

Grace: Receiving what we don't deserve. Mercy: Not receiving what we do deserve.

"...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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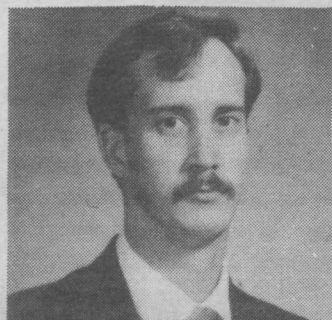
THE SEDUCTION OF SUCCESSION

By Pastor Rick Presley, Gethsemane Baptist Church, Columbus, Ohio

"For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?" (1 Corin. 3:3).

The Teaching of Baptist History

One of the most interesting and exciting things I ever read during my formative years was a little booklet entitled, *The Trail of Blood* by J.M. Carroll. This little book, still in print and available from the Ashland Avenue Baptist Church in Lexington, Kentucky, documented a thumbnail sketch of the history of Baptists from the time of Christ down through the ages to the present day. The main premise of the book was that Baptists are not a product of the Protestant Reformation because they predate Luther, Calvin and even the Catholic Church. As a result of this heritage, they represent the most ancient form of church government and practice as instituted by Jesus Christ and the apostles in the first century. As a result of this little book and my upbringing, I began to develop an avid interest in church history, particularly Baptist history. I became a firm believer in Matthew 16:18 where Jesus promised Peter and the other apostles that His church would never die out. My study of history led me to place a strong faith in the Word of God and the promise of our Lord for perpetuity rather than trusting in the ability of history to document the existence of true churches down through the ages. As my knowledge of history grew based on the books I read, the seminars I attended, and the tapes I heard, I noticed a shift in both my attitude and the attitude of those around me. There have been a number of things that have hap-



pened that have caused me to examine, not what *The Trail of Blood* teaches about Baptist history, but what we do with the claims of the book.

The Abuse of Baptist History

The Claim of Uniqueness: One of the first things that happened after I graduated from college that challenged my thinking about the claims we make regarding Baptist history was when I was given a book recounting the history of the 7th Day Adventist Church. I was shocked to discover that they traced their history back to the time of Christ through many of the exact

same Anabaptist forebears that Baptist historians used. Later, I found out that the Campbellites traced their history through the same people as well. I discovered from some friends that the Plymouth Brethren, Grace Brethren, German Dunkers and nearly all the Charismatic churches also follow the same history as we do. At first I was confused by the fact that we all shared common ancestors but then a little extra study on my part showed that since some of these groups sprang from Baptist churches fairly recently in history it comes naturally that they trace their lineage through the same people as we do. It was the existence of groups like the Brethren that confused me the most because history show that in some locations we trace our roots back through their forebears. While we don't trace our history through the Darbyites, we do admit to (Continued on Page 5)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Interim Pastor Jack C. Whitt



CHRISTIANITY AT ITS BEST!

"For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." (Phil. 1:21).

If every true Christian had the faith and attitude of the Apostle Paul, "We'd have it made." Let us just for a moment think about what Paul is saying. Is he serious about death being his gain? Let's face it! Most people would never think of

death as "gain" but Paul did. In another place he said, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." (2 Tim. 4:6). But, do you know what the secret is behind these statements made by this great man of God? It is simple. The secret lies in the first part of verse 21:

"For me to live is Christ."

Paul must have been completely convinced that Christ was the center of his life and that his only joy was in "presenting his body a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God". Paul had good reason for his somewhat "strange behavior" (Continued on Page 2)

BIBLICAL CALL FOR PATRIOTISM

By Ray Waugh, Sr.
Now With The Lord



Introduction

When we think of patriotism, many of us doubtless think in terms of some young man or some young woman in the uniform of one of the branches of four military service. Such, of course, should be evidence of patriotism, and all of us should be agreeable to such service. Having been through WWII in the 1940's and in Korea in 1950 and 1951, I can appreciate such evidences of patriotism. However, patriotism has a much larger emphasis, and all of us can be patriotic regardless of who we are and regardless of where we are.

Battling

For some decades in our American history, some have supposed that one had to be anti-communistic in order to be patriotic, and some of our greatest patriots have been abused and misused. Today, there are some who are of the opinion that if one is not indulging in some sort of revolutionary efforts, one is not really patriotic. Perhaps

we can note that being patriotic is much more than battling what we suppose are the enemies without and battling what we suppose are the enemies within.

If we are going to understand the true nature of patriotism and the highest form of patriotism, we shall have to look to God's Holy Word. In the Scriptures we find many evidences of godly patriots, and we shall make it a point to reference two or three of them.

Joseph

As a result of our church training as youngsters, most of us doubtless remember the boy Joseph as a shepherd-lad who did a lot of dreaming. We may also recall that he later was pretty good at interpreting the dreams of some Egyptian prisoners. A more complete look at the life of Joseph may enable us to see that he was also a great patriot, though he lived in a foreign land.

If Joseph's attitude had been one of rebellion against the duly constituted authority in Egypt, he could never have been brought to the place of service. If Joseph had developed an intense hatred for the godless Pharaoh under whom he experienced injustices and imprisonment, he doubtless would never have been so fully and mightily used of God. On the contrary, in part because Joseph was able to be patriotic in the land of Egypt, God used him to save millions of people.

David

There is another man in the Word of God whose godly patriotism may be somewhat overshadowed by our desire to concentrate on his human greatness. That man was David. It is true that David was mighty as a shepherd lad who was able to destroy Goliath. It is true that David was a great soldier. It is true, even more, that David was a great man both in his confidence in God and in his ready confession of his sinfulness against both God and man.

