

Guilt may be defined as being ashamed to live and afraid to die

"...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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WISDOM CONCERNING CREATION

By Ray Waugh, Sr.
(Now with the Lord)

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth..." (Gen. 1:1). "By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth..." (Col. 1:16).

Some of our most learned men appear at times to toy with the questions, "What is God?"; "Where did God come from, if there is a God?"; "How could there be a God?"; "Why should there be a God by whom all things consist?" Unfortunately, it seems that the answers that men provide to their own questions are without any regard whatever to the God of the Bible, and the Lord Jesus Christ whom we know to have the capability of making us "new creatures" (II Cor. 5:17).

As children who find it impossible to obtain adequate answers from wondering and sometimes amazed parents, these whose mortal minds appear to be knowledgeable and competent beyond most of their fellows—scientists and professionals of various disciplines—would seem to be balanced on the very precipice of ignorance without ever realizing it. They often gather data almost without end, and yet they do not appear to comprehend that such cannot provide them with any wisdom. These may sometimes come to their precipice of ignorance, and then sally forth to declare that "there is no God," or that a Creator God or a Sustainer God is a figment of human imagination.

Within the context of man's most advanced mental deliberations, these may be deemed to have attained a high level of intellectual astuteness. Yet, when we peruse their hypotheses and their theses, we discover that all of them are designed to prove that the universe and the life within it are the chance



products or the fortuitous conglomeration of unthinking elements by means of some natural evolutionary process. These are those who have the faith to suppose or believe that a few million or so letters and numbers can be cast to the wind and within a given period of time they will appear as an organized encyclopedia.

With seeming impunity, these defiantly shake their intellectual fists in the face of the God of the Bible who has positively declared, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). These may spend their lives amassing intellectual devices that are designed with one objective; namely to oppose the truths, "All things were created by him, and for him; And he is before all

things, and by him all things consist" (Col. 1:16-17).

It should be understandable, then, that God, in His wisdom and in accord with His sovereign omniscience should have long ago declared, "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things" (Rom. 1:22-23). In their human wisdom, men may declare that the universe and the things within it are their own resource for facts, truth, and wisdom. God, however, counters every such effort with His eternal truth, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent" (I Cor. 1:20).

Human Folly

In the fourth century B.C., Aristotle was able to accumulate in his works on physical science, including his PHYSICS and HISTORY OF ANIMALS, most of the knowledge then available regarding the universe and life as it existed upon

(Continued on Page 6)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon By Pastor Eugene P. Helton

AN EVERYDAY CHRISTIAN

"Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no" (Ex. 16:4).

What kind of Christian are you? Are you a Sunday morning Chris-



tian? Are you a Sunday morning and Sunday evening Christian? Are you a Sunday and Wednesday Christian? Are you a holy day/holiday Christian? Are you a time of trouble Christian? Or are you an occasional Christian? Or are you an everyday Christian?

As we look back at our text verse,
(Continued on Page 2)

VISION

By Pastor Edward G. Graff, Grace Central Baptist Church,
Mansfield, Louisiana

Vision means competence in perception (discernment), intelligent foresight. I speak of a man of vision. Paul, the apostle, was so formed. Paul was given a vision from heaven, and he was not disobedient to that vision. Acts 26:13-19 says "At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee, Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Verse nineteen is what we will focus upon.

Paul knew well that "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Prov. 29:18). Without a spiritual vision you are without



spiritual understanding. And you are not in obedience to God's will for you. What is embodied in a spiritual vision?

First: A Vision of Missionary Need

We see Paul, a man of vision, not only of the vision here spoken, but the vision of missionary need—the need to take the Gospel of Christ to the hearing ears of the known world of Paul's time. Paul was not disobedient to that vision of missionary need! Paul preached passionately the Good News of Jesus Christ to every one, even to kings and jailers. Yes! Paul had a missionary vision. Do you?

The Macedonian Call (Paul's Vision at Troas) Acts 16:9-10 "And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over in Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them." Paul had a vision of a Macedonian man standing before him, begging him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia, and help us!" After seeing this vision Paul and Luke (the "we" in verse 10), immediately made an effort to go to Macedonia, confidently resolved that God had called them to preach the gospel to them.

The assembly is a mission station, or it is no assembly at all. Why? Because missions is the main reason for the assembly to exist! The order for missions was given by Jesus, our Christ, to the assemblies, when He said "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 28:19). The Gospel moves outward from the local assembly, first to the city, then to the state, then to the nation,

(Continued on Page 3)

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EVERYDAY

(Continued from Page 1)

we see that the Lord said to Moses: "...the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day...." Serving the Lord is not just a sometimes duty; it is an everyday duty. The Lord never gave us an option not to serve everyday; He gave us a commandment to serve everyday. He told the children of Israel to "gather a certain rate every day...." It is no less a requirement for God's children living on planet earth as we approach the year 2,000. We, like the children of Israel, freed from Egyptian bondage, should also "gather a certain rate every day."

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

MAY 1, 1996

PAGE TWO

Editor's Update

By Pastor Eugene P. Helton, Editor

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Tomorrow, exactly on time according to God's time table for planet earth, spring arrives in Ashland, Kentucky. It seems to me that spring has been a long time coming this year, however, it will arrive at just the time that God planned when He created and ordered the universe.

Just as I have been eagerly looking forward to spring, all of God's saints should be looking forward to the second coming of Jesus; coming in the air to snatch away all of the redeemed to heaven.

Many believe that day will never come. Many believe it will come but is a long time in the future. Peter wrote about the likes of these: **"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation"** (II Pet. 3:3-4).

