

# The Baptist CHALLENGE

a voice of independent Baptists

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WHOLE NO. 543

## Separation of Church and State

By M. L. Moser, Editor

Romans 13:1-5; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-16; Acts 4:19; John 18:36

As Preached November 3, 2009  
Mt. Zion Baptist Church,  
St. Clair, Missouri

Freedom often times must be purchased. Our forefathers came to America in search of freedom — freedom of speech and freedom of religion. Some countries will not permit a man to hold an office if he is not a member of a particular denomination. Other countries of the world do not

(See **STATE** on page 11)

Tonight's subject is: "Separation of Church and State with Freedom of Conscience."

Definition: "Separation of church and state is a political and legal doctrine that government and religious institutions are to be kept separate and indepen-

dent from each other. The term most often refers to the combination of two principles: secularity of government and freedom of religious exercise."

There are various forms of government in use in the world today. Some permit no freedom to men at all

but are made slaves of the government. Others permit maximum freedom for its citizens. Our own government permits freedom as few countries in the world know it. History reveals that our freedom was patterned after the democracy of a Baptist church.

## The Bible Looks At Divine Healing

By Sam Bradford

This is a day when great emphasis is made on "creature comforts." More emphasis is placed on "How do you feel?" than on "What kind of a person are you?"

That emphasis has easily spilled from the secular over into the religious world. People just want to be comfortable.

Because of that drive to be physically well and comfortable, men and movements have played upon the plight of the sick and afflicted.

This study makes no attempt to examine the validity or effectiveness any of those movements. In the

(See **SAM** on page 5)

## The Church — It's Institution and It's Witness

By W. Lee Rector

The church of the living God is the body of Christ, a local assembly of baptized believers, covenanting to preach the gospel to every creature throughout the ages, thus honoring the commission of Christ, its head, and actually yielding its life to the personal supervision, enduement, and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The church was founded by Christ Jesus in person, during His personal ministry on earth, and immediately after His return from His wilderness temptations (Mk. 3:13-14; Lk. 6:12-13). He called unto Him His disciples (made by John) and organized His

(See **RECTOR** on page 16)

## Quiz The Pastor

# Is There Any Scripture Which States That the Tribulation Period Is Only Seven Years?

By Austin Fields

“And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints” (Jude 14).

You will notice in this verse, the Lord is coming with his saints. If they are to come with Him, then we can only conclude that He must have come for them at an earlier date. This period of time between the coming for, and the coming with the saints, is known as the tribulation period. It is my first belief that the scripture teaches that this time period will be seven years.

In Daniel 9:20-27 we hear Gabriel telling Daniel that seventy weeks are to be determined upon Daniel’s people which are the Jews. These seventy weeks are not to be

calculated as seventy weeks of days, but rather seventy weeks of years, each day representing one year as was the case with Jacob, when he worked two weeks for Rachel, which consisted of fourteen years (Gen. 18-28). If two weeks represented fourteen years, then seventy weeks would be 490 years. Now I realize that there have been many more than seventy weeks passed since Gabriel told this to Daniel, but there has not been seventy weeks (490 years) passed upon the Jewish nation in the sense of God dealing with them in a Jewish dispensation, for the Jewish dispensation ended at the cross.

Now we are living in a Gentile dispensation which started when the Jewish dispensation ended (Rom. 2:13-28). Furthermore we

hear Gabriel tell Daniel that after sixty-nine weeks (483 days or 483 years) shall Messiah be cut off. Now I feel sure that all will agree that that takes us up to the cross, and that leaves us one more week of the seventy to be fulfilled, in which He will deal with the Jew, and God will not deal with Daniel’s people (Jew) until the fulness of the Gentiles be fulfilled (Rom. 11:25). The Gentile dispensation will end with the rapture, thus the tribulation period will be a Jewish age.

In Revelation 7:1-8 we have John’s description of the sealing of the servants of God. All of those who are sealed are Jews but one Gentile among them, and this raises the question, where are the Gentile believers if the tribulation period is to be calculated as part of the Gentile age? Christ has decreed that there be glory in the church. I feel sure that if the church were here in the tribulation period that our Lord would still work through her as He does now.

From Revelation 4 through 18 we do not read of the church on earth, but she is pictured as enthroned elders in heaven. From this I gather that the tribulation is to be reckoned as a Jewish age rather than the

church age. Gabriel also told Daniel that after the sixty-sixth week, the prince would come (Anti-Christ) and would confirm the covenant with many Jews for one week and then break the covenant in the middle of the week. Then after the seventieth week has been fulfilled, everlasting righteousness shall come in, which is the Millennial reign of Christ.

Now I am sure that the Anti-Christ has not come as yet, neither has everlasting righteousness been brought in, so that would leave us one week of seven days or seven years, wherein God will deal with the Jew before He brings in the Millennial kingdom. Thus the tribulation period, or the time of Jacob’s trouble, will last for seven years.

In Matthew 24:3-31 the Lord describes for us some of the things that are to come to pass during the tribulation period. His description in these verses has reference to the Jewish nation, for verse 34 says, “this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.” These things shall be fulfilled during the last week of the seventy weeks of Daniel 9, or the seven years that are left of the 490 years, which Gabriel told Daniel was determined upon his people. □

### THE BAPTIST CHALLENGE

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**You Are Never So High As When  
You Are On Your Knees**

# Who Are Good Patriots?

Who are good patriots? The answer to this question requires a definition of patriotism. Patriotism is sacrificial love for ones country — sacrificial love for all of the worthy interests of the people.

Now, it becomes quite necessary to this hour of peril and in this hour of national problems for us to do some clear thinking and clear differentiation. Unless we do, much injustice will be done in our land because of a lack of understanding. To clear up some things for our thinking, we offer the following observations:

(1) We should never confuse patriotism with partisanism. Patriotism involves the whole of the interests of the whole of our people, while patriotism involves party interests for a part of the people.

(2) We should ever remember that partisanism subordinates the interests of the whole of our people to the interests of a party, while patriotism subordinates a party to the well being to the whole country.

(3) We should ever remember that partisanism is arrogant selfishness running rough shod over personal rights and liberties, while patriotism puts the interests of the whole above the interests of the few, allowing common-

sense and fair-play as a means of conciliation and understanding.

(4) We should ever remember that partisanism is wicked intolerance, marching under the guise of party self-sufficiency, assuming all not in accord with the partisan leadership to be boobs and ignoramuses, while patriotism is broad mantled charity, providing rights and privileges for minorities, and proceeding with equity toward the service of the whole.

In the light of these facts—and facts they are—there will need to be definite adjustments made in the thinking of the American people before 2010 election appears. We all need to set ourselves right on the question of patriotism. To illustrate, the Republican party can push its own progress and seek to elect its own ranks to political positions in our land upon the basis of its platform without party being accused of unpatriotism.

The Democrats can put forth their leadership and promise a continuation of liberalism without being justly subjected to the charge of a lack of patriotism.

Conservative Democrats can resist with might and main the platform of both Republican and liberals

without rightfully being charged with the loyalty to our country. If either group were to put party interests above loyalty to our country then partisanism would obviously obtain and the interests of America people would obviously obtain and the interests of American people would obviously be imperiled. In the coming 2010 election, every citizen should be a patriot first and a party regular second.

Should 2010 election appear with a Democrat unfurling the banner of his party and that liberal were the present president of the United States, it would not be unpatriotic for a conservative Democrat to vote

against such a candidate. Unless the brain trusters at Washington are definitely out of the picture before the coming election, they will attempt to smear all conservative Democrats and Republicans as disloyal citizens.

The patriotism about which we write is a patriotism which puts our country and its constitution above self interests, and which will move to extirpate and destroy every vestige of radical leadership which seeks to overthrow our constitution. The patriotism will round up all Communists and Fascists and put them where they belong. — Copied □

## The Robin and The Sparrow

By Elizabeth Cheney

“Said the Robin to the Sparrow  
I should really like to know  
Why these anxious human beings  
Rush about and worry so?”

Said the Sparrow to the Robin;  
“Friend, I think that it must be  
That they have no Heavenly Father  
Such as cares for you and me.”



*“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil” — Ephesians 5:15, 16*

It would be difficult to

## The Motivation of Time

By Thomas R. Smith, Pastor  
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overestimate the value of our time. Understanding the brevity of life and the importance of using our time wisely serves to motivate us to be better stewards of our moments and days. It is foolish to live with little regard for how our time is being used. We are admonished to be *“Redeeming the time.”*

To redeem means “to

buy up” or “buy back.” Investors sometimes buy up things that are considered to be of great value, such as real estate, gold, etc. We are commanded to buy up time. Time is extremely valuable. It is the commodity that we use in exchange for everything that we do. If we are going to read our Bible, spend time with our family, or get

involved in serving the Savior, then it will require our time. Time, once it is gone, can never be recovered. If we lose our keys or misplace our wallet, they can be replaced. Such is not the case with our time.

If time is wasted, it is gone forever and it cannot

(See **SMITH** on page 15)

## Palin Urges Nation to Look to God

In a video released Friday, Sarah Palin said the United States should rededicate itself to seeking God’s will, arguing that a humble spirit could help leaders get more answers on issues such as health care, energy and national security.

The video was released by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. The 2008 Republican candidate for vice president said: “No one person has all the right answers. It takes a united nation, and it does take godly counsel, and it takes prayer and answers to prayer — and a collective humble heart of a nation seeking God’s hand of protection and his blessings of prosperity. I think if we

can get back to that, our country will be a safer, more prosperous and healthier nation!

The former Alaska governor referred to an Abraham Lincoln proclamation that declared a day of national humiliation, fasting and prayer.

She said the United States has been “touched by God” because the nation’s early leaders dedicated the country to God.

“If we could get back to that — that humbleness, with that kind of contrite spirit — I think that we would be able to be provided more of the answers to so many of the great challenges that we’re facing,” Palin said. “And

these are huge challenges, whether we’re talking about health care, whether we’re talking about energy independence, whether we’re talking about national security measures.”

Though the tape was released Friday, Palin dined and prayed with Graham 91, on Nov. 22.

