, would she be. Jesus explained that they erred in their knowledge and understanding of Scriptures. First of all, there will be no marriage in the resurrection. Then, our Lord went directly to the real issue, that the Sadducees denied that there was a resurrection, quoting Scripture, which they should have known and understood. "But...have ye not read...I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." If these men were simply dead, if they were not now in the presence of God, if their bodies would not some day rise from their graves, He, the God of the living, would not have claimed to be their God.

The Importunate Widow (Luke 18:1-8) - This woman was the subject of one of Jesus' many parables. In this parable, we learn determination, patience and perseverance in prayer. The three main characters are the unjust judge, the widow, and the adversary. Our Lord, in His parable, tells of a widow who was very persistent, one might even call her annoying or troublesome, in her demands on the judge, insisting that he inflict the proper punishment upon her enemy for some wrong which had been done to her. The judge kept refusing to come to her aid, not giving heed to her very strong requests. Her pertinacity, her determination, finally, got the best of the wicked judge. Knowing that this woman would not leave him alone, until he had honored her wishes, the judge reluctantly took the proper actions to vindicate this woman. How much greater is our God, our Judge, the true and righteous Judge, who will, in His own way, in His own time, avenge His own elect. "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Rev. 13:10, 14:12). We must be patient. We must have faith. We must obey. "For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. 6:17). The day of our Lord's vengeance will come. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war" (Rev. 19:11). Christ, in His righteousness, will return and make all things right. Our persistent prayer should be "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20).

Pray for your country
today!
(1 Timothy 2:1-2)

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TRIBUTE

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for about a year.

The Holy Spirit then appointed Brother Gilpin to the First Baptist Church of Russell, Kentucky in 1929. Before moving from Cincinnati, Helen bore a son. He was born on March 30, 1929 and his name was John R. Gilpin, Jr.

The Gilpins moved to Russell in 1929 to work in the Lord's vineyard for the next twenty-five years. During this time, Helen gave birth to two girls. Rhoda was born on May 27, 1937 and Ruth on June 29, 1939. Due to controversy in the church, Elder Gilpin resigned in 1954. The Gilpins continued to live in Russell until their present house in Ashland was completed in March of 1955.

After resigning the First Baptist Church of Russell, the Gilpins and some members from the church at Russell started holding services in a hotel in Ashland, Kentucky. This work was under the authority of Kings Addition Baptist Church of South Shore, Kentucky. In 1955, Calvary Baptist Church was organized after the New Testament pattern and according to the apostles' doctrine. The church moved to its present building in 1967.

Sister Gilpin's years at Ashland were the years of the great Bible conferences. The first was held in 1959. Eleven conferences have been held to date. Sister Gilpin played an important role in these as the general overseer of all food for the guests who came. Except for the last three, she fed them under a tent in her backyard.

A Character Study

Helen Virginia Gilpin has had from the time of her second birth a deep-seated love for her Lord and Saviour. She has ever sought to honor Him in all that she did. Her faith in Him has been shown by her works for Him. She has given Him glory in His church by many duties performed, including teaching the Bible to women and children and playing the piano. Helen Gilpin has always honored God's Word by wearing a hat or scarf on her head in church.

Sister Gilpin has been untold help to her husband as he labored in the Word and doctrine. She has been willing to share a part of him to those he has blessed with his

ministry. She has been a source of strength to him when he was weak and of comfort when he was sorrowful. Like Aaron and Hur with Moses, she held up his hands when the battle was the hottest. Through all the church troubles across the years she has unceasingly retained a sweet, patient spirit. She has revered her husband and been in subjection to him. Sister Helen has always been a lover of hospitality. Literally thousands of guests have been entertained in her home over the years. She enjoyed the companionship of Brother Gilpin's mother from 1929 until her death in 1953. I have always received the very best of treatment when visiting in her home. Like Phebe, "she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also" (Rom. 16:1-2).

Sister Gilpin has been a virtuous woman, a godly mother of children, a helpmate to her husband, a loyal and faithful Baptist, a glory to her God and a blessing to her friends. During my interview with her on August 29, she herself said: "I am happy to have been a helpmeet for a great servant of the Lord." How fitting are the words of Proverbs 31:29: "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all."

