

Does your life shed light or cast shadows?

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

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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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THE LORD GOD HATH SPOKEN, WHO CAN BUT PROPHECY?

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

Within the confines of God's Word, we can see two great messages:

1. To those who are living a life of disobedience to God, we find a message of judgment and impending doom.

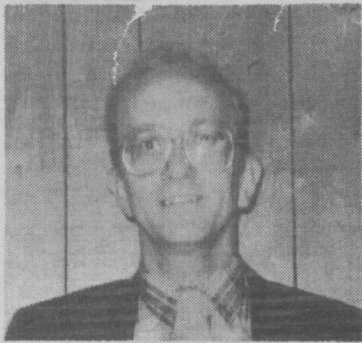
2. To those who have trusted in Christ, we find a tremendous responsibility laid upon their shoulders, to proclaim His Word to those in need of salvation.

In Amos 3:1-8, Amos, the shepherd/prophet, spoke to a nation that contained both groups of people. Within this discourse, we find both great themes clearly proclaimed. Amos' message to those who were living lives of disobedience is found in verses 1-6. Amos' message to those who were serving the Lord is found in verse 7-8.

Amos' Message to the Disobedient

1. "Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family...." This message given by the Lord is a message of opposition. He was speaking to wicked Jews opposing the sin in their lives. The Lord has a specific message addressed to those who are living in rebellion against Him. This message is meant to hinder their sinful lifestyles. What is one reason the Lord opposes the sin of mankind? Sin eventually brings about man's ruin. When the Lord gives man a message meant to obstruct their sinful acts, it is for man's good.

"...which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying...." The Lord is reminding the Jews of His grace in delivering their ancestors from the bondage in Egypt. If He had not delivered their forefathers, the generation of Amos' day may



have still been slaves in Egypt. The Lord is reminding all who are obstinate of His great grace toward them. Truly, the Lord shows His grace to health, wealth, yes, even physical life are graces bestowed by God upon both the just and unjust.

2. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth...." The Lord is reminding Israel of their favored position. Among all the nations of the earth, the Israelites were the most special and blessed. Among all of His creation, humanity holds a very special position of blessing in God's sight. It is only man that was created in the image of God; only

man has an immortal spirit that will live eternally; only man is capable of reason and responsibility toward His moral laws; only man was created a little lower than the angels.

"...therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." Because of Israel's special status and responsibilities, they were held highly accountable to Jehovah. He would hold them accountable for their sinful actions. Likewise, due to mankind's honored position among His creation, humanity is held responsible to God for their lack of obedience.

3. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" If two do not have the same goals and motives there cannot be a close relationship. The Lord is warning the Israelites that, if they do not have a radical change of lifestyle they cannot have communion with Him. They may be physical Jews, but they were not in fellowship with their God.

The same holds true for man. (Continued on Page 6)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Interim Pastor Jack C. Whitt

WHY PREACH?

"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21).

Why preach the Gospel? Why should men stand, week after week, behind a pulpit to urge and exhort men, women, boys and girls to listen and heed to God's Word?

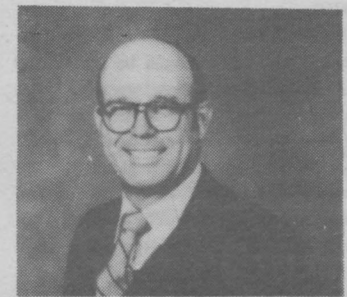
Surely it is a vain thing to plead for souls if God has already foreordained men's salvation. Such is the argument presented by some who reject the sovereign will of God in choosing those who will be saved. Such are the arguments of the hardshells who ridicule efforts to evangelize and spread the Gospel by way of missionaries to foreign lands and within our own

LESSONS FROM GRANDMA'S OLD DOMER-NECK HEN

By Pastor Charles Lybrook, Waverly Road Baptist Church, Huntington, West Virginia

Where that name of the breed came from I do not know. I consulted Mr. Webster who I don't think raised too many chickens in his day, at least he never heard of a domer-neck hen. So I took my case a little further up the street to Mr. Britannica. He seemed to be a little more knowledgeable on the subject as he had a whole lot more information compiled on just about everything from the egg to the chicken house and everything in between. But he never heard of a domer-neck either, probably because he never dealt with anything but purebred stock, but my Grandma Hardin's old domer-neck hens were a dead ringer for Mr. Britannica's fancy Barred Plymouth Rocks. Be that as it may, I shall never forget traversing the old path that led from our little vine covered four room home, that God blessed so graciously, to Grandma's house where I spent many a wonderful day and night with Grandpa and Grandma Hardin (Uncle Jim and Aunt Meck, being derived from her given name "America", to non-family members). Along that path were little houses about the size of a good doghouse. This is where the old settin' hens were tethered after they had hatched off their new brood of chicks. It was a pleasant little field between our house and Grandma's house which everybody in the clan affectionately called "down home" or "down to the house."

But what I want to talk about is the lesson taught to me by those



domer-neck settin' hens. As a little boy I didn't dare get too close to those little chicks or I just might have gotten a good floggen. I will never forget how absolutely protective those old hens were. By the way, that reminds me of something good and wonderful about my heavenly Father. He is absolutely protective of you and me as His little children.

As I think back to those good ol' days, I seem to remember that I never once saw or heard of an old domer-neck mother hen that ever, under any circumstance, rejected even one of her brood of chicks. Never did I see one of those hens fail to instantly receive her little ones when they came running and chirping in fear. My dear reader, never will our God fail to receive the feeblest of His own. He will always be to us a refuge in the time of storm, an eternal refuge in the time of any trouble.

Oh, how well I remember that old hen and her undying desire to protect her brood of little yellow chicks. Here is a bird that is, for herself, afraid of the menacing talons and the sharp, flesh rending beak of the hawk. Yet when in the face of that great danger and harm to her little ones, she would stir up her whole strength to their defense.

And so it is with our God. There is no care like His care, no compassion like His compassion, and no fury like His fury in the protection of His own.