There is, however, another side to David's life during those years when he was in the service of King Saul. It is quite probable that though King Saul may have stood

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
FEBRUARY 1, 1997

PAGE TWO

Editor's Update

By Interim Pastor Jack C. Whitt

To our many TBE readers, I bring you all greetings once again from Calvary Baptist Church here in Ashland, Ky. This is our February edition of our 1997 year now well in progress. Our prayer is that it will be a good year for all of us, especially for all the family of God. We are pleased to say we have added several new subscribers to our mailing list and continue to receive new requests all the time. We receive letters from some who tell us how much they enjoy the paper and some have mailed in financial contributions which has helped us out a lot. As the editor, I am especially thankful to all who have given their support to me by their encouraging letters and to those who have been generous in supporting the publication of this paper. Due to the high cost in the publication of the TBE, our church has voted to increase the subscription cost from the annual rate of five dollars to eight dollars, this to take effect in February. This will involve all new subscribers and those who will be **renewing** subscriptions as of this date and forward. This price, we feel is pretty low considering the cost of many other papers of this size. The new rate will only run about 66 cents per month. To be honest with you, our receipts have not come close to covering our cost of publication. Yet we are seeing improvement in this area. If it were possible, I would like to send our paper free to everyone. Our only goal is to see the paper become self-supporting, nothing more. If the new rate is a problem for anyone, by all means continue as you have been doing. If you want our paper, we want you to have it.

We remind any of you who may be in the area of our church, to stop by and visit with us. We love to see and welcome visitors. Many of you are old friends of Calvary, we'd like to see you again. Again I wish to thank all of you who read our paper. We always welcome your comments, so write us.

May God bless all of you in this new year.

CHRISTIANITY

(Continued from Page 1)

ior" (as many thought him to have). He had an encounter with his Lord while on the road to Damascus that he would never forget (Acts 9). To say the least, Jesus made a lasting impression upon him having knocked him down and blinding his eyesight causing the trembling Paul (then Saul) to ask: "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). From that moment forward, Paul was a new person. He had been miraculously saved. Many of you know the rest of the story how he went about preaching and witnessing to the small and the great, to the rich and the poor, to kings, governors and the religious elite of his day. Paul became "all things to all men that he might win some to Christ". And as he said: "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." (Acts 20: 26,27). Truly Paul exemplified, "Christianity at its best."

Likely, few there are today who have the faith and Christian character of the apostle Paul. Yet, I

believe it is possible, and wouldn't it be good if we could? Think about this! A saved loved one dies and we can praise God because he or she went home to be with the Lord.

Is it not true that our attitude about life and death largely depends on what or who we are living for? The Apostle Paul said: "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." This is what makes the difference. This is not to say we are to become morbid about life or hasten our own departure. No, we should live each day to its fullest and to the best of our ability strive to serve Jesus.

"Christianity at its best" is when we live to please Jesus and forget about self. This was Paul's philosophy: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20).

"Christianity at its best" is when we know and feel the presence of the Holy Spirit prompting, encouraging and strengthening us to live for Christ.

We must not forget that living for Christ involves living for oth-

SUCCESSISM AND THE CHURCH

What is Success?

According to worldly standard, success is the attainment of fame, fortune, popularity, and prosperity. It is also defined as the accomplishment of what is aimed at or desired. However, according to the Bible (the only inerrant standard), success is faithfulness to the Lord Jesus Christ and obedience to the whole of God's Word. Biblically-speaking, then, success has nothing at all to do with the attainment of fame, fortune, popularity, or prosperity, or with earthly accomplishments.

What is Failure?

According to worldly standards, failure is a lack of fame, fortune, popularity, and prosperity. It is also defined as a lack of success in accomplishing what is aimed at or desired. However, according to the Bible, failure is unfaithfulness to the Lord Jesus Christ and disobedience to God's Word.

What is Successism?

Successism is the mistaken application of worldly standards of success and failure to the work of the ministry of the church. According to this perverted philosophy, those churches and pastors that have great outward, visible results or responses to show for their work are highly successful, while those churches and pastors that have little to show for their labors are dismal, abysmal failures.

What Saith the Scriptures?

The truth of the matter is that success or failure in the work of the ministry cannot be measured in terms of attendance, offerings, property, responses, decisions, or baptisms. Success or failure in the work of the ministry can only be measured in terms of faithfulness to the Lord Jesus Christ and obedience to God's Word. In fact, God never calls upon His people to be successful, but only to be faithful and obedient (Matt. 25:14-30; 1 Cor. 3:5-7, 13; 4:2; Rev. 2:10).

Successism destroys the purity and unity of the church as it leads to easy believism, pragmatism, and hucksterism. It fills the church with tares, brings discouragement to the pastor, and promotes carnality in the church. Spiritual success cannot be measured by worldly standards. The Lord's judgment of a church or pastor is all that really matters (1 Cor. 4:1-5).

-submitted by: John A. Kohler, III, Pastor Lighthouse Baptist Mission, Michigan City, Ind.

ers as well. No one can truly say they are living for Christ while harboring a vindictive or mean attitude toward a brother or sister in Christ or even an unsaved person. Love is the great motive for serving Jesus, Listen: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matt. 5:43-45).

Most of us may never become like the Apostle Paul completely, but we could try and by God's grace we can pray: "Lord help me to say, 'For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.' And that I might be a living model of 'Christianity at its best'.

If you see
someone
without a
SMILE,
give them
one of
yours!



The Baptist Examiner Bible Study Lesson

By Kirk R. Everman

Member of Calvary Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tennessee

"Study to shew
thyself approved
unto God..."

2 Tim. 2:15

Studies in Genesis

Stealing Away (Gen. 31:1-55)

In our last study we observed Jacob's prosperity increased while serving Laban. In this study we will observe some of the consequences resulting from his actions and his new wealth which lead to his separation and departure from Laban.

Jacob is no longer viewed favorably by Laban and his kinsmen (v. 1-2). The transfer of wealth from Laban to Jacob during the last several years of Jacob's labor separated Jacob from Laban in the hearts of Laban's family. While this change was likely a gradual process, the time is punctuated by the voice of the Lord speaking to Jacob: **"Return unto the land of thy fathers...and I will be with thee"** (v.3).

Jacob thus prepares to separate his family and his possessions physically from Laban. First, Jacob tries to persuade his wives that they need to leave their homelands to return with him to his (v.4-13). He sends for Rachel and Leah to come to the fields where his flocks are (v.4). Jacob presents himself in a favorable light especially in comparison to Laban, as he describes how he has served Laban for so many years. His recollection of events incorporates God's presence throughout his time serving Laban and even claims God's direct intervention in the transfer of Laban's wealth (v.9). His account includes details that were not expressed in previous passages. If Jacob's words are accurate of his experiences, then it suggests his relationship with the Lord was much stronger during this period of his life with Laban's family than previously observed. It is also possible that he is crediting God for his prosperity, instead of any deceptive labor practices; this would be similar to his claim made when he deceived his father Isaac in obtaining the blessing intended for Esau (see Gen. 27:20). In either case, Jacob's words convey the authority behind the voice that has given

him this command to return home.

