

The Baptist CHALLENGE

a voice of independent Baptists

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The Suffering Church

A Centennial Sermon, Delivered At Santee Baptist Church,
Orangeburg South Carolina, July 16, 1876

By Eld. D. W. Cutting

“Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase. For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age” — Job 8:7, 8.

Twelve days ago (July 4th 1876), the citizens of these United States celebrated the one-hundredth anniversary of American Independence. The hearts of all were filled with joy; and they manifested their joy in the ringing of bells, firing of cannon, delivery of orations, public dinners and social parties; and even now, in the city of Philadelphia, are publicly displayed, exhibitions of arts, inventions, and manufactures, and works of skill, and genuine, in the various departments of industry, showing the progress and improvements of the last one hundred years. The past is fraught with many lessons which

are intended to prepare us for the future. To review the past is not only interesting but instructive to every thinking mind, not only to the citizen, the philanthropist and the patriot, but to the Christian, more especially, as in deep humility and gratitude he contemplates upon the dealings of God towards him, giving him grace to endure sufferings, and power to triumph over temptation and sin, guiding and leading him thus far on his journey heavenward.

While all denominations of Christians, in common, rejoice in their prosperity, and thank God for their protection, and the blessings they enjoy, the Baptists, as a sect differing from all others in many of their principles and practices, have much to be thankful for, and they do rejoice with a joy unspeakable, and lift up their hearts and voices

in devout thankfulness to God for guiding and sustaining them thus far through hard trials, great difficulties and severe persecutions, and for the rapid increase and successful dissemination of their principles and practices, as taught and enjoined in the word of God. Having confidence in God, and trusting in the promise of Him who “spake as never man spake,” they have undoubted assurances that He will never leave them nor forsake them. If it is the will of God that they shall suffer trials and persecutions in the future as their fathers have done in the past, they believe that God’s presence shall cheer them, and that His grace shall sustain them, and be sufficient for them. My brethren, to sustain trials and endure hardships inspires to greater zeal, energy, and perseverance

— to gain progress through adversities and opposition is a source of great joy, and calls loudly for holy gratitude, devout thankfulness and sincere praise to Him who has helped us hitherto.

My discourse today is concerning the Baptist denomination, in Scripture language, “a sect everywhere spoken against.”

The question naturally arises, Who are the Baptists? and where did they come from? In church history they are better known by their principles and practices than by their name. In some portions of the land, it is customary for some persons to sneer at Baptists as a “new sect,” as “religious upstarts,” started with Roger Williams, etc., and some believe it. They have been taught to believe it.

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Quiz The Pastor -- #29**Nazarite Or Nazarene?**

By the late Nick Michalinos

Question: Is a Nazarite the same as a Nazarene?

Answer: No, they are not the same. I'll give a simple explanation of both, beginning with the Nazarite.

A whole chapter, Numbers 6, is recorded giving a description of what a true *Nazarite* really is. A Nazarite was a man or woman who engaged themselves by a personal vow or a vow made by others who had authority over them (Samson, Judg. 13:5; Samuel, 1 Sam. 1:11; John the Baptist, Lk. 1:15) to abstain from wine and all intoxicating liquors; to let their hair grow and never cut or shave the hair or beard; not to enter into the presence of a dead body, nor to be present at any funeral (Jesus was not a Nazarite for He was in the presence of corpses many times); if any one died suddenly in their presence, they would have to begin again the whole ceremony of their Nazariteship, which ceremony lasted for eight days.

Some took the Nazarite vow only for a time (Num. 6:13), while others were Nazarites for their whole lives (Samson, Samuel, John the Baptist). The whole idea of being a Nazarite was to separate themselves from the normal ways of life so as to wholly devote themselves to the service of God. The word "Nazarite" means "one separated." After their vow as a Nazarite had been fulfilled, there was a ceremony performed to get them back into normal activities of everyday life (Num. 6:13-21).

Now, a *Nazarene* was simply a person who lived in the town of Nazareth. As we would call a person



Benjamin Franklin, 1787

"I have lived, Sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing this truth: that God governs in the affairs of man. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His

aid? We have been assured, Sir, in the Sacred Writings that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. "I firmly believe this."

— (Calling on framers of the Constitution to pray for guidance from God.)

who lives in Pasadena a Pasadenian, or a person who lives in Houston a Houstonian, so Jesus was a Nazarene because He lived in Nazareth. Though He was born in Bethlehem (Lk. 2:4-7), yet after His birth and escape into Egypt from the execution squads of wicked King Herod (Mt. 2:13-16), Jesus, Joseph and Mary returned into Israel and "came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth (where Joseph and Mary had previously lived, Lk. 1:26-27; 2:4); that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, *he shall be called a Nazarene*" (Mt. 2:23). It was from Nazareth at the age of 30 years that Jesus came down to the Jordan River to John the Baptist "to be baptized of him" (Mt. 3:13). He

God In Our Government

was born in Bethlehem but was "brought up" in Nazareth (Lk. 4:16; 2:39-40, 51-52), making Him a Nazarene. Bear in mind that everyone who lived in Nazareth were also called Nazarenes. Joseph was a Nazarene, Mary was a Nazarene, etc. ¶

Church Goes Independent

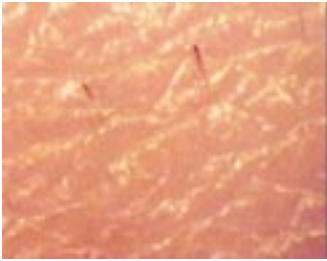
Citing differences over homosexuality and other issues, the largest United Church of Christ congregation in New England has voted to break away from its denomination.

Members of the First Church of Christ in Wethersfield voted 510-59 on June 6 to leave the

(See **HOMO** on page 24)

THE BAPTIST CHALLENGE

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God's Masterpiece — The Human Body #17

The Skin You Love To Touch

By Arthur I. Brown

Having made a survey of the digestive, circulatory, and respiratory systems, we are now in a position to consider the manner of removal of waste materials from the body. In other words, we ought to know something about elimination. The organs concerned in this important process are: the kidneys, skin, liver and lungs, and to a lesser extent, the intestinal canal. Only the kidneys are specially constructed for this sole purpose, the other organs being used in other ways as well. The liver eliminates certain waste products through the bile which it manufactures; the lungs, as we have seen, remove carbon dioxide, while the intestinal tract is the avenue by which the gross waste matter of food is expelled.

The life processes of the body are intimately associated with chemical changes as food is burned up by oxidation, and certain waste materials resulting from this process are poured into the blood. If the blood could not get rid of this poisonous matter, death would be speedy. So, the function of the kidneys is to take from the blood which passes through them

the products of combustion and eliminate them.

The kidneys are situated in the posterior lumbar region and are outside the abdominal cavity, shaped like beans, about four or five inches long and one and a half inches wide. They are imbedded in a fatty capsule or covering and outside of this we find a thin layer of connective tissue called the Renal Fascia. Large blood vessels enter the kidney, as we would expect, seeing that the job done here is to extract from the blood the poisonous substances it has collected in its journey through the body. The process is altogether too intricate to be discussed understandably in a few moments, and I shall not make the attempt. It is enough to know that the fluid secreted by the kidneys contains organic materials, like urea and uric acid, which have been selected or secreted by the epithelial cells of the kidney, mixed with the watery solution filtered out from the blood, and directed to the collecting tubules, then emptied into the ureters, long tubes running from kidney to bladder. About three pints of fluid leave the

kidneys each twenty-four hours.

The most important substances excreted in this way are the nitrogenous products of protein destruction in the body, urea being the most abundant. Uric acid is another protein waste in smaller quantity, along with ammonium salts from similar sources. Phosphates of sodium, potassium, and calcium are also normally present, as well as other mineral salts, especially sodium chloride, which is common salt.

The skin or integument is the elastic and protective covering of the body. It covers the entire external surface, and is continuous at the openings of the body with the mucous membranes of the interior surfaces. It consists of two layers, a superficial one called the epidermis or cuticle, and a deeper one, known as the corium or true skin, or derma. This deep layer is elastic and sensitive, with many blood vessels, soft and red; it rests on a loose tissue, called the subcutaneous tissue. Its surface is covered with microscopic projections called papillae, extending upward into the epidermis. In it the roots of

the hairs are lodged, and a vast number of glands which open on the surface. These glands are of two kinds, sweat glands, secreting perspiration, and sebaceous glands which secrete an oily substance into the hair follicles.

The superficial layer, the epidermis, consists of layers of epithelial cells of varying character and thickness. The deeper cells are soft, but near the surface they become flat and dry, until finally they are mere scales and constantly being shed.

The tiny projecting papillae of the deep layer contain certain nerve endings, which are especially distinct and sensitive on the front of the finger tips. Some contain several loops of blood vessels and are arranged in rows, forming ridges which are circular. It is a remarkable fact that no two fingers or toes are alike in this respect, hence the thumb or finger print is a positive means of identification. Its value is never lost, even in old age, as these ridges are permanent. The Bible seems to refer to this in Job 37:7, "He marks as with a seal in the hand of every man; that all men may know his works" (Fingerprints).

Sweat glands are found in the skin of the entire body. Each gland consists of a coiled tube embedded in the deep layer, with a

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duct opening on the surface and into the ridges made by the rows of papillae. With an ordinary magnifying glass the tiny droplets of sweat may be seen in these openings. The sweat or perspiration is a thin watery fluid, highly acid but saline to the taste, containing a number of substances in solution derived from the vascular network in the corium. The most important of these substances are: sodium chloride, phosphates, urea, and carbon dioxide. It is estimated that there are approximately 2,000,000 sweat glands, which secrete nearly a quart of perspiration daily in health. It is a continuous process of which we are not aware when the excretion is moderate and uniform. Under other conditions we know how profuse it can become.

Other appendages of the skin are the nails and the hairs. Nails are hard but elastic structures, belonging to the outer layer, giving protection to the ends of the fingers and adding power and ease in using them. Here again we see the thoughtfulness of the Creator. The hairs also belong to the cuticle or outer layer. They are distributed over the greater part of the body surface, being conspicuous on the scalp by their size and length. The softness and

gloss of the hair are due to the oil which is poured into the follicles at the roots by the oil glands. Here is God showing Himself to be a Specialist in beauty — the great Artist of the universe.

In this connection it is interesting to think of the eyelashes, the long hairs protecting the sensitive eyeball from dust; the eyebrows to prevent perspiration from running down from the forehead into the eye. Those who have the idea that the sole use of eyebrows is that they ought to be plucked into a thin line of varying shape have failed to discover the real use of this important adjunct to comfort.