Graham had never met Palin, who was in the area as part of a book tour for her memoir, “Going Rogue.” Billy Graham said it was an honor having Palin in his home to join his family for dinner and that they took the opportunity to pray together.

“I, like many people, have been impressed with her strong commitment to her faith, to family and love

of country,” he said in a statement. “I appreciated hearing her speak of her own spiritual journey and her life in Alaska.”

Palin was joined by her parents, Chuck and Sally Heath, her aunt, Katie Johnson, her daughter, Piper, and son Trig.

Graham said he shared his memories of preaching in Anchorage in 1984. Graham, who has suffered from ill health for some time, has been dubbed “America’s pastor.” He has counseled U.S. presidents from Dwight Eisenhower in the 1950s through George W. Bush and is known worldwide for his preaching and activism.

— St. Louis,  
Post-Dispatch.

## Atheists Fume At Creationists, New Darwin Million Book Giveaway

As atheists celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* TODAY, thousands are still livid at best selling author and Creationist Ray Comfort and 1,200 Christians for handing out 170,000 copies of a special edition at 100 of the top U.S. universities on Nov 18. Now Comfort says he plans to give away 1 million more copies at universities worldwide.

Comfort's special edition of **The Origin of Species** contains a controversial Introduction that presents the case for Intelligent Design.

Despite threats of "unilateral resistance," book burnings, and prominent atheist Richard Dawkins' public encouragement to students to rip out the Introduction, Comfort says his group has decided to continue giving away books.

"It's our aim to get this edition into the hands of students in every university in the United States, then Europe, and then the rest of the world," Comfort said. "We have the manpower to do it because of our television program that is aired in 70 countries."

Comfort co-hosts an award-winning television program with actor Kirk Cameron.

"If the Introduction is as weak as atheists main-

tain, why would they rip it out because it would strengthen the case for evolution? But it does the opposite, and that's why they are so threatened," Comfort says. "Among other things, they don't want students to discover how Hitler used evolution as the catalyst for his final solution."

Comfort says there is no doubt that Darwin was a racist, as Darwin believed that black people were closer to gorillas than white people. He also had condescension for women, saying that natural selection had left them less intelligent than men.

"We have a clip on livingwaters.com of Richard Dawkins speaking about 'Survival of the Fittest'. In responding to the statement 'So the way we have created our human society where we look after the weaker people is counter evolutionary,' he said, 'profoundly counter Darwinian, and thank goodness for that.'"

Comfort says that though atheists will try to find out which universities his group will be targeting next and when they will be going in, as they have in the past, they will have "more chance of flossing the teeth of the lions at the LA Zoo at feeding time,

than they have of getting those details."

Much of the information in the Introduction comes from Comfort's three latest books, **You Can Lead an Atheist to Evidence, But You Can't Make Him Think**, and **Nothing Created Everything** and **How to Know God Exists**. He is also the author of *The Charles Darwin Bible* and *The Atheist Bible* (the Unauthorized Version). □

### SAM . . .

(Continued from page 1)

study, the author seeks only to set forth certain New Testament truths concerning "How God did it." Any movement of person presenting a healing program that is not in harmony with these New Testament principles must defend their program apart from Holy Scriptures.

**Question:** Are all miracles of God?

Sorcerers of Pharaoh worked miracles. Ex. 7:10-12; 7:20-22; 8:16-18

False prophets of the (See SAM on page 24)

"last days will work miracles: Mt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:9-11; Rev. 13:11-15; 16:13-14; 19:20.

**Answer:** No!! Satan's agents also perform miracles.

**Question:** Does God heal all who have faith? Trophimus was left at Miletus sick (2 Tim. 4:20).

Epaphroditus "was sick nigh unto death" because of his devotion, to Christ (Phil. 2:27).

Paul had a thorn in his; flesh to keep him humble (2 Cor. 12:7-10).

**Answer:** No! God sometimes uses sickness and pain for his children's good.

**Question:** Did Jesus advertise and hold healing meetings?

Jesus healed a multitude and "suffered not the devils to speak for they knew him" (Mk. 1:32-33).

Jesus healed a leper and said, "see thou say nothing to any man." The healed man began to "blaze abroad the matter," and Jesus was hindered in His

**When home is ruled according to God's  
Word, angels might be asked to  
stay with us, and they would  
not find themselves out  
of their element.**

**Charles H. Spurgeon**

*"I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word." -- Psa. 119:15, 16*

# Who Jesus Is In Every Book of the Bible

In **Genesis**, Jesus Christ is the seed of the woman.

In **Exodus**, He is the Passover lamb.

In **Leviticus**, He is our high priest.

In **Numbers**, He is the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.

In **Deuteronomy**, He is the prophet like unto Moses.

In **Joshua**, He is the captain of our salvation.

In **Judges**, He is our judge and lawgiver.

In **Ruth**, He is our kinsman redeemer. The Bridegroom.

In **1st and 2nd Samuel**, He is our trusted prophet.

In **Kings and Chronicles**, He is our reigning king.

In **Ezra**, He is the faithful Scribe. He is the rebuilders of the broken down walls of human life.

In **Esther**, He is our Mordecai.

In **Job**, He is the Dayspring from on high and our Everlasting redeemer for Job said, "I know my redeemer liveth:" He is our ever-living redeemer.

In **Psalms**, He is our shepherd.

In **Proverbs** and **Ecclesiastes**, He is our wisdom.

In the **Song of Solomon**, He is the loving bridegroom. Our Beloved.

In **Isaiah**, He is the suffering servant.

In **Jeremiah**, A promise of a new and better covenant.

In **Lamentations**, He is our weeping prophet.

In **Ezekiel**, He is the wonderful four-faced man.

In **Daniel**, He is the fourth man in life's "fiery furnace."

In **Hosea**, He is the faithful husband, forever married to the backslider.

In **Joel**, He is the baptizer in the Holy Ghost and fire.

In **Amos**, He is our burden bearer.

In **Obadiah**, He is the mighty to save.

In **Jonah**, He is our great foreign missionary.

In **Micah**, He is the messenger of beautiful feet.

In **Nahum**, He is the avenger of God's elect.

In **Habakkuk**, He is God's evangelist, crying, "revive thy work in the midst of the years."

In **Zephaniah**, He is our Savior.

In **Haggai**, He is the restorer of God's lost heritage.

In **Zechariah**, He is the fountain opened up in the house of David for sin and uncleanness.

In **Malachi**, He is the Sun of Righteousness, rising with healing in His wings.

In **Matthew**, He is the Messiah. He is King of the

Jews.

In **Mark**, He is the Wonder Worker. He is the Servant.

In **Luke**, He is the Son of Man, feeling what you feel.

In **John**, He is the Son of God.

In **Acts**, He is our Holy Ghost.

In **Romans**, He is the Justifier.

In **1 Corinthians**, He is the Love that never fails.

In **2 Corinthians**, He is our righteousness.

In **Galatians**, He is our redeemer from the curse of the Law. He sets you free.

In **Ephesians**, He is Head of the church.

In **Philippians**, He is the God who supplies all our need.

In **Colossians**, He is the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

In **1 and 2 Thessalonians**, He is your hope.

In **1 and 2 Timothy**, He is the mediator between God and Man.

In **Philemon**, He is the friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

In **Titus**, He is truth.

In **Hebrews**, the Blood of the everlasting covenant.

In **James**, The Great Physician.

In **1 and 2 Peter**, He is the Chief Shepherd.

In **1, 2 and 3 John**, He is the manifested love of God.

In **Jude**, He is the

foundation of your faith.

In **Revelation**, Alpha and Omega, beginning and the end. He is your coming king.

The King of kings and Lord of Lords.

He is the First and Last, the Beginning and the End!

He is the keeper of Creation and the Creator of all.

He is the Architect of the universe and the Manager of all times.

He always was, He always is, and He always will be.

Unmoved, unchanged, undefeated, and never undone.

He was bruised and brought healing.

He was pierced and eased pain.

He was persecuted and brought freedom.

He was dead and brought life.

He is risen and brings power.

He reigns and brings peace.

The world can't understand him

The armies can't defeat Him.

The schools can't explain Him.

The leaders can't ignore Him.

Herod couldn't kill Him.

The Pharisees couldn't confuse Him.

(See **BIBLE** on page 7)

**BIBLE . . .**

(Continued from page 6)

The people couldn't hold Him.

Nero couldn't crush Him.

Hitler couldn't silence Him.

The New Age can't replace Him.

The DeVinci Code can't explain Him away.

He is light, love, longevity, and Lord.

He is goodness, kindness, gentleness and God.

He is Holy, righteous, mighty, powerful and pure.

His ways are right, His word is eternal.

His will is unchanging and His mind is on me.

He is my Redeemer, He is my Savior.

He is my guide and He is my peace.

He is my joy, He is my comfort.

He is my Lord, and He rules my life.

I serve Him because His bond is love.

His burden is light, and His goal for me is abundant life.

I follow Him because He is: the wisdom of the wise, the Power of the powerful, the Ancient of days, the Ruler of rulers, the Leader of leaders, the Overseer of the overcomers, and the Sovereign Lord of all that was and is and is to come.

And if that seems impressive to you, try this for size:

His goal is a relationship with ME. He will never

leave me, never forsake me, never mislead me, never forget me, never overlook me, and never cancel my appointment in His appointment book.

When I fall, He lifts me up.

When I fail, He forgives.

When I am weak, He is strong.

When I am lost, He is the way.

When I am afraid, He is my courage.

When I stumble, He steadies me.

When I am hurt, He heals me.

When I am broken, He mends me.

When I am blind, He leads me.

When I am hungry, He feeds me.

When I face trials, He is with me.

When I am persecuted, He shields me.

When I face problems, He comforts me.

When I face loss, He provides for me.

When I face death, He carries me home.

He is everything for everybody, everywhere, every time, and every way.

He is God, He is faithful.

I am His, and He is mine.

My Father in heaven can whip the father of this world.

So if you're wondering why I feel so secure, understand this ...

God said it and that settles it.