Tomorrow spring will arrive at the moment that God planned for spring to arrive. When God created and ordered the universe, He put His time table in place. Every event planned in eternity passed will happen right on time. All of us who know and love the Lord long for His coming and sometimes we grow weary of this world just the way we grow weary of a cold, hard winter. Spring will arrive right on time and Jesus will arrive right on time. He promised before He left to return and take His redeemed to heaven. **"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, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also"** (Jn. 14:2-3) **"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise..."** (II Pet. 3:9).

Are you ready for His coming? If you're lost, you're not ready. If you're saved and not serving Him, neither are you ready. **"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh"** (Matt. 24:44).

Service is required by the Lord of those who have been set free from Satan's captivity and the bondage of sin. The following verses of Scripture teach us that everyday presents opportunities to serve the Lord and He requires that we avail ourselves of these opportunities. **"So he left there before the ark of the covenant of the Lord Asaph and his brethren, to minister before the ark continually, as every day's work required"** (I Chron. 16:37). **"And he appointed, according to the order of David his father, the courses of the priests to their service, and the Levites to their charges, to praise and minister before the priests, as the duty of every day required..."** (II Chron. 8:14). I would emphasize the word DUTY in this verse. It is our duty to serve the Lord everyday.

Again we look back to our text verse and find the Lord said: **"...That I may prove them..."** Our daily service to the Lord becomes the fruit and the proof of our

love and commitment to Him. We might say that it is the evidence of the faith that we have in our Lord. **"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"** (Heb. 11:1). James declared in his writings that true faith will produce works in service to our Lord. So daily works becomes the evidence of true faith.

Again looking back to our text verse the Lord said: **"...whether they will walk in my law, or no."** The Lord commanded daily service to prove the people as to whether they were willing to be obedient to His Word or not. I must ask myself the question: "Am I serving the Lord everyday?" "Are you serving the Lord everyday?"

Some Attributes of an Everyday Christian

He/she will study the Word of God everyday. One should not just read the Word of God, but should diligently study the Word of God. I am not in favor of the programs that encourage reading the Bible through in one year. If a person

reads the Bible through in one year and does not more; that person is not studying the Word of God. I would rather a person study a verse a day and learn and spiritually grow from the truth of that verse, than to read the Bible through in a year and learn nothing. **"Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God..."** (Neh. 8:18).

He/she will pray to God everyday. Prayer is something that some folks only practice when they have a need or are in trouble. Many take their needs and desires to God without ever giving thanks for past and present blessings. Prayer is talking to God. Prayer is expressing love, adoration, praise, and thanksgiving. Prayer is worship. We should surely take our burdens and concerns to the Lord, however, prayer is so much more than asking God to take care of all our needs and concerns. **"Mine eye mourneth by reason of affliction: Lord, I have called daily upon thee, I have stretched out my hands unto thee"** (Ps. 88:9).

He/she will praise God everyday. We that are the redeemed of the Lord have much to praise Him for. If He desired it to be so, even the rocks would praise Him. He doesn't want the rocks to praise Him; He wants you and me, we that are redeemed by the shed blood of Jesus, to praise Him. I feel that some Baptists and some Baptist churches do not show forth enough praise of our Lord Jesus Christ. True Baptists, more than all others, have much to praise the Lord for. **"I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever"** (Ps. 145:1-2).

He/she will keep everyday the vows made to God. There was a time in this country when marriage vows were considered, by most everyone, to be sacred. To many today that is no longer the case. Marriage vows are broken without remorse and divorce is commonplace. Vows made to the Lord must be kept. When a person comes before a church to petition that church for membership and unites with that church by baptism or by letter or by statement, such a person has in effect made a vow to serve the Lord in that church in such a way to bring glory to Jesus. **"Unto him be glory in the church..."** (Eph. 3:21). This vow should be kept everyday of the week. **"So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my vows"** (Ps.

61:8).

He/she will be watchful everyday. We can't be watchful unless we know how to watch and what to watch for. Many folks are watchful like the Pharisees. That is they watch their "religion" to the extent that they do not watch for souls; they do not watch for suffering. I certainly believe in doctrinal purity, however, doctrinal purity if practiced completely must include concern, compassion, and love. There is no doctrinal purity apart from being like Christ. There is no doctrinal purity in watching unless one hears and heeds the Word of God. **"Blessed is the man that hearth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors"** (Prov. 8:34).

He/she will carry part of the Lord's work everyday. **"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me"** (Lk. 9:23). Serving the Lord always involves some form of self-denial. It may be the giving up of another person. It may be the giving up of money and other material things. It may be that one may have to be physically and geographically separated from a place where they might prefer to live. The cross in Luke 9:23 has nothing to do with nailing two boards together and dragging a wooden cross down main street in Hometown, U.S.A. It has to do with shouldering daily the burdensome work of the Lord. Webster's dictionary defines shouldering as follows: "to assume the burden or responsibility." That's what we must do to take our cross daily. Following the Lord involves self-denial in assuming the burden and responsibility of everyday service.

He/she will exhort his brothers and sisters everyday. We should never practice Christianity in such a way as to constantly and continually be a discouragement to others. Some do practice Christianity in just that way. Exhortation is a doctrine and a command. In some places and with some people it is a forgotten doctrine. That is sad! We all need exhortation. **"But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin"** (Heb. 3:13).

In closing this message, permit me to just ask the following simple question: "Are you a sometimes Christian or an all the time Christian?"