The little chicks had no other refuge. When the shadow of the hawk came over that little field the old hen would bring forth that sound that only mother hens can produce and the chicks came scurrying. Immediately those wings would come down to receive every little terrified chick, and there

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WHY PREACH

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ize. True, they preach some truth of the need of sinners to believe and be saved but that is about the extent. There is no reaching out or going out into the highways and byways in compelling men to believe. On the other extreme, we have the preachers of free-willism, that is, that God did not predestinate anyone's salvation and it is entirely up to the individual to accept or deny the calling of God unto salvation. Further that God is trying to save as many as He can but man has the final decision. Both these extremes dishonor God and further, deny the teachings of

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AUGUST 1, 1996

PAGE TWO

Editor's Update

By Interim Pastor Jack c. Whitt

I bring you greetings once again from our church here in Ashland, Kentucky. This will be my second publication of *The Baptist Examiner* since assuming the editorship from Brother Gene Helton. We are holding our own very well here at Calvary Baptist Church believing in God and His promises to sustain His work through His local missionary Baptist churches.

We cannot afford ever to stop relying upon God's grace. We are making more effort to be a better church than ever before. Our men have begun to meet early on Sunday evening to pray before church time. Some of the women are coming early as well. Prayer is so important and we are trying to place a higher value upon this most neglected means of communication with God. It is by God, we stand or fall. It is to Him we must give account. We ought therefore "In all our ways acknowledge Him and He will direct our paths."

We have had several to apply for the Calvary Baptist Church pastorate. As of this writing, we have not begun calling anyone for consideration, although by the time of mailing, it is quite possible that interviewing may have begun. We do appreciate those who have submitted resumes. Some have not given doctrinal statements (or very little). We would remind those submitting resumes to include their doctrinal position. We are not being picky or difficult but we feel we could save you time and effort as well as our time and effort if you differ from us on major doctrines. Of course other considerations are important apart from doctrinal truth, but we must begin somewhere. No doubt all resumes we have received are from sincere, dedicated men of God. We want to reply to all who have mailed resumes as soon as we can.

As we close for this time, we would again ask your prayers for us. May God inspire each of us to pray even more "As we see the day approaching."

the Bible. In the former erring extreme, God's Word plainly commands to evangelize, to go, to send missionaries. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matt. 28:19-20). Then we read in Romans 10:14-15 "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Yes, we are to go and to bring the Gospel of glad tidings. Churches have no attraction for lost sinners. (Come to think of it, many Christians have little attraction to our churches.) It is God's people who can and ought

to urge the lost sinner to come inside our doors and hear the Word proclaimed. Most of us could do better in this great need. Beyond that, the Gospel ought to be preached in the homes and on the sidewalks, in the highways and byways of our land.

Then on the other erring extreme of free-willism, God's Word again denounces and goes against such doctrinal heresy. Listen: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth" (Rom. 9:16, 18). Thus it is God who chooses and yet man will deny, reject, and hate the revealed truth of the Word. And why is this? Simple, man is left out. He can take no credit. This is that inborn nature that says: "What about me? I must do something!" Nay, O foolish heart, there is nothing you can bring. We stand or fall at God's discretion. But yet, one would say that is discrimination and to discriminate is to be unfair or unjust. Nay again, dare

any to charge God foolishly? Listen: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonor?" (Rom. 9:20-21).

But now back to the question of our topic. "Why preach" if all this be true? If God has foreordained man's beginning and his end, is there need to preach? Let me gladly and loudly proclaim, yes, yes a thousand times, yes. Why preach, indeed! It is because God said it, nay, He commanded it. Dare we, who are but a worm, go against His divine Word? Listen! Do you believe the Bible? Search the Scriptures, see the many times we are told to preach, yea, even to shout from the roof tops this glorious and blessed Word that gives life and hope to the down trodden. Why preach? Because there are alcoholics, drug addicts, prostitutes, homosexuals, and lesbians, who need to be saved. They have tried every human plan of escape but all of them have failed. Why preach? Because there are families torn apart. Husbands and wives separating and divorcing, children left on their own and being abused. Why preach? Because everywhere we look, we see people hurting, people with heartache, people who are without hope and no place to turn for help. We see people dying around us. They need to hear the Gospel before they go out into eternity.

These are some of the many reasons to preach the Gospel. Yet still we hear from our opposers: Why preach? if God will eventually bring all these things to pass in His own way and in His own time? Again, it strikes me with wonder in how so many supposed Bible scholars cannot see the simple reasoning in God's Word. True, though it is, God will bring to pass all that He has decreed. Not one thing will fail to occur of His sovereign plan, yet He has also decreed that man will be instrumental in bringing these things to pass. We, then, as God's preachers and witnesses are privileged, honored and obligated to gladly present ourselves ready and willing to the task of carrying out this most solemn duty. How could it be otherwise? Both Old and New Testament Scripture abundantly attested to the aforementioned plan of God. Listen: "Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words

that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears. And go, get thee to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, Thus saith the Lord God; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear" (Ezek. 3:10-11). And again we read in this same chapter: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me" (Ezek. 3:17).

We see from these verses, that God has commanded that mankind be informed and warned, and those who are called to carry out this order had best be doing just that. We are to leave the results of the preaching in God's hands. If it were that we could preach to souls for 120 years and not one would be saved, we would be doing our duty and God would approve. Did this not happen with Noah?

In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul, the most profound witness to God's sovereignty in choosing His elect and who wrote with divine inspiration, the book of Ephesians, said in 1:4-5 "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Paul, knowing God's will and His foreordained purposes would come to pass, yet he could say "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:14-16). True preachers are like the Apostle Paul, we are debtors to tell people about Jesus Christ. Just as he (Paul) wrote to the

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Being overcome
with envy is like
running into the
ocean; the
deeper you go in,
the harder it is to
get out.

The Baptist Examiner Bible Study Lesson

By Kirk R. Everman

Member of Calvary Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tennessee

A Blessing in Disguise Genesis 27:1-40

"And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim...he called Esau his eldest son...And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death: Now therefore...go out to the field, and take me some venison; And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die" (Gen. 27:1-4). Using this deal with his son Esau, Isaac initiates a chain of events with an impact extending far beyond the nourishment from a single meal.