# Why The Name "Baptist"?

By S. E. Anderson

The name "Baptist" is a Scriptural name. It is found first of all in Matthew 3:1 which, like all Bible verses, is given by inspiration of God. John the Baptist is referred to immediately after "the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God" (Mk. 1:1). In Luke his story begins with verse five and in John with verse six. Thus the Baptist stands at the very threshold of the New Testament.

The name of Christ's great forerunner is found no less than fourteen times in the New Testament. The more honored name "Christian" is found only three times, and two of these are apparently used with scorn. Strange as it may seem, the name Baptist is always used with evident respect.

John the Baptist won a great many converts to Christ. These were soundly converted, baptized and trained, even before Christ began His own brief ministry on earth. Thus when Christ called for

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God is in control, I am on His side, and that means all is well with my soul.

Everyday is a blessing because GOD IS.

— Christian News

disciples He found them already prepared for Him (Mt. 4:18-22; 9:9). We do not read that John's converts were called Baptists, for there were no denominations in those days, but they must have been Baptist, for they believed what John the Baptist preached; they accepted the Baptist's baptism, and they in turn won converts and baptized them. Moreover, Jesus Himself was baptized by John the Baptist and endorsed him with lavish praise.

Again, the name Baptist is a Christ-centered name. John baptized in order "to make Christ manifest" (Jn. 1:31). Since Christ's greatest work on earth was His death, burial and resurrection on our behalf, John's baptism — immersion — pointed clearly to the Atonement. John pointed to Christ as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. John always pointed to Christ, saying, "He must increase, but I must decrease." When we do likewise we are Christ-centered.

John the Baptist came to prepare the way of the

(See **WHY** on page 21)



### Palin Cites Scripture As Source of Strength.

— Former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin says she relies on her faith in God, and that her strength comes from scripture as she faces daily challenges. Palin and her family recently visited Billy Graham and his son Frank-lin at the elder Graham's home in North Carolina. During the visit, Palin sat for an interview with producers from the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association where she spoke of her favorite scripture found in 2 Timothy. "God hasn't given us a spirit of fear, but a spirit of power and might and a sound mind," she summarizes. "That scripture reminds me that we don't have to be afraid and we don't have to be afraid [of]...admitting that we don't have all the answers. We don't have to be afraid of having to be in a position of thinking that unless you have every single concrete answer, you shouldn't run for office or you shouldn't put yourself out there as a voice for the people." Palin also commented on the importance of a leader being humble and sub-

## World News Roundup

mitting himself or herself to God." That's very important for a leader to be humble enough to say, 'I don't have all the answers. So, come on, nation. Let's gather round together,'" she notes. "Abraham Lincoln did that when he called for fasting and praying so that God's will would be done in our country and so that God's hand of protection would be made manifest in our country. History has proven that principle to be so true and so right." Palin is on a nationwide tour promoting her new book, *Going Rogue*

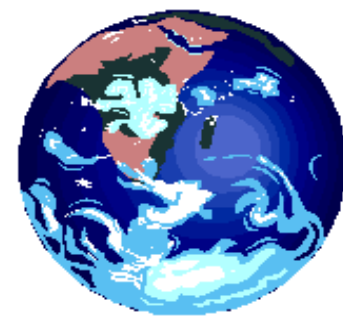
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**Canada — Opposition Isn't "Hate".** — A former Canadian youth pastor has been found not guilty of hate crimes for offering public, biblical arguments against the homosexual lifestyle. Stephen Boisson was punished last year by the Alberta Human Rights Commission for a letter to the editor that was published in a newspaper. That led to a courtroom battle where Boisson has finally been found not guilty. For the courts to come back now and to say that in fact [he] did have the right to do this and that the Human Rights Commissioners were unfairly treating him and ruled unjustly is a really

good victory — not only for Stephen Boisson, but [also] for freedom of religion [and] free speech throughout Canada," notes Jim Blake, head of Concerned Christians Canada. As for the message conveyed to the Human Rights Commission, Blake believes the judge brought awareness "that they need to be very careful about how they rule in these cases. Now, whether or not they'll change their behavior is another question because they seem to be very belligerent against Christian viewpoints." Despite that, the Concerned Christians Canada leader says it is certain that Christians now have legal precedent. He stresses that the Commission acts like a kangaroo court as all one needs to do is write down criticism of the homosexual lifestyle and put a postage stamp on it to initiate a full-forced legal process with government funds against an individual who must use his own funds. — ONN

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**Fast-growing Christian Churches Crushed in China.** — Members of a Chinese megachurch say it has been closed by police and hired thugs who smashed doors, seized Bibles, and sent dozens of worshippers to hospitals



with serious injuries. The eight-story Golden Lamp Church was built to serve nearly 50,000 worshippers in northern China. Today, its co-pastors are in jail, the gates are locked, and a police vehicle sits outside. Its closure is the most visible sign that the communist government is determined to rein in the rapid spread of Christianity, with a crackdown in recent months that church leaders call the harshest in years. Golden Lamp and other congregations under attack are part of China's growing "house church" movement, which rejects the state-controlled church in favor of liturgical freedom and a more evangelical outlook. — ONN

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**Southern Baptists Reduce Missionary Force.** — The International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention plans to scale back its overseas missions force by up to 600 missionaries in 2010 because of the economy. The reduction will

(See **WNR** on page 17)

# La Voz Del Desierto

## La Perfección de la Iglesia Que Jesús Edificó

Hay quienes dicen que no hay iglesia perfecta, porque ponen su mirada en las imperfecciones de los miembros, y no en Jesucristo y Su Palabra. Pero tratándose de la Iglesia que Jesucristo edificó, con los discípulos que le preparó Juan El Bautista, una Iglesia Bautista, ésta si es una Iglesia perfecta, pura y sin mancha; por causa de Aquél que la edificó. Estaremos viendo algunas razones por las cuales la Iglesia del Señor, la Iglesia Bautista, es una Iglesia perfecta; y todos debemos de esforzarnos por pertenecer a ella.

Cuando hablamos de la perfección de la Iglesia, no nos estamos refiriendo a la perfección de los miembros que la componen, pues sabemos que somos seres imperfectos (aunque posicionalmente en Cristo, somos justos y perfectos) (Romanos 5:9; 8:30). En la perfección de la Iglesia, nos estamos refiriendo a la Iglesia de forma institucional, como cuerpo de Cristo y como una institución divina. El Señor Jesucristo dijo que cuando venga por Su Iglesia (en el arrebatamiento de los salvos), viene a presentarse

a si mismo una Iglesia gloriosa, santa y sin mancha (Efesios 5:25-27).

El amor de Cristo por Su Iglesia, se presenta aquí en tres etapas de tiempos majestuosos; que se extienden del pasado, al presente, y al futuro. En el pasado, demostró Su amor por la Iglesia entregándose a sí mismo por ella. Esto se refiere a su muerte sacrificial en la cruz. Allí pagó el más grande precio, que se puede pagar, para adquirir para sí mismo una esposa. Así como Eva fue sacada del costado de Adán, en cierto sentido, la Iglesia fue sacada del costado herido de nuestro Salvador (“se entregó por ella”), “murió por ella”, “se sacrificó por ella”). En tiempo presente, Su amor por la Iglesia se muestra en Su obra de santificación, “*para santificarla, habiéndola purificado en el lavamiento del agua por la palabra*” (V. 26). Posicionalmente, la Iglesia está ya santificada, aunque en la práctica, está siendo santificada de día en día; pasando a través de un proceso de preparación moral y espiritual, diseñado por Cristo para ella.

El proceso de santi-

ficación es llevado a cabo “*en el lavamiento del agua por la palabra.*” En términos sencillos, esto significa que la vida del creyente, es purificada al oír las palabras de Cristo y obedecerlas (Juan 15:3, 7, 10). El Señor también vinculó la santificación con la Palabra, en Su oración intercesora (Juan 17:12-17). Así como la sangre de Cristo, nos purifica de una vez y para siempre de la culpa y la pena del pecado, así la Palabra de Dios nos purifica continuamente, de la contaminación e impureza del pecado.

La Iglesia Bautista, como Iglesia del Señor, está siendo bañada en el presente, pero no con agua literalmente hablando, sino con el agente purificador, que es la Palabra de Dios (1ra Tim. 4:6; 2da Tim. 2:15). En el pasado, el amor de Dios se manifestó en nuestra *redención*. En el presente, se ve en nuestra *santificación*. En el futuro se exhibirá en nuestra *glorificación*.

El Señor mismo “*se presentará a sí mismo, una iglesia gloriosa, que no tendrá mancha ni arrugo, ni cosa semejante, sino una iglesia*

*santa y sin mancha*” (Efesios 5:27). Entonces Su Iglesia llegará a la culminación de su hermosura y perfección espiritual (1ra Juan 3:2-3). Hermanos, nosotros conocemos la historia gloriosa de la Iglesia Bautista a través de los siglos. Sabemos cómo Dios ha mantenido su triunfo sobre el pecado y el mal, de forma maravillosa. ¡Tenemos un rastro trazado con sangre, pero de victoria en Cristo!

El apóstol Pablo entendió a cabalidad la perfección de la Iglesia de Cristo, y fue bien celoso con las doctrinas que el Señor dejó para Su iglesia. Él sabía que la iglesia tenía que presentarse a Cristo sin mancha, como una virgen pura (2da Cor. 11:2). Pablo tenía celo por la Iglesia de Corinto que él había ayudado a edificar, con celo de Dios. Su deseo era que algún día venidero, es decir, en el arrebatamiento de los salvos, pudiese presentarlos al Señor Jesucristo, sin haberse corrompido por las falsas doctrinas, que entonces prevalecían.

La expresión “*arrebatamiento de la iglesia*”,

(Vea IGLESIA en la pág. 10)

**IGLESIA . . .**

(Vino de la pág. 9)

no es una frase Bíblica o Escritural. Esta expresión lo que implica es una iglesia universal invisible, compuesta de todos los creyentes. No hay tal iglesia universal invisible en la Biblia. La Iglesia, en la Biblia, siempre ha sido una iglesia local, independiente y visible. La frase o expresión correcta es “*el arrebatamiento de los salvos,*” que incluye a toda la familia de Dios. La familia de Dios y la Iglesia, no son lo mismo.

