

The Baptist CHALLENGE

a voice of independent Baptists

VOL. XLII, No. 11

November 2004

WHOLE NO. 480



The First Thanksgiving

Having the God-implanted desire to spread the gospel of Christ in remote places, a company of about one hundred Pilgrims settled in Plymouth in 1620. Of their purpose Governor Bradford wrote: "A great hope and inward zeal they had of laying some good foundation, or at least to make some way there-

unto, for the propagating and advancing of the Gospel of the Kingdom of Christ in those remote parts of the world: yea, though they should be but even as stepping stones unto others, for the performing of so great a work." Never could these devoted men and women have imagined how the Lord would later use the

people and the resources of the great new land to carry the gospel to all parts of the world.

When a year later Governor Bradford called for a day of united thanksgiving, only half of their number had survived the rigorous winter. These could thank God that they were still alive and that He

had blessed the summer with an abundant harvest. December 13, 1621, was the day set for them to render thanks to the Lord. For three days the people gathered together to pray, sing hymns, and listen to sermons. They partook outdoors of bountifully la-

(See **THANKS** on page 24)

Demonology

By Jimmy A. Millikin

Time was when you would rarely hear the subject of demons mentioned or discussed in Christian circles. This is no longer true today. There is presently a very lively interest in the subject. In fact, there seems to be a pre-occupation with the whole realm of the spirit world, especially with de-

(See **DEMONS** on page 15)

A Baptist Bride

By M. W. Hall

A short time ago I received a paper from the Pastor of one of the largest independent churches in America. It contained a message by the pastor, and it was a good message concerning the work of the church, what they stand for doctrinally, etc., etc. I truly enjoyed the message, and rejoiced in most all of it; however there were some statements with which I

could not agree. I had heard different stories about what this church taught and practiced, and I was glad to have their direct statement as to the error of many of these rumors. The following are some of the quotes from this article:

"The local church is very precious to God."

"The best definition of

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The "Tater" Family

Practically every church has some interesting families in the membership. Others have some rather outstanding families in them. Still other churches number among their constituency families which are both interesting and outstanding. The latter is especially true of the Tater family. Arthur Flake is

(See **TATOR** on page 2)

Quiz The Pastor -- #33**What Does The Word “Selah” Mean?****By the late Nick Michalinos**

Question: I’ve been reading Psalms lately and have come across the word “Selah.” What does it mean?

Answer: □ Since the Psalms were sung to the accompaniment of a musical instrument, some believe the word “Selah” is a musical sign denoting a “rest” sign. For example, it would be appropriate to say the sign is saying, “Stop here and pause, and think about what you have just sung or read.”

It seems we can sing hymns and spiritual songs in our worship services and never understand what we have sung. We go from song to song under the direction of a song leader and cannot recall the truths revealed in those songs.

The word “Selah” counsels us to “pause and think” about what we have sung and to allow the

precious truths in the song to edify our spirits. That’s why we must carefully select the songs we sing. They must be songs that glorify the Lord and spiritually benefit the participant.

It is just as wrong to sing error as it is to preach error. I would encourage all of us to be “Selah” singers and readers of the Word of God. □

TATOR . . .

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credited with saying that the family includes: Dic-Tater, Hesi-Tater, Imi-Tater, Agi-Tater and Spec-Tater.

Uncle Dic-Tater has some very lovable characteristics, and is usually easy to get along with, especially if he is allowed to have his own way. The truth of the matter is that he is going to

have his way or else. His policy seems to be that of “rule or ruin,” and he usually ruins.

Aunt Hesi-Tater is the amiable wife of Uncle Dic-Tater. She, too, has some very lovable qualities, but her greatest fault seems to be that of always waiting for someone else to go ahead. This characteristic is probably due in part to the dominant attitude of her husband. She is a rather timid soul, and quite hesitant about advancing her ideas or doing anything without waiting for the advice of someone else, especially her husband.

Cousin Imi-Tater is quite an attractive young lady, and has some qualities which are not seen in any other member of the family. Perhaps her greatest lack is that of originality. She always wants to do what other people do, and that in spite of what God says: “Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil” (Ex.

23:2).

Cousin Agi-Tater is the other girl in the family, and is quite different from her mother or sister. Although she seems to be possessed of unflagging zeal and unlimited energy, she is constantly stirring up trouble. She is somewhat of a loose-tongued busy-body. Apparently, she has not learned what God means when He says, “Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people” (Lev. 19:16).

Cousin Spec-tater is the only son in the family, and seems to be obsessed with the idea that he is outnumbered by the feminine portion of the family. He is a quiet, humble, unassuming sort of fellow. His worst fault is that he never does anything. He simply sits or stands quietly by and looks on without much comment, about what the others do.

Do you belong to the Tater family? If so, which member are you? □

THE BAPTIST CHALLENGE

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**O morn, when like a summer bird,
My spirit shall go free;
When I shall see Thee as Thou art
And be, my Lord, like Thee!**

**Thou lonely one, lift up Thine head,
Array Thee for the feast;
He that hath tarried long is near,
The glow is in the East.**

**O morning Star, so soon to lead
Thy chosen one away,
O Son of Righteousness,
Bring in Thine Everlasting Day!**



Preached March 18, 1979 -- Message #11

Meaning of the Word Church

By M. L. Moser, Editor

We now begin our study of the second chapter. We have preached ten messages on chapter #1. There are 22 chapters in Revelation. If we preach ten messages per chapter, that is a total of 220 messages, and divide that by 50 and that comes out about four years. I don't think we'll be quite that long in the Book of Revelation, because I think we will be moving a little bit faster than that, but we do have ten messages that we did preach on just the first twenty verses of this book.

In chapter two we begin that second section of the Book of Revelation. We found in 1:19 the Lord gave John the divisions of this book. "Write the things which thou hast seen." Basically that is chapter one which refers to the vision of the Lord that John saw. Then he says, "And the things which are" and this primarily refers to chapters two and three which is our New Testament church dispensation, in which we live now. Then follows the third division. "and the things which shall be hereafter," and that begins with chapter four.

In this second and third

chapters we find that there are seven different letters that are written here. These seven different letters are written to these seven churches of Asia. The Lord had told John in chapter 1:11 "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." Seven different churches, and we find that there are seven different letters in chapters two and three that are written, one to each church.

The number seven stands out very distinctly and clearly here in the Book of Revelation. The number seven is a number that has a special significance throughout the Bible. It is interesting to study what is termed Bible Numerics, in which you learn that numbers do have significance. The number three stands for the Trinity. The number five stands for grace. The number six stands for man. The number seven stands for fulfillment or for com-

pletion. Just to give you an idea of the number seven and its uses in the Bible, in the Old Testament we find that there were seven days in creation. There was Daniel's weeks of seventy times seven. The Jewish calendar has seven days in a week. The Feasts that are in the 7th month, the 7th year was to be a sabbatical year. And then seven times seven years gives the time when all debts were to be canceled and property returned, the Year of Jubilee.

In the Book of Revelation you will find that the number seven is going to be repeated over and over again. In 1:4 we read of the seven spirits, and then in verse twelve of the seven candlesticks. In 1:14-16 we find the sevenfold manifestation of the Lord. The Head, the eyes, the feet, the voice, the hand, the mouth and the countenance. In 1:16 we find the seven stars.

Then as you move on over into the Book of Revelation, chapter 4 and verse 5 we find seven lamps of fire. Chapter 5:1 you find seven seals. In verse 6 you find seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb. In chapter 8:2 the

seven heavenly angels and the seven trumpets. In chapter 10:3 the seven thunders. In chapter 12:3 you have the seven heads of the dragon, and the seven crowns upon these heads. In chapter 13:1, seven heads with seven crowns upon the beast that comes rising up out of the sea. In chapter 15:1 the seven last plagues. Chapter 15:7 the seven vials. In chapter 17:9 the seven mountains. In 17:10 the seven kings. And again, in chapter 5:12 we find a sevenfold description or ascription of the glory to the Lamb, and to seven different visions. Chapter 7:12 we find a sevenfold ascription of the glory of God also into seven visions. So we find as we go through the book, the number seven repeating itself, showing the fullness and the completeness of whatever there is under discussion at that time. Now that's just preliminary to our studies, for we will notice some of these sevens in more detail as we get there.

The second thing I want to look at by way of introduction to this second and third chapter is the

(See **CHURCH** on page 6)

God's Masterpiece -- The Human Body -- #21

The Trap Door Guard Over Your Windpipe

By Arthur I. Brown

We are now engaged in a brief study of the process of digestion which, as we know, begins in the mouth. Before the food enters the mouth, it is tested by the eye and the nose. Usually we glance more or less carefully at food and decide whether or not it is suitable, and the sense of smell also comes into play. If the food passes these two tests, it is admitted to the mouth cavity, where the teeth begin their work of sawing and splitting and grinding into very small bits. The reason for this milling process is easily understood. The food particles, when small, can be acted upon by the digestive juices and must be moistened at the same time to permit easy access to the digestive ferments.

The tongue assists in this kneading process, rolling the food around in the mouth while the saliva from the three sets of glands is poured out and mixed with the mucus, released from many glands lining the mouth parts. The parotid gland in front of the ear is the largest of the three and secretes large

quantities of mucoid saliva.

The necessity and wisdom of these two kinds of saliva are obvious. If we are eating dry food, we need to have it moistened and diluted; so in this case, it is the parotid gland which is called upon chiefly. If we are biting into fruit which has plenty of juice of its own, the lower glands secrete a small amount of the sticky saliva.

The action of the glands is caused by what is known as a reflex mechanism. You ought to understand how this operates. Let us suppose that you come home one evening, and as you enter the front door, you smell the savory odors issuing from the kitchen. These odors, which consist of infinitely small particles, strike the moist region of the nose, where the olfactory nerves or messenger boys receive the information and without delay send an urgent message to the salivary center deep in the brain. "G.H.Q.," shouts the messengers, "the boss is hungry and food is coming immediately, we think. He will need plenty of saliva."

"What kind of food is it — wet or dry?" inquires G.H.Q. "Both kinds. Give him all you have." "O.K.," replies G.H.Q., "saliva coming at once," and the mouth "waters" even before the food arrives. The saliva may be wasted, but there is always plenty more.