We are told two additional things regarding this conversation: "Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau" and "Esau went to the field to hunt" (v. 5). Thus, Rebekah knows of the offer that Isaac has made to Esau and that Esau has already departed to earn his blessing.

Verses 6-17 feature Rebekah and Jacob as Rebekah plans for Jacob to receive this blessing from Isaac. First, Rebekah repeats Isaac's words to Esau. Then she begins to unfold her scheme to Jacob: "Go now to the flock, and fetch me thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth: And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may bless thee before his death" (v. 9-10).

In reply to his mother's commands, Jacob reveals that he is a man of details rather than a man of integrity. "Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man: My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing" (v. 11-12). Nevertheless, Rebekah expresses her commitment to the plan: "Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice..." (v. 13).

Jacob follows his mother's directions and fetches the animals. Rebekah prepares the tasty meal and dresses Jacob in some

of Esau's best clothing. As a final preparation step for Jacob's act of deception and in response to the concern raised by Jacob, Rebekah "put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck" (v. 16).

In verses 18-29 Jacob comes before his father to seek the blessing that Isaac has extended to Esau. As anticipated by Jacob, he must pass the testing by Isaac's non-visual senses. In response to Isaac's questioning, Jacob must respond with several lies. First, he identifies himself as "I am Esau thy firstborn" (v. 19). When Isaac questions the speed with which his son was able to accomplish the task, Jacob replies, "Because the Lord thy God brought it to me" (v. 20). Jacob's third lie follows after Isaac's examination of Jacob's fur-covered hands. "...The voice is of Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau...And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am" (v. 22-24).

Isaac is somewhat persuaded that the son before him is Esau and asks for the meal to be brought to him that he might eat first and then bestow his blessing. Isaac is satisfied with the meal and has one final test to discern if the person before him is his son Esau. "...Isaac said unto him, Come here now, and kiss me my son. And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed" (v. 26-27). Isaac has finally convinced himself that this must be Esau, "the man of the field", and not Jacob, "the dweller in tents".

Isaac's blessing is one of prosperity and power, including ruling authority over other nations and over Isaac's family. Jacob's deception was successful and he received the irrevocable blessing from his father. However, the concealment of the deception was short lived. "And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made

an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting" (v. 30).

Esau prepares his meal and comes before his father. Isaac questions the identity of this second visitor. "...I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly" (v. 32-33). Isaac relates to Esau that he has already given the blessing and that it shall stand. As Isaac describes the blessing which he has given to Jacob, Esau entreats his father three times for a blessing: "...Bless me, even me also" (v. 34), "...Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?" (v. 36), and "Hast thou but one blessing, my father...And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept" (v. 38).

Knowing that this son before him is truly Esau, Isaac gives a second blessing concerning Esau's future (see Heb. 11:20). "Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above. And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck" (v. 39-40).

Character: From Fear to Love

For the situation in this study, the pivotal character is Jacob and the pivotal moment is when he consents to his mother's plans. In verse 12, we see that two fears initially block Jacob from his willingness to take part: the fear of being caught and the fear of the resulting consequence (receiving a curse). Rebekah attempts to remove the second fear by offering to receive any curse that may be placed on Jacob. Next, she handles his fear by taking additional steps to effectively disguise Jacob; thereby reducing the chances of the deception being detected. Rebekah's actions are important for when Jacob's fears are removed, his true character is revealed. In other words, "What would he do, if he thought he

could get away with it?" Unfortunately, Jacob has decided that this is the right course of action, presuming that he does not get caught.

Believers and non-believers should be thankful for the existence of these two fears. In areas of our lives where our character may be weak, these fears are often sufficient to protect us from improper decisions or behavior. In fact, when one has acted in disobedience to God, typically it corresponds with the individual believing a lie that the reality behind at least one of those fears is non-existent. That is to say, "I won't get caught" or "there are no consequences to this action."

To the believer, the ultimate manifestations of these fears have already been realized; however the One doing the catching is not an earthly father, but is God. When God reveals to the heart that "...There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10) and "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23) and that those groups of 'none' and 'all' include you and me, we no longer need to discuss the possibility of being caught. There also remains no mystery regarding the magnitude of the consequences, "For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

So it is for those who expect to be justified by their good works. "For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. 3:10). However, to the sinner who trusts Christ as his or her Saviour, a love which transcends human understanding overwhelms that place of dreadful fear, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us...That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Gal. 3:13-14).

What does all of this have to do
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HEN

(Continued from Page 1)

she would remain hovering over and protecting her little ones.

This kind of reminds me of our heavenly Father. Surely, here is the only Refuge for the children of God. "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:7).

But what a sight that old domer-neck hen would make, and oh how I remember it now. What caused that? What caused that old hen to drop those wings and raise the feathers on the back of her neck and fly right into the face of a would-be chicken eating dog or cat? Motherly instinct, pure and simple! It was the power of love displayed.

Our heavenly Father is that way too you know. He "so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life" (Jn. 3:16).

He loved us so much that "He bore our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24).

He loved us so much that, even when we had all gone astray like unto straying sheep, He laid our iniquities upon Himself, and bore them in His own body. And even when we had become unprofitable, and when none of us were doing good nor could do good, He loved us and healed us with His own stripes (Isa. 53).

Dear reader, no one ever cared for me like Jesus...No one ever cared for me like Him, and I would recommend Him to you.

He will save you and He will keep you. He will protect you from the evil one who "as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8).

Isn't the fortitude of a mother hen something amazing? But not nearly as amazing as the love of God. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 Jn. 3:1-2). "Like as a father pitieth his
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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit Forum

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

**The Bible teaches all men are sinners and must believe on Jesus Christ
to be saved and go to heaven.**

**How does this apply to people in primitive lands who have never
or may never hear of Jesus Christ?**

Editor's Note - Since I submitted the question for the Forum, my response will not appear in this edition. Also Brother Lenegar has been ill and was not able to submit his response in this edition. He has undergone surgery. Remember him in your prayers.

**JAMES E.
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To begin with we must first understand that God is not obligated to save anyone. He would be totally just if every person that has ever been born would die in his sins and go to hell.