Lo que crea mancha y arruga en la iglesia, no son las imperfecciones de sus miembros, sino las enseñanzas de doctrinas falsas (Apoc. 2:2-5, 14-16, 20-25; 3:1-4, 7-11, 14-19). Es por eso, que Pablo aconsejaba a Timoteo y a Tito, que se ocuparan en la sana enseñanza (sana doctrina) (2da Tim. 4:1-5; Tito 2:1, 6-8). La Iglesia que Jesús edificó (una Iglesia Bautista), es una iglesia perfecta, no por los miembros que la componen, sino por el que la edificó; Cristo mismo. Dios el Padre puso el fundamento, para que la Iglesia fuera edificada en

Jerusalén (Isa. 28:16). Sobre ese fundamento que el Padre puso, el cual es Cristo mismo (un cimiento estable), Él edificó Su Iglesia. La edificó con un plan perfecto, y le entregó una doctrina perfecta, por la cual tenía que contender (Judas 3).

No quisiera terminar, sin antes mencionar por lo menos siete razones, por las cuales la Iglesia que Jesús edificó, es una iglesia perfecta:

1. Porque fue edificada sobre una base perfecta, Cristo mismo, como el Hijo del Dios viviente, una base inmovible (Mat. 16:13-18).

2. Porque esa Iglesia tiene un Maestro perfecto, el Espíritu Santo (Juan 14:15-18, 26; 16:7-13).

3. Porque esa Iglesia es casa de Dios, columna y baluarte de la verdad; enseñando todo lo que el Señor mandó (Mat. 28:20; 1ra Tim. 3:15).

4. Porque esa iglesia es el cuerpo de Cristo, y Él es Su Cabeza y Su Salvador (Efesios 1:20-23; Col. 1:18).

5. Porque el Señor Jesucristo anda en medio de Sus Iglesias y las supervisa y protege (Apoc. 1:12-13,

## Confianza Siempre En Dios

El Señor siempre nos da testimonio de Su fidelidad. Muchas veces nos desesperamos, porque no vemos los resultados que queremos, en el momento. Pero si oramos y esperamos en Dios, esos afanes y ansiedades, no podrán afectar nuestra vida espiritual, pues nuestra fe no está puesta en las circunstancias que nos rodean, sino en el Señor. En las buenas y en las

20; 2:1).

6. Porque Él prometió que se la presentaría a sí mismo, una Iglesia gloriosa, que no tuviese mancha ni arruga ni cosa semejante, sino que fuese santa y sin mancha (Efesios 5:25-27).

7. Porque Él se casará con esta Iglesia gloriosa, en el cielo; lo que se conoce como las bodas del Cordero (Apoc. 19:6-9).

Hermanos, recordemos que la segunda venida de Cristo a esta tierra está cerca. “*Y el Espíritu y la Esposa dicen: Ven, Y el que oye, diga: Ven. Y el que tiene sed, venga; y el que quiera, tome del agua de la vida gratuitamente. El que da testimonio de estas cosas dice: Ciertamente vengo en breve. Amén; sí, ven, Señor Jesús*” (Apoc. 22:17, 20).

— Por M. A. Curet

malas debemos alegrarnos y dar gracias a Dios (Habacue 3:17-19). Además, cuando perseveramos en la oración y comenzamos a hacer la voluntad de Dios, veremos que cosas extraordinarias ocurrirán en nuestras vidas (Hebreos 13:21).

Cuando nos alimentamos con la Palabra de Dios, y aprendemos a esperar, la debilidad y la confusión desaparecerán (Sal. 33:20; 37:7). De esta manera, nuestra alma y nuestra fe estarán protegidas y podremos vivir en victoria con Cristo, pues Dios está en control de todo. Es por eso que a través de nosotros, el Señor puede mover un mundo de posibilidades, e impactar a otros para Su gloria y honra. Al saber esto, nos motivaremos a seguir luchando, porque Dios caminará siempre con nosotros y nos bendecirá si confiamos en Sus promesas. Por lo tanto, recordemos que nuestras pruebas, son sólo temporales aquí en la tierra, y que hay que confiar en Dios, no sólo en los días de servicios en el templo, sino también, como dice Su Palabra: “*Confiad en Jehová perpetuamente, porque en Jehová el Señor está la fortaleza de los siglos*” (Isaías 26:4) — [Por Hna. Jemar Montes, Redactora]

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**Marcos A. Curet, Pastor**

**STATE . . .**

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permit churches to meet at all, because there is a marriage between church and state. Physical persecution results if these people meet anyway.

Freedom must be preserved. There are always those who would seek to undermine our freedoms. Fifth column movements. Freedoms usually are taken from the inside rather than from the outside.

One of our biggest bulwarks for religious freedom is our separation of church and state. We must always be on guard to protect this freedom. Baptists have always believed in complete separation of church and state and that every man should be free to worship or not worship God, according to the dictates of his own conscience. However, it seems that the greatest religion that is a danger to freedom of religion in the United States, is one that most people would not consider it a religion. That is the religion of atheism. As we will see later on in our message, the court system in the United States has now begun to recognize the religion of atheism having superior rights than that of the religion that worships God. Few today recognize that atheism is just as much a religion as are those that worship God, but our courts seemingly have not seen

that. It seems that this is the greatest danger to religious freedom today, the religion of atheism. We will look at that a little later on in this message. Let us now look to the Bible.

The book of Genesis begins with what is called the patriarchal period. Following the flood, Noah was in charge of the worship of God, and this practice was followed by the head of each family being responsible for the worship.

This was followed by a Theocracy in which the nation Israel was governed directly by God by means of divine prophets who were responsible for the religious worship of Israel. God spoke to and led the children of Israel through men such as Moses, Aaron, Joshua, etc. and other prophets with God's house of worship being the Tabernacle. Later at the request of the people, kings were appointed to rule the secular and the Temple was built and prophets were the spokesman for God. This continued until the end of the Old Testament.

A new means of serving God was begun in the New Testament — the Church. Whereas both the Tabernacle and Temple combined both the government and religious worship, in the New Testament we see a separation of the church from secular government. Christians became members of both institutions at the same time

and their allegiance was to each of them, but in their own sphere. Examples of this can be seen in the following Scriptures.

The Sermon on the Mount is the first mention of the law of the land (Mt. 5-8). Here the Lord speaks of the political power of the country and man's relationship to both religion and the civil government.

The next mention is found in Matthew 10:18-21 where the Lord speaks of "governors and kings."

The next place recorded of the conduct of the Lord toward the ruling power is found in Matthew 14:3-14. Even though it was by Him that kings rule, He said nothing and did nothing which in any way interfered with this act of the ruling power, wicked as it was. His conduct in this instance clearly teaches that His "kingdom is not of this world," and should not, in the least degree, be complicated with human government.

The next mention is in Matthew 17:24-27. Here an unjust claim was made by the officer of the government upon Jesus and His disciples, but there is not the least intimation that He intended to change or give direction in matters of government. On the other hand, He submitted without formal protest to the demands of the government, though He had to perform a miracle to do it.

Another question was asked in Matthew 22:17-22.

There is no misunderstanding what Jesus meant by these words. He said that while Christians owed duties to Caesar, representing the governing authority which should be faithfully performed, but they were separate and distinct duties and should not be complicated the one with the other. Not the least intimation of Church and State laws.

The next teaching of Christ on the subject is found in Matthew 26:51-54. Here Jesus persists in having nothing at all to do with the governments of this world. He asserts that the power which the governor exerts is derived from above, and therefore is exercised by His permission.

The struggle for religious liberty was already begun when the apostles Peter and John stood before the Jewish council of elders and rulers, and declared, "Whether it be right, in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:19-20). Here was the bold demand for liberty of conscience and liberty of speech, and the right of the magistrate to enforce religious faith by the sword was boldly challenged and firmly denied by inspired apostles.

The early Christians

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clearly asserted the right of religious liberty, but it was not accorded to them by pagan Rome; and when the Papacy ascended the throne of the Caesars, maintaining a corrupt and perverted Christianity by the power of the sword, it established a still more cruel despotism over the souls of men.

The dark ages for a thousand years, drove pure Christianity and religious liberty into the mountains and dens and caves of the earth, and hunted its votaries to bring them to the stake, the gibbet, or to be torn by wild beasts. The blood of thousands if not millions of martyrs marks the history of the faithful in that night of the world.

In 1521 the Reformation Period began. What hope the Anabaptists may have had was soon crushed. These leading reformers opposed the Baptists, stigmatizing them as Anabaptists or re-baptizers. More persecution followed at the hands of the Protestants which was little better than that of the Catholics.

In the early settlement of the United States, church and state were united by law, and the church sustained by taxation and State appropriations in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Virginia, and persecutions against dissenters were violent and severe. It was

not long until other states followed in establishing "state" churches, resulting in the continuing persecution of Baptists. But Baptists continued in their doctrine (and practice where possible) of the separation of church and state. Their doctrinal position can well be described in the following statement as it appears in **The New Directory for Baptist Churches**, pages 14 and 15. It says:

"Civil governments, rulers and magistrates are to be respected, and in all temporal matters, not contrary to conscience and the Word of God, to be obeyed; but they have no jurisdiction in spiritual concerns, and have no right of dictation to, or control over, or of interference with matters of religion; but are bound to protect all good citizens in the peaceable enjoyment of their religious rights and privileges.

"No organic union of Church and State should be tolerated, but entire separation maintained: the church should neither ask for, nor accept of, support from civil authority, since to do would imply the right of civil dictation and control. The support of religion belongs to those who profess it."

George B. Taylor in an article written in the early 1600's said: "The first modern treatise ever written upon Religious Liberty was by Leonard Busher, a Baptist, in 1614.

Its title is 'Religious Peace, or a Plea for Liberty of Conscience.' It is no plea for mere toleration, but a demand for liberty of conscience for every human being. Take some of its words to witness: 'That it may be lawful for every person, or persons, yea, Jews, Turks, Pagans, and Papists, to write, dispute, confer and reason, print and publish any matter, touching any religion, either for or against whomsoever.' Can the nineteenth century (1873), for fulness of freedom surpass that?