There is one person in your church who knows your preacher's life.

She's wept and smiled and prayed with him.

And that's your preacher's wife!

She knows one prophet's weakest point,

And knows his greatest power
She's heard him speak in trumpet tone,

In his great triumph hour.

But deep within her heart she knows

That scarce an hour before,
She helped him pray the glory down

Behind the closet door.
She's heard him groaning in his soul,

When bitter raged the strife,
As hand in his she knelt with him

For she's a preacher's wife.
You tell your tales of prophets brave,

Who walked across the world
And changed the course of history

By burning words they hurled.
And I will tell how back of them

Some women lived their lives,

Who wept with them and smiled with them.

They are the preachers wives!

JOY

(Continued from Page 7)

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

We must recommend it for that is the essence of the Great Commission.

We must also anticipate its consummation in glory. That great joy when we shall see Him face to face and be like Him for we shall see Him as He is.

FORUM

(Continued from Page 4)

LENEGAR

birth by Bishop Liberius of Rome. Many would not accept this date for many felt it was chosen to coincide with the Roman festival of the winter solstice.

Fourth, as the two festivals coincided, paganism influenced the Christian holiday more than the other way around. So much so, that the whole world embraces December 25th and all people, Christian or not, seem to love it more than all other holidays.

Fifth, it has grown in pagan value until today Christmas is the only day that universally unites all people in celebration that is neither honoring or pleasing to God. Indeed, it is the only day that provokes people to get drunk, commit adultery, and commit other immoral and unrighteous acts in the name of Christmas.

Sixth, observance of a "mass of Christ" is unacceptable to God's people called Baptist. We are not told to observe any day as the birth date of Christ. In fact, Jesus instructed us to observe the supper He instituted as a continual remembrance to Him until He comes again. It is a continual remembrance of Him commanded by Him (Luke 22:19-20). Let us adhere to the Scriptural guidelines. God says, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil" (Ex. 23:2). October 17th, or any other date, should not be observed any more than December 25th should be observed.

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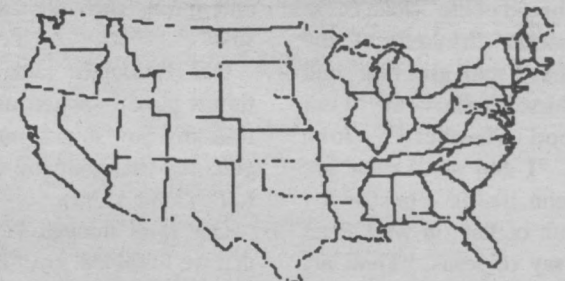
tians should be careful to avoid many of the worldly customs associated with this holiday.

Certainly a valid case can be made against celebrating a day that has its origin in pagan custom. I find no reference in the Bible to the day Christ was born nor any commandment to keep its obser-

vance. I believe the most significant aspect of knowing about Jesus Christ, is not the day of His birth, but the day that He became your Saviour and Lord.

The birth of Jesus Christ, next to His crucifixion was the most momentous event in the history of the world. It became the focal point of all history. Everything before Christ looked forward to His birth, and everything since then looks back at Him. It was such a crucial event that now all the world numbers years according to it (B.C. means "Before Christ" and A.D. means "Anno Domini" or in the year of our Lord). Jesus made an impact on the world that has never been, and never will be equaled by any mere man. In all the annals of the human race, no one is like Him. He never wrote a book, he never held political power, He was not wealthy or particularly influential in His lifetime. Yet He altered the world completely; in fact, no other human being has affected history remotely like He has. He has been opposed, hated, fought, censored, banned, and criticized in every generation since His birth. Yet His influence continues unabated. After nearly two thousand years, the impact of His life goes on so powerfully that it is safe to say not a day passes but that lives are revolutionized by His teaching.

GOD BLESS AMERICA LAND THAT I LOVE!



"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (II Chronicles 7:14)

Dear TBE readers,

Trinity Missionary Baptist Church (Carl Sadler, Pastor) in Richmond, Kentucky will be hosting a "Prisoners for Christ" conference on July 28, 1995 at 10:00 a.m. For more information, please call (513) 367-2190.