No sinner goes to hell because he rejected Jesus Christ. He goes to hell because he is a sinner and the rejection of Jesus Christ is just one of the sins. A person who is born in a primitive land and has never heard the Gospel will not be guilty of rejecting what he has never heard, but he is still a sinner and deserving of hell, and guilty of sinning against God. **"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse"** (Rom. 1:20). Sin in general condemns. "Rejection of the Gospel does not bring condemnation to man; it only manifests it and increases the penalty that shall be inflicted because of it." (T.P. Simmons, "A Systematic Study of Bible Doctrine"). **"For as many as have sinned without the law shall also perish without the**

law..." (Rom. 2:12). All men are guilty and without excuse because of the sin of Adam. We all sinned in him.

The only way that anyone is saved is through the grace of God. In mercy He loved the unlovable and by grace He saves us. **"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed"** (Acts 13:48). The people of primitive lands who have never heard the Gospel are just like the Gentiles before the Gospel came to them.

Now as I bring this answer to a close, please understand this, there will never be one of God's elect who will go to hell. God will see to it that he will hear the Gospel and be saved. I remind you of the Ethiopian eunuch of Acts 8:26-40. God sent Philip to the wilderness so he could preach the Gospel to him and he believed and was saved.

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Sanford, FL



The real issue is this: How can a person who has never heard the Gospel be responsible to obey that which he has not heard? Would it not be logical to excuse such an adult who had never heard? We don't believe so. Again, man is to blame for his inability to obey the revealed will of God. God permitted sin to enter into the world and such permission included that sin should come upon man by his own free choice. God does not compel any to sin even though He allowed it. So man is the real cause for sin and its punishment. Regardless of what he knows, he is still responsible!

Mankind is endowed with the light of reason. They are given a capacity to worship. This is why man erects false gods and idols even where the Gospel has not been preached. They can reason that the world was made by some higher being. They have a conscience that can determine right from wrong. It is also true that even primitive cultures establish laws to govern themselves by. I had one man tell me if a lost heathen who had never heard, would pray to God to give him more light, more light would be given for that person to be converted. My question to him was simply "Which god?" **"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of WHOM THEY HAVE NOT HEARD? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"** (Rom. 10:14). Regardless of whether a person is in the deepest jungle of Africa or on Madison Avenue, they must hear the Gospel to know and call upon the Lord. **"Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse"** (Rom. 1:19-20).

There are a few exceptions to this: I would say that babies and infants who die, as well as the mentally deformed, do not have the natural ability to reason. I believe that God provided forgiveness for such in the atonement of Christ. Such can not be accountable because of the absence of natural faculties. Jesus replied to the Pharisees: **"If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth"** (Jn. 9:41). There are three kinds of blindness: (1) Physical blindness, (2) Mental blindness, and

(3) Spiritual blindness. When Jesus spoke to the Pharisees He did not mean that they were physically blind. He told them if in fact they were like imbeciles or babies, they could claim the excuse of mental blindness. They could not make such an excuse. They were spiritually blind and hence responsible for their sins! Infants who die and imbeciles are mentally blind but the normal person is endowed with rationality to distinguish between right and wrong. He will have to give an account for himself one day before God. **"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God"** (Rom. 14:12). So even the heathen who have never heard the Gospel still are rational thinking people. They must all give account.

Understand this one truth: God created all people. He has the right to do with them as He wishes. He can save as many as He will according to His good pleasure! It is glorious thing that He saved any of us! Now those who have died without hearing the Gospel will not be charged with the specific sin of rejecting the Gospel yet they will still be judged for all their sins. Rejection of the Gospel does not in itself alone cause people to go to hell; people are judged according to their works (Rev. 20:12-15). This is why the Scripture teaches degrees of punishment. Certainly those who have not heard will not be punished to the same degree as a lost church member who heard the Gospel many times. This should give us even a greater burden to the work of world wide missions. My friends, think of those who are dying every day who have never heard the Gospel. Let us increase our efforts in getting the Gospel to precious lost souls!

**Amazing Grace,
how sweet the
sound!**

Paint for Paint By C.H. Spurgeon

If it is not a real, hearty ministry of grace, inspired by the Holy Spirit, it will end in nothing. Fine words neither wound nor heal.

Oratory may amuse, but it cannot convert; and rhetoric may astonish, but it will never save.

We must have more than mere words, however striking--paint will not do; we want living preaching, by men in

downright earnest, attended by the living Spirit, or else life will never be created or sustained by it.

What is the use of coloring the cheek of the dead? The hue of life is a mockery while death reigns within. That is evil preaching which creates the semblance of piety, but never imparts the substance.

Lord, save me from being the imitation of a Christian, the product of a mimic Gospel. Give me thoroughness and sincerity, and let not my religion be a painted pageantry for me to go to hell in. Create in me a clean heart, O God!

AFTER CONVERSION--WHAT?

By C. D. Cole

Introduction

Webster's definition of conversion: "A spiritual and moral change attending a change of belief with conviction; a change of heart; a change from worldliness to godliness; a change of the ruling disposition of the soul, involving a transformation of outward life."

Conversion is a spiritual and moral change of attitude: (1) towards God about sin; (2) towards God about His Son; (3) towards God about His Word; and (4) towards God about His people.

Conversion is an inward change leading to an outward change of life. We call this change an experience of grace because it is wrought by the Spirit of God in the human heart by the use of the truth. I Corinthians 15:10, "But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

I have heard about a man who objected to praying for the Lord to apply the truth to the hearts of the lost. He said the sermon was good and the truth was all that was needed. That man's objection was a revelation of his theology. He denied the truth of depravity; the truth that the human heart is wicked, that the carnal mind hates God, that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, that the Gospel is hid to the lost, that the sinner must be born again in order to see the kingdom of God. In a word, his theology denied the reality of sin.

If sin were just the misfortune of a good man—a man who loves God and is in fellowship with God—then the Gospel would be naturally believed and no change would have to be wrought in the mind or soul of the sinner. And in such a case, prayer would be useless. If the Spirit of God does not have to work a revolution in the heart and mind—if he does not have to do a work that cannot be done by the Word—then prayer for God to work would be a waste of breath. If sword or other weapons without human wisdom and power can kill the enemy and win the war, it would be folly to raise an army and get men killed. I Thessalonians 1:5,

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake." If the Word only is all that is needed for salvation, Paul was guilty of folly when he prayed for the salvation of Israel. Romans 10:1, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved."