"Nor are these the sentiments of a single man merely. Three years before, the Baptist Confession of Faith, then published, used this language: 'We believe that the magistrate is not to meddle with religion or matters of conscience, nor compel men to this or that form of religion, *because Christ is the King and Lawgiver of the Church and the conscience.*' Can the doctrine of religious freedom be put upon any better, or other basis now? But for more than one hundred years, the Baptists had been petitioning for religious freedom, equal rights for all."

In 1615 another tract appeared. Its title is "Persecution for Religion judged and condemned by Christ's unworthy Witnesses, his Majesty's faithful Subjects, commonly but most falsely, called Anabaptists." It says, "Earthly authority belongeth to

earthly kings; but spiritual authority belongeth to that one spiritual King who is King of kings."

In 1620, the year the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, another treatise was published by those calling themselves "Your Majesty's loyal Subjects, unjustly called Anabaptists." Its title is, "A most humble Supplication of many of the King's loyal Subjects who are persecuted only for differing in Religion." The work was written in Newgate prison. Its authors were denied ink and paper, but some friends, who supplied them with milk, put paper instead of corks in the milk bottles, and milk was used instead of ink. The writing, afterwards held to a fire, became legible, and was copied. Roger Williams said that their arguments were written in milk and answered in blood." Many other works followed, all of the earliest by Baptists. In those days no others advocated religious liberty.

The phrase "Separation of Church and State" goes back to the letter written by Thomas Jefferson in 1802 to the Danbury Baptists, in which he referred to the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as creating a "wall of separation" between church and state. In his letter he said:

"Believing with you that religion is a matter which

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lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should 'make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, thus building a wall of separation between Church & State.'

The phrase was quoted by the United States Supreme Court first in 1878, and then in a series of cases starting in 1947. However, they have put a completely different interpretation of this doctrine than did both Jefferson and previous Supreme Courts.

Under the United States Constitution, the treatment of religion by the government is broken into two clauses: the establishment clause and the free exercise clauses which reads: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

The concept of separation is commonly credited to the combination of the two clauses: the establishment clause, generally interpreted as preventing the government from establishing a national

religion, providing tax money in support of religion, or otherwise favoring any single religion or religion generally; and the free exercise clause, ensuring that private religious practices are not restricted by the government. The effect of prohibiting direct connections between religious and governmental institutions while protecting private religious freedom and autonomy has been termed the "separation of church and state."

But today, in contrast to separation the United States seems to be headed toward state atheism. This is not brought about by the will of the people, but by a court system that has either changed or modified previous rulings concerning the separation of Church and State to practically make the state the enemy of religion and the friend and supporter of atheism. Seemingly, every decision by many of the District Courts have whittled away, little by little, the original interpretations of the Supreme Court, and the United States Supreme Court is gradually following this same trend. Their interpretations are no longer a "separation of religion" but a "separation from religion." Thus it is being replaced by atheism. The courts, not willing to acknowledge that atheism also is a form of religion, simply a different form of religion a denial of God.

Historically, Baptists

have supported separation of church and state. In particular, many of the Anabaptist movements, sensitized by the persecution they suffered under both Protestant and Catholic authorities, held that the state should not interfere in religious affairs and vice-versa.

One of the earliest calls for separation came from Thomas Helwys, said by some to be the founder of the first Baptist church in England. In his last written work, *A Short Declaration on the Mystery of Iniquity*, he penned a note inside the cover of a single copy that was intended for King James. Whether the King received it or not is disputed, but Helwys was later arrested and placed in Newgate Prison. The words that got him in trouble were:

"Here, O king, and despise not the counsel of the poor, and let their complaints come before thee. The king is a mortal man and not God, therefore has no power over the immortal souls of his subjects, to make laws and ordinances for them, and to set spiritual lords over them. If the king has authority to make spiritual lords and laws, then he is an immortal God and not a mortal man. O king, be not seduced by deceivers to sin against God whom you ought to obey, nor against your poor subjects who ought and will obey you in all things with body, life and goods, or else

let their lives be taken from the earth. God save the king. Thomas Helwys, Spittalfield near London."

### **How America Became A Great Nation**

Why is this country the home of liberty? (2 Cor. 3:17). Our founding fathers came from places where there was no liberty. Visit other countries of the world and there is no liberty. A false system of government based on atheism; a false system of religion based on idolatry. No voting rights. No representatives in government. No freedom to govern themselves. No religious liberty. Our forefathers wanted to establish a land guaranteeing freedom, primarily religious freedom, and to participate in government. They found it necessary to fight for this liberty as have many others. They won our liberties for us by fighting and dying in battle. Many of these were Baptist preachers. The nation's birth was marked by religious services led by the Pilgrim fathers. Our first president George Washington, began his service with prayer. Our nation's holidays were all religious in their significance, days such as Thanksgiving, and our Independence day. All religious in their significance. It is only recently that our holidays have become secular in nature.

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Even these “religious holidays” have been made secular.

This has become a “lawless age.” Organizations today are teaching lawlessness systematically. No nation can long survive where anarchy reigns. America began as a great nation, but what has happened to them in the past 235 years? Israel also began as a great nation as seen by Moses. The Lord said:

“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up, and thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates” (Dt. 6:6-9).

Compare that with our own educational system. Prayer eliminated. Bible reading eliminated. The Bible as textbook for morals eliminated. Religious courses taught by unbelievers and strictly as literature, nothing more. What is true in schools, is also true in most churches.

The history of Israel’s decline should be studied in America today. God gave

them warning (Dt. 6:12). The very foundation of America is now under attack. What has made America great? Proverbs 14:14 explains it “Righteousness exalteth a nation.” America has been a nation of strong men and virtuous women. Has America forgotten God today? America has forgotten God on the religious holidays — now days of drunkenness and revelry. Even true of Sunday, what used to be called the “Lord’s Day.”

Have you forgotten God? How do you observe the religious holidays? How do you observe Sunday? When God’s people forget, it will not be long until our nation too will be gone. There needs to be repentance on the part of each of us and a return to the true worship of God on our “holidays” and to make them “holy days” in which they started out. What can we do about it?

You are responsible for the men we elect to govern our nation. This begins with those on the local level, all the way up to the national level. Every election will affect our religious freedom or lack of religious freedom.

There are three branches of government and all three of these are important in maintaining our religious freedom. Probably the most important branch is the Supreme Court of the United States. These nine members of the Supreme

Court have the final say as to both our laws and the interpretation of these laws. There is no appeal from their decisions. Many are not aware of the fact that it is the Supreme Court that has done more to remove the laws that protect our religious freedom than any other individual or group of men. It is the Supreme

Court that removed the reading of the Bible in public schools. It is the Supreme Court that removed prayer from our public schools, and ordered the removal of the Ten Commandments from being placed on any public property. An effort is being

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## Hope

By George W. Hipshire

When life’s great disappointments  
Bring oppression to the heart,  
And a pain beyond expression  
‘That you think will not depart,  
What a comfort is the knowledge,  
When with life you try to cope,  
That, when all around is shattered,  
There remains a blessed hope.

If ev’ry prayer was answered,  
And if ev’ry dream came true,  
Each, without a time of waiting,  
‘Twould be bad for me and you.  
But God in His great wisdom  
Has seen fit to let us grope,  
Like helpless, sightless children,  
Clinging desperately to hope.

We are told that each petition,  
Whether silent or expressed,  
If sincere, will find an answer,  
When we ask for what is best.  
As a drowning man finds safety  
Just by clinging to a rope,  
Be assured, when all seems useless,  
That there now abideth hope.

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made to even remove crosses from cemeteries where our soldier, sailors and Marines have been buried. Some are even trying to remove the tax exemption for churches. It is the Supreme Court that has done more to turn our nation away from a recognition of God, as did our founding fathers, than any other group. Look what the Supreme Court has done on abortions, pornography, etc.

That brings us to the second official that is responsible and that is the President of the United States. It is the duty of the President of the United States to appoint the members of the Supreme Court and all Federal Judges. Then it is up to the United States Senate to approve them, so both the President and the United States Senate have the sole responsibility as to who is to be placed as a justice on the United States Supreme Court. Therefore, the two most important offices in the United States are the President and the members of the United States Senate. The Supreme Court has the power to approve, change or even eliminate portions of the Constitution to where we are no longer provided these freedoms that were granted us in the original constitution. Already we can see that our religious freedoms are gradually

being taken from us and we are fast becoming a nation based on atheism rather than on the Christian principles of our founding fathers. We must remember also, that once a person is named to the Supreme Court it is for life, and we are “stuck with them” until they die. Your Senators are your only voice as to who shall be on the Supreme Court. The Senate is the only control over the Supreme Court and your only means to affect the Supreme Court.

The ballot box is our weapon to use in the United States by voting for those who believe in the principles of freedom, and refusing to vote for those who do not believe in the principles of freedom. We must oppose those who would take our freedom from us. Freedom will not preserve itself, but we must be the preservers of freedom. Freedom has been lost by default many times by those who would not fight for freedom.

For this reason, it is the Christian’s duty to vote. Government is ordained of God. (Rom. 1:1-4). A good government will work to preserve your liberties — a bad government will soon rob you of your liberties. Immoral and unprincipled politicians will work against your best interests and eventually take your freedom of worship from you. If we lose these liberties, it may be necessary for our children or grandchildren either to live without them

on

or to fight for them again. The choice may be freedom or slavery. We must always be on guard to protect this freedom.

Our votes will determine the kind of men who will occupy these offices. A good government will work to preserve liberty, a bad government will soon rob us of our liberties. Immoral and unprincipled politicians will work against your best interests. It has been said that for evil to prosper it is only necessary that good men do nothing. If our liberties are lost, it will be because good men do nothing. Put another way, if your liberties are lost, it will be because you did nothing.

The most important liberty that is under attack today is our freedom to worship God according to the dictates of our conscience and according to the Word of God. Your vote, and others like you, will determine whether this nation will have these same freedoms for your children and your grandchildren. Real freedom comes only through Jesus Christ (Jn. 8:36).