Rachel and Leah consider Jacob's words and support his decision to return home (v. 14-16). Unfortunately, their reasoning does not seem to be based on simple obedience to the Lord, or even a loving commitment to their husband, as much as the fact that there was no longer a great inheritance that they would miss in leaving their father.

Next, we are told of Jacob's flight from Padanaram back to Canaan (v. 17-21). It is important to note that in addition to his family, Jacob **"carried away all his cattle, and all his goods"**. While these items belonged to Jacob according to his agreement with Laban, they would dramatically slow the pace of his travels. How often do our feet drag in obeying God because we are weighed down by the things of this world? In addition to Jacob's property, **"Rachel had stolen the images that were her father's"**, while Laban was shearing his sheep. This not only suggests idolatry for Rachel and Laban, but in stealing her father's possessions, she gives Laban a legitimate reason for pursuing Jacob and his family.

Laban is informed of their departure on the third day after Jacob's flight. Laban and his brethren **"pursued after him seven days' journey and they overtook him in the mount Gilead."** Prior to Laban's confrontation with Jacob, God appears to Laban in a dream telling him to **"speak not to Jacob either good or bad"** (v.24).

The remainder of this passage concerns the confrontation between Laban and Jacob at Gilead. First, Laban brings his charges against Jacob (v. 26-30). The accusations included that Jacob carried away Laban's daughters **"as captives taken with the sword"**, that the secret departure prevented Laban from celebrating their exit with an affectionate farewell, and that Jacob had stolen Laban's household gods (or teraphim).

Jacob replies that he fled in secret because he feared that Laban, if he had known of Jacob's intent, would have taken his daughters from Jacob by force. Jacob considers himself and his family innocent with regard to the matter of Laban's gods, **"For Jacob knew not that Rachel had stolen them"** (v. 32). In his confidence Jacob condemns to death the person found with Laban's gods.

Laban searches through the belongings and the tents in Jacob's camp (v. 33-35). Rachel's life is endangered; she hides the images in her camel's "furniture", meaning the pad or saddle, which was concealed as she sat on it. She deceives her father when he enters to search her tent, claiming that she could not rise up, or stand, because of her physical condition associated with **"the custom of women"**. Laban is unsuccessful in locating his images in Jacob's camp.

When Laban cannot prove his accusations, Jacob responds in passionate anger to defend his name (v. 36-42). He declares how diligently he worked for Laban, even though Laban placed excessive requirements on Jacob and changed his wages numerous times. Jacob acknowledges God's presence as the primary reason that Laban did not try to send Jacob away with nothing. Jacob said that **"God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee"** in reference to Laban's dream. All of this is said without his realization that Rachel was actually guilty of Laban's charge.

Laban has no rebuttal to Jacob's defense and requests that a covenant be established between the two men. Jacob sets a stone up as a pillar and tells his brethren to gather stones to make a heap. The heap serves as a witness and reminder of the covenant (v. 48); Jacob called it Galeed. Laban calls the pillar Mizpah; **"for he said, The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another"** (v.49).

Laban's concerns expressed in the covenant are that Jacob does not mistreat his wives, Laban's daughters, and that neither Laban nor Jacob will pass by the place of this covenant to do harm to the other. The two men entered into the covenant (v. 53). **"Then Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and called his brethren to eat bread...And early in the morning Laban rose up, and kissed his sons and his daughters, and blessed them... and returned unto his place"** (v. 54-55).

Several final comments are offered to bring this study to a close:

1) **God is in control:** Jacob's goal to avoid confrontation with the one whom he had duelled with for so many years was thwarted when Laban overtook him in the mountains. We are reminded that God defines the limits of the events which touch the life of one of His children (v. 24).

2) **Our ways are not like His ways:** Jacob seeks freedom from Laban by running away from conflict. Following their confrontation and resulting covenant, we are told of any future interaction between the two men. Thus, Jacob's freedom actually results from dealing with his unresolved issues between himself and Laban.

3) **Innocence versus Not Proven Guilty:** While Jacob is innocent of the charges of stealing the teraphim, Rachel is not; although Laban cannot prove her guilt, God is not constrained by man's limitations: it is God who sees and judges all, even that which is hidden from man (v. 50, 53; 1 Cor. 3:10-15). The exhortation to believers is that we live in a godly manner without great concern for defending our honor before men, even as we experience false accusations, slander, or mistreatment (1 Pet. 2:12-23). For the actual value of that which is built by our labors is never according to our own estimation, but by the appraisal of God (1 Cor. 3:10-15; 4:5).

SLIM GEMS

•America was a better place when folks opened meals with a prayer instead of a can opener.

•Living in the past has one thing in its favor-it's cheaper.

•A stiff neck usually supports an empty head.

•Some people display a lot of unexpected talent when it comes to acting a fool.

•A self-made man is usually a horrible example of unskilled labor.

•Those who like to worry sure have a lot to choose from these days.

•Egotism is the anesthetic that dulls the pain of stupidity.

•Whenever you are robbed by worry it is always an inside job.

•What some people don't know about driving would fill a hospital.

•Wise men think without talking, fools reverse the order.

•The advantage about working day and night is that you can earn enough to pay the doctor when you break down.

•As a man grows older and wiser, he talks less and says more.

•The pessimist looks backward, the optimist forward, the theorist inward, the practical man outward, the good and wise man upward.



The Baptist Examiner Pulpit Forum

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



Please explain the head-covering for a woman in church.
How does it apply to the single woman and the married woman?