EXALT THE LORD

The Baptist Examiner Bible Study Lesson

By Clyde T. Everman
(Now In Heaven)

A Most Faithful Servant Genesis 24:10-67

In our last study, we studied the last days of Abraham. We saw the part Abraham played in the search for a bride for his son. In this study, we will give attention to the unnamed servant of Abraham and the part he played in seeking the bride for Isaac. We need to note his attitude, his action, his faith in his master's God. We can see that he is truly a model servant that it would be well for all of the Lord's servants to follow.

First, we need to look at his obedience (v. 1-9). He stood ready for service, and upon being told what he was to do he did not question what seemed to be an impossible task. He only wanted to know what he was to do if certain conditions arose (v. 5). Upon being assured by Abraham that the same God that had brought him from his father's house unto this land would "send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence" (v. 7). He at once took an oath that he would be faithful to the task assigned for him (v. 9).

Next we note his absolute dependence upon God; he was a man of prayer (v. 10-14). He realized what a difficult task he was to accomplish. He was on a very unusual mission and he knew that he could succeed only if the Lord guided him, therefore he prayed that God would guide him. He not only prayed for guidance in the way but to the damsel, "that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac" (v. 14). Note that his prayer was on behalf of his master, "thereby shall I know

that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master" (v. 14).

God's answer to the man's prayer was not long in coming. "And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milchah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder" (v. 15). Upon asking her for drink from her pitcher, Rebekah's reply was "Drink, my lord." She also said she would draw water for his camels, thereby doing exactly what he had prayed she would do.

It would seem that the servant could not believe that God had answered his prayer so quickly and so completely. He had not only brought him on the right road to the right place but to the right damsel that He had chosen as a bride for Isaac. "And the man, wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not" (v. 21). Upon being convinced that the damsel was the chosen one by the Lord the man gave her what was known as bridal gifts, "a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold" (v. 22).

Not only did Rebekah do all that the servant had prayed that she would do, upon being asked if there was room in her father's house for him to lodge, her answer, "We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in" (v. 25). Upon realizing that his prayers had been fully answered, "the man bowed down his head, and worshipped

the Lord" (v. 26). How many times do we stop to worship and praise God for answered prayer? The servant praised the Lord for his mercy to his master and his truth.

"I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren" (v. 27). Here is a very important truth. If we expect to be led by the Lord we must "be in the way." We must be willing to follow His guidance. We must depend entirely upon Him each step of the way.

Upon being brought to the home by Laban, Rebekah's brother, before he would eat he told them his errand. He told them he was Abraham's servant and then he reviewed some of the history of Abraham, telling how the Lord had blessed him with great riches and that he had a son by Sarah in her old age and it was to this son Abraham had given all that he had. He then explained how Abraham had sent him to seek a wife from his father's house. He told of the request which he had prayed that God would show him the one He had chosen for a bride for Isaac. He tells how his prayer was answered by leading him "in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter unto his son" (v. 48). He now asked for their answer, "And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left" (v. 49). Rebekah's brother and her mother replied to the request, "The thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good. Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take

her and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord has spoken" (v. 50-51).

"When Abraham's servant heard their words, he worshipped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth" (v. 52). This unnamed servant must have thought back on his journey and all that had taken place and thought how a very hard task had turned out to be so easy. How could he go into an unknown country and go to the right place and out of all the damsels that came to draw water how could the right one come out for him to meet? The servant answered that question, "I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren" (v. 27). How easy difficult tasks become when we are "in the way."

Having found the chosen bride for Isaac and she had consented to go with him, the servant, early the next morning wanted to depart for home. But the brother and mother of Rebekah desired they stay a few days, but for the servant there was to be no delay in his master's business and as Rebekah was ready to go they went on the long journey back to Canaan where Isaac was waiting, watching for his bride.

After introducing Rebekah to Isaac the servant's job was completed and no doubt that when he had told Abraham all that he had done, he received a "well done" from his master.

"And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her, and Isaac was comforted after his mother's death" (v. 67).

VISION

(Continued from Page 1)

and then to the world. Only the assembly has the authority to send out, and support men to the mission field. This order, from Christ, was first given to the assembly at Jerusalem, and from there passed down to local assemblies, as they were established by missionary work. In turn, the assemblies established by the Jerusalem assembly, by missionary work, passed the order for missions to assemblies established by them through missionary work. This missionary work continues today, through your local assembly! No other organization, whatsoever, has the authority to go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The local assembly must have a vision of missionary need, or they will perish from the face of the earth!

DO NOT BE AFRAID. Acts 18:9-10 "Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city." You are to speak to those around you wherever you may be. This you can do without fear because God is with you. And because God is with you, go, speak to the people, speak to them the Good News of Jesus Christ without fear.

Second: A Vision of Encouragement

Yes, storms of life will come but they will pass away. But even when our life is stormy, we are to be an encouragement to those around us in their storms of life. Acts 27:22-24 "And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar; and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." There are many storms in this world, but we must put our arms around those that are in a storm, and help them to keep their courage. We must counsel them to not be afraid. We are to have a vision of encouragement!

Third: A Vision of (Continued on Page 6)

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

MAY 1, 1996

PAGE THREE

"Be ye
angry
and
sin not"

(Ephesians 4:26)



Is it possible? You may have heard the saying "Hate the sin but love the sinner." May we put this principle into practice today as we relate to Christians and non-Christians alike.



The Baptist Examiner Pulpit Forum

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



**What is the Kingdom of God so often spoken of by Jesus in the Gospels?
Is there a difference between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven?**

(Submitted by Jack Whitt)

Short Forum This Month

During the past two years, *The Baptist Examiner* has normally had five respondents to the forum question. This month we have only two respondents. Brother Jack Whitt submitted this question and chose not to answer his own question. Brother James Hobbs has been ill and had considerable family illness which providentially hindered him. Brother Clyde Everman has moved to heaven and he now has all the right answers to all questions.