Did the Creator plan all this? Of course. How may we explain the different kinds of saliva? By chance development? And think of these well-known facts: Animals that eat foods containing moisture produce little saliva. Fish have *no* salivary glands, while birds that eat grain have them greatly developed. A cow receiving mixed food will secrete about fifty quarts of saliva a day; if it eats only dry hay, the quantity increases to as much as two hundred quarts.

When an individual eats an ounce of apple, the glands produce about one and one-half teaspoonfuls of saliva, while an ounce of dry bread will produce as much as twenty teaspoonfuls. In twenty-four hours, the tiny parotid gland, which weights only about half an ounce, secretes one

quart of saliva, and in the course of an ordinary lifetime it will produce 25,000 quarts of this very active solution, laboriously and skillfully manufactured by its cells of microscopic size. Imagine the ceaseless activity and skill of these small bits of tissue! And then remember that saliva is 99.4 percent water with one-fifth of one percent of salts of sodium, calcium, etc., with the powerful digestive ferment, ptyalin, which gives the liquid its remarkable digestive power. In this connection you may like to know what the tartar is which sometimes collects on the teeth. It is calcium carbonate which is precipitated in the mouth and, of course, if not removed, favors dental infection and decay.

In act of swallowing, to which I drew your attention briefly in the preceding article, is a very interesting operation. Most people seem to think it is some sort of an accident. The food, being rolled up into a bolus lubricated with saliva, slips into the back

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BODY . . .

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portion of the mouth and drops down into the gullet in some mysterious way, just missing the windpipe which is near at hand. Of course, this is not the explanation. Swallowing is a complex muscular action which occurs after the teeth have cut and ground the food, and the saliva has facilitated the mastication by its moistening effect. The tongue very skillfully kneads the food mass into a ball or bolus, and then there must be coordination between a whole set of structures — the larynx or windpipe, the epiglottis or little drawbridge which exactly fits over the entrance into the larynx, the soft palate, the tongue, lips, nose, lungs, diaphragm, the abdominal muscles, and of course, the brain center which control the entire operation. So there is much more than you may have thought to this common act of swallowing. It is rarely that anything goes wrong with the coordination. So foolproof is it that we hardly give any attention to this partly voluntary and partly automatic act.

Just a word about the windpipe and its covering, the epiglottis. The windpipe is open at the top, as every one knows, but it must be closed when food is swallowed; otherwise the swallowed mass will often enter the wrong passage. How is this passage made

safe? At the root of the tongue sits the little trap door “man,” and during the act of swallowing, following the orders received from G.H.Q., he lets himself down to meet the rising larynx, so that, momentarily, there is complete closure of the top of the larynx and no air can enter. When the bolus has passed, the drawbridge is raised and respiration again is resumed.

After passing the pharynx, the food enters the esophagus which is about ten inches long. Liquids pass down very quickly into the stomach, being pushed by the muscles in the folded elastic tube, but ordinary food requires about eight seconds to make the trip. A mouthful of hay eaten by a horse will take as much as thirty seconds to get into the stomach.

And, by the way, I am sure we have all been interested in watching a horse or a giraffe, a stork or a swan eat and swallow. The food travels upwards, showing that the force of gravity has nothing to do with swallowing. The waves of contracting muscles which push the food long defy the force of gravity in a most complex series of operations.

You have watched the sword swallower do his act. Perhaps you thought your eyes were deceiving you and the sword, after all, did not enter the stomach. You were wrong. One famous entertainer was able to

swallow fourteen sharp swords together, having learned the trick of pushing these weapons past the larynx and through the gullet into the stomach without engaging in the act of swallowing. That is, the ordinary swallowing muscles were trained not to operate, and remaining inactive for the period during which they were under their owner’s will, there was no contraction and no injury.

The stomach is a bottle-shaped bag with a capacity of about sixty cubic inches. It is placed somewhat transversely in the upper part of the abdomen with its large end turned to the left. The esophagus, of course, opens into its upper or cardiac end. This organ or sac has three layers, the outer being called peritoneum, the middle layer formed of two layers of strong muscle, one running longitudinally, the other circularly, and the inner layer of mucous membrane in which are situated the important digestive glands.

A normal efficiently acting stomach is elastic, and when food enters, it does not sag down like a stocking, but expands in all directions maintaining its original position. In the next article I shall describe the very remarkable work of this important part of our anatomy with its complicated network of glands and the different secretions of strong chemicals, all designed to perform a very

definite work.

And as always, when we examine God’s handiwork, we are filled with amazement at the number of minute agencies which were devised in the beginning and caused to work in conjunction with one another without any confusion or overlapping. In response to orders issued very frequently, there is instant obedience. If this were not so, there would be chaos and eventually death. In the body there is no hesitation and no thought of disobedience.

How different from this is the attitude of the human will! Throughout the Bible, God is continually reminding us of the blessings of obedience and the dangers and penalties of disobedience. “Obey my voice and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.”

Did the people, to whom these words were spoken, obey? Here is what God says about it: “But they hearkened not nor inclined their ears, but walked in the counsels and in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward.” The result of this disobedience is sure judgment. This judgment may be postponed for a while, but there is no evading it.

Our world never seems

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BODY . . .

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to learn this lesson of obedience. Individuals and nations are alike guilty. God's patience is infinite, but surely His hand of mercy is being withheld. A civilization which has disregarded the Word of God is now reaping the reward of its sin; and, in spite of all warnings is persisting in its defiant attitude, making a frantic effort, without God, to create a new era of peace and good will among men, while there is no manifest good will toward God, but a continuation of the challenge to His authority.

I give you some extracts from Psalm 119 and plead for their recognition.

"Thou hast commanded me to keep thy precepts diligently ... then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments. I will praise thee with uprightness of heart when I have learned thy righteous judgments ... Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee ... I will not forget thy word ... Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do wander from thy commandments ... Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works ... Thy hands have made me and fashioned me: give me understanding that I may learn thy commandments."

God attaches great importance to His commandments. He never issues any that are not necessary. If nations and individuals do not consider them sufficiently important to be studied and obeyed, they must expect to take the consequences. God has said: "Yet I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion ... serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

Friends, I have a profound conviction that it pays to obey our God. Have you made a friend of Jesus Christ? God will not permit His Son to be ignored and dishonored. What will you do with this Jesus? HE'S WONDERFUL! □ □

CHURCH . . .

(Continued from page 3)

word church. We find in 1:20, "The mystery of the seven stars which Thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." Now before we can understand what churches are, we need to understand what the meaning of the word is. To do this, we want to look at what is termed the etymology of the word. By

the etymology we mean its genealogy, so to speak. The etymology of a word takes it right back to its very root meaning so that you can find out from where the word was derived. This is what we want to do in learning what the church means.

Not necessarily what the "church" means in the 20th century, but what the word church meant in the first century. Words, as you know, sometimes change their meanings. By way of example, we will use First

Thessalonians as an illustration showing how words change meanings, and sometimes, practically reverse their meanings. Paul is writing concerning those who have already died in the Lord and he says: "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

(See **CHURCH** on page 7)**"There Always Will Be God"**

By Albert Leonard Murray

They cannot shell His temple,
Nor dynamite His throne;
They cannot bomb His city,
Nor rob Him of His own.

They cannot take Him captive,
Nor strike Him deaf and blind,
Nor starve Him to surrender,
Nor make Him change His mind.

They cannot cause Him panic,
Nor cut off His supplies,
They cannot take His kingdom,
Nor hurt Him with their lies.

Though all the world be shattered,
His truth remains the same,
His righteous laws still potent,
And "Father" still His name.

Though we face war and struggle
And feel their goad and rod,
We know above confusion
There always will be God.

CHURCH . . .

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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 them which are asleep" (1 Thess. 4:13-15).

Now if I were to ask you what does this word "prevent" mean, you would automatically think, the word "prevent" means to hinder. It means not to allow something to take place. Now that is the meaning today. If you were to look this word up in a dictionary, you would find that in 20th century language the word prevent does mean "to keep from occurring, to hinder, or to impede." But that is not what the word prevent meant in 16th century English when our New Testament was translated. The word prevent meant "to precede, to go before." The word "pre" means before, "vent" is an opening, and it meant "to go through the opening before," so that the word means "to precede," that is, to go first. We see at least in this one case how the word has changed its meaning from the way it was originally used in the 15th and 16th centuries when the King James translation was made, and the way the word is used today.

Our King James reads, "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 them which are asleep." Unless you go back to what the word meant when the translators translated this Bible, then you will not know what the word prevent means. You cannot use a dictionary that only gives its current definition and understand that passage. If you are going to read it as it would currently be understood, you would say "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 (hinder) them which are asleep." But that's what the word means today, but it is not what the word meant then. The word then meant "precede." So, if we understand it properly, we have to go back and learn what the word meant in the day that it was translated.

Now the same is true concerning many other words such as the word "baptize." The word "baptize" in the days of the New Testament simply meant "immersion," and that's all it meant. It never meant anything else. If you are going to find out what the word "baptize" means, you cannot go to a dictionary today and see what the word "baptize" means. If you do, you will find that it has a variety of uses and a variety of meanings. Today "baptize" means not only to immerse,

but also it means "to sprinkle". It can mean "to pour"; it can mean all of these things, because that is the way it is commonly used today, but you don't want to know how it is commonly used today. You want to know the definition of the word when Jesus Christ was baptized, and also, you want to know what the common practice was when Jesus was baptized. To do that, you have to go to the etymology of the word, the root meaning of the word, to find out what it meant at the time of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The word baptize comes from a Greek word "*baptizo*" and it means "to dip, to plunge under, to immerse." That's what it meant in New Testament days. That's all it meant. It never meant to sprinkle. There is a word for sprinkling in the Greek, but it is not the word "*baptizo*." It is the word "*rantizo*" or

"*rantize*," and if the Lord intended to make sprinkling baptism, He would have used the word "*rantize*", but He used the word "*baptizo*" which means "immerse" or "immersion."

Now to understand the word "church" we have the same difficulty. The word church today means so many different things in our common everyday language that even we ourselves use that word to mean different things. "I'll see you at church tonight." "I'll meet you at the church." "Well, it didn't rain in the church, but it sure rained outside."

In other words, we're talking about the building, so often times we will use the word church to refer to the building, and yet we know, as Baptists, that the word church does not refer to the building.