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It wasn't long after Pan and I were married that we heard a sermon on the subject of the "woman's head covering." The preacher made a statement that if a woman refused to wear one, she could not be in submission to her husband. He went on to even question a woman's salvation who refused to wear it. Well, we felt pretty uneasy in that meeting because my young wife was not wearing a covering. We did not get mad at the preacher but we did decide to study this subject together. I took my Bible, a Greek dictionary and we sat at the kitchen table for a few hours looking up the words in 1 Corinthians 11. "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered." "But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering." (1 Corinthians 11:4-6,15). In our study we discovered that the word "Covering" in the Greek is translated as "Veil." It indicates some kind of additional outward covering. In Verse six the word "covered" is the Greek word {Katakalypto} The root word means "down from or throughout." {Kalypto} indicates "to hide something." So we translate the covering as "to cover up," or

better yet, "to cover one's self throughout." In Verse 15 the word covering is {Peribolaton} It is rendered "Vesture or a covering thrown around, a wrapper or mantle." The derivative indicates "to cast about or throw around."

This passage of scripture is interpreted in many various ways. Some think that the covering is the actual hair. If that be true you would have to read verse four this way: "Every man praying or prophesying, having his head with hair on it dishonoureth his head." "Every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head without hair dishonoureth her head." Such interpretation is silly at best. Others say that the head covering or veil was a custom limited to the biblical era. This is also unsatisfactory. Notice the context of verse two: "Keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you." In other words, continue to obey the commandments of God. That still applies to us even now. The head covering is one of the ordinances or commands taught to the church. The problem is that most women who think they are wearing a covering, are in fact not wearing a biblical covering. In fact, I will tell you that in 22 years of my ministry in and around Baptist churches, I have seen, in my opinion, but few women adorn a true biblical head-covering.

Now what I'm about to say is going to offend around 99% of all the sisters who wear what they think is a proper head covering. I see most women wear a little doily on their heads. It doesn't even cover their hair. I wonder if this lets them show their fine hair styles and still wear the "covering?" In my opinion, that is not a covering according to the biblical definition of the word. Some ladies wear hats for a covering. Again, I doubt if that is a true covering according to the biblical definition. Again, a true head-covering according to the words defined is a vesture that com-

(Continued on Page 6)

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Please read 1 Corinthians 11:1-16

The teaching of the head covering as part of divine order, indeed, divine order itself, especially in regard to the area of subordination, is today changed, modified, or ignored altogether. This is because of rebellion as part of the continually growing spirit of lawlessness as we approach the end of the age. Woman's lib has opposed and invaded this area of divine teaching with false charges of degradation and inferiority. Ignoring God's divine order (1 Corinthians 11:3) the rebellion opposed God's teaching of the woman's subordination and the accompanying symbols. The divine order of God is not a personality, ability, or inferiority issue. In no way does God's teaching degrade a woman, punish her, or in any other way mistreat her. It is God's wise order of things.

Because of this order, the Holy Spirit gives us instructions in appearance and conduct. We are concerned specifically with the head covering. The woman has two in these verses. The first is long (no specific length, but longer than a man) hair. It is a symbol of headship, or authority in God's order which acknowledges the husband's authority as her natural head. It is proper for a single, or young woman to have this symbol and crowing glory. The second is a veil, or hat used when in church as a symbol acknowledging man's authority in the spiritual (religious) realm. It is God's order, not a contrivance of man, nor a plot to degrade and bind woman. 1Corinthians 11:8,9

says: "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man." No doubt "liberationists" and other rebels will dislike me to various degrees, because I would dare to just quote these verses, but God gave them to us, not me.

Just as a woman is not to speak in the assembly, usurp authority over men, or teach a mixed group of people, she is to wear a head covering when in church. Note verse 9 in 1 Corinthians 11. She is to do so for God and because of the angels who are in the assembly at any given service. They know of no insubordination among their ranks. Young ladies and single women, for the same mentioned reasons of God's order, are to cover their heads as well. Let us be careful in this present age to give Satan, or rebellion no occasion among us, or in the church.

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"And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." (1 Sam. 15:22). We are told in John 14:15 and in 1 John 5:3 that to love God is to keep His commandments.

We claim that we speak where the Bible speaks and are silent where the Bible is silent, yet when it comes to the head covering we hear all sorts of excuses to not obey this clearly given commandment. Did Paul write 1 Cor. or did God? Yes Paul was the scribe, but God wrote it. Don't say then, that Paul hated women or that

Paul wrote about a custom in Corinth. God wrote it and He doesn't set His commandments according to such things. Read 1 Cor. 11:1-16 and you must admit that it is teaching that a woman should have her head covered.

Some say that verse 14 tells us that the hair is the covering. Now brethren, come on, would God spend 15 verses telling us that a woman must wear a covering if one verse tells us that it is her hair? Not only that but if hair is the covering in these verses then we should be able to substitute hair for the word covering and it would sound alright. "Every man praying and prophesying HAVING HAIR ON HIS HEAD, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth and prophesieth WITH HER HAIR CUT OFF dishonoureth her head: for that is even one as if she were shaven." (vs. 4,5). Doesn't make sense does it? If hair is the covering then verse 4 says only bald men can pray or preach and verse 7 says that men ought not to have hair. Verse 14 is simply saying that even in birth there is shown a difference and a woman's hair is her glory. If then her hair is her glory as seen in this verse then she must cover that glory when she worships because God is to get the glory in the church.

The Greek words used in the passage also shows that there is a separate covering taught in this passage. The word for cover or covered in verse 6,7 is KATAKALUPTO + to cover wholly, ie. to veil; uncovered in verses 5, 13 is AKATAKALUPTO = to unveil; whereas the 15th verse about long hair being the covering is PERIBOLATION = a covering or that which goes around.

Why should women wear a covering?

(1) Because God says so, and to obey is better than sacrifice. This is an act of obedience to Him.

(2) Because she must cover her glory when she worships in
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If at first you don't succeed, with Christ's help, try again.

SUCCESSION

(Continued from Page 1)

having ancestors in the Moravian Brethren who were also known by the term Anabaptists. To summarize my findings, I discovered that we are not the only ones who can trace their history back to the time of Christ. What I found especially revealing was that even the Catholics could trace their history back to the time of Christ. Ironically, I had a friend show me that they could use that stalwart Baptist publication, *The Trail of Blood*, to prove it! This really shook many of the preconceived notions that I had about the uniqueness of Baptist history and the claims we make that we are the only ones who can claim to trace our roots back to the time of Christ. Ultimately, all Christian denominations can trace their history back to the time of our Lord. The Protestants do it through the Catholic church and many Fundamentalist denominations do it through the primitive Anabaptists and their forebears, but basically, everyone traces their history back to Christ. Obviously, there was more to being a true church of Jesus Christ than simply having a pedigree.