The skin has a triple function, as we saw in a former article. It is the protective covering of the body, an organ of excretion, and an organ of the special sense of touch. Also it aids in regulating body temperature. We shall study this touch sense when we consider the special senses. Now we are more concerned in its function of secreting sweat, a process of elimination. By getting rid of much hot water, it tends to keep the temperature down to normal limits under very adverse conditions. The power of absorption by the skin is very limited.

In health the quantity of sweat is modified in various ways: by the diet, by the amount of liquid taken, and the kind of liquid; also by the character of the cloth-

ing, the season of the year, temperature of the atmosphere, etc. In fevers, the blood vessels of the skin are dilated, but the nerve stimulus dulls the action of the cells and the skin remains dry.

The effect of baths upon the skin is to abstract heat, improve the tone of all the structures, and favor the action of the glands. The skin is a portion of our bodies to which we do not pay much attention. But we now see its great importance and what a splendid organ it is, beautifully designed to carry out the exact function of the Creator.

The impression that I always get from a consideration of these innumerable observations is one of tremendous awe, as I meditate upon the infinite wisdom of God who was able to devise all these thousands of minutiae instantly, and bring them into perfect functioning condition by the exercise of His omnipotent will. I gather from my reading of Scripture that this is one of the things God expects to happen with those who have spiritual perception, or even common intelligence.

When the 14th Psalm speaks to us and tells us that “the Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were *any* that did understand, and seek God,” it surely indicates a measure of surprise that men could be so void of

discernment, or as we would say, just “dumb” in the face of all the unassailable evidence of the existence of a Supreme Creator who is a Person. Yes, a Person who ought to be sought and consulted. But what does God see? Listen! “Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge?” It is so easy to forget that we cannot fool God. His omniscience enables Him to read every thought of man the world over. He knows *my* thoughts down to the smallest detail. He knows what you are turning over in your mind. This knowledge that we are in the presence of God, at least in the sense of His awareness of our every action, should deter us from disobeying or ignoring Him.

The nations have done that and have virtually challenged God for world supremacy. God has spoken and men everywhere ought to know that there is such a Being, who demands at least an acknowledgment of His existence and an attitude of obedience to His commands. But man persists in his godless defiance. There can be only one result — judgment of the severest kind when God’s long suffering is at an end.

And it does begin to look as if God’s patience is about exhausted. If that is so, it will not be long before a surprised world will

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The Book of Revelation — Message #7**The Voice of the Trumpet**

By M. L. Moser, Editor

(Preached February 18, 1979)



“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea” (Rev. 1:10-11).

John, as already noted, is on the Isle of Patmos, one of the remote prisons that were used in that day and time, similar to Alcatraz when it was active in California. Even though he has been isolated from everybody and placed on this island where there is very little vegetation and many salt mines, he is not separated altogether. While he is there, he says, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day.”

I don’t care what man can do to you, man can not separate you from God. When you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, man can do little to you. He might separate you from others, he might isolate you,

he can put you where you are all by yourself; he may put you down in the inner most dungeon as they did Paul and Silas, yet you will never be alone, because the Lord will always be there with you. God can meet with His people anywhere. Though they sought to isolate John from everybody by putting him on this island with just a few other prisoners, no friends, nothing around him to give him any of the comforts of life, we find the Lord right there with John, and not just in an ordinary capacity. For John says:

“I John, I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day.” By being “in the Spirit” it means more than simply having the Holy Spirit indwell him. You and I know that the Holy Spirit indwells every believer, but when John talks about being “in the Spirit” he means that he is now being completely possessed and dominated by the Holy Spirit.

Now that is the ideal. Our lives should be such that we are completely controlled by the Holy Spirit. It is not always the case. There are times when one can be filled with the Spirit to do a special work for the Lord. When you are

“filled with the Spirit”, you are so possessed and so dominated by the Holy Spirit, that you are able to do a special work that God has set aside for you to do. There is no such thing as living in a constant state like that.

There is a distinction to be made in being *filled* with the Spirit, *indwelt* by the Spirit and *led* by the Spirit. There is another phrase commonly used today and that is “*baptized* in the Spirit,” but that’s never applied to any individual. No individual has ever been “baptized in the Spirit” or “by the Spirit.” The baptism of the Holy Spirit was an immersion of the New Testament church on the Day of Pentecost and it has never been applied to any individual. It only applied to the New Testament church for the purposes of empowering the church and to enable it to fulfill the commission and do the work that God had given it to do. That’s why the Lord told them to tarry “until ye be endued with power from on high” (Lk. 24:49) so they might have the power to carry forth the Great Commission that the Lord gave them. There is no such thing as a “baptism

of the Holy Spirit” today, for every New Testament church is empowered by the Holy Spirit. Ephesians tells us that the New Testament church is God’s dwelling place or God’s habitation “in the Spirit” (Eph. 2:22), and we do not have to have a “baptism in the Spirit” because He already indwells every New Testament church.

But, there is such a thing as being “*filled* with the Spirit,” being “*led* by the Spirit” and being “*indwelt* by the Spirit,” and every child of God, every saved person, is indwelt by the Spirit. Romans tells us that “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his” (Rom. 8:9). So there is no such thing as a saved person not being indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God.

Secondly, there is being “*led* by the Spirit.” All of us ought to be led by the Spirit, and God will lead us by the Spirit. Our difficulty is that sometimes we do not follow. There is the leadership of the Holy Spirit if we will but follow His leadings. Remember, however, that in the leading of the Holy Spirit, He always leads according to the Word of God, never contrary to the Word of God.

Thirdly, being “*filled* with the Holy Spirit” occurs when God has some momentous or special work that He has for that person. You can only be filled one

(See **REV** on page 6)



Southern Baptist Publishing House Produces New Bible Translation

In the beginning were the words: Hebrew and Greek, poetic and prophetic, historic and hyperbolic.

Edwin Blum has read them all, chapter and verse.

General editor of the Holman Christian Standard Bible, Blum spent nearly eight years going over every jot and tittle from Genesis to Revelation. April 15, the fruit of his labors hit bookstores nationwide.

"It's a great privilege to wrestle with the Bible," Blum said. "I hope it's made me more godly."

Dozens of translations and interpretations of the Bible fill bookshelves, but Blum and others said there's something different about this one, which is being promoted as the first major English-language translation in more than 30 years.

"We would say that our translation is an up-to-date translation," Blum said.

"For a new generation in the 21st century, it was time for a fresh translation of Scripture that again has an eye toward the accuracy and the English styling," said David Shepherd, senior vice president and publisher of the

Nashville, Tenn.-based Broadman & Holman Publishers. The publishing company is a division of LifeWay Christian Resources, an entity of the Southern Baptist Convention that operates stores throughout the United States.

"We buck the trend a little bit," Shepherd said. "The trend had been the lower reading level translations. When you bring something down to a fourth-grade reading level, you're going to lose a little bit. Shepherd further said: "It's great maybe as an evangelism tool ... (but) as the person grows in faith and maturity, they want something that again services them better as a Bible study translation."

As comfortable as readers may be with particular translations, Shepherd indicated new renderings of familiar words may give the text "fresh meaning."

For example, many Christians may easily begin recitation of John 3:16 with the words "For God so loved the world." The Holman Christian Standard Bible, however, starts, "For

God loved the world in this way."

Likewise, Jesus' directive that's been translated, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," appears this way in the Holman Christian Standard Bible: "Keep asking, and it will be given to you. Keep searching, and you will find. Keep knocking, and the door will be opened to you."

Readers may also be surprised to see Paul cited as a "slave of Christ Jesus" in the first chapter of Romans rather than as a "servant," as he's referred to in other translations.

"A servant is somebody you hire. A servant is somebody you pay," Blum said. "A slave is somebody who's bought, who's owned. ... Paul will say you're not your own."

Said Blum, "The slave experience, you know, obviously has political ramifications, but I don't think you should translate an ancient word into something less accurate just because (you) think slavery was so horrible you don't

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time until you have been emptied, then you can be refilled just like a cup. You only fill a cup one time until it's emptied and then you can refill it, so believers can be filled more than once.

This is the case with John. Though he is separated and isolated, though he is on this island by himself, yet he says, "I was in the Spirit." The Holy Spirit had come near to him in an especial way and was preparing him for this special work that he was going to do.

We find something very similar to this with the Apostle Paul. This is something entirely unique and different for John and Paul. It's going beyond that which you and I can have; it's going to that which is not the natural, but the supernatural, for in Second Corinthians chapter 12 we find a similar occurrence with Paul. Paul says:

"It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God

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knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter” (2 Cor. 12:1-5).

John is to be given a revelation similar to what the Apostle Paul had. The Lord is going to take John to heaven where he is going to get a vision of the future of this world. He will see it’s climax and the ultimate victory that the Lord Jesus Christ is going to gain over Satan and all of his forces. It seemed as if Satan was going to be victorious, but the Lord is going to show him differently. So he says “I was in the Spirit.”

I want to notice something else he says. “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day.” I want us to make a distinction between “the Lord’s Day” and “the day of the Lord.” They are not the same. The “day of the Lord” is not a 24-hour day. The “Day of the Lord” is really a period of time; that time of judgment when Jesus Christ returns to this earth to fulfill the prophecy of what is called “the Tribulation Period.” This is the Day of the Lord, but the Lord’s Day has reference to the first day of the week. That day that we know as Sunday. The first day of the week was early recognized as a special day so that the mere mention of it would be sufficient to identify in the minds of

those to whom the Apostle wrote, as the Lord’s Day. Thus the Apostle John sanctions the first day of the week as the Day for special worship of the Lord. Though alone, he was worshiping on that day.

This is the day that the believers in the New Testament set aside to worship the Lord Jesus Christ. It was on the first day of the week that the disciples came and found the tomb empty. “*And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him*” (Mk. 16:1-6). So we see that Jesus came forth from the grave on the first day of the week, and from

that day on, the New Testament Christians worshiped the Lord on the first day of the week.

Notice in Luke 24:1: “Now upon the *first day of the week*, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre.” Also in John 20:19-26 we find it repeated. These verses speak of this resurrection, but verse 19 says: “Then the same day at evening, being *the first day of the week*.” Turning now to Acts 20 we find that the New Testament churches were meeting in regular weekly services. In Acts 20:7 we find: “And upon *the first day of the week*, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow.”

In First Corinthians 16 we read: “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon *the first day of the week* let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come” (1 Cor. 16:1-2). So we see that Paul was writing and telling the church at Corinth that they are to make their collection upon the first day of the week. But this was not limited to the church at Corinth. He says: “As I have given order to the churches of Galatia” (1 Cor. 16:1). So it was the custom of the New

Testament churches to meet on the first day of the week in celebration of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Also, the empowering of the New Testament church on the Day of Pentecost was on the first day of the week. Ignatius who wrote his “Epistle of Ignatius” to the Magnesians about 101 A.D. calls the Lord’s day “the queen and prince of all days.” Chrysostom in writing on Psalm 119 says, “It was called the Lord’s day because the Lord rose from the dead on that day.”