There is a twofold implication in praying for sinners: (1) that the Gospel and the preacher are not enough for salvation; and (2) that the Holy Spirit is equal to the task of converting the sinner, giving him eyes to see and a heart to believe the Gospel. This does not mean any weakness in the Gospel as the means of salvation; the weakness is in the sinner to see and believe. The Gospel saves the believer, but it has no power to make a believer. Only God can give the disposition to believe. And I believe with all my heart He is able to do this, and so I pray in faith that He can if He will.

There are three distinct elements in conversion:

1. There is the realization of our sinful and lost condition—such a realization disturbs and distresses, and makes one uneasy and unhappy. This is a painful experience, but it is a necessary experience. It is not necessary as any price for salvation. The sinner is not saved by mourning, but how can a man want to be saved from a condition that is satisfactory? If sin does not cause one to mourn, if sin does not cause misery, then salvation would bring no joy.

2. Another element in conversion is the realization that we can do nothing about it so far as making amends for our wrong doing. If the sinner could fix up the past and never sin again, he would be his own Saviour and would not need to look to another. The Scriptures make it clear that the sinner cannot save himself—that he cannot make himself right with God by his own works—that salvation is of grace. Ephesians 2:8-10, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his work-

manship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Titus 3:5 says "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." In conversion, the sinner loses all hope in himself.

3. Another element in conversion is the belief that Jesus Christ can and did do something about sin—that He put it away by the sacrifice of Himself. He had no sin of his own to put away; He put away the sins of others. The sinner cannot make himself right with God, but the Saviour can and did. That is why salvation is by faith. It is by faith because Christ did the saving work on the cross, when He bare our sins in his own body. By suffering for us He settled our sin debt; therefore, to be saved we must take the place of sinners and look to Him for acceptance with God. God accepteth no man's person; we are accepted in the Beloved. Ephesians 1:6 says "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

These three elements are in every conversion and I do not hesitate to say that if you lack one or all, you are not saved. They may not be very pronounced in the beginning, but if you have them, they will become more pronounced as you grow in grace and knowledge of the truth.

Where are you?

It is not the question of where you are physically—that needs no discussion—you know that you are here in this building. You would know what I meant if I should ask, "Where are you as to your health? or as to your finances? or as to your reputation?"

The question is: What is your status as a mortal being accountable to God? What is your position or standing before God? As a converted person—converted to faith in Jesus Christ—where are you? The Bible gives the answer:

1. You are not under law, but under grace. Romans 6:14 "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Romans 7:4, "Wherefore, my brethren, (Continued on Page 6)

GRACE REIGNING IN ELECTION

By Horatius Bonar

"For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt." Accordingly, he finds fault with election, as a mere system of arbitrary partiality and favoritism; and tells us that if there be such a thing as total helplessness in man, and sovereign election in God, then man is not to blame if he be lost. Man's entire apostasy and death in sin, so that he cannot save himself, and God's entire supremacy, so that He saves whom He will, are doctrines exceedingly distasteful to human pride. But they are Scriptural.

Why was one thief saved and the other lost? "Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in Thy sight." God was not bound to save the one, and He had power enough to have saved the other, and neither could save himself. What made the difference? The sovereign grace of God.

Why was Paul saved and Judas lost? Was it because the former deserved to be saved and the latter did not deserve to be saved. Was it because the one was a fitting object for the grace of God and the other not? No, the one was no more a fitting object than the other. Was it because Paul chose Christ, and Judas rejected Him? Well, but how was it that Paul chose Christ? Was it not because Christ chose him?

Why was it that Judea was made a land of light and Egypt remained a region of darkness? Who made the difference? Man or God? Was God unjust in leaving Egypt in the shadow of death when He made light to arise on Israel? What had Israel done to deserve a privilege like this?

Why is it that Britain is a land of light and Africa a land of darkness? Who made the difference? Who sent the Gospel to Britain and withheld it from Africa? Is God unjust in leaving the mighty continent in the hands of Satan, and in delivering from his yoke this small island of the sea?

None have deserved salvation. No man is more fit for it than another. God was not bound to save any. God might have saved all. Yet He only saved some. Is He, then, unjust in only saving some when He could have saved all? Objectors say, Oh, those who are lost, are lost because they rejected Christ. But did not

all equally reject Him at first? What made the unbelief of some give way? Was it because they willed it, or because God put forth His power in them? Surely the latter. Might He not, then, have put forth His power in all, and prevented any from rejecting the Saviour? Yet He did not. Why? Because so it seemed good in His sight.

Is it unjust in God to save only a few when all are equally doomed to die? If not, is there any injustice in His determining aforehand to save these few, and leave the rest unsaved? They could not save themselves, and God in His infinite wisdom must resolve to save them. Or, was it unjust in Him to resolve, in His infinite wisdom, to save them? Or, was it unjust in Him not to resolve to save all? Had all perished there would have been no injustice with Him. How is it possible that there can be injustice in His resolving to save some?

There can be no grace when there is no sovereignty. Deny God's right to choose whom He will and you deny His right to save whom He will. Deny His right to save whom He will and you deny that salvation is of grace. If salvation is made to hinge upon any desert or fitness in man, seen or foreseen, grace is at an end.

One of the controversies of the present day is respecting the will of God—as to whether His will or man's is the regulating power in the universe, and the procuring cause of salvation to souls. The supremacy of God's will over individual persons and events is questioned. Things are made to turn upon man's will, not on God's. Conversion is made to turn on man's will, not on God's. Man's will, not God's, is to decide what individuals are to enter heaven. Man's pen, and not God's, is to write the names of the saved ones in the Lamb's Book of Life! Much zeal is shown for the freedom of man's will, little jealousy seems to be left for the freedom of God's will. Men insist that it is unjust and tyrannical in God to control their wills, yet see nothing unjust, nothing (Continued on Page 8)

THE LORD

(Continued from Page 1)

kind. We all are born as fallen creatures. Just because we are a part of humanity that does not mean that we are automatically in fellowship with Him. We must have a radical change in our life. We must be made new creatures in Christ; this takes places when the Lord saves a man from his sin.