The Claim of Succession: Many preachers gave the impression when they taught from *The Trail of Blood* that we could trace our history back to the time of Christ just like links in a chain. These teachers adopted the phrase "Baptist Succession" to describe this belief that there is a clear and unbroken line of churches from the time of Christ to this present age. I have since found out that this claim is largely exaggerated for a variety of reasons. Most of the documents have been lost or destroyed by our enemies during times of intense persecution. And the documents that have survived have been written, for the most part, by our enemies who present us in the least favorable light. Their reliability and validity is very much in question when it comes to giving an accurate picture of Anabaptist matters of church policy, practice and doctrine. Another thing about studying Baptist History was whose history to read. I did not have to read very long before I found out that different authors claim different groups to be ancestors. There was always some standard by which an author would judge a church to be a Baptist ancestor depending on his particular prejudice. The most open-minded of

historians whose tapes I heard, used only two qualifiers: The way of salvation and the method of Baptism. If salvation was by some form of works, then they were not Baptist and if it was by grace through faith then it could only be Baptist. If Baptism consisted of the immersion and the candidate was an infant or otherwise not coming as a willing participant, then the ancestor in question could not possibly be Baptist. Other historians began with these two qualifiers and added or subtracted other tests such as open, close or closed communion, the method of church government, acceptance or rejection of the Apostle's Creed and a host of others. So I found a wide-ranging definition of what constituted a Baptist ancestor, depending on whose book one was reading at the time or which historian was speaking.

The Claim of Exclusiveness: The last thing that happened that caused me to question the importance of maintaining a strong belief in Baptist succession was the fact that many of the preachers and authors who taught succession accepted churches as ancestors which, if these same churches were still in existence, these pastors would exclude from their church fellowship. They would not accept their members into their churches without being re-baptized, yet they had no problem claiming them as ancestors. I considered this a contradiction between what they believed and what they practiced. How could we possibly accept a church in ancient times that practiced foot washing as an ancestor, yet not accept one who does the same today as a fellowshiping church, all other things being equal? How is it possible to embrace a church in the middle ages which observed alien immersion as one of our founding churches but spurn such churches today? In seminars that I have attended on *The Trail of Blood* a great deal of emphasis is placed on the fact that we do not worship the name "Baptist" because most of our ancestors churches went by other names. Yet in actual practice today, we would have little to do with a church that did not have the name Baptist over the door. We certainly would not practice pulpit affiliation with a non-Baptist or accept their members into our congregations without re-baptizing them. There is currently a movement among some Baptist churches to drop the name Bap-

tist and call themselves a Community church or Chapel but they are very few and are viewed with a great deal of suspicion by most of us.

The Claim of Authority: It was this final area that caused me to question the benefit of teaching Baptist history in the politicized, parochial manner in which I had been taught it. There are a number of benefits to teaching Baptist history and I do not want to come across as being against it. I cherish the heritage of our forefathers who have shed blood, lost their children and loved ones, suffered innumerable and unspeakable deprivations for the cause of the gospel and Jesus Christ. I would not have heard the gospel had it not been for the sacrifices made by countless saints to pass that heritage down to me so I could pass it down my children in obedience to 2 Timothy 2:2. It is also vital that we understand the animosity of our enemies toward the truth and have a clear grasp of the persecution that went on in even the recent past against those who stood for the truth. We should never lose sight that we live in a dangerous world that wants nothing less than the total eradication of a Biblical faith. However, when the teaching of Baptist history leads to churches calling into question the pedigrees of fellowshiping churches, I believe the teaching is abused. My father-in-law told me a story of how he received an offer from another church to come check out the pedigree of the church where he was a member to see if it was scripturally founded or not. This is certainly

not one of the uses to which teaching of Baptist perpetuity is supposed to be employed! Imagine the arrogance of a pastor who cannot trace his own church's records back beyond the 1600's or even later claiming that he can validate another church's pedigree. It was this and similar abuses that caused me to ask the question, Why do we place such an emphasis on our heritage if it leads to this sort of behavior? I am not referring to the legitimate study of Baptist history, but the pride and boastfulness that comes from those who make claims that can not be supported either by Scripture or history. Certainly we can all see the hypocrisy of excluding from fellowship those churches who have the same heritage, who adopt the same confession of faith, churches we would claim as ancestors if they didn't exist in the present age. How can we legitimately and in good conscience break fellowship with a church we would proudly own as an ancestor if it existed 200 years ago in England or France?

Reasons for the Abuse of Baptist History

The Substitution of Preaching for Practice: I have found that one of the reasons why we pay so much attention to our history is that it allows us to participate in the accomplishments of others without actually doing anything ourselves. We can be martyrs without suffering. We can be evangelistic without witnessing. We can be part of a growing movement without actually adding new members to the church. We can be loving without caring

for others. We can be holy without being sanctified. We can be right without reading, studying and knowing our Bibles. We can be called Christians without developing and fostering an intimate, personal knowledge of Jesus Christ in our daily walk. We can be associated with a great movement without making any real demands on our participation in that movement. We can take great pride in our heritage and accomplishments without actually having to do a single thing except study Baptist history. After all did not the Pharisees say to Christ, "We be Abraham's seed." and He rejected their claim, not because of their heritage but because of their refusal to accept Him as Messiah? Surely we need to realize that our pedigree is not nearly so important as our personal relationship with our Lord and Savior. The validity of the existence of any church is not found in where it came from (after all, even the Catholics sprang out of churches begun by the apostle Paul and his followers) but in where it is going. This is borne out by the fact that none of the seven churches of Asia mentioned in Revelation are in existence today. We cannot rest on the accomplishments of the past to secure our future.

The Substitution of Pride for Possession of God's Grace: This leads to another observation about our attitude toward Baptist history, the way it is taught in our churches and the way it is practiced in our relationship to others of like faith and order. On more than one occasion I have heard

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DEEP FOUNDATIONS

by C.H. Spurgeon

"The Lord diggeth deep when he meaneth to raise the building high; and when he would give men to know much of Christ, he first bringeth them out of themselves by godly sorrow."