There is a denomination called Seventh Day Adventist, and another called Seventh Day Baptist that say we are to worship on the Sabbath day. Nowhere in your Bible will you find any Gentile ever commanded to worship on the Sabbath day, nor will you find that the New Testament churches met upon the Sabbath day. It was already an established custom for churches to meet for their weekly services upon the first day of the week. The early church fathers such as Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Minutius Felix, and all of those who lived in the first, second, third and fourth centuries, met on the first day of the week. Thus, the Lord’s day is not just an ordinary day. It is a special day and should be treated as such!

(See **REV** on page 11)



President Ronald Reagan August 23, 1984. — “Without God, there is no virtue, because there’s no prompting of the conscience. Without God, we’re mired in the material, that flat world that tells us only what the senses perceive. Without God, there is a coarsening of the society. And without God, democracy will not and cannot long endure. If we ever forget that we’re one nation under God, then we will be a nation gone under.”

* * *

Buying Votes With Your Money. — “John Kerry is getting more specific with some of his spending plans when the people of this country actually make him our president. Yesterday he came out with a plan to increase the child care tax credit from \$3,000 to \$5,000. What’s more, he plans to extend the eligibility for this credit to people who have no job whatsoever ... He wants to extend this income redistribution program to single mothers who don’t work! In plain language this means that the

World News Roundup

government would simply write a \$5,000 check to every single, non-working mother out there every year and call it a ‘tax credit.’ Can’t you just see these women stampeding to the polls in November to vote for Kerry! For \$5,000 untaxed dollars a year ... why not?” — Talk show host Neal Boortz.

* * *

President Reagan’s Farewell Address, January 1989. — “(A)s I walk off into the city streets, a final word to the men and women of the Reagan revolution, the men and women across America who for 8 years did the work that brought America back. My friends: We did it. We weren’t just marking time. We made a difference. We made the (‘shining city upon a hill’) stronger, we made the city freer, and we left her in good hands. All in all, not bad, not bad at all. And so, good-bye, God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.”

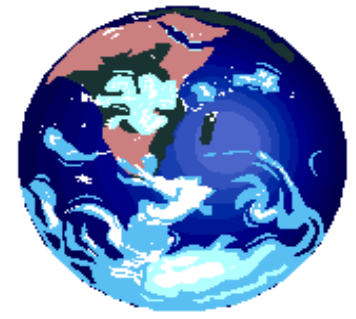
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What’s Wrong With Contemporary Christian Rock Music? — This question was posed to us by someone who “happened to stumble across” an article I had written on the subject. He said “It

seems as if you are very narrow minded. I bet your church probably has no instruments [He’s wrong, and his letter is full of grammatical errors and boasting]. He said, “You see, I attend World Harvest Church in Columbus, Ohio. We sing *any* song that glorifies our Lord and Savior. I don’t listen to *any* secular music, but I love to listen to Christian rock ... It magnifies the man that died on a cross for me. Its churches like yours; with such religious traditions, which cause people to run away from God.” We have warned of the danger of CCM/Rock—how it’s even worse than secular rock. The writer is from a charismatic church (Rod Parsley, pastor) and does not lack for audacity. He says: “God doesn’t live in your little box you try to keep him in. See, you live in the back woods of Alabama [Huntsville, Space City, USA!]. I am from ... Detroit...” — CC

* * *

“Teach Children Atheism, Let Them Decide.” — The Institute for Public Policy Research recommends that atheism be added to British school curricula and explicitly taught. A similar change has already been made in Scotland. The report says: “Children should be taught



atheism and then allowed to make up their minds on the validity of religion or atheism on the basis of which is best supported by the evidence.” Britain is now a secular society (Rom. 1:28) with “only 7% of the population attending a place of worship each week.” Evolution and humanism are already standard fare in most U.S. textbooks. — CC

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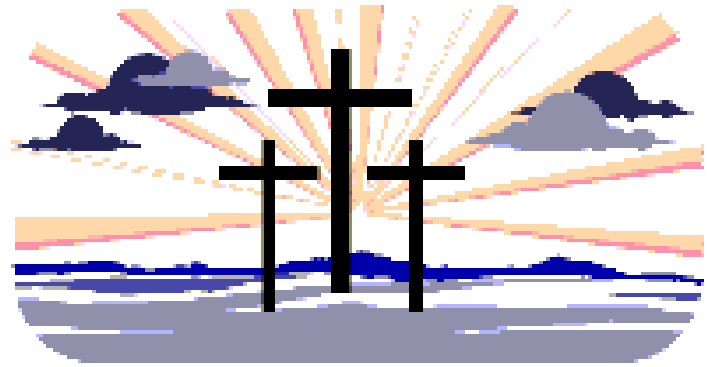
Homosexual Master Plan To Destroy Family. — Homosexual activists’ goals for the destruction of the family include: universal acceptance of the gay lifestyle, destruction of Scriptures that condemn homosexuality, muzzling of clergy and Christian media, special privileges in the law, overturning laws prohibiting pedophilia, indoctrinating children through public education, etc. (Dr. James Dobson newsletter, 4/04). Some danger points: (1) With the legalization of homosexual marriage, all public schools will be required to teach that this

(See WNR on page 14)

La Voz Del Desierto

El Día de la Muerte Y La Resurrección de Jesucristo

Por M. A. Curet



El día en el cual murió nuestro Señor Jesucristo, ha sido tema de controversia. Hay dos puntos de vista. Unos dicen que Jesucristo murió un miércoles por la tarde y otros que murió un viernes por la tarde. Los que apoyan el viernes como día de su muerte, usan el pasaje que aparece en Marcos 15:42-45, aquí ellos interpretan “*día de reposo*” como el séptimo día de la semana, llamado sábado.

Estas personas parten de la teoría de que los judíos acostumbraban contar como día entero cualquier fracción del mismo. El primer día sería, según ellos, un par de horas del viernes, el segundo desde las 6:00 P.M. del viernes hasta las 6:00 P.M. del sábado y el tercer día comprendería las horas restantes.

Es importante que sepamos que nuestro Dios aunque está fuera del tiempo, mide el tiempo de forma completa y con exactitud (Gén. 1:5-8, 13).

Como podemos ver en estos pasajes, para Dios un día comprende un periodo de tiempo de “*tarde*” (*tinieblas*) y “*mañana*” (*luz*). Aquí podemos ver una muestra clara de que el “tercer día” indica tres días y tres noches. El Señor también dividía el día en doce horas (Juan 11:9).

Este punto de vista (el del viernes), no cumple con las condiciones expresadas por nuestro Señor, cuando dijo: “Porque como estuvo Jonás en el vientre de la ballena tres días y tres noches, así estará el Hijo del hombre en el corazón de la tierra tres días y tres noches” (Mateo 12:40). Jesús lo dijo y los principales sacerdotes y los fariseos se aseguraron de que así fuera (Mateo 27:62-66).

Partiendo de las expresiones de nuestro Señor, es imposible que haya muerto un viernes, pues no se cumpliría lo expresado, de que estaría “*tres días y tres noches*

en el corazón de la tierra.” Para que esto se cumpliera tuvo que haber muerto un miércoles, lo cual probaremos.

Jesucristo fue crucificado a la hora tercera (como a las nueve de la mañana), desde la hora sexta hasta la hora novena hubo tinieblas (*de doce del medio día hasta las tres de la tarde*) y a la hora novena Jesús clamó y expiró (*las tres de la tarde*), (Marcos 15:25, 33-37). Si contamos desde la puesta del sol del miércoles hasta la puesta del sol del sábado encontraremos que hay tres días y tres noches como lo había dicho nuestro Señor, o sea, setenta y dos (72) horas. Al amanecer del primer día de la semana, el domingo, Jesucristo ya había resucitado (Mateo 28:1-6; Juan 20:1-10).

En la semana de su muerte se estaba celebrando la Pascua. Esta era una celebración judía que comenzaba el día 14 del mes de Nisán, al ponerse

el sol, hasta el día 21 a la puesta del sol. El mes de Nisán era el primer mes del año sagrado hebreo, que correspondía casi a nuestro mes de Abril. Durante estos siete días de fiesta se ofrecían sacrificios y ofrendas, señalando el primero y el último día, como días de reposo (el día 15 y 21), (Exodo 12:16; Levítico 23:7-8).

Los cálculos astronómicos modernos ponen de manifiesto, que el año 30 A.D., año de la crucifixión de nuestro Señor, el día 14 de Nisán cayó jueves. Esto nos indica que el primer día de la fiesta de Pascua (viernes 15), era día de reposo y el último día (jueves 21), también era día de reposo.

Conociendo ésto, se nos hace fácil entender el pasaje de Marcos 15:42, que vimos anteriormente, aquí “*día de reposo*” no se refiere al séptimo día de la semana, llamado sábado,

(Vea TUMBA en la pág. 10)

Concilio Mundial De Iglesias (WCC) Desea Movimiento Ecuménico Más Amplio.

— El Consejo Mundial de Iglesias ha extendido una invitación a los Católicos Romanos, Pentecostales y Evangélicos para que se reúnan y consideren nuevas maneras en las cuales puedan trabajar unidos en el futuro. De acuerdo a un informe de parte de “Noticias Ecuménicas Mundiales,” líderes de varias iglesias agencias miembros del Concilio, publicaron un informe el pasado 24 de noviembre de 2003, llamando a los representantes de la Iglesia Católica, así como de las Iglesias Pentecostales y Evangélicas a reunirse antes del mes de noviembre de 2004 para “discutir la formación de una nueva red de relaciones.” El Concilio está buscando nuevas maneras de “reconfigurar el movimiento ecuménico” con el propósito de crear una organización paraguas más amplia del ecumenismo con las iglesias y agencias no afiliadas actualmente con el Concilio.

Evangelistas Atacados Por La Policía. — El 2 de marzo, en el hogar de

la ciudad de Ho Chi Minh (República de la China Comunista) de Nguyen Hong Quang, un funcionario de la iglesia Menonita y el evangelista Pham Ngoc Thach descubrieron a dos policías encubiertos de seguridad nacional espíandoles. Los policías atacaron a Quang y a varios otros cristianos antes de retirarse y de llamar a oficiales de diversos grupos. Armados con revólveres y otras armas rodearon el hogar de Quang y ordenaron a 12 trabajadores cristianos a permanecer dentro de la casa. El policía entonces intentó incitar a vecinos para atacar a los cristianos. Un anciano de la iglesia fue llevado a la comisaría de la Policía. Cuando tres evangelistas jóvenes fueron a investigar sobre el anciano, fueron viciousamente golpeados.