I conclude with these remarks. It is the Christian’s duty to vote. A good government will work to preserve your liberties — a bad government will soon rob you of your liberties. Good officials will work for you and to preserve your freedoms. Immoral and unprincipled politicians will work against your best

interests and eventually take your freedom of worship from you. If our liberties are lost, it is usually because good men do nothing. As we have already said, if we lose them it may be necessary for our children or grandchildren either to live without them or to fight for them again. The choice may be freedom or slavery. There is never a “perfect” candidate. If you wait for one you will never vote. If you do not vote you have no right to criticize the elected officials. It is your duty to vote. □

## SMITH . . .

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be retrieved. With each passing day, our time becomes more limited, making it of increasing value. The older we are, the more conscious we become of this fact. Our yesterdays are now more numerous than our tomorrows.

Therefore, we must take advantage and make full use of our time while we have it. We should think practically on how we might redeem our time, by evaluating how our time is spent. The Psalmist prayed, “*So teach us to number **our** days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom*” (Psa. 90:12).

An excuse that is commonly used to justify negligence in spiritual service or devotion is the

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body. That the church was organized in the mountains at the time He called the disciples unto Him is seen in the following facts: A church is a called out body — these were called out. A church is a body of baptized believers — these believers were baptized by John. A church is an organized body — this body was organized by the Lord. The Lord ordained twelve of their number; set them first in the church (1 Cor. 12:28); and then sent them out as evangelists and missionaries from the church (Lk. 9:1-10). The church was organized with its official family and upon its institution the Lord delivered to it the beatitudes (Mt. 5:3-12).

That the church was organized by the Lord before the Day of Pentecost, following the resurrection of the Master, is proved by the following facts:

1. The Lord organized it in the very beginning of His personal ministry on earth (Mk. 3:13-14; Lk. 6:12-13).

2. The Lord during this ministry affirmed Himself to be its builder and its perpetuator throughout the ages to come (Mt. 16:18).

3. The Lord delegated to His church the authority to act for heaven (Mt. 16:18; 18:18), and this delegation further proved the church's existence

before Pentecost, following the resurrection, since Christ had not been crucified at that time.

4. The Lord instituted the Lord's Supper and set it in the church (Mt. 26:26-29), and this was done before His death. All worshipping bodies assume that the church is the custodian of the Lord's Supper. Pedo-Baptists do this in spite of the fact that the Supper was instituted by the Lord before His death. Paul sets forth the detailed instructions for the administration of the Supper, given by the Lord to His disciples or His church (1 Cor. 11:23-30).

5. The Lord set the ordinance of baptism in the same body before His crucifixion (Mt. 28:19).

6. The Commission was given to His church to evangelize, and to baptize, and to teach (Mt. 28:19-20), and this was done before His death.

7. The Lord assembled Himself with His body, after His resurrection, and before His ascension (Acts 1:4), and this was before the Pentecost following His resurrection.

8. The Lord delivered His body, its Magna Carta while renewing the Commission He had previously given to it (Acts 1:8), and then ascended (Acts 1:9).

9. The church transacted business in old-fashioned Baptist way (Acts 1:15-26), and this was before Pentecost dawned.

10. The Lord added to

them (the church) on the Day of Pentecost, about three thousand souls (Acts 2:41). Since something cannot be added to nothing, then the church had to be in existence for the Lord to have something to which to add the saved.

These ten facts ought to prove to any unbiased mind that the church of the living God was founded by the Lord Jesus Christ in person during His earthly ministry and that it both existed and operated before the Day of Pentecost, following the Lord's resurrection.

The church instituted by the Lord Jesus is God's lone witness on earth. A Convention of Baptists has no authority to witness for Christ — that's His body's business. An Association of Baptists has no authority to witness for Christ — that's His church's business. The church's authority to bind, to loose, to witness, to baptize, and to teach is set forth in Matthew (Mt. 16:19; 18:18; 28:19-20).

We challenge the reader to give us scriptural evidence of any other group ever receiving authority to speak for heaven, and remember that the execution of this authority is limited to two functions — executive and judicial. All legislative function for the church is

denied. We Baptists have long rightly laid the lash of truth on the sore backs of Pedo-Baptists for practicing legislative function in their so-called church life — and by the way, aren't we Baptists doing some legislation for the Lord when we set up assemblies and boards and grant them authority to act for our churches? □

**SMITH . . .**

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lack of time. In reality, we all have the same number of hours per day and days per week. If God wants us to do something, the time is available to accomplish it. It is our duty to arrange our schedules in such a way that we have the time to do His will. We must recognize and overcome the temptation or tendency to procrastinate or postpone things that should be done immediately.

Too much time may be spent on things of lesser importance; then we find that we have very little time for matters of greater value. We must continually assess our schedules and adjust our priorities, as we seek to be good stewards of our time. With God as our helper, we must be to using our time wisely. □

**A skeptic is a person who,  
when he sees the handwriting  
on the wall, claims it is a forgery**

**The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.  
Psalm 14:1**

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not be accomplished by recalling any personnel, but through natural attrition, completion of service, retirements and limiting appointments. "We are simply not going to be sending as many new missionaries," said Wendy Norvelle, an IMB spokesperson, in an interview with the Christian Post.

\* \* \*

**Five Chinese Christian House Church Leaders Sentenced to Labor Camps Without Trial.** — In what is seen as an arbitrary administrative sentence by the Chinese Public Security Bureau (PSB), which circumvents the court and prosecution systems, five more church leaders from Linfen Church, Shanxi, were each sentenced November 30 to two years re-education through labor. ... According to ChinaAid, the five church leaders were accused of "gathering people to disturb the public order," referring to the one-thousand believer prayer rally held on September 14 for the victims of the midnight attack on Fushan Church. 17 church buildings were destroyed and over 30 believers were seriously wounded during the unprecedented mob attack on September 13. ChinaAid says that according to a

witness, Ms. Yang Caizhen was seen being beaten severely during an interrogation. "One of her front teeth was knocked out during an interrogation, and Ms. HYang is reported to look very fragile," the Christian charity said. — RPRS

\* \* \*

**Washington, D.C.'s City Council Has Voted to Legalize Homosexual Marriage.** — As expected, the final vote was 11 to 2, and Matt Barber, director of cultural affairs for Liberty Counsel, says, "It's very unfortunate that they would choose to brazenly circumvent the will of the people in order to push something on Washington, D.C. that the people reject — and that is counterfeit same-sex marriage." The city's Election Board refused to put the issue on a future ballot to allow the people to decide. Congress now has 30 days to review and take action to override the vote, but Barber feels the liberal tone of Washington precludes that happening. However, he believes that the public could still send a message." Liberals seem to have blinders on relative to their political self-preservation, and the D.C. Council is apparently also blinded by their activism, and they are going to have to answer to the people," he warns. "The very people that they thumbed their

nose at will have a chance to vote them out of office." Barber finds it significant that Council members may have put their political futures on the line to satisfy homosexual activists as they have ignored their constituents.

\* \* \*

**Graham Speaks Truth About Islam.** — A messianic Jewish leader is pleased that evangelist Franklin Graham continues to tell the truth about Islam and won't buckle to the demands of the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR). Recently Graham was interviewed by CNN's Campbell Brown who asked the evangelist about comments he made in 2001 when he referred to Islam as "a very evil and wicked

religion." Graham did not back down from that assessment. Instead he replied that "true Islam cannot be practiced in this country. You can't beat your wife. You cannot murder your children if you think they've committed adultery or something like that, which they do practice in these other countries," he explained. "I don't agree with the teachings of Islam, and I find it to be a very violent religion." The Council on American Islamic Relations was incensed by Graham's latest comments and sent him a letter asking for a meeting to "clear up misconceptions" and offer "accurate and balanced information about Islam." The self-proclaimed "Mus-

(See WNR on page 18)

I have held many things in my hands and lost them all; but the things I have placed in God's hands, those I always possess

"For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day"

2 Timothy 1:12

WNR...

(Continued from page 17)

lim civil rights group” said Graham did not respond to a similar letter in 2001. — ONN

\* \* \*

### Who Benefits From Senate Healthcare?

**ACORN!** — A legal scholar says the Senate healthcare bill is not only stuffed full of racial quotas and preferences, but it also gives the disgraced liberal activist group ACORN opportunities to receive funding from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Harry Reid’s (D-Nev.) “manager’s amendment” in the Senate healthcare bill requires that six federal agencies each establish an “Office of Minority Health.” Under that requirement, HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius is supposed to award grants and contracts to organizations that are “indigenous human resource providers in communities of color” and engage in “community outreach activities” — the type of work ACORN says it has been doing for years. Hans von Spakovsky, a senior legal fellow at The Heritage Foundation, says scandal-plagued ACORN — the Association of Community Organizers for Reform Now — is exactly the kind of organization that will be applying for and receiving these federal

funds.” It illustrates this wrong assumption that’s all throughout this huge bill, and that is there are all these racial preferences and racial quotas everywhere in it,” he explains. “There’s this whole assumption by the left that the disparities in healthcare have to do with the racial background of doctors — something that is completely untrue — and it’s these kinds of things that in fact may worsen healthcare across the country.” Senator Roland Burris (D-Illinois) said earlier this month that he would filibuster the healthcare bill if it did not contain a public option. However, Burris now tells *The Weekly Standard* he was willing to support the Senate bill once the “disparity” provision was included in the manager’s amendment (pages 240-248). According to *The Weekly Standard*, ACORN also stands to qualify for funding on page 150 of the amendment, which states that “community and consumer-focused nonprofit groups” may receive grants to “conduct public education activities to raise awareness of the availability of qualified health plans.” — ONN

\* \* \*

**Oral Roberts Dies, Proving That His Teaching Was False.** — Famous Pentecostal “healer died on December 15 at

age 91. This act proved that his teaching was false, as he often said that it is God’s will to heal every sickness. For example, the September 1976 issue of *Abundant Life* magazine contained an article entitled, “Why I Know That God Wants to Heal You.” Roberts wrote, “Sickness is part of the curse and Jesus came to

destroy the curse. He suffered in our stead because he did not want us to suffer disease. He took our specific diseases and infirmities upon his own sinless, perfect body in complete payment for the penalty of sin,” and, “Sickness is not part of

(See WNR on page 19)

## Example Better Than Precept

I’d rather see a sermon,  
Than hear one any day.  
I’d rather one should walk with me  
Than merely show the way.