Then there are others who say "the Baptist church." You see this pri-

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Hail to the brightness of Zion's glad morning!
Joy to the lands that in darkness have lain!
Hushed be the accents of sorrow and mourning,
Zion in triumph begins her mild reign.

Hail to the brightness of Zion's glad morning!
Long by the prophets of Israel foretold!
Hail to the millions from bondage returning!
Gentiles and Jews that blest vision behold.

See, from all lands, from the isles of the ocean,
Praise to Jehovah ascending on high;
Fallen are the engines of war and commotion,
Shouts of salvation are rending the sky!



Group Hits Partisan Politics. — Americans United for Separation of Church and State has criticized two Baptist congregations for Democratic advocacy. The watchdog group is asking the Internal Revenue Service to investigate New Birth Baptist Church of Miami, Fla., for hosting what the group called a “Democratic rally” during an Aug. 29 worship service, which featured Democratic National Committee chairman Terry McAuliffe and Democratic political activist Al Sharpton. Speakers urged the congregation to defeat President Bush in his bid for re-election. Americans United also criticized an Aug. 29 speech by former President Bill Clinton at Riverside Church in New York City, which was highly critical of Bush’s policies. Churches and other non-profit groups organized under Section 501(c)3 of the federal tax codes are not allowed to endorse political parties or candidates without risking loss of their tax-exempt status. However, churches may host voter registration drives and educational

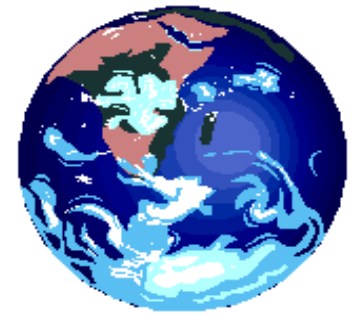
World News Roundup

activities as long as they are done in a non-partisan fashion. — ABP.

TV Sexual Content Increases Teen Sex. — A regular diet of TV that’s high in sexual content can encourage teenagers to engage in sexual activity sooner, according to a recently released study. Researchers interviewed 1,792 teenagers about their TV viewing habits and sexual activity. “Adolescents who viewed more sexual content at baseline were more likely to initiate intercourse and progress to more advanced ... sexual activities during the subsequent year,” researchers in *Pediatrics* online journal. “TV may create the illusion that sex is more central to daily life than it truly is and may promote sexual initiation as a result.” The researchers found that 64% of all TV programs contained sexual content during the 2001-2002 season, the period studied by the survey. “Youth in the 90th percentile of TV sex viewing had a predicted probability of intercourse initiation that was approximately double that of youths in the 10th percentile,” they wrote. — ABP

President Urges UN to Ban All Forms of Human Cloning. — In a recent speech to the United Nations General Assembly, President Bush asked member countries to pass a treaty that would allow the drafting of a resolution calling on nations around the world to ban all forms of human cloning. In this session, the U.N. will consider a resolution sponsored by Costa Rica calling for a comprehensive ban on human cloning. Meanwhile, Bush administration officials are lobbying leaders from other countries in advance of an expected vote.

Maximum Fine Levied For “Wardrobe Malfunction.” — The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has levied the maximum fine of \$550,000 against 20 CBS affiliates owned by Viacom, Inc. for “apparently willfully broadcasting indecent material.” The episode occurred during the Super Bowl half-time show on Feb. 1 in which Justin Timberlake pulled off part of Janet Jackson’s clothing, exposing her breast to millions of viewers. The proposed fine is the maximum amount that can be levied by law.



Jan Crouch Released From Hospital After Undergoing Surgery. — Officials at Trinity Broadcasting Network confirmed that Jan Crouch, wife of Pastor Paul Crouch, founder of Trinity Broadcasting Network has been released from the hospital after undergoing surgery last week. “Mrs. Crouch is at home and well on her way to a full recovery”, said TBN officials. The co-founder of TBN was diagnosed with acute pancreatitis and gall stones after being rushed to emergency for severe abdominal pain. Paul Crouch Jr., the eldest son of the Crouches thanked TBN viewers, and friends for their prayers and get-well cards. “Mom’s fine,” laughed Crouch. “She’s already back at her fax machine!” [NOTE: This is just another one of contradictions of the advocates of “signs and wonders.” When they *really* have a serious problem, they don’t rely on the likes of Benny Hinn, Oral Roberts, or any other to take care of the problem

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La Voz Del Desierto

El Amor Que Debemos Sentir Por La Iglesia

Por M. A. Curet

Como Bautistas debemos sentirnos gozosos por pertenecer a la Iglesia que Jesús edificó durante su ministerio aquí en la tierra. Después de la salvación, lo más grande que le puede suceder a un creyente, es conocer la Iglesia del Señor y pertenecer a ella.

Cuando conocí al Señor Jesucristo, en septiembre del año 1977, tenía un deseo ardiente de conocer la verdad y de pertenecer a Su Iglesia. Le pedí al Señor

que me guiara hasta Su Iglesia, y así Él lo hizo. Desde entonces mi corazón ha disfrutado de gozo pleno y mi amor por la Iglesia del Señor crece cada día más. Somos bienaventurados al pertenecer a la Iglesia del Señor.

La Biblia dice que debemos ser imitadores de Cristo. Si queremos ser imitadores de Cristo tenemos que amar la Iglesia, a tal grado que podamos entregarnos a ella, como lo

hizo el Señor. No podemos imitar a Cristo actuando indiferente ante la Iglesia, no haciendo nada por ella, sino esforzándonos para su progreso. Cristo amó tanto la Iglesia que se entregó a sí mismo por ella, para presentársela como una Iglesia gloriosa (Efesios 5:25-27). La santidad y la gloria de la Iglesia son inseparables.

Como imitadores de Cristo (1ra Corintios 11:1), debemos amar la Iglesia.

La Iglesia Bautista tiene una historia muy bonita que fue escrita con un rastro de sangre. Es algo maravilloso leer sobre la historia de la Iglesia y ver cuantos millones de cristianos bautistas murieron defendiendo la pureza y la gloria de la Iglesia. *¡Verdaderamente esto es algo digno de admirar!*

Hay varias razones por las cuales debemos amar la (Vea **AMOR** en la pág. 10)

El Celular Y La Oración

Por Luis M. Alicea, Redactor

¿Qué tiene más valor para tí, el celular o la oración? Para el creyente la respuesta es bien fácil. El que es espiritual constatará que la oración. Sabemos como creyentes, que la oración es el sistema de comunicación de todo buen cristiano (Proverbios 15:8, 29). También sabemos que el celular no tiene el alcance sobrenatural que tiene la oración. La Biblia dice: "La oración eficaz del justo puede mucho"

(Santiago 5:16). Sabemos que el celular está limitado, pero que la oración no tiene límites y que es una línea segura que nunca se desconecta.

Podemos decir que el sistema del Señor es más rápido y efectivo, pues Dios mismo nos garantiza que no perderemos señal alguna, en el contacto de amor y devoción que llevamos con Él, "Clama a mí, y yo te responderé" (Jeremías 33:3; 1ra Pedro 3:12; Job 22:27). Sin

embargo, muchos cristianos se preocupan si le cortan el servicio telefónico, pero no se ocupan de usar "continuamente" el maravilloso sistema de la oración (1ra Corintios 7:5; Filipenses 4:6; Colosenses 4:2; 1ra Timoteo 2:1). No digo que el celular es un artefacto malo, pero sólo nos resuelve comunicándonos en este mundo. Pero la oración sirve para esta vida y para la venidera. A Dios le agrada que sus

hijos utilicen la oración, pues la oración no interrumpe el servicio que con tanto amor y devoción le llevamos al Señor.

Podemos orar en cualquier parte del mundo, sin interrupción alguna, las 24 horas del día, y libre de costos (1ra Tesalonicenses 5:17; Efesios 6:18; 1ra Timoteo 2:8). El celular, si no se usa con control, es un aparato que en la Iglesia puede inter-

(See **CELULAR** en la pág. 10)

AMOR . . .

((Viene de la pág. 9)

Iglesia:

1. La Iglesia es la casa de Dios y es columna y baluarte de la verdad (1ra Timoteo 3:15). La Iglesia en su esfera de testimonio al mundo, es la base y fundamento de la verdad.

2. La Iglesia es la novia de Cristo, Él es su cabeza y ésta es su cuerpo (Efesios 1:22-23; 5:23).

3. La Iglesia es la esposa del Cordero (Apocalipsis 19:7-9).

4. La Iglesia es el centro de aprendizaje donde los santos se van perfeccionando para la obra del ministerio y para la edificación del cuerpo (Efesios 4:11-16).

5. La Iglesia es casa de oración (Marcos 11:15-17). La Iglesia primitiva lo entendió así (Hechos 12:5).

Después de haber mencionado algunas razones, entre otras, por las cuales debemos amar la Iglesia, mencionaremos ahora algunas formas en que podemos demostrar ese amor por la Iglesia:

1. Trabajando por el adelanto de la Iglesia en conocimiento, santidad y comodidad (1ra Corintios 15:10-11; Apocalipsis 2:3).

2. Promoviendo su crecimiento y prosperidad espiritual (1ra Timoteo 4:11-

13, 15-16).

3. Sosteniendo la adoración, las ordenanzas y las doctrinas (Hebreos 10:23-25; Judas 3).

4. Contribuyendo con gozo y regularidad para el sostenimiento del ministerio, los gastos de la Iglesia, la ayuda a los pobres y para el extendimiento del evangelio a todas las naciones (1ra Corintios 16:1-2; 2da Corintios 8:1-24; 9:6-10).

5. Teniéndola como prioridad en mi vida (Mateo 6:33).

6. Cuando por alguna razón, tenga que mudarme a otro país, trasladaré mi membresía a otra Iglesia Bautista hermana (de la misma fe y el mismo orden), y seguiré activo en la Iglesia, en dondequiera que viva (Hechos 11:19-21; 18:24-28).

Para cumplir con todas estas cosas, tenemos que sentir un gran amor por la Iglesia. El Señor puso a los pastores para enseñar a los miembros de la Iglesia, y que éstos puedan crecer espiritualmente y puedan amar la Iglesia (Efesios 4:15-16).