Cortan Las Cabezas A Cristianos Nigerianos En Su Propia Iglesia. — Según un informe de Michael Irlanda del Servicio

Noticias Alrededor Del Mundo

de Noticias ASSIST, el pasado 24 de febrero se les cortaron las cabezas a unas 48 personas en Yelwa, Nigeria durante un servicio de oración matutino. Los musulmanes armados invadieron la Iglesia, ordenaron a la congregación acostarse en el suelo y procedieron a usar sus machetes cercenando sus cabezas. Una fuente dijo que unos 400 musulmanes pesadamente armados participaron en la ejecución gritando “Allah u Akhbar” (Dios es grande). Al parecer usaron uniformes rojos y negros y se movieron con precisión militar. □

TUMBA . . .

(Viene de la pág. 9)

sino al “*Shabat Judio.*” Esta palabra viene del verbo hebreo “*Shabbath*” que significa, “*desistir,*” “*parar*” o “*cesar,*” de cualquier actividad. Podría aplicarse a cualquier ocasión sagrada, como un tiempo de cesación de labores, tal como era usado en el Día de Expiación. Este día era observado anualmente en el décimo día del séptimo mes (Levítico 16:31; 23:32).

Los judíos eran bien estrictos en la observación del “*Shabat,*” más que cualquier otra fiesta. En la víspera del “*Shabat*” ellos

preparaban sus casas y sus mesas para la espléndida y jubilosa solemnidad del “*Día del Shabat.*”

Hoy día nosotros no tenemos que preparar nuestras casas ni nuestras mesas para el “*Día del Shabat*”, pero si nuestros corazones. Debemos preparar nuestros corazones para el “*Shabat Cristiano*”, que corresponde al “*Día del Señor*” (el domingo).

Ahora entendemos porque el día de la muerte de nuestro Señor era día de preparación, pues al otro día era el último día de la Pascua. El último día de la Pascua cayó jueves, y por mandamiento de Dios y costumbre de los judíos, este último día era día del “*Shabat*” (reposo). Basándonos en esta información obtenemos que nuestro Señor murió un miércoles por la tarde y fue sepultado antes de la puesta del sol de ese mismo día, según la ley judía (Deuteronomio 21:22-23), y por ser víspera del “*Shabat*” (Marcos 15:42). Su resurrección fue después de la puesta del sol del sábado siguiente a su muerte (72 horas después), después de las 6:00 P.M., comenzando el domingo (primer día de la semana), *Día del Señor.*

La muerte y resurrección de nuestro Señor Jesucristo nos abre la puerta al nuevo Pacto de La Gracia, donde ahora podemos acercarnos con confianza al trono de Dios para alcanzar misericordia (Hebreos 4:14-16). □ □ □

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Marcos A. Curet, Pastor

REVELATION . . .

(Continued from page 7)

Do you know what some of the Adventists will tell you? They say, "Yes, but you see, when you are meeting on the first day of the week, you are meeting on Sunday, and that's a day that's been set aside for the worship of the Sun, and you worship on a pagan, heathen holiday. Well Saturday is named after Saturn, so has that helped them any at all if they worship on the day set aside for the worship of Saturn? That's where the name Saturday comes from. So really they haven't helped themselves one bit if they try to use that as a basis of argument.

I think I told you before when we were studying the book of Acts what happened to me one time. While I was a student at the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, I was doing some visitation, and ran into a fellow who was a Seventh Day Adventist. He began saying the Roman Catholics were the ones who changed from worshiping on the Sabbath day to the first day of the week, and he said, "I can prove that from the Bible." Well, I thought that was very unusual that he was going to prove it from the Bible, so I told him that I wanted to see it. He had a Seventh Day Adventist Bible but he didn't go to the Bible. He went to the notes that are in the back of the Bible. He didn't go

to one of the 66 books between Genesis and Revelation, but to the notes that had been appended to the back of the Bible after the Book of Revelation. Somebody had written in the notes that the day had been changed by the Roman Catholics and that they were responsible for changing it from worshiping on the Sabbath day to worshiping on the first day of the week. That poor fellow didn't have any more sense than to believe that those notes were just as much Bible and inspired as the books of Genesis through Revelation.

Now don't laugh, because we have some Baptists that do the same thing. There are some Baptists that will take a Scofield Reference Bible and consider all the notes at the bottom of the page to be as inspired as the part above. Remember this, only the part that *is* the Bible itself is inspired. All the notes, the marginal notes, and the commentaries are simply man's opinions, his ideas, what he believes. They may be right, they may be wrong, therefore they must be checked out by the Word of God, and not to be accepted automatically as fact.

I think Scofield has done much harm with his doctrine of the church, because Scofield was not a Baptist, and he has tried to destroy much Baptist doctrine with his so-called universal, invisible church

theory. That's not a Bible doctrine, but it is in Scofield's notes. Particularly as you read concerning the church on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2, he says the church started there; that it was born on the day of Pentecost, and that is simply not true. You'd be surprised how many Baptists (and others) have been influenced to accept that theory simply because it's there at the bottom of the page in Scofield's notes. Remember, any notes by any man need to be tested by the Word of God. This Adventist man really believed that the Catholics changed Saturday worship for Sunday worship because there it was in the back of his Bible. The churches in the New Testament worshiped on the first day of the week, commemorating the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Next, notice, "*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet*" (Rev. 1:10). Trumpets were customarily used in the Old Testament to announce the divine commandments from the Lord. In the 19th chapter of Exodus there are at least three occasions where God speaks to the children of Israel. In verse 13 the Lord tells Moses that the trumpet is to be a signal that He is to speak unto them. Verse 10 says "*And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people,*" etc. He then

says, "*There shall not an hand touch it,*" talking about the mountain, "*but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount*" (Ex. 19:13). Then verse 16 says, "*And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.*" Now notice in verse 19: "*And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.*" So we see that God used the sound of a trumpet to indicate that it was to be a divine command that was to come to the children of Israel.

Let us notice now another passage in Zechariah chapter 9. Again we find that the trumpet is to emphasize and point out the authority coming from the Lord. It says: "*And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south*" (Zech. 9:14).

In the book of Matthew, chapter 24 we see that the Lord again talks

(See **REV** on page 12)

REVELATION . . .

(Continued from page 11)

about trumpets that are going to sound. He says: "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Mt. 24:31).

Again in First Corinthians 15: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be change" (1 Cor. 15:51-52).

In First Thessalonians 4: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first" (1 Thess. 4:16). So we see that the trumpet is connected with the authority of the Lord.

Look at the next thing in this first chapter of the book of Revelation. He said: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last" (Rev 1:10-11). Alpha and Omega are the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet. In verse 8 he says the same thing, "I am Alpha and Omega, the

beginning and the end." Also in chapter 22:13, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

The Lord talks about the fact that He is the Alpha and Omega, and this is the sound of the trumpet that sounds, in which the Lord speaks as the voice of a trumpet. The trumpet then is that which calls John to attention. It is this that God uses to arrest John in his tracks to assure him that what he is about to be commanded to do is from God Himself. We must recognize the Lordship of Christ, for it is Christ's voice sounding "as of a trumpet."

So the trumpet serves four purposes. First, to gain John's attention. Secondly, to assure him of the deity of the speaker, that this is God speaking to him. Thirdly, to assure him of the importance of that which is to follow. Fourthly, to give him his commission to write these seven letters to these seven churches, and to write the book of the Revelation.

So now we find John in prison. But really this prison has suddenly been changed. It is changed to the "prophet's chamber." John is going to become the prophet to write the book of Revelation to these seven churches of Asia, and through them, to you and me, that we might have these great words of God that have been recorded for us in the book of Reve-

lation. Now here are his orders: "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and what thou seest write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea" (Rev. 1:11).

Now each church was given an individual letter which we find recorded and preserved in the second and third chapters of this book. Each letter was written to one specific church, but was also intended for all churches as well, so that all seven letters were intended for every church. Each of these seven letters, though written to one particular church, was to be circulated among the other churches so that all might have the advantage of knowing each message. This entire book, all the book of Revelation, was also written for the churches and it has been transmitted down to us so that you and I might have it today.

As John is given the command to write, He says: "What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia" (Rev. 1:11). The book is to be sent to each church individually as all New Testament churches were separate and independent churches. They were not members of an organi-

zation, as there were no organizations other than independent churches. There were no Conventions, no Associations, no organized Fellowships. There were no Conferences, Synods, Dioceses, as each of these churches was an independent, separate church, not forming, composing or being a part of any kind of an organization. These churches were given these letters, by the Lord, through John the Apostle.

As far as organizations are concerned, they came into being at a much later date, centuries later to be exact, and the first of these organizations was the Roman Catholic Church. They are the ones that set up the first Convention. The late Dr. W. W. Barnes, former Head of the Church History Department of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary of Ft. Worth, Texas, a seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention is the author of the Encyclopaedia of Southern Baptists. In his book "A Study in Ecclesiasticism, A Study of the Southern Baptist Convention," he declared that the way the Southern Baptist Convention is set up is identical with the way that the Roman Catholic Church was set up in its beginning. He declares that the beginnings of the Southern Baptist Convention pattern exactly the beginnings of the Roman

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REVELATION . . .

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Catholic Church that soon developed into what is now known as the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church.

Now Baptists are a little bit behind time on all of this, because the organizations among Baptist churches did not begin until long after the Reformation period and thus are comparatively new and unscriptural and of recent origin. The Catholics began it, but these Baptist organizations are following the same pattern of the Catholics.

Now the Lord told John to write and He says: "What thou seest, write in a book." In the last chapter of Revelation John says I did what I was told to do; I followed my orders. "And I John saw these things, and heard them" (Rev. 22:8). John did write then what he saw. He says I saw these things and I heard these things. What I have written in this book are things that I personally saw, things that I personally heard. This did not apply only to these seven letters in chapters two and three, but it included the entire book of the Revelation.

God has also told us that the next thing to take place is the sound of the trumpet. The godless world will not hear it but the saved will hear it. All who have part in the suffering and waiting for Christ, whom John here represents, shall

hear it. When they hear it, they shall be transfigured. That's how we are going to know when the Second Coming of the Lord takes place. In 1 Thessalonians 4 it tells us that the return of the Lord is to be preceded by the sound of the trumpet. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (precede or go before) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:13-17).