4. "Will a lion roar in the forest, when he hath no prey? will a young lion cry out of his den, if he have taken nothing?" All speech has meaning. The Israelites knew a lion's roar tells us of captured prey. It is a true message. A lion does not lie nor deceive through his roaring. Amos' message from the Lord has great meaning as well. Israel and all mankind should heed its warnings. The Lord never makes idle threats, when the Lord speaks man must listen and realize it is true.

5. "Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no gin is for him?" For a bird to be captured a trap must be set. If Israel falls into the judgment of God it is because they refused to avoid the trap of sin. Sin kept in a nation truly is a trap that causes great harm to a nation's inhabitants.

So, too, in the life of the disobedient; the trap has already been laid; sin has already entered the world. By turning a deaf ear to the warnings of God, sin will cause eternal harm to those who reject the saving message of God's grace.

"...shall one take up a snare from the earth, and have taken nothing at all?" If a trapper takes up his trap before his prey is caught, he is defeating the purpose of the snare. A snare only captures prey when it is set. The same principle is true concerning sin. Israel was foolish if they believed they could allow sin to exist in their nation and, yet, escape its sting. They should seek to rid sin from their nation before it was too late.

If an individual sees sin dominating his life he must turn to Christ to have that sin cleansed. Without a cleansing of sin, no one can escape its power and harm.

6. "Shall a trumpet be blown

in the city, and the people not be afraid?" In Amos' day, the warning of coming danger was issued by the trumpet. The Israelites had been trained to fear when they heard the sound of the warning trumpet in their city. Amos' message to them was the blast of a warning trumpet, warning of their coming judgment for the sin they had committed. Similarly, in today's time, the gospel message is encircling the globe like the warning blast of a trumpet that fills a city. For the world to reject God's words as unimportant, is ignoring the warning blast of coming judgment.

"...shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" Our Lord controls all things. The Israelites needed to know that when harmful events take place in their nation it is for a purpose. The Lord either causes, or allows, these events to judge, or perhaps, warn of greater future judgment. Amos foretold of judgments that would fall against other nations surrounding Israel. Israel should notice these judgments and see their need to repent.

Likewise, all humanity should see the Lord's hand in dealing with sin and repent before it is too late.

Amos' Message to the Obedient

7. "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." Yes, there was still time for Israel to repent; the Lord is not a Lord of impatience. Yes, He gave Amos his message for a reason...to take it to those who needed it. Amos' responsibility was to take this message to Israel and warn them of coming judgment.

So too, with His followers today. He has given His message to His servants (all saints, but especially His churches) to take to a lost and dying world. There is still time, but the time is running out. The Lord is coming back quickly.

8. "The lion hath roared, who will not fear? the Lord God hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" The Lord gave His message to Amos. It struck fear in his heart, a fear for his nation and a fear (reverence) for what great grace had been bestowed upon him. How could he keep this message to himself?

The Lord has made it clear—all men must be saved or face an eternity in the lake of fire. This

message should work fear in the hearts of all men.

If we know that the Lord is speaking truth how can we continue to be quiet about man's need to be saved? Should we not fear for others when we hear the message of coming judgment? Should we not appreciate and reverence our Lord for the great grace He has shown to us? HOW CAN WE REMAIN SILENT?

CONVERSION

(Continued from Page 5)

ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

2. You are not under the wrath of God. John 3:36 "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." Galatians 3:13 "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

3. You are in Christ. I Corinthians 1:30 "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Romans 8:1 "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

4. You are dead to sin. Romans 6:2 "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Romans 6:11 "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

What are you?

You are a person of two natures—flesh and spirit. You have had two births. These natures are not brothers but enemies. Galatians 5:17 "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." These natures are not twins or friends; they are foes. So you are going to experience a warfare. You will not find it easy to live the Christian life. You will not find yourself satisfied with your progress and attainments. You will find your-

Lord Make Me A Winner of Souls

By Kathryn Parrish

(Taken from Jewels of Truth)

Lift up your eyes unto the fields,
See the harvest, great, the laborers, few;
Lord, send laborers to do Your will,
And bring lost sinners to You.

Oh, Lord, I pray You will send the preacher,
For he is eloquent and knows what to say;
Or would You send the Sunday School teacher
Into Your harvest today?

Wait, my child, do you not remember?
My commission I gave to the church!
Of My church are you not a member?
Your duty, are you trying to shirk?

Child, out there in the harvest field,
My sheep are waiting to be told;
To the gospel they will yield,
And come rejoicing into the fold.

My sheep will not perish if you do not bother
To tell them that I died for them;
But your reward will go to another,
The soul-winner's crown you will fail to win.

Oh, Lord, forgive me for shirking my duty,
And for my cold, indifferent heart;
I want to tell them of your love and beauty,
And how, in salvation, they may have a part.

Lord, give me much love and compassion,
Make me wise and very bold;
Oh, may I go out with zeal and a passion,
To be a winner of souls.

self crying again and again "O God, make me a better Christian."

You are a child of God—babes to begin with, but susceptible to growth. But to grow; you will have to feed on the sincere milk of the Word. You will begin to backslide the day you begin to neglect the Word of God. God has provided a church and preachers to help you know more about the riches of His grace and the things He has prepared for you. You can no more prosper as a Christian without feeding on the Word than you can prosper physically without food for the body.

You will have a heavenly Father who will not allow you to run wild. You will be subject to discipline, and you will learn by sad experience that it will not pay to be careless and loose in your living. You may not be a good child, but He will be a good Father. You may not be a wise child, but He will be a wise Father.

*Show me the way,
not the fortune or
fame, not to win
laurels or praise
for my name...But
show me the way to
spread the great
story that thine is
the kingdom, the
power and the
glory.*

*Don't start your
day by supposing
that trouble is just
ahead. It's better
to stop supposing
and start with a
prayer instead.*

LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY

By Waldo Whiddon

"And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil" (Lk. 11:1-4).