El Señor quiere que amemos la Iglesia, si no amamos la Iglesia, no podemos decir que lo amamos a Él, porque la razón de su entrega lo fue la Iglesia (Efesios 5:25-27). □

Cortan Las Cabezas A Cristianos Nigerianos En Su Propia Iglesia

CELULAR . . .

((Viene de la pág. 9)

rumpir el Servicio de Adoración a Dios, como también en cualquier otro lugar, puede interrumpir otros servicios, como en los hospitales, universidades, escuelas o tribunales, donde su uso está prohibido.

En cambio la oración puede ser usada en los hospitales, tribunales o en la Iglesia o donde quiera que usted esté, porque se puede hacer mental y silenciosamente. No existe ningún tipo de comunicación con mayor distancia y efectividad que la oración (Hechos 10:1-4). Es tal su potencia y calidad, que los grandes hombres de Dios como David, Daniel, Abraham, Moisés, Josué, Samuel y otros, fueron grandemente beneficiados cuando se mantenían "intensamente" en comunicación con el Señor. Estos que he mencionado, no vemos que se hayan quejado de la oración. Al contrario, eran "constantes en la oración" aun cuando se les tenía prohibido (Daniel 6:5, 7, 10-11), porque tenían puesta su confianza en el poder omnisciente del Dios que todo lo puede. "¿Y acaso Dios no hará justicia a sus escogidos, que claman a él día y noche? ¿Se tardará en responderles?" (Lucas 18:7; Mateo 21:22). □ □

Según un informe de Michael Irlanda del Servicio 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.

* * *

Enséñele Ateísmo A Los Niños, Déjenlos Decidir. — El Instituto para la Investigación sobre la Política Pública recomienda que el ateísmo sea agregado a los planes de estudios de las escuelas británicas y enseñado explícitamente. Un cambio similar ya fue realizado en Escocia. El informe dice: "a los niños se les debe enseñar ateísmo y luego permitirles tomar una decisión sobre la validez de la religión o el ateísmo basado en lo que esté mejor apoyado por la evidencia." Gran Bretaña es hoy en día una sociedad secular (Romanos 1:28) □ □

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Marcos A. Curet, Pastor

WNR . . .

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by their alleged “gift of healing.” They go to doctors, hospitals, and rely on medical treatment. While they drag millions from their naive followers by promising them prosperity and health, they do not practice what they preach at “crunch time.” — Bob L. Ross.

* * *

Movie Ratings Now Less Strict. — Today’s movies contain significantly more violence, sex and profanity on average than movies of the same rating a decade ago. A movie rated PG-13 today contains comparable content to an R-rated movie a decade ago, according to a study by the Harvard School of Public Health. — CC

* * *

Is It Hate Speech To Collect Bible Verses On Homosexuality? — Last year a Pentecostal pastor in Sweden was found guilty of offending homosexuals in a sermon and sentenced to one month in prison under a trial test of a law against a law against incitement. He had described homosexuality as “abnormal,” and called homosexuals “perverts.” The prosecutor played an excerpt from the sermon, called it an attack, and said: “Collecting Bible [verses]

on this topic as he does makes this hate speech.” — CC

* * *

Stanley Clarifies Stance on Female Pastors. — Popular Bible teacher and former Southern Baptist president Charles Stanley ridiculed the SBC’s mandate that wives should submit to their husbands and he doesn’t support its ban on female pastors. He said he was led to Christ by a quiet female evangelist, not by a fiery female pastor. Stanley added, “You just can’t draw the line and say you can’t do so-and-so.” After a Texas paper reported that Stanley disagreed with the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message, he told the Baptist Press that he is “absolutely” supportive of the Baptist Faith and Message and its stances on the role of women, but thinks a clarifying amendment is needed. He made a distinction between “pastor” and “preacher,” saying the latter can be a woman. — CC

* * *

New Bible Translation Promotes Fornication. — A brand new translation of the Bible, praised by Britain’s archbishop of Canterbury, flatly contradicts traditional core Christian beliefs on sex and morality. Titled “Good as New,” the new

Bible is translated by former Baptist minister John Henson for the “One” organization, to produce what the group calls a “new, fresh, and adventurous” translation of the Christian scriptures. The 104th archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams, describes it is a book of “extraordinary power,” but admitted many would be startled by its content. “Instead of condemning fornicators, adulterers and abusers of themselves with mankind,” says Ruth Gledhill, the London Times religious affairs correspondent, “the new version of his first letter to Corinth has St. Paul advising Christians not to go without sex for too long in case they get frustrated. The new version, which Dr. Williams says he hopes will spread in epidemic pro-fusion through religious and irreligious alike, turns St. Paul’s strictures against fornication on their head.” The One organization that produced the new Bible translation is dedicated to “establishing peace, justice, dignity and rights for all.” It is also focused on “challenging oppression, injustice, exclusion and discrimination” as well as accepting “one another, valuing their diversity and experience.” According to Ekklesia, a London-based theological think tank that supports the “One” translation: “The translation is pioneering in its

accessibility, and changes the original Greek and Hebrew nomenclature into modern nicknames. Peter becomes Rocky, Mary Magdalene becomes Maggie, Aaron becomes Ron, and Barabbas becomes Barry. In keeping with the times, translator Henson deftly translates “demon possession” as “mental illness” and “Son of Man” as “the Complete Person.” In addition, parables are rendered as “riddles,” salvation becomes “healing” or “completeness,” and heaven becomes “the world beyond time and space.” According to the London Times, here are a few sample passages. In Mark 1:10-11 the Bible (KJV) says: ‘And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him: And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’ The new version: “As he was climbing up the bank again, the sun shone through a gap in the clouds. At the same time a pigeon flew down and perched on him. Jesus took this as a sign that God’s spirit was with him. A voice from overhead was heard saying, That’s my boy! You’re doing fine!” In 1 Corinthians 7:8-9 the Bible says, “I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide

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CHURCH . . .

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marily in the newspaper after some moral or social issue has been discussed, that they say the "Baptist church took this position on it." What they really mean is the denomination. Of course, they must modify that slightly because there are so many different Baptists under that umbrella called "the Baptist denomination." But today, the word church often times means an entire denomination.

Then there are those who refer to the church as a local assembly, simply an individual small group, that assembles together. That's a church. There are others that use the word church in a universal aspect. The Roman Catholic Church, when they talk about their church, they're talking about a universal church that includes all the Roman Catholics all over the world. This is the universal, visible church, as they refer to it. Incidentally, that is what the word "catholic" means, it means universal.

Another definition, the definition commonly used by Protestants, is a universal, invisible church. This idea is that all believers, all Christians make up this universal, invisible church. Now within this there is a variety of definitions, because there are some who begin it at the Day of Pentecost, saying that it only includes those from the Day of

Pentecost and forward. There are others who say that it began with the New Testament and includes all of those from the time, from the baptism of Jesus and forward. Then there are others who say that this universal, invisible church includes all believers. They include all the Old Testament saints, and all those who will be believers in the future, so that it includes all the saved of all times.

Now all of these cannot be right. Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" and He only built one kind of church. All of these are contradictory. All of them cannot be right.

When we come to this book of Revelation, and we read that there are seven churches in Asia, and we read in chapter 2:1 "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus" what are we to understand by this word church? Are we to understand that He is writing to a building? Are we to understand that He is writing to an entire denomination? Are we to understand that He is writing to all believers combined to make up this universal, invisible church? Or, are we to understand that He is writing to this great big universal church that is located all over the world, making up the Catholic church, as the Roman Catholics teach? Or, when we read this word

church, are we to understand that He is writing about a specific single local church, located in one specific city, and that it is a local, visible body?

How are we to know? This is where you go to the etymology of the word. What does the word mean? If you wish to know what the word means, it comes from a Greek word "*ecclesia*." The Greek word "*ecclesia*" is spelled either "*ecclesia*" or "*ekklesia*." What does the word mean? We mentioned the word "*baptizo*", and a Greek dictionary, called a Lexicon, gives the meaning of the word "*baptizo*" as meaning "to dip, to plunge under, or to immerse." You can do the same thing with this word "*ecclesia*." You can use a concordance, and if you don't have one you ought to have one. You need a large concordance. In the back of a Thompson Chain Reference Bible there is a brief concordance. That's excellent, that's fine, but an unabridged concordance like Strong's or Young's will not only give you the various places where these words occur in the Bible, but it will refer you to two different sections in the back. One is to the Hebrew words and the other is to the Greek words, and it will give you a key number by this word so that you can turn back to the number where that word is, and it will give you the Greek word and then tell you what

that word means. It will also tell you how that word came into being.

This word "*ecclesia*" comes from two Greek words that have been put together to make up one word. The word "*ek*" is the word that means "out of" and the second word is "*kaleo*" to mean "to call." The word "*ecclesia*" means "to call out" but that is only half the meaning of the word. There are some that go off half-cocked, so to speak, in that they only get half of the meaning of the word. You need to understand that you must get all of it to understand it. The full meaning is a "called out" and a "called together." It is an assembly. Unless you have a "called out" and a "called together" you do not have an "*ecclesia*." You need to have an assembly. So it means "to call out" and without a "calling together" you do not have the full and true meaning of the word, only a partial meaning. An assembly is essential.

Many of the old translations before the King James Version, the word that they used to translate it into English was the word "congregation" or "assembly" and that is the essential part of the word.

It was a very commonly used word in the day and time of the Greeks. This was in the day and time of the Greek city-states. The Greeks used the word to

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denote or to designate their assemblies of free citizens that convened together to conduct their public affairs. A city would have a group that would come together as our Board of Directors and would meet together in an assembly to conduct the affairs of the city. That was the "ecclesia."

Now as long they were dispersed out among the citizens they could do nothing. They had to meet together and it is only when they meet together that they can conduct business. Let me give you another illustration and that's our United States Congress.

We have 100 Senators. These 100 Senators, two from each state, when they assemble are the United States Senate, and when they meet together in their assembly, they can vote, they can act officially, they can pass laws. But when they are out of session, they are scattered around the country in the various States, they can do nothing. They are not a United States Senate. They only are a United States Senate when they meet together according to their rules and their regulations, and it is then they become the United States Senate. The same with the House of Representatives. The same is true here in Arkansas. We have both a House of Representatives and a State Senate. They cannot be a

Senate and they cannot be a House of Representatives and cannot function until they assemble. It is the same with a New Testament church. This was the use that was made of the word by the Greeks, always a local assembly. When you turn to the New Testament you find that this is the exact same meaning that the word has. Never does it have a universal concept. There is nothing anywhere in the Bible about a universal church.