This is what you and I are listening for, the trump of God. I do not know when the trumpet is going to sound, but I do know that one day the trump of the Lord is going to sound, and when the trump of God sounds, all the saved that have died, their bodies are

going to be resurrected. Their spirit and body are going to be united, and they are going to be with the Lord forevermore. Then, in "the twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor. 15:52), almost at the very same moment, all the saved living upon the earth, that same transformation is going to take place with them. Those of us who are saved are going to be caught up from this earth along with the dead in Christ, and together we will be with the Lord forevermore. We shall mount up with wings like eagles to the very presence of the Lord (Isa. 40:31).

But the godless world will not hear that trumpet. The unsaved people, their ear will not hear that trumpet. They will be left behind. The only thing that will let them know that the trumpet has sounded is the sudden disappearance of all the saved, from the face of the earth. They'll not hear that trumpet when it sounds. Every child of God, every saved person, everyone who had received Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior will hear that trumpet just as John on the Isle of Patmos heard the trumpet of God speaking unto him, saying: "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." God is going to come back one of these days with the sound of the trumpet and when the trumpet sounds, the dead in Christ shall rise.

The trumpet not only

called John but it should summon our attention also.

Isaiah 40:31 describes to a certain extent how it will be for the believers in that day and time. "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" because they will then be in their resurrection body — a body made perfect like unto the glorious body of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If the trumpet were to sound now, would you hear the trumpet? Would you be left behind, and not really know what had happened until you begin to look around, and find that all of your saved friends and loved ones are gone, and you're left behind?

One day the trump will sound. I don't know when it will be, but it's not long. The coming of the Lord draweth nigh. Will you hear the trumpet? Unless you're saved, unless you've received Jesus Christ as your Lord and your Savior, you'll not hear the trumpet, and you'll be left behind. What can you do? You can become a child of God now; you can receive Jesus Christ now; you can trust Him as your personal Lord and Savior now. Then when the trump sounds you'll hear the trumpet and you'll be transfigured and changed like all the others who are saved. Would you trust Him now and be saved? □

WNR . . .

(Continued from page 8)

perversion is the moral equivalent of traditional marriage. (2) Foster-care parents will be required to undergo “sensitivity training” to rid themselves of bias and must affirm homosexuality in youth. (3) The impact of homosexual marriage will spread through the world and lead to polygamy. (4) It will create millions of motherless and fatherless children. So far, only Belgium, the Netherlands and Canada [and Massachusetts] have authorized homosexual marriage. — CC

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SBC To No Longer Endorse Female Chaplains?

— The Southern Baptist Convention currently has about 196 female chaplains from among about 2,500 endorsed by the mission board. The SBC executive committee voted to part from the Baptist World Alliance, saying it has become too liberal, and advocates “aberrant and dangerous theologies.” This will be presented in June at the SBC annual meeting. — CC

* * *

What’s the significance of the famous White Cliffs of Dover in England to the debate over creation and evolution? — Answer:

The White Cliffs of Dover hug the coastline of southeastern England. These cliffs — made primarily of chalk — are eroding at an alarming rate. While we don’t have an exact idea how much erosion has occurred at the White Cliffs, we can compare it to what has happened in other parts of England. For example, a lighthouse near Eastbourne had to be rescued from a cliff’s edge. The erosion was more than 70 feet in 165 years, or about 5 inches per year! Now how does this relate to Genesis—and evolution? These rates of erosion contradict the evolutionary belief that landforms are hundreds of millions of years old. If they were that old, the White Cliffs of Dover would have been disappeared long ago. Evolution requires millions of years, but rates of erosion argue against it. The Bible is correct — our earth is on the order of thousands of years old, not millions!

* * *

Another Suicide Goof.

— An Australian woman who committed suicide two years ago surrounded by supporters and euthanasia activists was not dying of cancer at the time of her death, an official post-mortem report has confirmed. The country’s leading euthanasia campaigner — who knew ahead of Nancy Crick’s

death that she was cancer-free but did not make that public — said in response to the report’s release that the point was immaterial.” To Nancy’s mind it didn’t really matter and I guess to my mind it didn’t matter either,” Dr. Philip Nitschke told a commercial television channel. Nitschke advised Crick in the weeks leading up to the day she took a lethal barbiturate on May 22, 2002, although he was not one of the 21 people with her when she died, having decided to absent himself for legal reasons.

* * *

Anti-Religious Government Policies.

— A Senate committee heard testimony this week about the impact of anti-religious government policies. Texas Senator John Cornyn, who chaired the hearing, wasted no time in summing up the situation. He says people of faith are increasingly besieged by court rulings and government policies. “Some courts, led by the United States Supreme Court, have demonstrated a clear and unmistakable hostility toward religious expression in the public square,” Cornyn stated. Christian lawyer Kelly Shackelford offered the hearing a specific example of how a federal judge banned a graduation prayer and threatened Texas high school students with jail. “The judge told the students that they could not, at the

graduation, pray in Jesus’ name — and that federal marshals would be in attendance and that any student who violated that order would be taken to the Galveston County jail for up to six months’ incarceration,” Shackelford said. “He then followed, and I quote, ‘Anybody who violates these orders, no kidding, is going to wish that he or she had died as a child when this court gets through with it.’” The hearing also heard from a World War II veteran who talked about his legal fight to overturn a ban on hymns, prayers, and preaching at a Dallas-area senior citizens’ center.

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Q: Was the TV movie *Inherit the Wind* an accurate portrayal of the Scopes trial?

— A: *Inherit the Wind*—which starred the late Oscar winners Jack Lemmon and George C. Scott—is the fictionalized account of the famous Scopes ‘monkey trial’ of Dayton, Tennessee. But as we revealed in our Creation magazine, almost all of the scientific evidence brought forward during the time of the trial has been discarded. There was another very disturbing thing about *Inherit the Wind*. It caricatured Christians as self-righteous, intolerant and mean-spirited. The two leading Christian characters

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SUFFER . . .

(Continued from page 1)

Although this untruth has been denied and disproved and refuted again and again, still it is repeated, by some through ignorance, while others know better.

It is said by some of our enemies that Baptists originated in the German city of Munster, in 1534. Lamentable must be the weakness, and deplorable the ignorance of such statements, come from what source they may. Limborch and Mosheim, German Pedobaptist historians, and others deny these statements. Rev. William Cecil Duncan, professor of the Greek and Latin Languages in the University of Louisiana, says:

“Baptists do not, as do most Protestant denominations, date their origin from the Reformation of 1520. By means of that great religious movement, indeed, they were brought forth from comparative obscurity into prominent notice, and through it a new and powerful impulse was given to their principles and practices in all those countries which had renounced allegiance to the Pope of Rome. They did not, however, originate with the Reformation, for long before Luther lived, nay, long before the Roman Catholic Church herself was known, Baptists, and Baptist churches, existed

and flourished in Europe, in Asia and in Africa.”

Dr. Ypeig, professor of Theology at the University of Groningen, and Dr. J. J. Dermont, chaplain to the King of Holland, Pedobaptists, writing a history of Dutch Baptists at the request of their sovereign, testify “that the Mennonites descended from the pure evangelical Waldenses who were driven by persecution into various countries, professed pure and simple principles which they exemplified in holy conversation; they were in principle and practice, Baptists; they were in existence long before the Reformed church of the Netherlands. They further testify *that the Baptist may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the days of the apostles, and as a Christian society which has preserved pure the doctrines of the Gospel through all ages.*” (Enc. Rel. Knowl., Art. Mennonites).

Is not this testimony sufficient to prove that the Baptists did not originate at Munster, or with Roger Williams? Can any one desire testimony more satisfactory and more convincing?

But further. We cannot say positively when the Roman church had its origin. In A.D. 606, we learn that the first Bishop of Rome assumed the name of Universal Bishop, and the Catholic Church

became the Roman Catholic Church, anathematizing all who dissented from it as heretics, and consigning them to destruction. All Protestant sects believe and affirm the Roman Catholic Church to be the “man of sin,” “the son of perdition,” “the antichrist,” “the mother of harlots.” Then we would ask, for all the ages previous to the Reformation in the 16th century, Where was the Church of Christ? Was it annihilated? Are we prepared to say there was no Church? That it no where on earth existed? That there were no Christian people? No true followers of Christ? No people to uphold the standard of a pure gospel? None, no where to be found, to bear witness to the truth as it is in Jesus? Can we say there were none? If so, where is the promise of Christ? Has He not said, “Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it”? Has His word failed? No, never! His word cannot fail. Heaven and earth may pass away, but His word cannot fail. There must have been a Christian people in every age, from the days of the apostles to the present time, characterized by the same doctrines and practices. If this continuous line of witnesses were not Baptists, who were they? All Pedobaptist churches had their origin in or about the Reformation in the 16th

century. They date no farther back than 300 or 400 years, and some are of much later date.

From the testimony of historians, Baptists and Pedobaptists, we learn that a body of Christian disciples having different names at different periods, holding the views and faith and practice of Baptist churches of the present day, may be historically traced from the times of the apostles to the present time. What does Mosheim, a Lutheran and bitter enemy to the Baptists, say? Does he say that the Baptists had their origin at Munster? That they are a new sect? Of recent date? No; he says: “Their true origin is hid in the remote depths of antiquity, and is consequently extremely difficult to be ascertained” (Mosheim, vol. iv, p. 427). Had he pursued his investigations and followed closely their track, he would not only have said their origin is in the remote depths of antiquity, but that their origin is in the first church at Jerusalem, and their germ at the river Jordan.

Baptists may with triumph appeal to the pages of history upon which may be seen indubitable proof of Baptist communities in succession descending to us from the apostles, all striped, and bruised, and scarred, and torn, and mangled, and bloodstained; martyrs to the truth: slain

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Fundamental Baptist Information Service

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Rick Warren's Dangerous Judge Not Ecumenism.

— Rick Warren's book *The Purpose Driven Life* is a No. 1 bestseller in both Christian and secular markets. It contains extensive documentation of Warren's dangerous and unscriptural "judge not" ecumenical philosophy. On page 164 he says, "God warns us over and over not to criticize, compare, or judge each other. ... Whenever I judge another believer, four things instantly happen: I lose fellowship with God, I expose my own pride, I set myself to be judged by God, and I harm the fellowship of the church." Warren carelessly makes no distinction between hypocritical judgment or judgment based on human tradition and biblical judgment. Actually, the child of God has an obligation to judge everything by God's Word. The believers at Corinth were rebuked because they were careless in this regard and were tolerant of false teachers (2 Cor. 11:1-4). The Bereans, on the other hand, were commended because they carefully tested everything by the Scriptures (Acts 17:11). The Bible says "he

that is spiritual judgeth all things" (1 Cor. 2:15) and Jesus taught that we should "judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24). To test preachers and their message carefully by God's Word is not a matter of pride, but wisdom and obedience. In keeping with his judge not philosophy, Rick Warren uncritically quotes from a wide variety of theological heretics, especially Roman Catholics such as Mother Teresa, Brother Lawrence (Carmelite monk), John Main (Benedictine monk), Madame Guyon, John of the Cross, and Henri Nouwen. He does not warn his readers that these are dangerous false teachers who held to a false gospel and worshipped a false christ. In the strongest terms we urge our readers to beware of Rick Warren and the Purpose Driven philosophy. We don't need a man's shallow encapsulations of the New Testament faith; we need the "whole counsel of God" as found in the Scriptures.