We see many to be but low and mean in point of grace, not rising like towers toward heaven, but lying low upon the earth: these have never been digged out by a deep sense of sin, nor excavated by profound soul-trouble, and hence it would not be safe to build high with so shallow a foundation. If we could read the secret history of dwarfed Christians we should find that they never had much humbling of heart. They tell us there is as much of a tree under as above ground, and certainly it is so with a believer; his visible life would soon wither were it not for his secret life, and his high enjoyments would fall over to his ruin were they not balanced by his inward humiliations. There must be deep foundations if we are to have high walls; we must be emptied of self, and everything of human strength, or we shall never be filled with the love of God.

O my heart, be ready to be trenched deep if this be necessary preparation for being built up aloft. Welcome pain and down-casting if edification is to follow.

NEW YEAR, SAME GOD!

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SUCCESSION

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preachers make the statement, "I am proud to be a Baptist." This naturally begs the question, have we any right to take pride in a denominational affiliation? I am certainly grateful that I am a Baptist but I would hesitate to state that I am proud to be a Baptist. I did not become a Baptist through careful intellectual inspection of denominations or by an exercise of my own ability to spiritually discern truth. Nor did I become a Baptist because of their exalted position or in order to enhance my peer acceptance among a select group of privileged individuals. I became a Baptist by the grace of God. All of the truth that I know, I know because the Lord revealed it to me. Anyone who is truly a Baptist in more than just name would assent to the same truth, that we are what we are by God's gracious favor, not by our own merit or skill. Since I did not become a Baptist by my own effort, I can take no more pride in my denominational affiliation than I can take in my own salvation. It was by the revelation of the Holy Spirit that I came to know the truths of the local church, sovereign grace and many others and it is to God that the credit goes for my obedient response to his inner prompting.

Now then, if I am a Baptist by the grace of God, what are people who are not Baptists? Are they unenlightened? Ignorant? Disobedient? No doubt some of them are. But what of those who have not received the same grace of God that we have received. Is it possible that there are dedicated Christians to whom God has not revealed the same amount of truth that He has revealed to us? Based on discussions that I have had with a number of non-Baptist believers, I have no doubt that they are living in response of others for something that we have received only by a revelation of God's grace and something which they may receive only by the same grace? Do we not then become judges of the grace of God?

Correcting the Abuse of Baptist History

Recognition of the Hypocrisy and Carnality of Breaking Fellowship with True Churches: In the Apostle Paul's definition of

carnality in I Corinthians 3:3 he equates carnality with a divisive party spirit within the church. I am convinced that this same spirit that drives wedges of division between churches that are of like faith and order is the same spirit of carnality. It is this party spirit that marks the heathen. It forms the basis for our political structure in this country and gives rise to all the disaffected constituencies clamoring for legislative action to be taken in order to alleviate their grievances. What is happening today in church circles is not much different. Disaffected pastors snap and snipe at one another because of some real or imagined offense and instead of following the Lord's formula for conflict resolution laid down in Matthew 18, they break fellowship with one another. Thus we end up with a situation where we have pastors and churches refusing to fellowship with churches that they would claim as ancestors if they were separated by the boundaries of time ordinance. Surely this fits Paul's definition of carnality. Missionary organizations have been torn apart by this sort of conflict and now the cause of spreading the gospel in foreign lands is suffering. People dying and going to hell without hearing the gospel because churches who preach, teach, believe and practice from the same Word of God are dividing about issues of inflated importance. There are cities, counties and states where churches who believe essentially the same thing are not speaking to one another and are actively engaged in slandering and shaming each other because of petty issues that are blown all out of proportion. A good test question we should be asking ourselves relates to what we believe about church history: Is it right for us to break fellowship with churches that we would be honored to claim as ancestors if they existed in their present form prior to the Reformation?

Recognition of the Biblical Teaching on Grace and Peace: If I am what I am by the grace of God and you are what you are by the grace of God, how can I stand in judgment over you? God did not call us to criticize each other. God did not call us to division. God's ministry is one of reconciliation. If division is a sign of our carnality and hypocrisy what marks our spirituality? The first thing we need is a conviction from

the Holy Spirit on whether our desire to be right stems from a adherence to the true Biblical practice of Christianity or does it stem from an inward need for pride and boastfulness. What is our motivation for excluding others from our fellowship? Is it to be in conformity with our Lord Jesus Christ so that we can resemble him or is it so those we exclude from fellowship will feel pressured to be more conformed to us? These are questions I have to answer in my own heart and life. I have experienced a great sense of peace and relief since I have come to terms with the Biblical teaching that I am not accountable to God for what others believe, I am only accountable for what I believe, how I practice it and how I proclaim that faith to others. Certainly, that is more than enough to keep me busy seeking the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit to transform my life according to II Corinthians 3:28.

To conclude, I must resort to a lesson I learned from the American Kennel Club. The A.K.C. warns potential dog owners not to be fooled by the claims of breeders who advertised "pedigreed" dogs. They state that a pedigree is nothing more than a list of a dog's parents and grandparents. Even a mongrel could be called a pedigreed dog as long as a record was kept of its lineage. Nor is a pedigree a qualification for entrance into a dog show, the pet must also be registered with the governing body conducting the show such as the A.K.C. I own a dalmatian dog who has no pedigree and does not qualify A.K.C. sanctioned shows because she is unregistered. However, I have no doubt that she is a Dalmatian because she is white with black spots, she is the right size for a Dalmatian, she has the right temperament for a Dalmatian and in every way conforms to the breed standard of what constitutes a Dalmatian. Her parents, unregistered dogs themselves, are also undoubtedly dalmatians, based on their appearance. I do not need a governing body to recognize my dog as a Dalmatian to assure me of my dog's breed but I am excluded by the "elite" from participating in their activities due to a lack of documentation or recognition.

To apply this illustration to our churches, a pedigree does nothing to qualify us as a scriptural church. Protestants and Catho-

lics have pedigrees but they hardly match the Bible's definition for a church because of their form of church government, way of salvation and application of the ordinances. By the same token, Campbellites and Adventists have pedigrees identical to present day Baptists because they split from Baptist churches, yet their works for salvation schemes marks them as preachers of another gospel. Clearly, there is more involved than the recitation of a list of ancestors. Consequently, our church was founded from a Baptist church whose pedigree disappears somewhere in the 1600's. I don't need a governing body or enlightened class of brethren to tell me that I pastor a true New Testament

FORUM

(Continued from Page 4)

HOBBS

order to give God the glory in her worship.