Now there is a universal family. The family includes every saved person. The family includes everyone that is born again or born into the family of God, but this is not the church. The very word church requires an assembly, and you do not have all believers assembled. The church is always a local body, never universal.

The word church is used in two senses in the Bible. The first is what is called the generic or abstract sense. The other is what is called the particular or the local sense. Notice in Matthew 16:18, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Now, when the Lord says "upon this rock I will build my church," He is referring to the church as an institution. Just as we say the American school is not as good today as it was 50 years ago. We're talking

about the school in the sense of the abstract, the generic use.

Another case is found in Ephesians chapter five. The Lord is speaking through the Apostle Paul to this church at Ephesus, and is giving them some instructions. He says in verse 23, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:23-25).

First, He is talking about a relationship between a husband and a wife. He is saying that the wife is to recognize the husband as the head of the home, but he is telling that husband, that as the head of the home, he has a responsibility to love his wife. We're not going into this now for this is not our subject. If you need some additional information, simply read the verses that follow, where He says in verse 28 "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church" (Eph. 5:28-29). He's talking about the fact that the husband is to love his wife with a

sacrificial love.

Now what kind of husband is he talking about? Is he talking about a great big universal husband made up of all the husbands in the world? Is he talking about a universal wife, a great big wife, (I've seen some fairly big wives all right, but not this big), made up of all the wives in the world? A universal wife? Is He telling that universal husband to love that universal wife?

Reminds me of the story of the midget in the circus. He became engaged to the fat woman in the circus. After they were married, this little midget looked at that fat woman he had just married, and starts walking around her, all the way around her. After he was through, he looked up admiringly and said "Just think. Acres and acres and it's all mine."

Now we know the Lord is not talking about a great big universal husband, and He is not talking about a great big universal wife. Why is it then that people will try to make this a great big universal church? Same verse. Same application. We have sense enough to know that when He says "Wives" He's not talking of a great big universal wife, but wife is used in the sense of an institution and it means every individual wife. The same with the church. Every individual church. It is a local assem-

(See **CHURCH** on page 18)



Important Recall Notice!

The Maker of all human beings is recalling all units manufactured, regardless of make or year, due to a serious defect in the primary and central component of the heart. This is due to a malfunction in the original prototype units code named Adam and Eve, resulting in the reproduction of the same defect in all subsequent units.

This defect has been technically termed, "Sub-sequential Internal Non-morality," or more commonly known as SIN, as it is primarily expressed. Some other symptoms:

- [a] Loss of direction
- [b] Foul vocal emissions
- [c] Amnesia of origin
- [d] Lack of peace and joy
- [e] Selfish, or violent behavior
- [f] Depression or confusion in the mental component
- [g] Fearfulness
- [h] Idolatry
- [i] Rebellion

The Manufacturer, Who is neither liable nor at fault for this defect is providing factory authorized repair and service free of charge to correct this SIN defect. The Repair Technician, Jesus, has most

generously offered to bear the entire burden of the staggering cost of these repairs. There is no additional fee required. The number to call for repair in all areas is: P-R-A-Y-E-R.

Once connected, please upload your burden of **SIN** through the *Repentance* procedure.

Next, download *Atonement* from the Repair Technician, Jesus, into the heart component. No matter how big or small the SIN defect is, Jesus will place it with:

- [a] Love
- [b] Joy
- [c] Peace
- [d] Patience
- [e] Kindness
- [f] Goodness
- [g] Faithfulness
- [h] Gentleness
- [i] Self-control

Please see the operating manual, *Holy Bible (Believers-Instructions-Before-Leaving-Earth)*, [King James Version] for further details on the use of these fixes. As an added upgrade, the Manufacturer has made available to all repaired units a facility enabling direct monitoring and assistance from a resident Maintenance Technician, the Holy Ghost.

Repaired units need only make Him welcome and He will take up permanent residence on the premises!

W A R N I N G : Continuing to operate the human being unit without correction voids the Manufacturer's warranty, exposing the unit to dangers and problems too numerous to list and will result in the human unit being permanently impounded. For

free emergency service, call on JESUS.

DANGER: The human being units not responding to this recall action will have to be scrapped in the furnace. The **SIN** defect will not be permitted to enter Heaven so as to prevent contamination of that facility.

Thank you for your attention. Please assist where possible by notifying others of this important recall notice!!! □ □

How Readest Thou?

It's one thing to read the Bible through,
Another thing to read and do,
Some read it with design to learn to read,
But to the subject pay little heed.

Some read it as their duty once a week,
But no instruction from the Bible seek;
While others read it with but little care,
With no regard to how they read nor where.

Some read to bring themselves into repute,
By showing others how they can dispute;
While others read because their neighbors do,
To see how long 'twill take to read it through.

Some read it for the wonders that are there,
How David killed a lion and a bear,
While others read it with uncommon care,
Hoping to find some contradiction there.

DEMONS . . .

(Continued from page 1)

monology. More than ever before in modern times Christians need to be informed concerning the biblical teaching about demons.

Their Existence

Many feel that there is no such thing as demons, that they are merely the creation of superstition and imagination. However, the New Testament presents unrefutable evidence for the existence of demons. The Gospels relate a mighty outburst of demon activity during the public ministry of Jesus. They opposed the mission of Christ (Mt. 4:1-10; Mk. 5:1-10). The casting out of demons was one of the most frequently performed miracles of Jesus (Mt. 15:22, 28), and He gave His disciples authority to do the same (Mt. 10:1). Their existence is also witnessed in the rest of the New Testament (cf. Jas. 2:19; Eph. 6:10-20; 1 Tim. 4:1; Rev. 9:11; 16:14).

Their Nature

The New Testament gives us a great deal of information concerning the

nature of demons. We know that they are real personalities. They are capable of intelligent, voluntary actions, such as thinking, speaking, and acting (Mk. 5:10; Lk. 4:34; Acts 19:15-16). We know also that they are spiritual beings (Mt. 8:16; Lk. 10:17, 20; Eph. 6:21). They are beings with great power (cf. 2 Pet. 2:11; Mt. 12:29; Eph. 6:10ff). Demons are “unclean” spirits, which means they are depraved and wicked in their nature (Mt. 10:1; Mk. 1:27; Lk. 4:36; Acts 8:7).

Their Work

The work of demons is essentially the same as that of Satan. Their main occupation is that of opposing the will and purposes of God. In this work, people often become the victims of their evil deeds. They oppress, influence, and subject the minds of men. Demons had control of the mind of the maniac of Gadara, and only after they had been expelled was he in his “right mind” (Mk. 5:15). They also oppress the body and hinder man’s general well being (Mt. 9:32-33; 12:33; Lk. 13:11-17). They use men to hinder the work of God (cf.

Acts 16:16-18; 19:11-20).

Demon Activity Today

There can be no doubt concerning the existence and activity of demons in New Testament times. But what about the activity of demons today? As far as the biblical record is concerned there is nothing in it which would cause us to believe that demon activity ceased after the New Testament age. In fact, the Bible indicates the opposite. There is indication that demon activity will increase in the last days (cf. 1 Tim. 4:1; Rev. 9:1-21).

Christ’s Authority Over Demons

With all the talk about demons today, one might get the impression that man is a helpless victim of demons. Not so! God is still sovereign and in perfect control of the universe. The healthy Christian has nothing to fear from demons, for in Christ our victory is complete. This does not mean that believers will never be confronted with demonic power. Indeed, they will. But ours is the victory in the Lord (Eph. 6:10ff). □ □

WNR . . .

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even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.” The

new version: “If you know you have strong needs, get yourself a partner. Better than being frustrated.” — WorldNet Daily.

* * *

Partial-Birth Abortion Not Necessary. — Government witness Dr. Curtis Cook of Grand Rapids, MI, testified at one of three trials taking place across the country testing the constitutionality of the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act. Cook, who specializes in high-risk pregnancies, said that the type of abortion banned by a new federal law is never necessary to preserve the health of the mother. — Focus on the Family.

* * *

P&G Recruits Homosexuals. — According to a recent American Family Association report, Procter & Gamble “actively seeks out individuals who practice the abnormal and destructive homosexual lifestyle to work for the company. It is the only group P&G seeks to employ based on their behavior ... In addition, P&G is a major sponsor of Out & Equal, an organization that bills itself as one that ‘offers LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered) diversity training to companies that want to delve deeper into the special workplace issues faced by LGBT employees’.” □

**“Don’t let your worries get the best of you.
Remember, Moses started out as a basket case”**

Fundamental Baptist Information Service

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Evolutionary Censorship. — When an article was published in a peer-reviewed magazine recently presenting the view of Intelligent Design as opposed to Darwinism, many evolutionists were up in arms. The article, "The Origin of Biological Information and the Higher Taxonomic Categories," by Dr. Stephen Meyer, appeared in *Proceedings*, a publication of the National Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian Institute. The article was blasted by the National Center for Science Education, the Biological Society of Washington, and *Nature* magazine, all of which say the article should not have been published ("Darwinists Squelching Intelligent Design Debate," *Agape* Press, Sept. 17, 2004). Dr. John West of the Discovery Institute's Center for Science and Culture observed: "These groups typically say that the evidence is so overwhelming for Darwin's theory of evolution that there can't be any serious question about it, but then, apparently, they're afraid of even allowing one article that would be critical of it, even if it passes peer

review. It's so dangerous they can't even allow it."

* * *

The Ecumenical Movement Defined.

— The following is one of "22 emphasis of the ecumenical movement is now upon a 'unity by consensus' or 'unity in diversity' model, that is, a unity in which those of all religious persuasions are now urged to retain their own religious or denominational identities while uniting around a common cause or belief. In the U.S., key proponents of the ecumenical movement include the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches, the Charismatic Movement and evangelical movements such as the Promise Keepers movement, Evangelicals and Catholics Together and any other individuals, churches or parachurch organizations that seek to minimize Biblical doctrine (truth) in an effort to find common cause with those who preach a false gospel."