* * *

Homosexual "Marriage" Dealt A Blow By Arizona Supreme Court. — The following is from

WorldNetDaily, May 25: "In the Grand Canyon state, the Supreme Court decided not to hear *Standhardt v. Arizona*, a case brought by two single men who were denied a marriage license. The Arizona Court of Appeals dismissed the suit on Oct. 8, and the homosexuals sought review by the state Supreme Court. 'This is a fantastic victory in the defense of marriage,' said Gary McCaleb, senior counsel with the Alliance Defense Fund, in a statement. 'We are extremely pleased at the Arizona Supreme Court's decision not to hear this case. Arizona's marriage laws are clear. The Arizona Court of Appeals understood that, and now the Supreme Court has agreed. The plaintiffs simply had no case.' ADF represented Arizona state Sen. Mark Anderson as a friend of the court. The group's amicus brief argued Harold Donald Standhardt and Tod Alan Keltner, the men denied a marriage license, misrepresented the law, that the Massachusetts Goodridge opinion does not control Arizona law and that there is no national 'trend' toward same-sex marriage. 'Although the majority of Americans consistently oppose same-sex 'marriage,' homosexual activists have filed lawsuit after lawsuit in an attempt to find radical judges who will tear down democratically enacted laws and impose a radical, nation-changing agenda on an unwilling

public,' McCaleb said."

* * *

Hindus Worship At Mary Shrine. — On May 5, a group of 60 Hindus led by a priest worshipped at the Roman Catholic Mary shrine at Fatima, in Portugal (Frontpage Online, Portugal's Weekend Newspaper in English, May 22). The priest chanted prayers at the Catholic altar in the Chapel of Apparitions. The Hindus, who also lit candles and danced outside of the Shrine, were greeted personally by the local Catholic bishop and the rector. Bishop Ferreira e Silva said, "We don't want to be fundamentalist, but sincere and honest." Fatima is the site of an alleged "visitation of Mary" in 1917, promising peace if men would dedicate themselves to her. On May 13, 1982, Pope John Paul II made a pilgrimage to Fatima to dedicate the entire world to the "immaculate heart of Mary." He said, "In entrusting to you, O Mother, the world, all individuals and peoples, we also entrust to you this very consecration of the world, placing it in your motherly Heart." On his 1982 visit the Pope also thanked Mary for his survival of an assassination attempt a year earlier, and he returned to Fatima in

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1991 to repeat his prayers of gratitude on the 10th anniversary of the shooting. In 1994, John Paul II told 230 Italian bishops in Rome, "A maternal hand guided the bullet and the pope was drawn back from the threshold of death" (Evangelical Times, July 1994). A bullet that was extracted from the pope was placed in the golden, diamond-studded crown worn by the Mary statue at Fatima, and the pontifical sash that was perforated by one of the bullets was donated to the Jasna Gora Mary shrine in Poland.

* * *

Preacher Causes Uproar In California Senate.

— Ralph Drollinger, who leads a Bible study class for lawmakers in Sacramento, caused an uproar when he said that women senators were sinning by living in the state capitol for four days a week instead of being at home with their children. He said: "It is one thing for a mother to work out of her home while her children are in school. It is quite another matter to have children in the home and live away in Sacramento for four days a week. Whereas the former could be in keeping with the spirit of Proverbs 31, the latter is sinful" (Los Angeles Daily News, May 25). He said that men and

women have been given different roles by God. Not surprisingly, many senators in this liberal state disagreed vehemently and several led a protest against Drollinger's remarks. Drollinger also got into trouble when he referred to Roman Catholicism as a false religion. (California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is a Catholic.) Drollinger, who heads up Capitol Ministries, is a member of Grace Community Church, where the senior pastor is John MacArthur.

* * *

Anti-conversion Law Repealed In Indian State.

— The following is from the Baptist Press, May 26: "Barely a week after India's Congress Party defeated the previous pro-Hindu government in national elections, an official of the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu has announced the repeal of the state anti-conversion law, Compass Direct news service reported May 25. Chief Minister Selvi J. Jayalalithaa made the announcement May 18 in a five-page statement, noting, 'I have ordered that the Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Forcible Conversion of Religion Act 2002 be repealed at once.' The Tamil Nadu anti-conversion law was enacted on Oct. 5, 2002, despite large-scale protests by the Christian minority and opposition parties. It contained loose

definitions and required all conversions to be registered with the state government. Without proper registration, both 'converter' and 'converted' could be jailed and fined. Richard Howell, general secretary of the Evangelical Fellowship of India, told Compass Direct, 'This is an answer to prayers offered by Christians everywhere. We are happy [Jayalalithaa] is moving away from Hindutva' [the Hindu nationalist movement]."

* * *

Passion of Christ Star Nominated For MTV Award.

— The sensual MTV channel has nominated Jim Caviezel for its Movie Award for Best Male Performance for his work in *The Passion of the Christ*. (*The Passion of the Christ* has earned more than \$39,000,000 in the U.S. alone.) Also nominated are four other Hollywood movie stars, including Johnny Depp (*Pirates of the Caribbean*) and Tom Cruise (*The Last Samurai*). If Caviezel were a staunch Bible-believing Christian (he is a Roman Catholic) and if *The Passion of the Christ* were faithful to the Word of God, MTV would not touch it with a proverbial "ten foot pole." Jesus warned, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world,

therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:19).

* * *

Conclusion: Friends in Christ, do not be discouraged by any of this. It is God's will that we know the times and that we be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves. These things remind us that the hour is very late, and we need to be ready for the coming of the Lord. Are you sure that you are born again? Are you living for Christ day by day? "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:11-14)

QUOTES

The ladder of life is full of splinters, but they always prick the hardest when we're sliding down!

* * *

When God denies His child anything, it is with the design to give him something better. □ □ □

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by the most cruel tortures that Satan could invent, by prisons, and dungeons, and starvation, by fire, and gibbet, and sword; men and women, in the face of danger, and suffering, and death, standing firm and immovable in the faith of the gospel — these were the true followers of Christ, and faithful witnesses of Jesus during the dark and fearful ages when the Man of Sin ruled the world. We are proud to claim them as our brethren — would to God we were worthy to be associated with them.

All historians acknowledge that the primitive Christian church extended into the second century. And we find upon the pages of history that the Tertullian and Montanes Baptists appeared in the second century, extending into Asia, Africa and some parts of Europe. The Novatians appeared in the third century, and were found in France A.D. 254, and were planted all over the Roman Empire, and were numerous at Alexandria, Constantinople and in Phrygia, and though greatly persecuted were found in a prosperous condition as late as the middle of the fifth century; and Robinson says “a succession of them continued until the Reformation in the 16th century.”

Donatists we find in the 4th century, extending their influence until the 8th

century. Jones says: “There was scarcely a town in Africa in which there were not Donatist churches.” The Paulicians appeared A.D. 650 in Greece, and were found in other portions of Europe in 1017. The Patarines were known in the year 330, and Dr. Allix says: “By means of the Patarines the truth was preserved in A.D. 517, falling and rising as persecution became more or less severe, but never disappearing; in the 13th century they had increased greatly. Persecution was so great that they scattered, and either formed churches of other names or united with kindred brethren, and it is believed they were dispersed in Italy until the Reformation.”

At the foot of the Alps there is a valley called Piedmont, believed to be so named on account of its situation, from *pede*, at the foot, and *montium*, of the mountains. It is said to contain 13,000 square miles and surrounded by mountains, and intersected with deep and rapid rivers and many streams which fertilize the land, the whole country interspersed with hills and dales, resembles a watered garden, and in its beauty and plenty is like unto an earthly paradise. This valley at an early age of the Christian Era became a place of refuge to the true worshipers of Christ.

History tells us that they existed here in the

second century; and this beautiful valley from time to time became an asylum for the oppressed, and a refuge for the persecuted. We are told that they were first called *believers*, and from time to time were known by different names; and ecclesiastical writers called them Vaudois, Valdenses and Waldenses, simply from their living in valleys.

For many years, in this secluded retreat, they worshipped God in peace; but this people, so pure and devoted, were doomed to persecution, and for many ages suffered in the extreme; and in the 13th century the Pope instituted a crusade against them, and they suffered such tortures as the “Man of Sin” only could invent. Their principles, however, continued unsubdued, and at the time of the Reformation their descendants numbered 800,000. When Piedmont became subject to France in 1800, the French government gave them toleration, but in 1814 persecution revived, and they were again subjected to fire and sword as before. Some years ago, we are informed, they were visited by some pious and benevolent persons, and their number is computed to be about 20,000. When the Reformers in the 16th century sounded the note of general liberty, it was hailed with joy, and men everywhere arose and struggled to cast off the oppressive weight

that was crushing them. All over Europe men rose up pleading and contending for truth and religious freedom. These glad notes, wafted by the winds of heaven, reverberating amid the mountains and valleys, and echoing through the dark and dense forests, were heard by thousands sheltered in remote obscurity, who cheerfully came forth from their retreats and confessed themselves Baptists. Can this be true? Let Mosheim, the Lutheran historian, again testify; hear him:

“The true origin of that sect which acquired the denomination of Anabaptists by their administering anew the rite of Baptism to those who came over to their communion, is hidden in the depths of antiquity and is of consequence difficult to be ascertained.” He further says: “It must be observed that they are not entirely in error when they boast of their descent from the Waldenses and Petrobrussians and other ancient sects who are usually considered as witnesses of the truth in times of general darkness and superstition. Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe, particularly in Bohemia, Moravia, Switzerland and Germany, many persons who adhered tenaciously to the doctrines, etc., which is the true

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source of all the peculiarities that are to be found in the religious doctrine and discipline of the Anabaptists" (Mosheim, *Hist. of Anabaptists*, p. 491).

So we have found Baptists in great numbers in the 16th century, in the year of the Reformation, when, or about the time, Pedobaptist churches had their origin. The Baptists of England in their Jubilee Memorial, in 1855, say: "England undoubtedly received the gospel in the days of the apostles, and its ecclesiastical history plainly proves that thousands were baptized according to the primitive mode." Wales was also visited and Baptist churches constituted, and sustained, and, it is said, that several Baptist churches now existing, date back their origin to the 17th century; this brings their history to the present time. "The oldest Baptist church now existing, in Britain, bears date A.D. 1633." Wales, Scotland and Ireland, from early times till now, have had their Baptist churches.