We'll try our best to have four respondents in the June issue.

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"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:7).

I readily admit this, as many Examiner questions, is one of differing opinions and contro-

versy. It would solve a lot of problems, if we could just say that the two phrases, "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven" are equivalent and ALWAYS have the same meaning. I cannot say that, however, and so I see a difference, or differences between the two, although one comes from, and is connected to the other. It appears in some places that the terms are interchangeable. Without going into long examples and explanations, I will point out that "context" is the key to understanding the two terms. How they are used and what teaching they are expressing and emphasizing depends on context.

Matthew uses the term "kingdom of heaven" some 33 times and "kingdom of God" some 4 times. Some say Matthew used this phrase because of his Jewish readers. In some instances the two terms are interchangeable in the aspects they present. In others they are not. The "mixed character" and development of the kingdom and its aspects can be seen in the parables about the kingdom. Again the parables are viewed in a wide range of opinions, controversies, and interpretations. There are a few things I would like to point out (as I understand them) about the differences between the two terms.

The "kingdom of God" speaks of the universal kingdom (a realm rather than a place) with God as King which emanates from Him to accomplish His purposes. He and His authority are at the center of His kingdom and it is dominant and opposite that of Satan's empire granted him for a season by God. In the kingdom of God, the will of God is being done on earth as it is in heaven. God's kingdom is universal and accepts all who will be in subjection to Him. The kingdom is righteous and it brings about righteousness to all within it through Jesus.

The kingdom of heaven (of the heavens) is as we said peculiar to Matthew and I believe that it refers to, or signifies the messianic rule of Jesus on earth. It will

come from heaven, although on earth, have heavenly influence and attributes, and will eventually end in the heaven of new creation and eternal ages. Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom as opposed to Satan's kingdom as offered to Him by Satan during the temptation. The basic difference then? "Kingdom of heaven" indicated the nature and characteristics of Jesus' earthly kingdom, while the "kingdom of God" is both the origin and the end of the kingdom of heaven.

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I perceive the kingdom of God in two ways. First, it is the present reign of our Lord Jesus Christ over His redeemed people of the past, present, and future ages. Secondly, it is the future visible manifestation of this present spiritual reign! So the kingdom of God is both a present reality as well as a future revelation. The Scripture bears this out: Jesus spoke of the kingdom's present reality. He proclaimed to the Pharisees: "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." (Literally: "The kingdom of God is in your midst—It is right before you now.") People can enter the kingdom right now. When they get born again they immediately come under the sovereign realm of Christ. Now, the kingdom is not the same as the church. You get into the kingdom by knowing Christ as Savior; you get into the church by Scriptural baptism. Jesus also said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." This means to seek his rule over your life. It is submission to

His sovereign claims. This kingdom is now growing silently and invisible. Jesus gave several parables that describe the nature of the present kingdom rule. It is like a treasure "hid" in a field. It is like a "net" invisible in the water yet gathering all kinds of fish. It is like a tiny mustard seed that little by little "grows" into a giant plant. The kingdom of God is a present reality but it is not dominant on earth today. One day Christ will come back to earth and then the kingdom will be visible. He and His beloved kingdom saints will rule the earth for 1,000 years. Paul said of this future manifestation that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Paul was speaking of the resurrection of the body. One day we will enter the kingdom of God with a new, glorified body! "If the age to come is thought of as existing beyond history, the millennium will witness the triumph of God's kingdom within history." We are taught then by our Lord to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

"Is there a difference between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven?" These are interchangeable. They mean exactly the same thing. The difference can be traced to the Greek language of the New Testament. Actually the kingdom is referred to in Matthew 19:17-24 as three things: "kingdom of heaven" (v. 23), "kingdom of God" (v. 24), and "entering eternal life" (v. 16). All three are one in the same. The kingdom of heaven is the Semitic form and the kingdom of God is the Greek form of the same phrase." The kingdom of heaven is a natural Jewish expression used quite common in their language at that time.

**JESUS IS
ALIVE!**

**DOES HE LIVE IN
YOUR HEART?**

At the close of a religious service, a gentleman approached Dr. D.M. Stearns with a criticism: "I do not like your way of preaching," he said. "I do not care for all this talk about Christ dying for the lost. Instead of preaching the death of Christ on the cross, it's better to be up to date. Preach Jesus, the teacher and example." "Would you be willing to follow Him if I preach Christ as the great example?" asked Dr. Stearns. "I would" said the gentleman "I will follow in His steps." "Then," said Dr. Stearns, "Let us take the first step, 'Who did not sin' as we read in I Peter 2:22. Can you take this step?" The critic seemed confused. "No" he said, "I do sin, I must admit." "Well, then" said Dr. Stearns "your first need of Christ is not as an example but as a Saviour." - Copied -

PIDDLE PRAYING

By Pastor Robert Barkman, Landmark Baptist Church, Collinsville, Illinois

Piddle - 1. To spend time in a wasteful, trifling, or ineffective way.

2. To waste, to fail to utilize.

"Piddle praying" is a term used by my wife to describe ineffective and wasteful prayers. All of us, at one time or another, have found that we have uttered prayers that were a disgrace in God's eyes. We all have taken the grace and privilege of prayer for granted which has led to its misuse.

As we turn our attention to James 4:3, we will find four questions answered about prayer and the root cause of "piddle prayers."

"Ye ask" - What is, probably the most common purpose of prayer? Making our requests known unto God, with a desire for His will to be done. The Lord, Himself, declares that we are to present our needs and desires to Him, in submission to His will. He always wants to fulfill our request if it results in His glory and our good.