* * *

Hate Crime Conviction Reversed For

Evangelists In Brazil. -- The following is from *Religion Today*, Sept. 8, 2004: "An appeals court in Sao Paulo has reversed the conviction last year of two evangelists charged with violating the South American nation's 'hate crime' law. The landmark case involving evangelicals and Afro-Brazilian spiritists is the first to test a federal law declaring it a crime to 'practice, induce, or incite discrimination' against members of another religion, *Compass Direct* reported. Umbanda and Candomble spiritist groups brought criminal charges more than two years ago against Baptist pastor Joaquim de Andrade and Anglican Aldo dos Santos, claiming that gospel tracts they distributed at the annual Iemanja festival disparaged the African deity and therefore violated the federal law. In April 2003, the men were found guilty of the charges, but they refused to pay the fine imposed and appealed the verdict."

* * *

The Other Side of the Iraqi Situation.

— While media coverage of the American action in Iraq has been overwhelmingly negative, the Iraqi interim prime minister Ayad Allawi painted a different picture in his speech before a joint session of congress on September 23. After saying, "I have come here to thank you and to promise you that

your sacrifices are not in vain," he gave the following facts. Since the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, more than 3,300 schools have been or are in the process of being upgraded and repaired and more than 35,000 school teachers and supervisors trained. The average teacher's monthly salary has risen from about \$30 to \$120. The U.S. Agency for International Development has printed and distributed nearly 9 million new textbooks. Iraq government health care spending has risen from \$1 per person under Hussein to \$41 today. All 240 hospitals and 95% of health clinics have reopened and new facilities are under construction. Some 12,000 tons of medicine have been distributed. Iraqi pharmacists and doctors are now receiving the latest training and drugs, something not allowed by Saddam for the past 35 years. Income from oil revenue has already exceeded expectations by billions of dollars. 500,000 Iraqis now have cell phones, a technology forbidden under Hussein. Generation of electricity has risen from the pre-war level of 4,400 megawatts to 6,000. A new first responder communication network linking fire, rescue, and other civil forces is operational. Clean water is

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now available to 15 million people. Unlike under Hussein, Iraqis now enjoy basic liberties, including freedom of speech, religion, and assembly. Iraqis are free to read any of the 120 newspapers that are now published; free to use the Internet; free to own satellite dishes. By the end of the year, some 200,000 Iraqi soldiers, police officers, and security personnel will have been trained, equipped, and put into the battle for civil security.

* * *

Promise Keepers Still Sounding The Ecumenical Theme.

— One of the themes of Promise Keepers from its inception has been ecumenical unity. Though it is not as large and influential as it was in the 1990s, Promise Keepers still draws thousands to its conferences and it continues to sing the ecumenical song. At the Promise Keepers Pastors and Leadership Conference in Phoenix in February 2003, Ed Barron, vice president of PK's U.S. ministries, said: "It does not matter if you are Baptist, Methodist or Catholic. Regardless of distinctive we come surrounded by the Biblical truth that they love Jesus" (Eyewitness report by Ralph Colas, Executive

Secretary of the American Council of Christian Churches). Tony Evans said, "Denominationalism is a sin as Christian leaders are divided. Unity is oneness of purpose." When we turn to the Bible we see the error of these statements. It is impossible to obey Biblical commands such as the following while also holding the Promise Keepers philosophy: Allow no other doctrine than that which was taught by the apostles (1 Tim. 1:3); keep every detail of the New Testament faith without spot (1 Tim. 6:13-14); prove all things (1 Thess. 5:21); earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3); avoid false gospels, false christs, and false spirits (2 Cor 11); beware of every wind of error (Eph. 4:14); and separate from false doctrine (Rom. 16:17). It is very sad that many independent Baptists have gotten involved with Promise Keepers. Those who are in this camp have departed from the Word of God.

* * *

Homosexual Marriage Approved In Nova Scotia and Promised In Spain. — On September 24 Nova Scotia became the sixth Canadian province to approve homosexual "marriage," joining Manitoba, Yukon, British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec. In every case, the new "right" was granted by activist

justices in the courts. A court ruling in Saskatchewan is expected soon. Bob Fougere of the Rainbow Action Project said, "This is a great day for Nova Scotia"; but in reality the ruling is a major step toward the destruction of the very concept of morality and an invitation for God's judgment. Observers believe that Spain's socialist government will approve homosexual marriage in October, joining Belgium and the Netherlands.

* * *

Christian Doctor Murdered In Bangladesh By Suspected Islamic Militants. — Doctor Gani Mondol, a convert from Islam to Christianity, was murdered on Sept. 18 by suspected Islamic militants as he was walking from work in Jamalpur, 140 kilometers north of Dhaka. His throat was slit. Local Muslims were angry about the doctor's conversion and had been spreading rumors about him. Mondol has mortgaged his own property to provide assistance to victims of recent flooding.

* * *

Communist Government In China Fines Couple For Having More Than One Child — Nine couples in Shenzhen, in southern China, have been given steep fines because they had more than one child.

One couple was fined the equivalent of US \$94,250 and their house has been sealed off because they had twin baby boys last year even though they already had a six-year-old child. The harsh fines are called "social fostering fees" and remind us that communism is no friend to true liberty.

* * *

Second Catholic Diocese Files For Bankruptcy.

— On September 20 the Roman Catholic Diocese of Tucson, Arizona, filed for bankruptcy to seek court protection from mounting lawsuits against its priests. The diocese has already paid more than \$10 million to settle 11 abuse lawsuits filed by 16 plaintiffs. More than 30 others are waiting to file their claims. In July the Catholic Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon, filed for bankruptcy. That archdiocese has already paid out \$53 million to settle more than 130 claims by people who say they were abused by priests. The Archdiocese of Boston was forced to sell expensive real estate to pay sex abuse claims.

* * *

Mel Gibson To Receive Producer of the Year Award.

— Mel Gibson is scheduled to be honored as "Hollywood

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CHURCH . . .

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bly. It is used in the abstract or the generic sense. This is what you have here. That's what you have in Matthew 16.

I'm not a builder, or constructor or designer or anything, and there maybe some things that I don't understand, but there is one thing I like to use as an illustration about this church in Matthew 16. This is what I call a prototype church. It's the template church. The template or the prototype is the first one and it is to be used as the pattern for all other churches.

For instance, if you are going to cut some boards and they are to be three inches wide and three feet long, you have a first one. Now you don't take that one and discard it and use the next board and make that your pattern. After you have cut that one, you discard that one and use the new board and make it the pattern. First thing you know, when you get through that last board is going to be a lot bigger than what that first board was. But, you take the template or the prototype, or your pattern, and that pattern is used to cut out every board from then on. You use the same piece of wood as your pattern. Don't change it each time.

That's exactly what the Lord says about His church. We're not to take

the church that we came from and make ours like that and then take the preceding church and make theirs like that, or the next church make theirs like this one, but every one of us are to go back to the New Testament and that's our model church. That's our pattern church. If we keep trying to copy the church one by one all the way down and each one copying the previous church, we're going to find that the result is that the last church is going to be a lot different from what it was when it started out at the beginning. This is where so much of our difficulties has come in Christendom today, or in our denominations today. Each one has been copying and patterning the previous one. What they need to do is to go back to the first church in the New Testament for their model. That's the one that we should pattern ourselves afterwards. When we come to our Bible we find that's the way the word is always used, as a local assembly.

Whenever it is used in the abstract or the generic sense, it is used in that general sense just as He said "Husbands love your wives." Not a universal husband, but each and every individual husband, love your each and every individual wife even as Christ loves each and every individual church. Local assembly just like it's a local husband and a local wife.

Now you never read anywhere in the Bible about the word church being used where it includes a group of churches. The word is used in the singular only when it refers to a specific local, individual church, or it is used in the sense of the institution that we were talking about. When it refers to an area, a continent, or a province, it refers to them in the plural. The "church of Rome" singular; "the church of Ephesus" singular, but talking about a province like Galatia, it says the "churches of Galatia" plural; the "churches of Asia" plural, etc.

So we need to make this distinction because this is where so many people have gone astray when they begin to read the Bible. When they read the word church, they think automatically of the word church as it is used today, and today we are reading of churches that are not like the model church. Instead, they are copies, after copies, after copies, after copies and after you have gone through 2,000 years of copies, the 2,000 year church is an entirely different church than what the model was from which they started. We need to go back to the New Testament, look at the church in the New Testament, and make that our pattern and model, and then we will be able to determine and ascertain exactly the New Testament

church and what it is.

The word has never been used in any other way. Sometimes you find some people getting themselves into some difficulty. There are some who believe there are two kinds of churches, a visible church and an invisible church. There are also some who have a hypothetical tree. They say this great big trunk is an invisible tree and that's the universal, invisible church. On that tree you have a limb over here and that's the Methodist Church. Over here you have a limb or a branch and that's the Catholic Church. Over there you have another branch and that's the Baptist Church. Up here you have another branch and that's the Lutheran Church. Up here you have another branch, and that's the Episcopal Church. Up here you have another branch, and another branch, and another branch, and finally they come up with a tree that has every different denomination on it as a different branch. This, they say, this is exactly the way it is in the Bible. We are all members of this great big universal tree but each one of us is a different branch of that tree.

I now raise two questions. Number One: Have you ever seen an invisible tree with visible branches? That's what they have. They have an invisible

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tree, an invisible church that's supposed to have branches that are visible churches. But you don't have anything like that.

The next thing, did you ever have a tree that had apples on one branch, grapefruit on another branch, carrots on another, plums on another, and cucumbers on still another branch, and maybe peanuts on the top? That's the way it is in this invisible tree that has visible branches and with every church being a visible branch. Every one of them is entirely different. There's no similarity between them. For example, the Unitarians deny the Trinity, they deny the deity of Jesus Christ. They deny every fundamental of the faith. In fact Unitarians brag about the fact that you can even be an atheist and be a Unitarian, yet they are supposed to be members of this tree. And we're all supposed to be on that same tree.

Forget everything that you read today. Forget everything that you ever heard about a church, and simply go to the Bible and read what the Bible says. If you need to look a word up, look it up. I use dictionaries frequently. Sometimes I have to look up common everyday English words, some that may not be so common. Now there may be some of these words, that if you

want to know what they meant then, not today, but then. That's why you need to have a good concordance, a good Bible dictionary, and just take a little time to study. After all, that's what the Lord tells us to do, to "study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, but rightly dividing the Word of Truth." If people would just look at the word "church" in the Bible without listening to pre-conceived ideas they would soon understand the real meaning of the word church.