In A.D. 1639, Baptists were found in the United States of America, and though meeting with much opposition, and persecution from Protestants, established churches and State governments, have rapidly increased, and are now spread over the entire country. In showing the

progress of the Baptist denomination in the United States in the last one hundred years, I copy from the Baptist Year Book of 1874:

"In the year 1770, there were in the United States, 77 churches; in 1874 there were 21,510 churches; 100 years ago, about 250 ministers; in 1874 there were 13,354; in 1784, about 34,100 members, in 1874 there were 1,761,171 members, and it is computed that at the present time the number of members is 1,815,000. For the last twenty years and more, churches have increased at the rate of one for every day in the year. Increase of membership at the rate of 1,300 for every week. Now, one in every 27 of the entire population are Baptists. One hundred years ago there were no Baptist newspapers, now there are over 50; 100 years ago there was one college, Brown University, at Providence, RI. now there are 42. In South Carolina, 100 years ago, there were about 10 or 11 churches; in 1874 there were 759, and now about 800; 100 years ago, about 200 or 300 members; in 1874 there were 93,922, now about 95,000." Now, one in every 8 of the entire population of the State are Baptists. One hundred years ago there was one Association in the State, now there are 26.

When we look over the world, and especially at the

rapid increase of the denomination in this country, how true the words of the text and how applicable to us, "Though thy beginning was small, yet thy latter end should greatly increase. For inquire, I pray thee, of the former age." Yes, Baptists in every age, amid reproach and persecution, have stood firm, and have ever testified to the most important truths of the Bible in their purity and simplicity, and have always contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

As Baptists, we look back through 18 centuries, and find our origin not at Munster, nor at the Reformation, nor in the dark ages, but that the first Baptist church was the church at Jerusalem. While all this is valuable and encouraging to the Baptists of the present day, it is far more important to know that our principles and practices are plainly taught and enjoined in the Bible; for as Baptists, we take the Bible only as our standard, believing that God has given it to us as *the rule* in constituting our churches, also to guide our faith and govern our actions; that as the only Lawgiver in Zion, *His* will is to be obeyed. We believe that the Scriptures were written by the inspiration of God, and contain all necessary information and instruction; that by its principles we are to be judged; "that it has God for its Author, salvation for its end, and

truth without any mixture of error for its matter;" and that it is given to man for all succeeding time, and that there is a curse resting on all who addeth thereto or taketh therefrom.

Baptist Principles and Practices

What are the distinctive principles of Baptists? As Baptists, while we agree in some points, we differ in others from other denominations, and we think the points of difference are important. The doctrines we embrace and to which we so strictly adhere, are learned from the Word of God. We are indebted to no profound philosophers and gigantic intellects who are regarded as wise men and lights of the world, although, in every age, in our ranks have been men of the highest literary attainments, and vast wisdom and devout piety, still these were followed only so far as they followed the teachings of God's Word. Our fathers, for the most part, were plain and unassuming men; they trusted not in their own wisdom, but sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit; they never consulted public sentiment, but searched the Scriptures for themselves, feeling that it was their duty to obey God rather than man; they read and studied the Bible, believing it to mean just what it said, and anxious to

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obey its commands, and to practice just what it taught. Their children have ever pursued the same course, and thus, while avoiding many errors into which others have fallen, they hope they have obtained a clearer knowledge of divine truth, and have been enabled to embrace, and adhere more firmly to the teachings of Christ and His apostles, and to follow more closely in the footsteps of the divine Master. We say this not in the spirit of boasting, but in devout thankfulness to God.

Baptists believe, "That a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, united by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His word; that its only Scriptural officers are Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties, are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus" (Enc. Rel. Knowl.).

Baptists believe that the principles upon which the churches of Christ are to be constituted are plainly given in the Bible, and that the churches constituted by the apostles were constituted on these principles, and that they are to be strictly adhered to in all succeeding

time. That the churches of Christ materially differ from all human organizations, and are separate, distinct, and independent of the State or civil power. Human societies have for their object the temporal well-being of its members; the churches of Christ have for their object the conversion and salvation of souls, and the glory of God. All human institutions are governed by human laws: the churches of Christ are governed by divine laws. We learn from the Bible and the teachings and practice of the apostles, that none but baptized believers are entitled to membership in the churches of Christ: that the apostles invariably demanded repentance and faith before baptism, and before admittance into the church. Philip would not baptize the Ethiopian eunuch until he professed faith in Christ: Paul was not received and baptized by the church until the church was satisfied of his conversion, and so we find it in every instance in the Acts of the apostles.

The Bible teaches, that individual personal faith is absolutely necessary to entitle any one to membership in the church of Christ: that Christians are to be baptized upon a profession of their faith; that no one can exercise faith for another; each individual is to believe for himself, to be baptized for himself; it must be his own free cordial act: that none should be made

members by force, against their will or consent, nor without their knowledge; that God requires us to worship Him in spirit and in truth, and in order that our service may be accepted it must be that of love, faith and obedience. We must first give ourselves to the Lord and then to the church.

We read that all the members of the apostolic or primitive churches were called saints, consequently all Baptist churches receive as members only those who give evidences of regeneration. Baptists regard infants and unbaptized persons and unregenerated persons as having no connection with the visible church of Christ. Baptists believe that the apostles constituted each church, a free and independent body, independent of each other, and of all others, separately or combined: that each church was responsible to Christ its only lawgiver, accountable to no power on earth, civil or religious, national or ecclesiastical; to no Congress, Parliament, Synod, Association, Convention, Conference, Priest, Bishop or Pope. But it recognizes Christ and owns Him only as Master; and to Him it stands or falls. It submits to no authority but His above its own. This principle is dear to every Baptist, and they have in every age appreciated its importance, and have ever cherished and defended it as a heaven born principle.

Baptists do not believe that the apostles established one visible organized body called *the church*, of which all the local bodies of believers should be subordinate parts or *branches*; but they believe that each church had a right to the distinctive name, *church*, according to the meaning of the word *ecclesia* from which the word church is derived, as the church at Jerusalem, the church at Corinth, etc.

We believe that God intended there should be separate and distinct churches, equal in all respects; established upon the same principles and governed by the same laws — no one subject to another, nor to any earthly head. Had Christ or the apostles intended that there should be but one organized body called *the church*, and that all the local churches should be dependent upon, and subject to it, they would have told us so; but on the contrary they constituted many churches, all having the same powers and privileges.

Baptists believe "That Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer, upon a profession of his faith, in water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in a crucified and risen Savior, with its effects in our death to sin and resurrection to a new

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life: that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation, and to the Lord's Supper" (Enc. Rel. Knowl.).

Baptists regard the Lord's Supper as an ordinance of Christ, and that none but baptized believers are admitted to this ordinance: "that it is a spiritual feast in which nourishment for the renewed soul is represented. It is intended for Christians in their church family capacity, provided for the members of that visible family." All the members not under censure are not only entitled, but are positively enjoined by Christ Himself to participate in this ordinance. "The broken bread is, not the real, but the emblem of the Savior's body broken on the cross for sinners; and the wine is not the real, but the emblem of His shed blood. The eating of the bread and the drinking of the wine are essential to this ordinance. Thus the members of the church by the use of bread and wine are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ, preceded always by solemn and prayerful self-examination" (Enc. Rel. Knowl.).

Baptists believe that regeneration, or, "being born again", is necessary to salvation; that regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit; and its evidence will be manifested in good

fruits, for "by their fruits ye shall know them" (Enc. Rel. Knowl.).

Baptists believe "that Christ secures justification to all who believe in Him: that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the promise of life eternal on the principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed not in consideration of our good works, but solely through faith in Christ's blood by virtue of which faith, *His* righteousness is imputed to us of God: that it reconciles us to God and secures every blessing needful for time and eternity" (Enc. Rel. Knowl.).

Baptists believe in the perseverance of the saints, that such only are real believers as endured unto the end: that persevering attachment to Christ is the mark which distinguishes them from false professors: that a special providence watches over their welfare: that they are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation." "If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed" (Enc. Rel. Knowl.).

Baptists believe in the absolute separation of church and State: they believe that the State has no right to interfere in matters belonging to the conscience; that every man has a perfect right to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience. When man violates the rights of man, the State may interfere and punish the wrong, but should not

interfere in matters which concern our relation to God. If the State establishes or prohibits any form of religion; if it supports one form to the rejection of another; if it prescribes the form of devotion, private or public, or interferes in any way in the matter of religious faith or practice, it transcends its powers and is guilty of wrong.

Baptists have always in every age contended for liberty of conscience. Soul liberty, not only for themselves but for others. For this principle Baptists from their beginning until this day have been battling. The plea of Peter and John to the Jewish Sanhedrin has been reverberating through all ages down to the present, "whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God judge ye, for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20).

The last distinction I shall mention is, that Baptists believe there is but one Mediator and High Priest between God and man, the man Christ Jesus: consequently they reject all human mediators and human Priests: they believe every believer has the privilege, in his own person, of drawing near to God, through the intercession of Christ. They believe that God designs that men should be set apart for the Gospel ministry, and that the church sets them apart and not the clergy; the act

which sets them apart makes them no better than their brethren; they are not set apart as lords over God's heritage, but as servants of the church, to serve in spiritual things. All Pastors or Bishops are of equal rank and possess equal rights and privileges, and in church relations are in all respects like their brethren. Baptists have always contended for this principle.

But there are persons professing to be teachers of religion, who have usurped the office of priesthood, exercising power over the consciences of men, withholding from them the pure word of truth, and leading them in spiritual ignorance down to eternal death. The belief in the necessity of a human mediator, and the belief in the official holiness of the teacher of religion has greatly hindered the progress of the religion of Christ. No error is more fatal to true piety and holiness. Baptists, to their honor be it said, have borne testimony to these great truths, and for them have ever been persecuted. Yes, persecuted even unto death, by Jews, Pagans, Romanists and even Protestants.

