

the Baptist CHALLENGE

a voice of independent Baptists

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Wanted: True Independent Baptist Churches

By Bert Craft, Sayville, New York

Many years ago, Jesus said of the church in Sardis, "*Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead*" (Rev. 3:1). Jesus looked at this assembly and saw something that man could not see. In man's eyes, this church had a good reputation, yet under the divine scrutiny of Christ, we see that their reputation was without reality. The Word of God proclaims that the last days will be characterized by those who have "*a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof*" (2 Tim. 2:5); those who "*profess that they know God, but in works they deny him*" (Tit. 1:16).

Our world today is filled with many *professors*, but only a few *possessors*. So it is true among those who call themselves "independent Baptists." There are many who profess the *name*, but there are only a few who possess the *nature* of a true, scriptural independent Baptist.

As we consider the topic, "Wanted: True Independent New Testament Baptists," let us be mindful that the opinion we have of ourselves, or the reputation we have in the minds of others, does not determine what we are. In fact, I know many who are wearing the name "Independent Baptists" who ought to be honest with themselves and others and take the name off their signs

and letterhead. They do not believe and practice what "Independent Baptists" have stood for and practiced throughout history. Though there have been some irregularities amongst Baptists, scripturally true, independent Baptists believe that ...

I. The Bible — Authorized Version (KJV 1611) — is Preserved, Sole Authority.

Since Christ started His church in the first century, Baptists have never questioned the authenticity of authority of the Word of God. The Baptists have never changed the Scriptures to conform to their beliefs. Rather, they have submitted to the Scriptures and have organized and governed their churches under the authority of the Word of God.

The first Baptist — John the Baptist — came into the country around Jordan preaching the preserved Word of God. "*As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet ...*" John believed that God had preserved the inspired words of Isaiah the prophet given nearly 700 years earlier. Therefore, John preached with authority, power and confidence. Jesus, during His ministry, often quoted Moses who had penned divine revelation about 1500 years before Christ.

Obviously, Christ understood divine sovereignty in the preservation of the Word of God. If John the Baptist and Jesus Christ did not question the veracity and authenticity of God's Word, why can we not believe God in our day that He has sovereignly preserved His Word for us? The preserved Word of God in English is the King James Bible (1611). The King James Version was translated from the Textus Receptus manuscripts. All of the other manuscripts have been altered and perverted so that the translations which do not align with the Textus Receptus are in actuality perversions of the Word of God.

True independent Baptists "*are not as many, which corrupt the word of God*" (2 Cor. 2:17); instead, they reject the perversions and wholly accept the Authorized Version of 1611 as the preserved, sole authority for all faith and practice. True independent New Testament Baptists also strictly believe that ...

II. Alien Immersion Is To Be Rejected.

Alien immersion is defined as a baptism that does not meet scriptural qualifications. There are four essentials to scriptural baptism.

1) Scriptural Candidate — a believer in Jesus Christ (Acts 2:41; 8:36-38).

2) Scriptural Mode — immersion in water (Mt. 3:16; Acts 8:38-39).

3) Scriptural Administrator — a New Testament Baptist church (in doctrine and not name only) that has been given authority from a church of like faith and practice (Mt. 28:18-20; Acts 16:5).

4) Scriptural Motive — to identify with Christ and to join a New Testament church (Rom. 6:3-4; Acts 2:41; 1 Cor. 12:13).

If any of these qualifications are not met, the baptism is not valid or scriptural, thus, it is considered alien immersion. Many so-called "independent Baptists" of today never concern themselves with how or where their church members were baptized. They accept "baptisms" from Methodist churches, Charismatic or Pentecostal churches, Interdenominational churches, Bible churches, and many others. They fail to see that baptism requires authority (Mk. 11:28-33), and that these churches do not have proper, scriptural authority. True independent Baptists were given the name "Anabaptists" centuries ago

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The Book of Revelation -- Message #13

The Church of Ephesus

By M. L. Moser, Editor

[We have decided not to run the entire series of messages in order, as it would take too long, so we will be printing message #13 this month. These messages are printed "as preached" and not as they would normally be in written form. They form a total of 113 messages preached at the Central Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas over a period of two years, in 1979-1981. We hope they will be a blessing to each of you as you read them. It is our hope to complete transcribing all of them and to print them in the form of a verse-by-verse commentary. For those who might be interested, tapes of these messages are available from the editor.]

"Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These

things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes,

which I also hate. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."—(Rev. 2:1-7)

There are some characteristics that are true or common of all these seven letters. As we go through the study of each of these letters, we will notice that each letter follows a certain pattern. First, it will be preceded by a command in exactly the same form telling the writer that he should write unto the angel of the church. In addition, we will find one or more titles which Christ claims for Himself, and is used in the opening of each address to add weight and authority to the message. These titles have been drawn from the attributes we find ascribed to Him in chapter 1:4-20. We also see that Christ claims to have intimate knowledge of the situation in each one of these churches. In every case, He always says: "I know." This is repeated some seven times, each time applying it to each one of these individual churches. Then each one of the letters concludes with a promise.

We also note that the weaknesses and the sins that beset these churches of the first century are also very common in our own time today. As we begin to look at these specific churches, and as we look now at this church at Ephesus, we should look at our church and compare it with the church at Ephesus, and we should be able to find some parallels. Parallels maybe in some of the good points, and I am afraid, parallels also in some of the bad points.