ABSOLUTELY EVERY PETITION MADE TO THE LORD WILL BE GRANTED, IF HE IS GLORIFIED AND WE BENEFIT SPIRITUALLY FROM THE RECEIPT OF THE PETITION: "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Lk. 11:9-13).

"And receive not" - Does this guarantee that every prayer we make will be answered? No. There are times when our petitions are denied.

"Because ye ask amiss" - Why does a loving Lord, who desires the best for us, reject some of our requests? It is because these requests are found deficient due to faulty motives (desires).

The Lord does not honor a petition that comes from sinful purposes. If we find our prayers are being unanswered, it is because the designs of our heart are defective. Sinful motives produce improper prayers. (The word "amiss" implies unsuitability, impropriety, or to fall short of a set standard. When applied to our prayer life, a prayer that is amiss is a request that is improper due to sinful motives.)

The Word of God is replete with warning of the Lord's rejection of prayers due to sinful desires. **"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me"** (Ps. 66:18). **"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination"** (Prov. 28:9). **"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear"** (Isa. 59:2). **"Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them: he will even hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings"** (Micah 3:4). The list goes on and on.

"That ye may consume it upon your lusts" - What is the underlying motive that renders our prayers defective? The fulfillment of a sinful desire is the purpose that lies behind ineffectual prayers.

A request springing from selfish, unlawful cravings is amiss and is found lacking by the Lord. The uttering of such a prayer is a waste of both our time and breath; it serves no godly purpose. It is sin.

Our petitions are to proceed from a heart that is in submission to the Lord's will. With every entreaty we should cry, "not my will but thine be done."

"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 Chron. 7:14).

If we sincerely place the Lord's will above our own EVERY PRAYER WE UTTER WILL BE ANSWERED. If He sees fit to grant our request, we can praise

Him realizing it is of His grace and love. We can enjoy this blessing, realizing we can use it for His glory and our good.

If He does not grant our petition, we can praise Him as well; He is working His will out for our lives and is doing this for our benefit. In this case, His will is being done and, therefore, His purpose for our life is being brought to pass.

Whether our specific requests are fulfilled or not, we can always praise Him out of a submissive heart. And we can know His will is being accomplished and our welfare is being worked out. **"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong"** (II Cor. 12:7-10).

Oh, how important it is to guard our hearts as we enter into prayer. **"Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the humble: thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear"** (Ps. 10:17).

By doing this we can turn our "piddle prayers" into "powerful prayers." **"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit"** (James 5:16-18).

PHILIPPIAN PARTNERSHIPS

By Larry J. Robbins, Assistant Pastor, Trinity Baptist Church, Richmond, Kentucky

"I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:3-6).

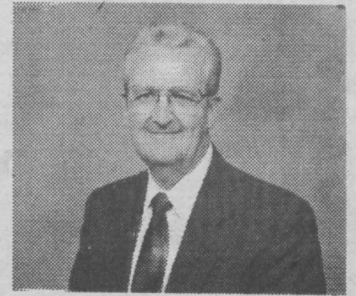
The gospel of Jesus Christ not only causes divisions, but it also creates partnerships. One such partnership resulted in the letter of the apostle Paul to the church at Philippi.

It was on Paul's second missionary journey he had answered a visionary call from a man in Macedonia saying, **"Come over unto Macedonia, and help us"** (Acts 16:9-10). In response to that vision Paul traveled to Philippi and established the first church in Macedonia. Through the years a very deep affection grew between Paul and the Philippian church.

From a Roman prison Paul wrote a letter in response to another gift they had sent him by Epaphroditus. This was a love letter describing both the character of Paul and the Philippian church. It was in that mutual love that this mutual encouragement, support, prayer, and suffering.

Verses three through eleven of chapter one comprise Paul's thanksgiving prayer. In verses three through six, cited at the beginning, Paul is thanking the church for their partnership in the gospel knowing that God will complete it in the future.

The New International version translates the word "fellowship" in verse 5 by the word "partnership." It translates the Greek word "koinonia." In secular Greek, the word was used to express a legal relationship or common ownership, such as a married couple. However, in the New Testament, "koinonia" (fellowship or partnership) is used as a spontaneous expression of the disposition of love created by Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. It is not economic, legal, or philosophical. In Paul's writings brotherly love goes beyond this. It is



not used in the sense of a requirement imposed, but flows from a relationship with Jesus Christ.

It would serve well to understand a little of the meaning and construction of the term "koinonia." It means "fellow" or "participant" and implies fellowship or sharing with someone or something in a common enterprise or inner relationship. For example, in Luke 5:10 it is used of partnership in work; in Hebrews 2:14 it says we share in a common mortality; and II Peter 1:4 we have a participation in the divine nature.

In Paul's writings "koinonia" always has a religious content; always used for religious fellowship or partnership of the believer in Christ and also in the church at Philippi. Only by the personal participation in Jesus Christ in the free pardon of sin makes possible the personal partnership in the gospel. The word implies inward fellowship on a religious basis. To be a Christian is to have fellowship (partnership) with God which issues in the brotherly fellowship of believers.

In conclusion, the book of Philippians should be a reminder to New Testament churches today that this kind of fellowship or partnership is absolutely essential if the gospel of Jesus Christ is going to be proclaimed. We have a common experience of the gospel, prayer, suffering, and many other needs. Also the unity of believers is closely related to the idea of partnership; being like-minded.

It seems that many churches strive to promote their differences, independence, and peculiarities rather than finding that common bond we all share; the common faith in Jesus Christ. Truly the gospel makes us partners in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Remember to observe the National Day of Prayer on May 2, 1996.