(3) Because of the presence of the angels (vs. 10). They don't understand any act of disobedience to God.

(4) To show subjection to her husband (or man). (Note: if a woman has no husband, she must still show subjection to either her father or some man who is over her).

Someone once said that if a woman refuses to be under subjection to her husband she should not wear a covering. Wrong!! She still has 3 major reasons to wear it.

It has been said that verse 16 tells us not to do it if there is contention about it. Now brethren, would God waste 15 verses telling us to do something then say that if we are going to argue about it not to do it? Of course not!!! What it means is if any one is contentious about it to let him know that there is no other practice except that we do as God says, and that is what the other churches practice as well.

FORUM

(Continued from Page 4)

SLEDD

pletely covers a woman's head and probably hangs down past her shoulders. Katakalypto means to "cover yourself up." The Peribolion is a mantle that wraps around the head not a little table doily or hair ribbon. I sat behind one lady not long ago whose doily fell off during a service. She would have never known she had lost her covering, if I hadn't picked it up off the floor and handed it back to her. I suppose if you could put on a covering and not know you lost it, it's not a real head covering. I would also say that this issue, like that of wine and grape juice, should not be a test of our Christian or church fellowship. I would never say that a woman is not saved or even not a dedicated Christian who chose not to wear a covering. I do not minimize this practice. I do say that a married or single woman should study this issue carefully and prayerfully. If God shows you that you should wear a covering, do it for the honor and glory of the Lord. What do you think about it? Send your letters!

SHAKESPEARE VS. BIBLE

While speaking of the power of God's Word one night in Hyde Park, I heard a man interrupt, crying out, "There are plenty of other books just as good."

"Well," was my reply, "tell us one!"

"Shakespeare!" he returned.

"Now I happen to know," said I, "many men who were won to Christ from drunkenness, gambling, vice, or ungodliness, by just one verse out of the Bible. Can you tell me of one man rescued from the curse of drink through reading a sentence of Shakespeare, or even the whole book?"

"No, sir," he answered more civilly.

-Copied.

PATRIOTISM

(Continued from Page 1)

head and shoulders above all other men of his time, his physical prowess and his military abilities were not the things that really impressed David. The thing that impressed David about Saul was the fact that he was THE KING OF ISRAEL, and that he had been anointed so by Almighty God.

Therefore, whether King Saul was experiencing one of his more noble accomplishments or manifesting the evidences of violent madness, David's respect for Saul never wavered; his patriotism in Israel remained intact. Even when Saul became a wicked backslider and sought David's mortal life, David's patriotism for Israel, and his respect for Saul who was king continued unabated.

Even in that hour when Saul was upon the heels of David, so close that David was able to cut off a portion of Saul's skirt, the godly David remained fully patriotic. David refused to harm Saul because he was God's appointed leader in Israel. With the life of King Saul obviously in his hands, David raised not a finger or a word against him. Because David loved God and because David walked closely with God, David knew that King Saul was God's ordained minister. David's godliness and his relationship with God in his daily life precluded any animosity against Saul.

Godliness

We never want to forget that godliness is the first necessity in each of our lives. Further, that godliness is absolutely essential to our true patriotism. The thing that many of the revolutionaries and the anarchists of our time fail to realize is a truth of which the apostle John spoke very clearly. John said, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar" (1 John 4:20). Whether in the days of Joseph or in the days of David or in the days of any other godly patriots such as Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, or even in our day, a man who truly loves God will not set himself the task of undermining his nation or bringing railing accusations against the duly constituted and appointed authority in our land.

If we in this land of America ever get to the place where we are dedicated to godly patriotism, the confusing voices that are raised in despicable carnage against our leaders will be heard no more.

SPECIAL NOTICE

A new book entitled "The Sovereignty And The Righteousness Of God" has been written by Edwin B. Fountain. He wishes to inform TBE readers that this book may be purchased for the price of \$10.00 including packaging and shipping. Check or money orders acceptable. I have a copy of this book and have read portions of it. I believe it would be of value to any Christian desiring to know and understand the sovereignty of God...correspondence may be sent as follows: Edwin B. Fountain, 2365 Womack Rd. East, Garfield, GA 30425

-The Editor

When we in this nation come to the place of godly patriotism, we shall be concerned about our nation, we shall be concerned about our Constitution, we shall be concerned about our Bill of Rights. Even more, however, we shall manifest a respect for our leaders that is practically unknown at this present moment in our history.

Scriptures

In that hour, we shall realize, as did Joseph and David of old, that patriotism begins with the truth that Daniel expressed so well, "The most high ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men" (Daniel 4:17). Contrary to the tragic babble that is abroad in our land, on the authority of the Word of God we can say that we are not being patriotic if we as a people democratically elect our leaders and then turn around to condemn them from every house-top by means of every available media.

If we, are truly godly patriots in this land "Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave," we read with new understanding the words of Peter,

"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well..." (1 Peter 2:13-14).

Those who are truly godly patriots today may feel the need to question some of the things that are being done contrary to the

Holy Word of God. Nevertheless, along with those elements of criticism, all godly patriots will honestly and faithfully pray for our leaders in accord with Paul's commendation,

"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" (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

Conclusion

Godly patriots today are respectfully subject unto the powers that be, just as long as those decrees are not contrary to the established truth in God's Holy Word. At such time, we should still respect the authorities, and submit ourselves to them as Joseph, as David, and as Daniel and some others. Truly patriotic people today remain true to the Holy Word of God, tell others about His blessed Son, and continue to help our America to live and to grow.

Pseudo-patriots may snap and snarl as mad dogs at the very vitals of our Constitutional form of government. In the process, they may show little or no respect for our leaders who have been assigned by God with their places of great responsibility. Each one of us must make some choices as we continue to live in this land of America.

What will it be with you? How is it with you today, and what will it be with you tomorrow? Upon our decision today will rest the good or the ill of our nation and our children tomorrow.