The eye’s a better pupil  
And more willing than the ear;  
Fine counsel is confusing  
But example’s always clear.

And the best of all the preachers  
Are the ones who live their creed,  
For to see good put in action  
Is what everybody needs.

I soon can learn to do it,  
If you let me see it done.  
I can watch your hands in action  
But your tongue too fast may run.

And the sermon you deliver  
May be very wise and true,  
But I’d rather get my lesson  
By observing what you do.

For I might misunderstand you  
And the high advice you give;  
But there’s no misunderstanding  
How you act and how you live.

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God's plan and not devised by God's will." Roberts even suggested that preachers who pray for God to heal, "If it be thy will," should be sued for "theological malpractice." When he breathed his last, Roberts demonstrated with great finality that he was a false teacher. No one dies of healthiness! — FBIS

\* \* \*

### Canada Pastor Cleared of "Hate Crime" After Seven Years of Harassment.

— After seven years of harassment by the Human Rights Commission of Alberta, youth pastor Stephen Boissoin has been cleared of hate crimes against homosexuals by a civil judge. As we first reported in September 2005, Boissoin was called before the Human Rights Commission about the immorality and dangers of homosexuality. This appeared in a letter to the editor that was published in the Red Deer Advocate on June 17, 2002. Boissoin rightly lamented that "children as young as five and six years of age are being subjected to psychologically and physiologically damaging pro-homosexual literature and guidance in the public school system; all under the fraudulent guise of equal rights." A civil rights

complaint was filed by homosexual activist Darren Lund, an assistant professor at the University of Calgary. Though threatened with a large fine, Boissoin said that he would not pay it nor would he apologize for what he wrote, even if he had to go to prison. He has stood by his convictions through the ordeal. In 2008, the Alberta Human Rights Tribunal found Boissoin guilty of hate crimes. It banned him from expressing his views on homosexuality "in newspapers, by e-mail, on the radio, in public speeches, or on the Internet," ordered him to pay \$7,000 for "damages for pain and suffering," and demanded that he apologize to Lund. We are pleased that Justice Earl Wilson has overturned this totalitarian-style ruling, having determined that Boissoin's letter does not constitute a hate crime. He also said that Lori Andrea-chuk, the civil rights lawyer that issued the ruling under the auspices of the Human Rights Tribunal, made many errors in her decision and had no power to impose a speech ban on Mr. Boissoin. — FBIS

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### China Crushes Large House Churches.

— The following is excerpted from "Fast-Growing Christian Churches Crushed," Fox News, Dec. 10, 2009: "Towering eight stories over wheat fields, the Golden

Lamp Church [of Linfen] was built to serve nearly 50,000 worshippers in the gritty heart of China's coal country. But that was before September when hundreds of police and hired thugs descended on the mega-church, smashing doors and windows, seizing Bibles and sending dozens of worshippers to hospitals with serious injuries, members and activists say. Today, the church's co-

pastors are in jail. The gates to the church complex in the northern province of Shanxi are locked and a police armored personnel vehicle sits outside. The closure of what may be China's first mega-church is the most visible sign that the communist government is determined to rein in the rapid spread of Christianity,

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## The Cold Dead Hand

Carve your name over high shifting sand,  
Where the steadfast rocks defy decay;  
All you can hold in your cold dead hand  
Is what you have given away.

Build your pyramid skyward and stand  
Gazed at by millions, cultured they say,  
All you can hold in your cold, dead hand  
Is what you have given away.

Count your wide conquests of sea and land  
Heap up the gold, and hoard as you may;  
All you can hold in your cold, dead hand,  
Is what you have given away. oh so grand,

Culture and fame and gold — oh so grand,  
Kings of the salon, or mart, a day;  
All you can hold in your cold, dead hand,  
Is what you have given away.

WNR...

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with a crackdown in recent months that church leaders call the harshest in years. ... House churches have been around for decades, but their growth has accelerated in recent decades, producing larger and larger congregations that are far more conspicuous than the small groups of friends and neighbors that used to worship in private homes, giving the movement its name. Their expansion and growing influence has deeply unsettled China's rulers, always suspicious of any independent social group that could challenge communist authority. ... At least two other large churches have recently faced similar crackdowns. In Beijing in October, authorities locked parishioners of Shouwang house church out of the space they had rented to worship in. In Shanghai, the Wangbang congregation faced a similar lockout. Both congregations had grown to more than 1,000 members." — FBIS

\* \* \*

**Lutheran Leader Says Bible Not Sole Authority.** — Mark Hanson, president bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, said on December 6 that the Bible is not the final word on homosexuality. In a meet-

ing in Chicago he said, "The understanding we have of homosexuality today does not seem to be reflected at all in the context of the biblical writers," but he thinks that it is O.K. because "God is still speaking to us" (Lighthouse Trails Research, Dec. 7, 2009). Thus, according to this Lutheran leader, the Bible is clearly not the sole authority for faith and practice. So much for Martin Luther's sola scriptura. — FBIS

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**Hundreds Leave Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church.** — The church founded by Dr. D. James Kennedy has split. The splintering of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida comes after the unhappy congregants lost a vote to fire the new pastor, the Rev., Tullian Tchividjian — a grandson of evangelist Billy Graham. The members who left met for their first service as a new church and organizers say around 450 people attended. Nearly all had been among Coral Ridge's estimated 2,000 members. — AP

\* \* \*

**PepsiCo Presses On** — In the October 2009 Out and Equal Workplace conference, PepsiCo's vice-president and CIO led a seminar to teach em-

ployees in the art of leveraging strong sponsor or leader relationships within companies to embrace homosexuality. The seminar was entitled "Use'em or Lose'em." — AFA

\* \* \*

**Portugal Assembly OKs Gay Marriage.** — Portugal's parliament passed a bill that would make the predominantly Catholic nation the sixth in Europe to permit gay marriage. Right-of-center parties opposed the change and sought a national referendum on the issue, but their proposal was rejected and the government's bill was passed by 125 votes to 99. Gay marriage is currently permitted in Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and Norway, Canada, South Africa and six American states also permit it. — AP

\* \* \*

**Funeral Rights OK'd For Gays, Unmarried.** — Rhode Island lawmakers voted to allow same-sex and unmarried couples the right to plan the funerals of their late partners, overriding a veto by the governor, who warned it eroded traditional marriage. The bill passed 67-3 in the Senate, and enjoyed support from several Republican lawmakers, who are in the same party as Gov.

Don Carcieri, an adamant opponent of same-sex marriage in a state that does not recognize gay unions. — AP

\* \* \*

**Malaysian Churches Attacked Amid 'Allah' Dispute.** — Malaysian officials say attackers have fire-bombed one church and tried to set another ablaze amid a growing conflict over the use of the word "Allah" by non-Muslims. The attacks escalated tensions in the Muslim-majority country ahead of planned protests against a court decision striking down a ban on non-Muslims using "Allah" to refer to God in their literature. The ruling incensed many Muslims, who see it as a threat to their religion. Hateful comments and threats against Christians have been posted widely on the Internet. The Malaysian government has appealed the ruling and the court has suspended its decision's implementation until the appeal is heard. Muslims argue that "Allah" is exclusive to Islam, and its use by Christians would confuse Muslims and tempt them to convert to Christianity. — AP

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**Planned Parenthood — 1.1 Million Abortions.** International Planned Pa-

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renthood Federation (IPPF) recently released its annual performance report for 2008-2009. Although their overall income for 2008 was \$119.7 million, down from over \$120 million the previous year ... IPPF's abortion business boomed as the organization provided almost 428,000 "abortion services" to young people alone, with a staggering 1,134,549 total number of such services (almost double the number from 2007) across the globe ... In the report IPPF boasts of promoting its abortion agenda among its member associations in traditionally pro-life countries.

\* \* \*

**Third State Allows Unlimited Assisted Suicide.** — The Montana Supreme Court has officially paved the way for the state to become the third to allow the practice of assisted suicide. The decision essentially has Montana joining Oregon and Washington as the only three states in the nation to allow assisted suicides. It declared assisted suicide as legal and could prevent doctors from almost any prosecution for engaging in them. — Lifenews.

**WHY . . .**

(Continued from page 7)

Lord, and to make His

paths straight (Mt. 3:3). When we prepare the way for our children, and Sunday School pupils, and those who listen to our witness — all for our Lord — then we are doing what the Baptist did. And when our paths are straight by Christian standards, then they will lead our followers directly to Christ.

The name Baptist is also a descriptive name. Since baptism symbolizes our death to all sinful ways, our burial of all bad habits, and our rising to walk in newness of life, then baptism symbolizes our conversion as well as our entire Christian life. Perhaps that is why the word "baptized" is used in several places to describe the entire work of John the Baptist (Jn. 1:28, 31, 33; 3:23; 10:40) and of Christ Himself (Jn. 3:22, 26; 4:1-2).

Logically, then, each Baptist is one who has "killed" all sinful ways, buried them in the baptistery, and ever since lives as one who is "risen with Christ" (Col. 3:1), who has "put off the old man" and has "put on the new man" (Col. 3:8-14). Thus it seems that Baptists have a deeper obligation to live a consistent Christian life than non-immersed Christians! But do we?

Further, the name Baptist is an ideal name. It is the name the Lord gave to the first preacher of the Christian gospel, the one who baptized the Son of God, the one in whom the

Holy Spirit dwelt from his infancy, the one who was "great in the sight of the Lord" (Lk. 1:15), the one whom Christ praised so profusely, the one whom "all men" counted as a prophet indeed, and the one who had the honor of being the first martyr for Christ. Notice that everything John did and said brought honor to Christ. His name was not an object of praise or glory; rather, it was a signboard pointing to his Lord. Would that all modern Baptists were faithful signboards, not seekers for glory.

Again, the name Baptist could be what it was at first, non-sectarian. John, the first Baptist, was not a narrow denominationalist; he was all out for his Lord. If every Christian now could forget all divisive influence, all divisive teachers or leaders, and go back to the original source of the Christian gospel in the New Testament, he would take his stand with the Lord Jesus and His apostles, all of them endorsed John the Baptist (Acts 1:22). This endorsement would magnify Christ as Lord and Savior, not any lesser cult or leader.