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

WISDOM

(Continued from Page 1)

the earth. His knowledge, however, did not bring him a knowledge of God. We presume that he died believing in "The Unmoved Mover." Although men of science and philosophy looked to Aristotle for centuries as the wisest of the ancients, his theses today are deemed to be foolishness by all of those today who are called scientists.

In the first century A.D., Pliny the Elder, in his encyclopedia of nature and art, HISTORIA NATURALIS, accumulated in some thirty-seven volumes the knowledge then available to mortal men. Again, for centuries, scientists and philosophers looked to Pliny the Elder's word as manifest evidence of man's greatness. Today, perhaps, there is not one single point in any of Pliny's laborious efforts which would be deemed to be scientific truth by the scientists of our day.

Thankfully, however, several centuries before Aristotle appeared on the human scene and even longer before Pliny the Elder, God raised up a prophet by the name of Daniel. Through him, God let it be known that even the knowledge of men is something over which He is sovereign. For more than 2,000 years God permitted spiritually-ignorant and defiant men to suppose that Aristotle had provided them with truth. For more than 1,500 years, God did the same with the foolishness of Pliny the Elder.

In our day, knowledge is increasing as never before in human history. Even at the turn of this 20th century scientific foolishness was abroad in our world. In those days, my Daddy read NATURAL PHILOSOPHY by Sharples, Phillips, and Balderson that was published in 1892 by Lippincott. In that volume, my Daddy was informed, "It is not possible to divide a molecule...." In that same volume he was informed, "The word atom means indivisible," and that its property was such that "it is indestructible."

Nevertheless by the third decade of this 20th century, in part thanks to Einstein, men had learned that the atom could be divided, and that matter was destructible. Some had even pre-

sumed that a great ship could be propelled across the ocean with a few drops of water. What apparently had happened was there was an "increase in knowledge" in accord with the sovereign prophecy of Daniel, "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" (Dan. 12:4).

Consequently, during the rest of the 20th century, men have attained more knowledge about the universe and the creatures of earth than they had gained in the previous 5,000 years. Some tell us knowledge is doubling every ten years, while others are informing us that knowledge is doubling every year or every two years. Nevertheless, along with that knowledge, there is the potentiality for destruction beyond the wildest imaginations of even the men who are in the forefront of science. Along with this capability for violence, man's efforts seem to be designed to outlaw God from His universe and to discredit His Holy Word.

Quite obviously, men have declared open warfare against God. If we can accept the truth of God's Word, however, we can know that God long ago wisely declared, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God" (Ps. 14:1). God wisely explains the frailty and the foolishness of men with His Word, "I am from above; ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you that ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:23-24).

God's Wisdom

Moses, as we know, lived many centuries before Aristotle and even more centuries before Pliny the Elder. These unbelievers of a distant day, even as the ancient Babylonians and Egyptians, believed that some forms of life could arise spontaneously in damp soil, in rotting meat, and in many forms of refuse. Though Moses was "learned in all of the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7:22), we do not find any of the foolishness of the Babylonians, the Egyptians, and none of the foolishness of Aristotle or of Pliny the Elder in any of his writings.

Rather, our blessed Savior, even Jesus the Christ of God, could declare with confidence and with assurance more than 1,900 years ago, "If ye believe not his [Moses'] writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (Jn. 5:47). Thankfully, with the perfection of the microscope and by means

of a rather elementary experiment, Louis Pasteur put an absolute end to all of the scientific nonsense concerning spontaneous generation that had gone before. What the apostle Paul had called, "Science, falsely so called" (I Tim. 6:20) almost 2,000 years ago was wiped out in just a moment of time.

Surely, then, our God speaks wisely for all time, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men..." (I Cor. 1:25) and "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent" (I Cor. 1:19). The whole of our educational, political, and social world, and much of the theological world may concede the supposed wisdom of Satan's, "Yea, hath God said?" (Gen. 3:1).

We can know, thankfully, however, that "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1) yet stands as unassailable and sovereign truth as we move toward the 21st century. And in the closing moments of this 20th century, even the scientists must concede that "after their kind" of which we read in Genesis 1 stands untouched. To this hour, men have not one "missing link" or transitional form of life. Evolution, which is foolishness, is forever precluded.

VISION

(Continued from Page 3)

Heavenly Paradise

II Corinthians 12:1-4 "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth); such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth); How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." Paul was actually caught up into heaven, and saw all the beauty there, the same beauty that we shall see, one day. But, for now, you are to hold close to your hearts the vision of heavenly paradise. A vision of the throne of God, Christ setting at the right hand of the Father, the water of life, the tree of life, angels, the cloudless day, the streets of pure gold, the gates of pearls, a painless—sor-

rowless—fearless forever. The vision given to you is Christ, through John, in the Revelation of Jesus Christ. Revelation 21:1-4 "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 them, 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." Revelation 21:21 "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." Revelation 22:14-17 "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Fourth: A Vision of Christ

If you have the vision of missionary need, you will spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every nation, every tongue, and every people. You will see, and hear the vision, saying, "Come over, and help us." If you have the vision of encouragement, you will help, and encourage others in their storms of life, despite you own. If you have the vision of heavenly paradise, you will put into effect the commandments of Christ.

To be a real live, on fire, red hot, Christian you, like Paul, must have vision. You must have the vision of missionary need, the vision of encouragement, and the vision of heavenly paradise. These three visions you must have

in order to have the vision of Christ ever before you.

Without vision you will spiritually weaken, and your local assembly will perish! The doors will close for a final time, and the lights will burn no more, and the preaching of the Gospel will go wanting! Is this what you want for your Christian life? Is this what you want for your local assembly? If not, then see the vision of Christ and let His light shine boldly to the world!