A Woman's Touch

By Wendy Barkman



Mahalah

(Mahalath, Mahlah)

General Information

Mahalah (1 Chron. 7:18)-She was the daughter (some say son) of Hammoleketh, a female descendant of Manasseh, son of Joseph. (Refer to "Hammoleketh".)



Mahalath I (Gen. 28:9)-She is identified as the daughter of Ismael and the sister of Nebajoth. She became the third wife of Esau. Most authorities make her to be the same as Bashemath II (Refer to "Bashemath II"), and it seems that she probably was. It also seems that Esau married this woman, a niece of his father's, to please his parents. Remember, Esau had already displeased his parents by marrying two Hittite (Canaanite) women (Judith and Bashemath I). Now he sought to please them by marrying this descendant of Abraham, as Jacob, his brother, had married his mother's own nieces, Rachel and Leah.

Mahalath II (2 Chron. 11:18)-She was the granddaughter of David, being the daughter of an obscure son of David named Jerimoth. According to the reading of the RSV, the NIV, and the NAS, and according to several authorities, she was also the daughter of Abihail II, David's niece. (Refer to "Abihail II".) She became the wife of Rehoboam, grandson of David. Depending on how one interprets these verses (whether Abihail II was the mother of Mahalah or another wife of Rehoboam), the children of verse nineteen were either the children of Mahalah II or Abihail II. If they were mother and daughter, then of course, they were children of the one and grandchildren of the other. If they were two different wives of Rehoboam, then they could have been the children of either one, probably Abihail II.

Mahlah (Nu. 26:33,27:1-11,36:1-12; Josh. 17:3-6; 1 Chron. 7:15) She was one of Zelophehad's five daughters, of the tribe of Manasseh. (see Hoglah, Noah, Milcah, Tirzah).

Name Study

Mahalah, Mahalath, Mahlah-sickness, disease, a musical instrument, harp, wind instrument, melody, melodious song, infirmity-derived from word(s) meaning-to be rubbed, worn, to be weak, sick, afflicted, to grieve, make sick, to stroke, entreat, to twist, to whirl, to dance, to writhe in pain (labor) or fear, to wait, to pervert, to wound, to dissolve, to profane, to break a promise, to begin, to play the flute.

Personal Application

One was the granddaughter of King David, who, as a young boy, had played the harp for King Saul, and the evil spirit, which tormented King Saul, would depart. All were sin sick.

Practical Application

The term Mahalah is used in the titles of Ps. 53: and Ps. 88:.. As Herbert Lockyer puts it, "...its significance is apropos seeing that in these Psalms the writer is dwelling upon the subject of man's spiritual sickness." Read these two Psalms. We are reminded of Paul and Silas, who, though beaten, afflicted, and imprisoned, sang their praises to the Lord. Acts 16:25. Though one's body may be full of disease, and though the pain and suffering might be great, he can sing and make melody in his heart to the Lord. Eph. 5:19. This, dear brothers and sisters, illuminates and clarifies how that this name can have both meanings.

Love is the
greatest commandment.

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ANOTHER'S FAULTS

In speaking of another's faults
Pray don't forget your own,
Remember those in homes of glass
Should seldom throw stones.

If we have nothing else to do,
But talk of those who sin,
'Tis better we should look at home
And from that point begin.

We have no right to judge a man
Until he is fairly tried,
Should we not like his company,
We know the world is wide.

Some may have faults.
But who have not
The old as well as the young,
Perhaps we may for aught
Have fifty to their one.

So let us all when we commence,
To slander friend or foe
Think of the wrong one word may do
To those who little know.

Remember curses sometimes like our
Chickens roost at home,
Don't speak of other faults
Until you have none of your own.
-author unknown



"WHY, YES, THESE ARE A FULL SET OF YOUR SERMON TAPES,
PASTOR. JOHN USES THEM TO GET THE KIDS ASLEEP."

Letters to the Editor



Dear Editor,

Enclosed is \$---- to apply to editing the paper.
We are blessed by receiving the paper. You are doing a great job.
Mrs. A.B. Harris, Texarkana, AR

Dear Editor,

I'm sending you ----- dollars for 1997 subscription. I enjoy
your paper (and) read every word. (It) helped my daughter get out of
(a) false church!

Viola Tyrell, Independence, KY

Dear Baptist Examiner,

Please renew my subscription for 2 more years.

I enjoy and am pleased with your publication. Keep it up!
Vernon A. Buttress, Broken Arrow, OK

Dear Sirs,

Your papers are a real blessing to my husband and I. Please
accept our sincere apologies for being late with our renewal.
Mr. & Mrs. Rick Rogers, Colmesneil, TX

Dear Brethren,

I read TBE each month and find its contents in perfect
harmony with God's true Word. I especially agree with the opinions
given as the true meaning of water baptism.

An offering is enclosed.

Marion Jones, Ellaville, GA

A PREACHER WHO WOULDN'T DO

A church was in need of a preacher. One of the elders was interested in finding out just what kind of preacher the church wanted. In order to do this he composed a letter as though it had been received from a preacher and read it to the committee selecting a new preacher.

"Gentlemen:

Understanding that you need a preacher, I would like to apply for the position. I have many qualifications that I think you would appreciate. I have been blessed to preach with power and have some success as a writer. Some say that I am a good organizer. I have been a leader in most places I have gone.

"Some folks, however, have some things against me. I am over fifty years of age. I have never preached in one place for more than three years at a time. In some places I have left town after my work caused riots and disturbances. I have to admit that I have been in jail three or four times, but not because of any wrongdoing. My health is not too good, though I still get a good deal done. I have had to work at my trade to help pay my way.

"The churches I have preached in have been small, though located in several large cities. I have not gotten along too well with the religious leaders in different towns where I have preached, and I am sure that they will not recommend me. In fact, some of them have threatened me, taken me to court, and even attacked me physically. I am not too good at keeping records. I have been known even to forget whom I have baptized. However, if you can use me, I shall do my best for you, even if I have to work to help with my support."

The elder read this letter to the committee, and asked if they were interested in the applicant. They replied that he would never do for their church. They were not interested in any unhealthy, trouble-making, contentious, ex-jailbird; and were insulted that his application had ever been presented! But one of them did ask the preacher's name, and the elder replied, "The Apostle Paul."