How vitally important our prayer life is! Everything we are, and everything we do, everything that is blessed in and through our lives, is a product of prayer. The devil is afraid of nothing but true prayer. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" (1 Pet. 5:8-9). Satan's whole aim is to keep the saints from praying. He is not afraid of any prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our efforts, mocks our wisdom, but he trembles when we pray. Beloved, that is why the Lord Jesus urges us in so many ways to pray. "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" (Matt. 7:7-8). I believe that if the quality of our prayer life is poor, our whole spiritual service will be poor.

If we want to become people who really pray, we do well to consider the prayer life of Jesus. How He, the Son of God, who came from the Father, and knew glory, prayed during His short life on earth. We often read in the Gospels that He was either in the wilderness or went up on a mountain to pray. "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed" (Mk. 1:35). He went where there was nothing to distract Him. We see the same thing in the writings of Matthew,

where we find Jesus seeking a quiet place after the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, after a hard day's work. "And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray; and when the evening was come, he was there alone" (Matt. 14:23). Also we see "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God" (Lk. 6:12). This, beloved, was the secret and power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. What happened when Jesus prayed?

a. The heavens opened! "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened" (Lk. 3:21). Beloved, this then, is the experience of those who pray! We are often alone when we pray like this, and heaven truly is opened.

b. His appearance has changed! "And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening" (Lk. 9:29). Our Lord Jesus was not transfigured on the high mountain simply because He is the Son of God altogether, but because He prayed to the Father above. "...And as he prayed...His appearance was altered!" By praying and seeking the face of God in spirit and coming into His presence through honest prayer and supplication, our faces will shine spiritually with the joy of the Lord!

As born-again Christians, we all want to be conformed to the image of Jesus. We long for the Lord to become visible to us. This will take place according to the measure in which we pray. Then the glory of Jesus will be reflected in our faces with our everyday walk with Him. There is often so much pompousness and so much that is negative in the nature, voice, and so little resemblance of Jesus, because our fellowship with the Father, and the Son is so superficial.

In a harmonious marriage a husband and wife often seem to resemble one another more and more as time goes by. How much more is this true if you enjoy intimate fellowship with the Lord, and have a powerful prayer life? This, beloved, could make you a powerful and true prayer warrior.

Think about it.

c. The powers of death have to depart. The third experience Jesus had in Gethsemane was very hard. We read "And being in agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Lk. 22:44). Here Jesus our Lord and Saviour had a direct confrontation with the powers of darkness who wanted to thwart the whole plan of salvation. He was on the point of accomplishing His great work of reconciling the world with God on Calvary's cross, and then suddenly He was attacked by the powers of death. It was as though He would have to die. He saw His work of reconciliation frustrated and hastened in prayer to His heavenly Father.

Luke recorded some of our Lord's praying for the benefit of mankind also in other places. "Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done" (Lk. 22:42). This mightily strengthened Him and in the next verse we read: "And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him" (Lk. 22:43). Because Jesus wrestled with death here, He prayed all the more fervently, and He overcame. Jesus is the victor of all manner of destruction.

2. What place did prayer have in the life of Jesus?

When they wanted to make Him the center of attention, we often read: "And he withdrew himself..." When He healed all the sick, and even greater crowds followed Him, the Bible says: "And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed" (Lk. 5:16). When they wanted to make Him king after the feeding of the five thousand, we read: "When Jesus perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone" (Jn. 6:15). Fellowship with His Father in prayer was more to Him than the homage of man. When the disciples said "Lord, teach us to pray" (Lk. 11:1), He expressed in His answer what has priority in true prayer, in verse two, He said: "When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." Beloved, we are too often concerned with

A Woman's Touch

By Wendy Barkman

Chloe

1 Corinthians 1:11

General Information

1 Corinthians 1:11 - Some people of the household of this woman, Chloe, informed the Apostle Paul of some problems among the brethren at the church of Corinth. Exactly who she was is uncertain. The



Scripture is not clear on this. Some say that she probably lived at Corinth, and that she herself was a member of the church of Corinth. Chloe's family informed Paul of these problems in the Corinthian church. Others indicate that she was a godly woman, well known by the members of the church at Corinth, not necessarily a member herself. Still another opinion is that Chloe, whether a pagan or a Christian, we do not know, had close friends or slaves (servants) who informed Paul of problems in the Corinthian church. Some believe that these members of Chloe's household had delivered Paul's earlier letter to Corinth, thus their knowledge of problems within this church.

Note - A few authorities believe Chloe to have been the name of a place, a city in Cappadocia. Chloe is also thought to have been the popular name for the Roman goddess Demeter, goddess of husbandry (farming, crops), the name Chloe being given to this Roman goddess because of the green crops. This goddess had 56 temples in Greece, one being in Corinth. The view held by some is that those of the household of Chloe were lost people who worshipped Chloe, or disinterested critics outside the church.

Name Study

Chloe - a tender sprout, green herb, verdure, green grass, green grass of the field, green: from a word meaning greenish, verdant, dun-colored; translated green, pale, in the following verses: Mk. 6:39; Rev. 6:8, 8:7, 9:4. This word is also related to the word meaning (greenish hue), "gall" or bile, poison or an anodyne (wormwood, poppy, etc.); translated gall in the following verses: Matt. 27:34; Acts 8:23.

Personal Application

The color green indicates a healthy, fruitful plant. Was Chloe, as Herbert Lockyer indicates, characteristic of "fruitful grace and beauty"?

Practical Application

It is interesting to note that green in Mark 6:39, and other places, represents life, but in Revelation 6:8, the pale (pale-green in the original) horse represents death. The thought that comes to mind is a dead body lying in a coffin, and how it resembles life, but is not. The same is true, spiritually speaking, of those who make a pretense of being spiritually alive, but are, in reality, spiritually dead.

what we need in our prayers, but the Lord gives His Father's interest absolute priority. Instead of His saying, "O Lord, help me, I can't stand this pain and agony any longer" when He was dying He said "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Lk. 23:34). Yes, His prayers would ring the bells of heaven, and the Father would listen to His Son.