Food for Thought:

People of high intelligence talk about ideas.



People of average intelligence talk about things.



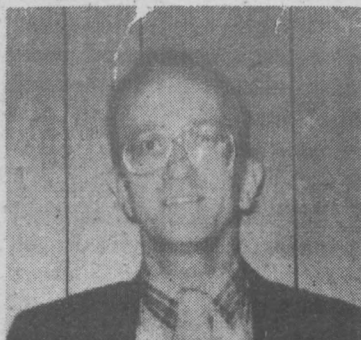
People with no intelligence talk about other people.



BLOOD CRY:

The Cry of the Martyr's Blood

By Pastor Robert Barkman, Landmark Baptist Church, Collinsville, Illinois



"And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord. And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him. And the Lord said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper? And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground" (Gen. 4:1-10).

In Genesis 4:1-10, we find the historic record of Cain and Abel, a well-known account of jealousy and familial murder. There are several Biblical "firsts" found within this event: the first children born, the first occupations, the first offerings to Jehovah, the first competition between siblings, the first covetous rage, and even, the first murder.

However, we can add one more "first" to this list. The murder of Abel by Cain is the first act of martyrdom committed against one of God's worshippers. Our Lord mentions Abel's murder as one component which constitutes the legacy of martyrdom throughout Old Testament times: "From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation" (Lk. 11:51).

Notice in Hebrews 11:4 the description of this murder in-

cludes the component of martyrdom: "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. 11:4). The righteousness of Abel and the witness of his approved sacrifice to Jehovah, clearly stands in opposition to the corrupted character of Cain and his unacceptable sacrifice. When the lost world, motivated by jealousy, hatred, or guilt sheds the blood of God's people, martyrdom has taken place.

The martyr's shed blood not only stains the pages of Biblical history (II Chr. 24:21; Mk. 6:27; Acts 7:58, 12:2) but also, the historical record of the Lord's churches from their inception until the present day. Martyrdom has always been with us and will continue to be with us until the Lord Jesus Christ comes again.

In Revelation 6:9-10, the martyrdom of God's people is symbolized. The martyrs are pictured as animals slain upon the altar of burnt sacrifice. Their shed blood, flowing at the base of the altar, is pictured as their souls (the physical life they possessed). Leviticus tells us that our blood and physical life are directly linked: "The life of the flesh is in the blood." As their blood flowed, it was literally, their souls (physical life) flowing out of them. This may seem like a very grisly scene, and rightfully so for martyrdom is a very heinous crime. However, we, like Paul, must be prepared to make this sacrifice from the cause of Christ. "Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13).

Surrounded by the shed blood of their life, the martyrs of Revelation 6:10, ask a very important

question of the Lord: "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. 6:9-10).

Please notice, the martyrs are not asking the Lord IF He will judge their murderers. They are simply asking when this judgment will take place. It seems as if it would never come. The Lord will ALWAYS avenge the blood of martyrs. He is ALWAYS just. He NEVER ignores sin. "When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble" (Ps. 9:12). "He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in his sight" (Ps. 72:14).

Truly, we can be at peace during times of tribulation, and even martyrdom, knowing that our Lord has called us to share in His sufferings and will then glorify Himself in our lives: "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified" (I Pet. 4:12-14).

The conclusion of Hebrews 11 is a fitting conclusion to our study. "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women

A Woman's Touch

By Wendy Barkman



Ahinoam

I Samuel 14:50

General Information

I Samuel 14:50 - She was Saul's wife, and also the daughter of one, Ahimaaz.

I Samuel 14:49 - She was probably the mother of these children: Jonathan, Ishui, Melchishua (sons); and Merab and Michal (daughters).



I Chronicles 8:33-40, 9:39-44 - Again, this is probably a list of descendants of Saul and Ahinoam. After a comparison and study of the genealogies found in I Chronicles and in I Samuel, there appears to be no satisfactory explanation concerning the seeming discrepancy in the naming of Saul's sons. Either we have a son called by more than one name, or one mentioned in the one genealogy and not the other.

I Samuel 20:30 - This is a reference to Jonathan's mother, most probably Ahinoam.

Name Study

Ahinoam - my brother is delight, the beauty and comeliness of the brother, brother of grace, brother of pleasantness. Her name is derived from two Hebrew root words, the one meaning brother, and the other meaning to be agreeable, delight, suitableness, splendor, or grace. The root word for agreeableness, etc., from which part of her name is derived, is translated in the following different ways in other verses of Scripture: pass in beauty, be delight, be pleasant, be sweet, beauty, pleasant (ness): Gen. 49:15; II Sam. 1:26; Ps. 27:4, 90:17, 141:6; Prov. 2:10, 3:17, 9:17, 15:26, 16:24, 24:25; Song of Sol. 7:6; Ezek. 32:19; Zech. 11:7, 10.

Personal Application

Again, very little is known about this woman, and one can only speculate concerning how these above ideas applied to her life. Was she a very pleasant, agreeable, easy to get along with sort of person? Remember the moody and, at times, crazy husband she had to put up with.

Practical Application

As Christians, we have a relationship with Christ, that of Christ being our brother. We are also told that we are joint heirs with Christ (Matt. 12:50; Mk. 3:35; Lk. 8:21; Rom. 8:17). Truly, our Brother, Christ, is delightful. Truly, He is gracious. Truly, He is beautiful. Truly, He is pleasant. Truly, He is all of these things and much much more (Ps. 27:4, 90:17; II Cor. 8:9).

received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in

mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (Heb. 11:32-40).