Do you know why most preachers today believe in a universal, invisible church? It's because that's all they have ever heard all their life. That's what their pastor preached. If they went to school, that's what they heard in school. That's what I got in school. I went to a Southern Baptist Convention seminary (New Orleans), and I was fortunate that there were some who taught the truth. Most of them however (in fact the whole New Testament department), was shot through and through with modernism and liberalism, and I was not taught the truth concerning the church. Most preachers that believe in the universal, invisible church have never made it a matter of study. They've just accepted it and taken it for granted because that's all they have ever

heard, and they never even study it. It's commonly accepted so why study it.

It reminds me of the government. You know they made some tests with cyclamates, an artificial sweetener. They said that if you drink 400 bottles of pop a day for 20 years it might cause you to get cancer of the pancreas or some place. But you'd have to drink 400 bottles of pop a day for 20 years, and so they banned cyclamates taking them off the market. Someone raised the question why they don't do the same thing with sugar, and see if sugar causes cancer. They said no, we don't need to do that because sugar has been commonly accepted for such a long period of time we don't have to test it. Some doctors tell us that sugar would cause cancer lots quicker than cyclamates or saccharin. But, it's commonly accepted so we don't check it. This is exactly why so many people believe in the universal, invisible church. It's commonly accepted. This is what they've heard all their life, and they never make a study of it. This is why preachers continually preach a universal, invisible church. They've never made it a personal study.

I close with an example of A. W. Pink. A. W. Pink is one of the best writers that you'll find any where. Occasionally you'll find a book of his you may not agree with, but on the

whole his books are very good. But he always believed in the universal, invisible church until late in his life. Late in his life he came to the South of the United States and for the first time in his ministry, the first time that he had ever heard of the idea that it was simply a local visible body. He had never been confronted with that before at all. Never even heard of it at all. In his writings he said he made a study of the church and came to the conclusion that the Baptists here in the South were right. In his later years, toward the close of his ministry and shortly before he died, he wrote an article on First Corinthians 12:13 in which he declared why he believed that the New Testament church was a local, visible body and that there was no universal, invisible body.

Let's be careful what we receive that has been handed down. The Bible says to "prove all things," and you prove them by the Word of God. That's what you test them with. That's the standard that you use to test everything. If we will do that, we'll avoid many errors that we might get into otherwise. □ □

**Be ye fishers of
men.
You catch them
He'll clean
them.**

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Producer of the Year” at the Hollywood Film Festival awards ceremony on October 18. Gibson produced and directed “The Passion of the Christ,” which has grossed an estimated \$604 million worldwide since its premier earlier this year. “Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets” (Lk. 6:26). “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” (Jn. 15:19).

* * *

Episcopal Church Sues Breakaway Congregations. — The Episcopal Church USA has filed suit against three Southern California congregations that broke away in August because of their disagreement with the denomination’s theological liberalism and support for the ordination of homosexuals. The denomination’s lawyers sent “angry letters” to the congregations “insisting that they return all of their Bibles and hymnals to the diocese, stop worshipping, and vacate the church property.” This action flies in the face of the Bible’s teaching of the autonomy of the assembly as well as its prohibition against Christians suing

Christians (1 Cor. 6:1-8).

* * *

The Roman Empire Returns. — A recent exhibition in Brussels focusing on the future of the European Union featured a section entitled the “Roman Empire Returns.” It predicted that the 21st century will be the “European Century” and that the EU will dominate world affairs. The exhibition had strong anti-American overtones, referring to the “American onslaught” and claiming that America bribes, bullies or imposes its will. The exhibit was sponsored by the European Council. According to Bible prophecy, the Roman Empire is the last of the four pagan world empires that rule prior to Christ’s return. The great prophetic image in Daniel 2 represents Babylon (the head of gold), Medo-Persia (breast and arms of silver), Greece (belly and thighs of brass), and Rome (legs of iron). The Roman Empire appears in two incarnations in this prophecy and continues to exist until it is destroyed at the return of Christ to establish His kingdom. Its first incarnation is depicted by the two iron legs of the image. The final incarnation is depicted by the feet and toes of the image, which are “part of iron and part of clay.” It is these feet that the stone “that was cut out without hands” (representing Christ and His

kingdom) strikes (Dan. 2:34-35).

* * *

Female Pastored Church Leaves Georgia Baptist Association. —

After the Floyd County Baptist Association adopted the new Baptist Faith and Message on Sept. 27, North Broad Baptist Church in Rome, Georgia, pulled out over the issue of female pastors. The Baptist Faith and Message as modified in 2000 by the Southern Baptist Convention correctly states, “...the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture” and cites 1 Timothy 2:11-14. North Broad Baptist Church is co-pastored by a man and wife team, Tony and Katrina Brooks. Katrina told the Baptist Press that though she tried to fill out her “call as a pastor through being a wife and a mother and through other staff positions,” three years ago she realized that her calling “was to be a senior pastor.” Pastor Katrinia is deceived, because God does not act contrary to His own Word; and this is not my puny judgment; it is the Bible’s. As for the Southern Baptist Convention’s position on this matter, it is commendable that they are trying to weed out female pastors; but the Word of God not only forbids a woman to usurp authority over men but also to teach men, whereas in many

Southern Baptist congregations females teach mixed adult Sunday School classes and otherwise hold positions contrary to the Word of God. Billy Graham’s daughter, Anne Graham Lotz, is a Southern Baptist and she regularly preaches to mixed crowds of men and women. She was featured as a preacher at a Sunday morning worship service June 15, 2003, sponsored by the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists (Ohio Baptist Messenger, July 2003). If we are going to disregard the Bible in one area why not disregard it altogether? Conventions and associations, being extra-biblical institutions, can only define and enforce doctrine by consensus, and the consensus invariably falls short of the whole counsel of God.

* * *

Pope Says Catholic Church Only True Church. —

In his book Sources of Renewal Pope John Paul II says the ecumenical movement will lead to complete unity with the Roman Catholic Church, the only true church: “Such actions [ecumenical endeavors], when they are carried out by the Catholic faithful with prudent patience and under the attentive guidance of their bishops, promote justice and truth, concord and collabo-

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ration, as well as the spirit of brotherly love and unity. The result will be that, little by little, as the obstacles to perfect ecclesiastical communion are overcome, all Christians will be gathered, in a common celebration of the Eucharist, into the unity of the one and only church, which Christ bestowed on his Church from the beginning. This unity, we believe, subsists in the Catholic Church as something she can never lose, and we hope that it will continue to increase until the end of time" (John Paul II, *Sources for Renewal*, p. 328; originally published in Polish in 1972; revised and republished in Italian in 1979 and in English in 1980). Protestants and Baptists who associate with Rome are naïve, disobedient dupes.

* * *

Mohammed Prophesied That Muslims Had To Kill All Jews.

— The following is from *Palestinian Media Watch Bulletin*, Sept. 14: "Twice in three days, PA religious leaders have openly called for the genocide of Jews. Broadcast on official PA TV, both called for the murder of Jews until the Jewish people are annihilated. Both presented the killing of Jews not merely as the will of Allah, but also as a necessary stage in

history that should be carried out now. To support these mandatory killings, both cited the same Hadith — Islamic tradition attributed to Mohammed — expressing Allah's will that Muslims will kill Jews, before the 'Hour of Resurrection.' 'The Hour will not take place until the Muslims fight the Jews, and kill them. And the Jews will hide behind the rock and tree, and the rock and tree will say: oh Muslim, oh servant of Allah, this is a Jew behind me, come and kill him!' Numerous times in recent years Palestinian religious leaders and academics have taught publicly that this particular Hadith applies today."

* * *

Mercer University Establishes School of Theology With No "Creedal Boundaries."

— At the state level the Southern Baptist Convention is a mixture of conservatism and theological liberalism. An example is Georgia with its extremely liberal Mercer University, the state's largest and most prominent SBC educational institution. It has received millions of dollars in funding from SBC congregations. R. Kirby Godsey has been the president of the school since 1979. In his 1996 book "When We Talk to God...Let's Be Honest," Godsey said "...the notion that God is the all powerful,

the high and mighty principal of heaven and each should be laid aside." In this one book Godsey denies, reinterprets, or questions practically every doctrine of the Christian faith. When Mercer University founded a School of Theology, Godsey said: "Education that is controlled and limited by creedal boundaries is not education at all. Education that has been purified in the sieve of doctrinaire orthodoxy is not education at all. It is not even good training. We want to build a school where people can teach without fear of doctrinal listeners outside the door and where students can study without fear of intimidation and religious demagoguery." To the contrary, according to the Bible, training that is not scripturally doctrinaire is heresy and apostasy. Paul instructed Timothy, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2). And Jesus commanded the churches, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Mat.28:20).

* * *

Eighty-four Denominations Participate In Graham Crusade. — Eighty-four denominations directly participated in the Billy Graham Evangelistic

Crusade in Kansas City recently. Let me say plainly and emphatically that it is not possible to find 84 different denominations that follow the Bible in this apostate time. The participating denominations include those that hold such heresies as baptismal regeneration, sacramentalism, sacerdotalism, infant baptism, theological modernism, and charismaticism. Southern Baptists were prominent within this doctrinal hodge-podge. The ecumenical approach has been standard procedure for the Graham campaigns for five decades. In 1957 Graham said, "Anyone who makes a decision at our meetings is seen later and referred to a local clergyman, Protestant, Catholic or Jewish" (*San Francisco News*, Nov. 11, 1957). The vice-chairman of the Graham Crusade in Vancouver, British Columbia, in 1984, testified, "If Catholics step forward there will be no attempt to convert them and their names will be given to the Catholic church nearest their homes" (David Stine, quoted in the *Vancouver Sun*, Oct. 5, 1984). One hundred priests and Catholic laity were trained to follow-up Graham's crusade in Boston in 1982. A priest and a nun were among the supervisors of the counselors for the Denver crusade in 1987, and from one service alone

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a local church is 'A body of born again, baptized believers, banded together for the purpose of carrying out the Great Commission. Every saved person should belong to that kind of local church'."