Baptists have ever contended for a converted church membership, for absolute separation of church and State, for the independency of the churches, for the right of private judgment, for the

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sufficiency of the Scriptures as a rule of faith and practice, and for immersion only as Christian baptism; they have rejected sprinkling and pouring as baptism, infant baptism, baptismal regeneration and all human priesthood, and for these principles were and are persecuted. This persecution commenced with John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, and has continued to this day. In tracing them, we follow the path everywhere marked with blood; "John the Baptist was beheaded in prison, Christ our captain, the leader of our faith was crucified on the cross, and it is believed, His disciples with one exception sealed their testimony with blood, and even that exception, John the beloved disciple was banished to the Isle of Patmos, martyrs to the truth; and thus for eighteen centuries have Baptists suffered and bled and died for the truth of the gospel; for the religion of Jesus, ministers have been dragged from the pulpit — congregations scattered — prayer meetings broken up — worship in families molested — Baptist ministers and laymen have been fined and imprisoned, Baptist ministers confined in jail for preaching the "glorious gospel of the blessed God" — have preached that same gospel through the grates and bars of their

prison windows — they have languished and died in prisons, and dungeons. Baptists have had their property plundered and confiscated and have been left penniless — they have been banished and exiled. Old men with gray hairs, feeble and infirm; children young and tender; and women with new-born infants, have been banished and forced to leave their homes and country and their possessions.

Yes, Baptists have been beheaded, slain by the sword, at the block, at the stake, at the rack; — they have been whipped, and drowned, and hung, and burned. Yes, they have suffered tortures the most severe, and pains the most excruciating, that men and devils could invent or inflict. All this, for opposing error, and adhering strictly and closely to the pure word of God. How true are the words of Christ, "ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." And how true are the words of God spoken through Paul, who was persecuted and beheaded.

In speaking of the triumphs of faith, he says "others were tortured not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection, and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea moreover of bonds and imprisonments; they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they

wandered about in sheepskins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth" (Heb. 11:35-39).

The Baptists have, in this prediction, given evidence of its truth.

A few words as to the persecution of the Baptists in America. The Pilgrim fathers fled from persecution to this country, but they understood not the principles, nor did they possess the spirit of religious liberty. Historians tell us that, while on board the ship, on their way to this country, before they had yet landed on our shores, the "court of assistants" enacted a law that their ministers' houses should be built at the public charge and their salaries established.

Thus the church and State were united. Men were forced to support churches in opposition to their convictions. Afterwards a law was enacted at Boston for the special benefit of the Baptists, and reads thus: "It is ordered and agreed that if any person or persons within this jurisdiction shall either openly oppose or condemn the baptizing of infants or go about secretly to seduce others from the approbation or use thereof, or shall purposely depart from the congregation at the ministration of the ordinance,

every such person or persons shall be sentenced to banishment" (Winthrop p. 211).

From the oppressive laws enacted in the New England States, the Baptists and Quakers for many years suffered incredible hardships. In New England a law was passed declaring that none shall hereafter be admitted *freemen*, or be entitled to any share in the government, or be capable of holding office, or serving as jurymen, but such as have been received into the church (established) as members. Every person, who held not the favorite opinions concerning the doctrines of religion, the discipline of the church (established), or the rites and ceremonies of worship was at once cast out of society, and deprived of all of the privileges of a citizen. All authority to receive into the church, or refuse admittance, was given to the clergy and leading men of the church (Backus Church History).

Great power was given to the clergy (Backus Church History); "the most valuable civil rights depended upon qualifications purely ecclesiastical." The clergy determined and fixed the civil and political condition of every citizen.

Roger Williams was a noble champion for "soul liberty," (as he called it) and religious freedom. He boldly preached religious liberty,

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liberty of conscience, and liberty of worship, and declared that the civil magistrate had no right to coerce the consciences of men, nor inflict civil penalties upon men for their forms of religious faith and worship. He was a firm advocate for Baptist principles; but he was not the first Baptist preacher in the world, neither was he the father of the Baptists, nor of religious liberty; he, however, belongs to the line, to the chain. Religious liberty has been, from the days of John the Baptist until now, a cordial Baptist principle. That first gospel preacher on the banks of the Jordan was a Baptist and from his day until now, the same faith and practice has been maintained and defended by a noble army of martyrs.

John Clark and Obadiah Holmes were firm Baptists, and they fearlessly and boldly contended for religious liberty and Baptist principles. Their names with many others are dear to American Baptists, for their struggles and sufferings for freedom of conscience; their memories will ever be fondly cherished, and handed down to generations yet to come.

Dr. John Clark, while preaching at Lynn near Boston, July 20th, 1651, was arrested, with his friends Obadiah Holmes and John Crandall, by an

officer of government, forced to attend the parish church, afterwards tried and fined; Mr. Holmes 30 pounds (\$150), Mr. Clark 20 pounds (\$100) and Mr. Crandall 5 pounds (\$25), in case of failure, to be publicly whipped.

Dr. Clark while in prison offered to discuss the points of doctrine he embraced, but no one would reason with him. The fines of Clark and Crandall were paid by their friends without their consent; they were released and ordered to leave the country. Mr. Holmes positively declined to pay his fine, nor would he suffer his friends to pay it. He was tied to the whipping post and publicly whipped in Boston, and we are told that very near the identical spot, there now stands a large and beautiful edifice, from the pulpit of which a Baptist preacher proclaims to a large and intelligent congregation, the same truth for which Holmes was whipped.

Clark and Roger Williams went to England to promote the interest of Rhode Island. They succeeded in obtaining a charter granting religious liberty to all the inhabitants of the colony. They possess the honor of contributing much towards establishing the first government on the earth that give full and equal liberty, civil and religious, to all men living under it.

In Virginia, in its early days, we find church and

State united, and the church of England established. Laws were enacted for the support of the clergy. Men were compelled by law to have their children christened; compelled to attend public worship and to use the "Book of Common Prayer." Laws were enacted to prevent preaching by other denominations, or to hold prayer meetings, or any kind of public worship. And even marriages were not recognized as lawful unless the ceremony was performed by the minister of the established church, and in fact all other ministers were forbidden to perform the ceremony.

Many oppressive laws were enacted against the Baptists and Quakers. A law was enacted "that all persons that shall refuse to carry their children to a lawful minister to have them baptized shall be amerced 200 pounds of tobacco, 'one-half to the informer and one-half to the public' " (Henning's Stat., ii: 165).

Men were fined and imprisoned for preaching the gospel. Men and women fined for not going to church. Men fined and imprisoned, and whipped for not having their children christened. Men imprisoned for holding a prayer meeting, and for allowing them to be held at their houses.

When Lewis Craig and Joseph Craig, and Aaron Bledsoe, were arrested for preaching the gospel of the son of God, in the colony

of Virginia, Patrick Henry rode fifty miles to volunteer his services in their defense; he succeeded and they were liberated. As he entered the house, he heard the indictment read by the King's attorney. He took the paper in his hand and addressed the court, eloquently, truthfully and effectively. In his speech he said:

"Did I hear an expression as if a crime, that these men are charged with? What! for preaching the gospel of the son of God." Swinging the indictment three times around his head, he exclaimed, "Great God!" He said: "these men are accused of preaching the gospel of the son of God! Great God!" and with similar words, thrice repeated, he inquired "what law have they violated?" The judge could endure it no longer and bade the sheriff dismiss those men.

It is the glory of the Baptists, that while they have suffered persecution almost from all dominant sects, they have never retaliated, they have never persecuted, even when it was in their power. It is, and was, and ever shall be against their principles; they cannot persecute, they have not so learned Christ.

Religious freedom now prevails in this country, and some one may be ready to ask: "Why recall the past? Why speak of these persecutions? Why not let

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BODY . . .

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awake to what it has lost, because when God's wrath breaks it will be too late. I am concerned about the individuals who read these words. None of us is able to bring pressure to bear on nations, but it may be that our argument and influence can yet bring some individuals to a realization of what it means to shut God out of the life.

Do you recall what God said to Solomon in 1 Chron. 28:9? "And, thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off for ever."

Does not that word of advice come to us today with the same force that it must have exerted on Solomon? I think so. God does not change. He is "the same, yesterday, today and for ever" — the unchanging One. He asks us to serve Him with the whole heart. He desires too, a "willing mind."

Too often we say we would really like to serve God, but circumstances make it difficult or impossible. We are able to make splendid excuses for ourselves, but then, I read that "the Lord searcheth all hearts and understandeth all

the *imaginings* of the thoughts." So why do I persist in trying to deceive Him? I cannot do it. He knows too much. That makes me decide to let Him have His way with me. Will you join me in that decision? You'll find the Lord Jesus Christ to be more wonderful than you have ever imagined! □

BIBLE . . .

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want to think about it."

The first verse of Psalm 1 in the Holman Christian Standard Bible, meanwhile, begins, "How happy is the man who does not follow the advice of the wicked." [Excerpts from a Religious News Service article.] □

SUFFER . . .

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these things be forgotten, as barbarities of by-gone days, as deeds done in a dark age?" Forgotten! Forgotten! Indeed! No! never! We ask, What is the use of history? We want our own people to know, and we want the world to know what our fathers have suffered for the truth; what principles and practices have borne good fruit, and have triumphed. The sufferings of Christ's people are a part of the history of Christ's church; a fulfillment of Christ's predictions. Forgotten! No!

It is right and proper for us to rehearse the deeds of those who have con-

tended and suffered for the truth. Persecution shows who are Christ's people, and who are not. Persecution is an evidence of the anti-Christian character of the Roman church. The church of Christ never persecutes. Forgotten! yes, when these predictions are blotted out by Almighty God from the Bible; when the stars of heaven shall fall, and the earth shall fail, and when time shall be no more, then, they may be forgotten, but not before. Why, even now, while we rejoice in our liberty, in some breasts there is the spirit of persecution, but through the mercy of God, we are permitted, yea, all denominations, to worship God as our consciences dictate. As Baptists our gratitude ascends to God, for the peace we enjoy; and while we as citizens rejoice in our civil freedom, we rejoice more in that freedom which gives us the liberty of worshipping God under our own vine and fig tree, where none can molest us or make us afraid.

Shall we celebrate our National Independence and not call to mind the great victories of soul liberty, which God has given us? Let us value our liberty and do what we can to extend like blessings to all the race of man. If we do not suffer as our ancestors have done, let their zeal and suffering emulate us to strive,

endure and contend for the "faith once delivered unto the saints." Let the love of Christ constrain us to devote all we have, our hands, tongues, money, and prayers to the spread of the truth, and the extension of Christ's Kingdom. □

WNR . . .

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in the film rant like lunatics much of the time. The film did get one thing right. It is indeed a 'crime' (to use their word) to censor an opposing view in the classroom. This lesson has been lost on secular humanists today who attempt to censor any evidence contrary to their dogmatic belief in evolution. For Christians, the lesson to be learned is that we must be able to give answers for our faith. After all, Christianity is a logical, defensible faith. □

HOMO . . .

(Continued from page 2)

national church and return to the independent status the congregation had for most of its 369-year history.

The 1.3 million-member United Church of Christ began ordaining openly gay clergy in 1972. Leaders of the Wethersfield church said this stand and others affirming homosexuality do not conform to their views of the Bible. □