REJOICE

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
MAY 1, 1996
PAGE SEVEN

What good is 'peace of mind' if we lie down and sleep while the world goes to hell?

JOHN

By Irene Orrick

John and I arrived at Stark about the same time, he from Virginia and I from wherever babies come. I assumed that he had always been with me and always would be. Children tend to make the assumption that things stay the same, especially those whose early years are in settled surroundings. I was surprised when I learned that 1942 was about to change into 1943; at six, I thought that all time, and maybe eternity, was identified as 1942.

John was a large white hound, my best friend and always-present companion. He was self-appointed as my guardian, and I imagine that he sometimes regretted his decision. For he was not the frisky, bouncing-about type; more like a pompous English butler, I think. But I was everywhere into everything, and though he would have preferred resting in the yard with drowsy brown eyes watching me play quietly, as he was convinced a

little girl should, he stuck determinedly with his appointment. In the spring, this guardian position took him with me exploring every pond and branch for tadpoles, out in the woods and across the hills searching out redbuds, dogwoods, and wild violets. In the summer, he might have to take up his post at the top of a hill covered with tall rye. For, if bent over and worked just right, tall rye or wheat on a steep hill can be made into a great slide. Too, I've always been addicted to autumn woods, so John faked admiration for them, and doggedly went along. Winters, he gave up his warm bed for my love of the deep snow.

And starting in the primer, every day, every year, July through March, John and I walked to Bunker Hill. He stayed all day, at noon enjoying his lunch of everybody's scraps. As we walked to and from school, John usually treated himself to a few short side-excursions to poke

about in the bushes for rabbits and such. Sometimes when he lagged behind on one of his missions I would hide from him. When he caught up, he indulged my nonsense by feigning some difficulty in finding me, wagging his tail and grinning as dogs do when he sniffed me out. Finally, turning determinedly towards our destination, he would clearly indicate, "Enough of this silliness, we'd better be getting on."

Similarly, through many years, God's self-appointed love has gone with me during a pleasant childhood, midst lots of spiritual growing pains, down a few valleys, and along hilltops. But sooner or later He will set His face toward home and say, "We'd better be getting on." I won't be reluctant to follow, for I know that the adventures He has planned in the new heaven and earth will be pleasant.

ARE YOU A VICTIM OR A VICTOR?

By Jack Whitt

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (Jn. 16:33).

We may see several things in this verse that should gladden the hearts of all Christians, among which, that Jesus is our peace. He is our happiness. Because He overcame the world, we too are overcomers. These are the good, positive things of this verse. The bad or negative part is that **"In the world ye shall have tribulation."** Yet this should not come as a surprise to the Christian. The problem comes about when we, as Christians, look to the world, wherein is tribulation, rather than to Jesus, wherein is peace and joy and overcoming power to live in this present world. We may say we become victims rather than victors when this condition occurs. There are numerous ways to become victimized in our world today. We hear about it all the time in the newspapers, on radio and television—victims of brutal killings, rape, robberies, etc. All these are brought about by sin. Sin is the reason for bloodshed, sickness, heartache, and sorrow. Sin is why people become victims. Yet there are more subtle and less dramatic ways of becoming victims. Is it not true that too often Christians are victims of themselves and to the temptations of the devil? Could it be true we make ourselves victims to the flesh when coldness, indifference, a complacent attitude toward church attendance and toward the Word of God exists?

And of the unsaved I say you are a victim of the worst degree. My friend, if you are living today content without Jesus Christ, you are a victim of Satan who has

deceived you. Jesus speaking to a crowd of spiritually blinded Jews said: **"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him"** (Jn. 8:44a). May I say to my reader (if you are unsaved) you may be a good, moral, respectable, law abiding citizen, a good husband or a good wife. You may give to the poor. You may even be religious. But if you have never seen yourself as a hell deserving sinner, if you have never received Christ by saving faith, then you are a victim of deception of which I must say will be far greater a consequence than all the harm man could bring to you. Jesus again speaking to His disciples said: **"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell"** (Matt. 10:28).

But there is a bright side to all of this! You need not be a victim, you can be a victor instead. Jesus said: **"Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."** All who put their trust in Jesus are overcomers. Why is this true? Because Jesus overcame the world, we who are saved have also overcome the world. It is true we do not always show this as we should (to our own shame) yet we read: **"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the son of God?"** (1 Jn. 5:4-5). Don't be a victim to Satan's lies another day. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Jarrel E. Huffman and Mr. J.C. Settlemaier have the unqualified endorsement of Sister Barbara Gregory, to prepare a book on the life of her late husband, Elder Elvis Gregory.

They are therefore seeking to obtain any information that you may have about Elder Gregory's life and ministry.

They especially wish to have the following:

- Dates and locations of meetings that he held, conferences he preached in, church organizations and ordinations in which he helped or attended.
- Tapes of messages he preached both at Pinehaven Baptist Church and in other churches and conferences.
- Sermons or articles which he prepared for periodicals or books.
- Manuscripts of any kind.
- Letters.
- Pictures.
- Testimonials, anecdotes, incidents, documents of any kind and/or any other information which you believe might be useful in this biography.

NOTE:

Please send copies if possible. If you do send original documents or materials that you wish to be returned, please indicate this and include your name and full return address. All materials will be returned as soon as possible.

Please send all information to:

J.C. Settlemaier
5075 Sandy Ct.
Pittsboro, IN 46167

Arbuckle Baptist Church in Lebanon, Kentucky is in need of a pastor. For more information, please call collect Frank Hall at (502) 692-6708 or Jerry Sadler at (502) 789-2241.