3. Thanks and praise, the

highest expression of perfect faith

In Colossians 4:2, we are not only told to pray continually, but also to give thanks. "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." Beloved, does prayer and thanks-

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BIBLE STUDY

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with the character of a believer? Well, first consider life under the law (attempting to achieve righteousness through keeping all of the law). Such is a life of fear and bondage, for the law was not given to redeem us, but rather to reveal the sin in us (see Heb. 2:15, 10:31; Rom. 3:20, 7:13-14). The sin nature of one living under the law is at times hidden from external view, for his or her "good deeds" are motivated by a fear of punishment from doing otherwise.

Motivation by fear should not be the case for the believer, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2). Also, "ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption..." (Rom. 8:15).

It is God's will that the character of the believer become increasingly more Christ-like. This is part of the sanctification process. The character of the spiritually maturing believer can be and is tested beyond that of a non-believer, because as one's life is increasingly motivated by love for God and not by fear of punishment (either by God or man), one's character is exposed to a greater degree.

A spiritual measuring stick is given to us that we might examine our lives. "Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment...There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us" (1 Jn. 4:17-19). Are there areas where obedience to God still comes from fear and not from love? Are there areas of disobedience because we have forgotten the love of God? The maturing believer is able to cease from sinful practices as an overcoming love continues to expand its territory in the believer's life, even overtaking the strongholds previously protected solely by fear.

We enter into the cocoon of sanctification as a lowly worm inching forward slowly in fear. If one were to look in on the

process, at times the novice observer might truly be disgusted by what is revealed during the transformation (especially, when we fail the tests of character). It is to the glory of God that we one day emerge no longer crawling in fear, but able to fly boldly in love, even in the day of judgment. Unlike the butterfly, our eventual beauty is not a superficial powder that is brushed off with the slightest touch. Rather, it consists of the precious, indelible markings from the righteous covering of our Lord.

HEN

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children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust" (Ps. 103:13-14).

Grandma used to keep the old settin' hen tied by one leg so that she could not wander off into the surrounding woods and weeds where such varmints lurked which would have her chicks for dinner, yet to her great consternation they would stray from her right into harms way. She would be furring and clucking and calling, yet when danger really came to the wandering ones she never refused them when they came running back to her scared to death for their very lives.

And so it is with out heavenly Father. When we have foolishly wandered from Him and gotten ourselves into an awful mess. He never casts us off when we come back in true repentance, confessing our sins and pleading His forgiveness. He will receive and forgive. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn. 1:9).

God's love is eternal love. He will receive and save the lost that come unto God by Him. Hear His precious words "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me" (Jn. 14:6).

He turns none away, all who come for His "so great salvation" (Heb. 2:3) shall receive a full pardon and a home in heaven. But just as the little chicks would have been eaten by the hawk had they not run for safety to their mother, so will men perish who neglect their souls salvation. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

So please consider the words

of our Saviour in our text: "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings...and ye would not" (Matt. 23:37).

God will save whosoever will...the rest will have to perish.

He will save the lost and He will restore the backslider, so let it not be said of you nor of myself, "And ye would not."

He has declared His great love for us in the unanswerable eloquence of the old rugged cross, and it is so good and so wonderful to be saved by His matchless grace.

I'm glad for my memories of Grandma's old domer-neck hen, but I'm more glad for the Saviour she and Grandpa loved and served so well.

GRACE

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proud, nothing Satanic in attempting to fetter and direct the will of God. Man, it seems, cannot have his own foolish will gratified, unless the all-wise God will consent to relinquish His!

Such are some of the steps in the march of Atheism. Such are the preparations making in these last days by the wily usurper for dethroning the Eternal Jehovah.

Men may call these speculations. They may condemn them as unprofitable. To the law and to the testimony! Of such speculations, the Bible is full. There man is a helpless worm, and salvation from first to last, is of the Lord. God's will, and not man's, is the law of the universe. If we are to maintain the Gospel—if we are to preserve Jehovah's honour—we must grasp these truths with no feeble hand. For if there be no such a being as a supreme pre-determining Jehovah, then the universe will soon be chaos; and if there be no such thing as free electing love, every minister of Christ may close his lips, and every sinner upon earth sit down in mute despair.

WHY PREACH

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Corinthians: "Because "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). And again: "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of, for necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16).

Though many may mock and ridicule the Bible doctrines we preach on election, predestination and sovereignty of God, we yet preach these truths gladly, not with malice or with hatred to those who stand against us, but we do this because it is God's will. Yes, we can preach this truth and still say: "Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). We believe all who truly feel the need and desire for Christ will find him. Why? Because God has so purposed it to be.

We are not able to understand all of God's purposes and plans. His ways are so much higher than our ways. He is in control of our lives and one day we will see things more clearly.

"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Ps. 17:15).

TEACH US

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giving have priority in your life? We should, first of all, give thanks. We not only see thanks in our Lord's prayers, but also praise.

This is the whole secret of how our lives can become more powerful, serene, blessed, and more importantly faithful. Learn to pray, looking away from visible things, and looking at the invisible as Jesus, the prophets and the Psalmist did. Oh, what meekness, compassion and love Jesus had! Our lives will also be sanctified when we pray Biblically. Let us strive to become a victorious man or woman of prayer to the praise of God, and our faithful Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, striving to do this for His honor and glory. Amen.

There is a classic story from the Civil War which tells how an inhabitant of the border county between North and South decided to remain neutral. He dressed himself in Confederate trousers and in a Union jacket, with the unfortunate result that the Confederates shot him in the chest and the Union soldiers shot him in the seat of the pants!

Too many Christians are like this man. They are trying to serve God and mammon. It can't be done (Matt. 6:24). Too many Christians compromise their conscience and permit things in their lives that God condemns in His Word; the result is, they are miserable, and they please neither God nor the world.

Don't straddle the fence! Who is on the Lord's side?

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but by Me"

Calvary Missionary Baptist Church of Springfield, Oregon is in need of a pastor. Those interested should contact Carl DeWitt at P.O. Box 950, Springfield, Oregon 97477.