Then the name Baptist could be a unifying name. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. 4:5) is our ideal. If we all had one faith we would have only one baptism. Conversely, if all Christians held to one baptism — the one Christ approved — that baptism

would point to only one faith, the faith symbolized and portrayed by the original baptism. Then if all had that one faith, we would all have one Lord and only one. We would declare our independence of all popes, bishops, priests, traditions, superstitions, and extra-biblical customs which now confuse multitudes of people.

How did Christians ever become so divided, especially on baptism? Within a century of Christ's resurrection, some influential leaders got the idea that baptism was necessary for salvation. This heresy led to baptizing babies, and sick people, thus making sprinkling seem to be more convenient. After a few more centuries, the majority of Christendom held to sprinkling babies, making the Roman hierarchy the arbiter of disputes. However, God had preserved for Himself a remnant through the ages, those who never yielded to Rome or to infant baptism. They were called various names, and since 1644 the name Baptists has gained increasing respect.

Every Baptist has the great privilege of witnessing for the Lord by means of explaining the meaning of his baptism and of his name Baptists. For when baptism is explained, the gospel of Christ is explained. Baptists then, should be both bold and courteous in explaining the name, and thereby glorifying their Lord. □

## A Parable

# The Man Who Wouldn't Listen

by Daniel Aceituna

Once upon a time there was a man taking a walk. This man had always enjoyed the marina with its ocean smell and sea gull sounds. As he was walking along, someone approached him and asked, "Can I help you?"

"Why," replied the man, "would you want to help me?"

"Because of the danger" said the stranger.

The man was very offended. Here he was trying to enjoy his own life and some stranger comes along and tries to ruin it with negative talk.

"Go away," he said, "and leave me alone." Imagine the nerve of some people he thought as he continued his walk.

Just then a second person approached asking, "Sir, may I lead the way for you?"

"Listen," said the man, "mind your own business and let me go my own way." The man was now walking faster in an effort to get away.

A third stranger walked up to him and said, "Sir, I should warn you that the end is near"

"Alright!" exclaimed the man. "Enough is enough, you people better

stop meddling in my life or else."

With that he took off running. He could hear others behind him yelling, "Wait! Don't go in that direction, you could be killed."

The man covered his ears in desperation and yelled, "Leave me alone and stop bothering me. It's my life and ..."

Before he could finish speaking he felt the sensation he had always dreaded as a child. He knew he had gone too far. He knew it was too late. He began to think he should have listened.

The fall seemed to last a lifetime, but finally he hit the water. "Now what do I do" he thought. "I don't know how to swim and I can't save myself now."

In retrospect the man realized that those people were only trying to help. They were warning him of the short pier and the unseen danger. And why not, for you see the man had been blind from birth.

### Parable Explained

This parable depicts man's spiritual blindness.

### Cast of Characters:

The Blind Man — Us.  
The Stranger's Warnings — God's Word.  
The Short Pier — Our Lives.  
The Fall — Eternal Damnation

We are all traveling on a short pier known as life. At the end of this pier is God's judgment (Heb. 9:27). The Bible says that most people will fall into damnation.

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Mt. 7:13-14).

"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Mt. 23:33).

Now perhaps you are like the man in the story and don't want to be bothered with all this talk about judgment and hell. Maybe you have even been approached in the past by someone trying to warn you about what the Bible says. Perhaps you, like the man in the parable, have been offended.

Since you have already read this far, please consider this. The Bible describes us as being in a rebellious state against God (Isa. 53:6). This rebellion has made us spiritually blind (2 Cor. 4:3-4). We, therefore, have no interest in doing God's will (unless it happens to align itself with

our own will) and we don't seek out God's authority over our lives except on our own terms (Prov. 14:12; Rom. 3:10-12). Naturally a man in a blind rebellious state will not want to be reminded that one day he must answer to God (Rev. 20:11; Rom. 1:28-32).

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6).

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4:3-4)

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12)

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10-12).

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them" (Rev. 20:11).

"And even as they did (See LISTEN on page 23

**LISTEN . . .**

(Continued from page 22)

not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" (Rom.1:28-32).

But before you really get offended and throw this away, please be aware that God cares for you (John 3:16). That is why He died in your place on Calvary and paid the price for your sins (Rom. 5:6-11).

That is why He risks offending you by telling you the truth and warning you of impending danger. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn. 3:16)

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a

righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement" (Rom. 5:6-11).

Don't be like the blind man who wouldn't listen and heed the warnings only to fall off the pier to his own destruction.

### **God's Warning and Remedy**

First the bad news. 1. We must realize that we are lost sinners that are spiritually dead "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Lk. 19:10)

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jn. 3:3).

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (Jn. 3:6).

2. As spiritually dead, lost sinners, God's judgment and wrath are upon

us. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:" (Heb. 9:27).

"For which things' sake [sin] the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience [sinners]" (Col. 3:6)..

3. Our good works can't stop this judgment and wrath. God demands death as payment for sin. "Not of works..." (Eph. 2:8-9).

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no not one" (Rom. 3:10).

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezk. 18:4).

"For the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

### **Now For the Good News**

God is willing to accept someone else's death in our place That someone is Jesus Christ. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (I Tim. 2:5-6).

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).

5. Jesus has bought salvation for us and now God can offer it as a gift by grace.

"Ye are bought with a price" (1 Cor. 7:23).

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).

How does someone accept this gift? Through repentance and faith.

Repentance means to change your mind and adapt an attitude of not rebelling against God. Faith means to simply take God at His word, i.e., believe the verses you have just read.

"Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21).

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13)

6. Upon being saved and born again spiritually, we become converted to a new creature in Christ.

"And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Mat. 18:3)

"Therefore if any man be in Christ he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). □

**The trouble with stretching the truth is that it is apt to snap back**

**Proverbs 19:5**

## Fellowships And Conferences

### OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

March 11-12, 2010,  
Bodine Baptist Church,  
3501 SE 59th St., Okla.  
City, OK 73135, Joe  
Hocking, Pastor.

\* \* \*

### LUBBOCK, TX

March 14-17, 2010,  
Tabernacle Baptist Church,  
1911 34th St., Lubbock, TX  
79411, Jeremiah Sargent,  
Pastor.

\* \* \*

### ST. CLAIR, MO

May 4-6, 2010, Mt. Zion  
Baptist Church, 1352 Park-  
way Dr., St. Clair, MO  
63077, Thomas Smith,  
Pastor.

\* \* \*

### DEARBORN HGTS., MI

June 15-17, Van Born  
Baptist Church, 25866 Van  
Born Rd., Dearborn Hgts.,  
MI 48125, Gregory  
Albright, Pastor.

\* \* \*

### SIOUX FALLS, SD

October 3-6, 2010,  
Empire Baptist Temple, 412  
S. Hawthorne Ave., Sioux  
Falls, SD 57104, Erich P.  
McCandless, Pastor.

### SAM . . .

(Continued from page 5)

ministry. He could no more  
openly enter into the city.”  
There is no record here of  
a meeting (Mk. 1:40-45).

Jesus healed among a  
multitude, and “He straitly  
charged them that they  
should not make him  
known” (Mk. 3:6-12).

Jesus raised a dead girl  
and charged straightly that  
no man should know it.”  
Jesus went into the home  
(Mk. 5:38-43).

Jesus healed a deaf  
mute and charged them that  
they should tell no man.  
Jesus took him aside (Mk.  
7:31-36).

Jesus healed a blind  
man and commanded him  
not to tell anyone. Jesus led  
the blind man out of the city  
(Mk. 8:22-26).

**Answer:** No! Jesus  
held no healing meet-  
ings and forbad adver-  
tising healing that He  
performed. If healing had  
been central in Jesus’  
ministry, one command  
from Him would have  
healed every sick one in the  
world.

**Question:** Did the  
apostles hold healing  
meetings.

The disciples healed all  
who came to them as they  
passed by on the streets  
(Acts 5:12-16).

Peter. Peter healed a  
man at the gate beautiful  
(Acts 3:1-11).

**Notes:**

1. There was no meet-  
ing.
2. The lame man had

no faith.

3. The lame man did  
not pray for healing.

4. Peter did not pray.

5. Peter healed by the  
“gift of healing.”

6. The people recog-  
nized Peter as a messenger  
of God.

Peter healed a palsied  
man in his home at his bed  
(Acts 9:32-35).

**Notes:**

1. Aeneas did not pray  
for healing.

2. Peter did not pray.

3. Peter healed by the  
“gift of healing.”

4. All in Lydda recog-  
nized Peter as a messenger  
of God.

5. Philip — Philip  
healed (Acts 8:5-8).

**Notes:**

1. Demon possessed  
ones do not pray nor do  
they have faith.

2. There is no record  
of Philip praying.

3. “From the least to  
the greatest, this man is the  
great power of God.”

Paul healed a crippled  
man (Acts 14:8-10).

**Notes:**

1. There was a  
meeting, but not a healing  
meeting.

2. The impotent man

had faith.

3. The man did not  
pray.

4. Paul did not pray.

5. Paul healed by the  
“gift of healing.”

6. The people recog-  
nized Paul as a messenger  
of God.

Paul cast out a demon  
from a Philippian girl (Acts  
16:16-18).

Paul performed special  
miracles (Acts 19:11-12).

Paul raised a dead  
person to life (Acts 20:6-  
12).

Paul received a viper  
bite unharmed (Acts 28:1-  
6).

Paul healed a man of  
fever and others of diseases  
(Acts 28:7-9).

**Notes:**

1. The father of Publius  
was a heathen (see vs. 20).

2. Paul prayed.

3. Paul laid his hands  
on the sick one.

4. There was no  
meeting.

5. The others who  
were healed were un-  
believers.

**Answer:** No! Use of  
the “gift” of healing was  
incidental and as credential,  
rather than a feature of the  
apostle’s ministry. □

**Here’s the key of success  
and the key to failure:  
We become what  
we think about**

*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true,  
whatsoever things are honest...if there  
be any praise, think on these things*

**Philippians 4:8**