"There is no invisible, universal church. The New Testament Church is very visible. There are thousands of them."

I could go on and on giving quotations from this article to which I could say a hearty "Amen!" This pastor spoke of the importance of baptism, that the authority for same was in the local church, that the mode is only immersion, etc. Then the following statement in which I could rejoice:

"We do not accept alien immersion here at _____ Baptist Church."

I purposefully leave out the name of the church and pastor, lest someone should think that I am trying to be critical and unkind in what I shall later say here. This is not the case, for I thank God for the work of this great church and pastor, and to find that they stand as I do upon these fundamentals. The next statement in the article from which I quote is:

"At the same time, we do not believe in a Baptist Bride."

He goes on to say that he believes that every born-again believer will be

caught up in the rapture, and will spend eternity with the Lord. This is true. Of course, his position is that of so many so-called "Baptists" today that all of the saved will be a part of the Bride of Christ. *This I do not believe. I believe in a Baptist Bride.* To take the position that all saved persons will be a part of Christ's Bride is the equivalent of saying that one church is as good as another, and that all will receive equal honor at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

Beloved, this is just not so. If this be true, then one might as well be a Catholic, or a member of one of the many other organizations which call themselves New Testament churches, but which, in fact, came into being fifteen, or sixteen hundred years too late to be able to make claim to New Testament authority. As the writer of the article from which I have quoted rightly declares, all of the saved will be with the Lord in glory, and will be present at the wedding supper, but all will not be a part of the Bride, nor have the special honor which will be accorded to the Bride of our Blessed Lord.

Jesus Established the Church

This Day-of-Pentecost origin of the church is too ridiculous to merit consideration here. Jesus said that He — not the Holy

Spirit — would build His church (Mt. 16:17-18). See Luke 6:12-16 where Jesus, after all night prayer, called His disciples to Him, and out of them, chose twelve whom He named apostles. See 1 Corinthians. 12:28, where it is stated that the apostles were set in the church first. Time nor space will permit a full discussion of these things here; however there are too many evidences of the fact that Christ set up the church while He was on earth to need discussion here.

The Baptist Name

Although Baptists have been called by various names since the days of the origin of the New Testament church, I believe that the name Baptist itself, as relating to the church, is scriptural. John was called "Baptist" in the New Testament. He was sent from God to prepare the material of which Jesus would set up His church.

I believe that the one true church which Jesus set up was a missionary Baptist church. We realize that today the name "Baptist" is used promiscuously by many groups which bear little likeness to the New Testament church in doctrine, practice, organization, etc., etc. True missionary Baptists today preach the same doctrines, have the same kind of organization, hold to the same ordinances, have the same kind

of government, and recognize Jesus the one only true Head of the New Testament church (Eph. 1:22-23). The church is also called His body.

Now a church, accordingly to the Greek New Testament can only be a visible assembly. Also the word "body" (Greek: *soma*), which is used many, many times to indicate the church, means a visible, organized body. It cannot be invisible, nor universal. Jesus used the human body to picture the structure of His church. The word is used 18 times in 1 Corinthians 12, and every time has to do with the church.

The Bride of Christ

The Bride of Christ will be composed of the aggregation of all true New Testament churches — of course, minus any unsaved who are members. I believe these true New Testament churches are true missionary Baptist churches. As to independent churches, we know that all New Testament churches were independent. There were no Conventions nor General organizations.

Two Opposing Positions

There are two common objections raised pertaining to our claim of a Baptist Bride:

1. Opponents will raise

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the question as to Paul's words concerning Christ's Bride, the church, as given in Ephesians 4:4 and 5:22-32.

In considering these scriptures, keep in mind that he is speaking to a local church: and truly there is only one church (one kind of church as set up by our Lord). Also he speaks of the church in an institutional sense, as we might say, "the home, the school." etc., without reference to any particular local home, or church, or school.

As to Ephesians 5:22-32, church is used in the same institutional sense.

2. The second objection raised by opponents of the Baptist Bride position is that the impurities, and disobedience of many of these churches, would disqualify them: hence the Bride will have to be made up of all saved people. This, too, I must deny, for Ephesians 5:25-27 tells us:

"Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, but holy, and without blemish."

So my friends, when the Bride is presented to Jesus, the Bridegroom, she will have been cleansed and made acceptable to Him.

Matthew 22:1-14 is an irrefutable reference, for it is quite obvious that this parable has to do with the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. And, beloved, there were "guests" at this wedding. Surely we never heard of a happy wedding occasion, such as this, with only the Bride and Groom present. Again, John 5:29 says,

"He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him rejoiceth great because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled."

It is easy to see that the friend of the bridegroom here is John, but he was not a part of the Bride.

I also urge you to read carefully Psalms 45:8-17. Without doubt, this is a picture of the happy occasion of the marriage, and glorious reception. Verse 14 says:

"She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee."

There is one other scripture which I shall mention here, which is usually referred to by the anti-Baptist Bride group — also by those who teach of an invisible, universal church, and that everyone who is saved is in the church, the body of Christ. This is Hebrews 12:22-23, where, in contrast with the law, we are told of that to

which we come.

"But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."

Now it is quite obvious to those who know anything about the Greek rendering of this, that "general assembly," and "church of the first born" are entirely two different things. The word used for "general assembly" is *panagurei*, and means "the assembly of an entire people." This evidently refers to all of the saved of all ages. However, church, in "church of the firstborn" is *ekklesia*, and means assembly. It is the word used for "church" throughout the New Testament. The "general assembly," and "church of the first born" cannot be one, and the same.

Dear friends, I must stand upon the proposition, that the church that Jesus built while He was here on earth was an old time missionary Baptist church, and that the aggregation of such churches will constitute the Bride of Christ. All who are born-again will be there, but only the Bride will have the place of highest honor. The Bride and the Bridegroom will not be alone at the Marriage

Supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9); the saved of all ages will be there. And what a time of glory it will be! Hallelujah!

There are so-called churches today which believe and preach salvation by works: the New Testament churches preached salvation by grace, through faith, and that unto good works (See Eph. 2:8-10; Phil. 3:5).

There are so-called churches today which believe and preach baptismal regeneration; the New Testament church preached the new birth by the Spirit of God. They made disciples, then baptized them.

There are so-called churches today which believe and preach sprinkling or pouring for baptism; the New Testament churches preached and practiced the only mode that can in any way be called baptism: that is immersion in water.

There are so-called churches today which believe and preach church government by a select few: the New Testament churches practiced authority and rule by the church, believing in the autonomy given the church.

There are many so-called churches today which believe and preach that a group must belong to, or be affiliated with some convention, or other organization: the New Testament churches believed

(See **BRIDE** on page 24)

Other Evidences

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the names of 500 seekers were referred to St. Thomas More Roman Catholic Church. All of the 2,100 Catholics who came forward during the Graham crusade in London, England, in 1989 were referred back to Catholic churches. In 1999 Graham said, "My responsibility is to preach the Gospel to everyone and let them choose their own church, whether it is Catholic or Protestant or Orthodox or whatever it is" (Graham, interview with Patricia Rice, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, October 10, 1999). He is a deeply deceived man.

* * *

Prophets Don't Have To Be Right.

— Many of the charismatic prophets today admit that they are wrong at least part of the time, but they claim that a New Testament prophet does not have to be correct in all of his prophecies. Mike Bickle of Kansas City helped promote the prophetic ministry among the Vineyard Churches when he joined John Wimber in 1990. I heard Bickle and Wimber speak at the Indianapolis '90 ecumenical conference. Recently Bickle said, "The easy response is to discount a prophetic person who gets it wrong. That's not the right response" ("Prophetic Movement

Confronts Extremes," Charisma Online, Oct. 7, 2004). He says we should not label it "false prophecy" but "soulish" or "humanly generated" prophesying. This is nonsense and heresy. If a man speaks by prophecy, he is to be judged as a prophet (Deut. 18:20-22; 1 Cor. 14:29). And one of the tests is accuracy. "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deut. 18:22).

* * *

Paul And Jan Crouch's Opulent Lifestyle. — Paul and Jan Couch of Trinity Broadcasting Network fame are staunch believers in the "prosperity gospel" and they have the lifestyle to prove it. Their annual salary is \$763,700. Their ministry owns a \$7.2-million jet and 30 homes, one of which features a \$10,000 wine cabinet. Two of the homes are multi-million dollar mansions in a gated community overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The ministry's balance sheet for 2002, the most recent available, lists net assets of \$583 million, including \$238 million in Treasury bonds and \$31 million in cash ("Pastor's Empire Built on Acts of Faith, and Cash,"

Los Angeles Times, Sep. 19). The extravagant headquarters near Los Angeles features reflecting pools, sculptures, and neoclassical colonnades. TBN spreads a radical unscriptural charismatic message around the world. Recently it came to light that 1997 Paul Crouch paid a former employee \$425,000 to keep silent about an alleged homosexual tryst. □

THANKS . . .

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den tables.

This thanksgiving festival of the Pilgrims spread to other colonies in the the New World. Later during the Revolutionary War the struggling young nation on eight different occasions observed a special day of thanksgiving for military victories.

From 1863 when President Lincoln asked that the nation observe the last Thursday in November "as the day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father," Presidential proclamation each year has called for a national Thanksgiving Day. In 1941 Congress fixed the fourth Thursday in November.

As we lift our hearts again this year in gratitude to God, may He give us grace to dedicate our abundance "for the propagating and advancing of the Gospel of the Kingdom of Christ in ... remote parts of the world." □

BRIDE . . .

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in the absolute independence of every local body of Christ, and recognized no Head except Jesus the Founder of the church (Eph. 2:23; Col. 1:18).

There are many so-called churches today which believe, preach, and practice "open communion" that is, let any Christian come and participate in that church's observance of the Lord's Supper: the New Testament churches observed the Lord's Supper as a local church ordinance.

Limited time and space prevent our going on and on with this list of differences in the practice of many so-called churches, and that of old time New Testament Baptist churches today. But we stand upon The Book. In the light of these things, I must say that we believe in a true Baptist Bride. And we believe that the bride will have the place of honor. Otherwise, one church is as scriptural as another, and that is not so. All believers are saved, but all are not in the Bride of Christ. □

**If God is Your
Copilot
Swap Seats!**