Now He says, "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write." This first letter is representative of that time in church history noted for its doctrinal purity. It is the time that is

closest to the times of the Apostles; the time closest to the closing of the New Testament dispensation. It corresponds to that period of time around 76 A.D. to 170 A.D.

We'll just mention a few things about the city of Ephesus. Ephesus was the chief city of the province of Ionia. The name Ephesus means "desirable." To a great extent you will find that the meaning of these names also will have something to do with the characteristics of each one of these churches. As you read about this church in Ephesus, you'll find that there are many things that would make it desirable.

It was a very large city; a very cultured city, but also a very religious city. You remember a woman by the name of Diana, a goddess. In the Book of Acts she is referred to as "Diana of the Ephesians (Acts 19:28). The city of Ephesus was the seat of Diana worship and her temple was at Ephesus and was considered one of the seven wonders of the world.

In the Encyclopedias we are told that this temple of Diana was decorated with 127 marble columns, each one 60 feet high. You can begin to see then, if you have ever seen pictures of this kind of column, why this would be deemed one of the seven wonders of the world. In addition, at this huge temple to Diana, there was a large open air amphitheater that could seat over 20,000 people. That's a fairly good size arena.

In addition, there was another principle temple, a shrine to Augustus Caesar. It also was located in Ephesus and was a part of the Emperor worship that characterized the people of that day and time. This city then was a very religious city, having two of the chief temples of the world, one to Augustus Caesar, the

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THE BAPTIST CHALLENGE

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M. L. Moser, Pastor Emeritus
CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH
15601 Taylor Loop Rd., AR 72223
mlmoser1@juno.com

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CHURCH...

(Continued from page 2)

Emperor, and the other to Diana, the great goddess of the Ephesians.

The city was generally a very wealthy city, considered to be a seat of culture, and yet their religious background was not very good at all. Ephesus was the very opposite. It was a very corrupt city that resulted from all of these things.

We see a great contrast here. The church of Ephesus had a godly beginning and had to its ministry many of the great people of the New Testament era. In Acts 19 we find that the Apostle Paul labored there for some three years. Though we are not specifically told this, it is assumed that Paul was probably the founder of the church. In Acts 19 it speaks of this group in Ephesus, and in Acts 20, Paul says: "And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons" (Acts 20:17-18). Paul indicates here that he may have been the founder of that church. He says: "Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: and how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house" (Acts 20:19-20). Still talking to these church members in Ephesus, Paul says: "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31).

Another experience of the Apostle Paul is recorded in First Corinthians, showing how

much the church of Ephesus was the recipient of his ministry, and received the benefits of his ministry. Paul says: "I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die" (1 Cor. 15:31-32). Paul says here that he had fought with beasts in the city of Ephesus.

Besides the ministry of the Apostle Paul, the church at Ephesus also had the benefits of many others. Paul, writing to young Timothy says: "As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine" (1 Tim. 1:3). Timothy, then, was left in Ephesus, and given the responsibility for the teaching of the church. Some have concluded from this that Timothy was ordained in the church at Ephesus, for it was Paul's custom that everywhere he went, he ordained elders and left them to preach and teach in that church, while he went on to other areas.

Turning back again to the book of Acts we find that the church at Ephesus had three others who ministered to them, Aquila, Priscilla and Apollos. We read: "And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow. And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews" (Acts 18:18-19).

Now drop down to verse 24: "And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly" (Acts 18:24-26).

We see here that Ephesus had Paul as its founder, Timothy left there by the Apostle Paul in order that he might instruct them, and they also had Aquila, Priscilla and Apollos to minister among them.

Furthermore, we read that Paul sends another man there. Paul says: "For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things" (Eph. 6:20-21).

Take all of these men, not only the Apostle Paul who spent at least three years there on one occasion, but also include the ministry of Timothy, Priscilla, Aquila, Apollos, and Tychicus. All of these contributed to the building up of this church in the city of Ephesus.

For what its worth, tradition says that Timothy was martyred there in the city of Ephesus, so that he spent much of his life there, even up until the time of his death.

From all this we can see why this church had so much going for it. They had some of the greatest preachers that a church could have. We find that the Apostle Paul, in speaking about this church, complimented them upon the fact that they had separated themselves from any connection with Judaism. He says: "And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months,

disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God" (Acts 19:8). Then in verse 10: "And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." This church then was a highly organized church, a large church that was just bustling with activity. The result was that it says "so much so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks" all by the ministry and the work of this church at Ephesus.

But, it is not how a church was, so much as the *present* condition of the church that concerns the Lord. As we look to the Book of Revelation we find that this church, though it had a great beginning, and though He complimented the church on many things, in spite of all of that, they were no longer that great church.

Let us note the church itself. Remember this, a church to whom much is given, much is required. In verse 1 the author identifies Himself as the Lord Jesus Christ. He says: "These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks" (Eph. 2:1). In 1:16 we see the one holding the seven stars in His right hand. This lets them know that this letter is from the Lord Jesus Christ. In verse 13 of chapter one, it is the one who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. So we find two marks of identification here, showing us that this letter comes from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now there are things that are commendable about this church. As we mentioned earlier, the word Ephesus means "desirable," and that did fit her character, a desirable church, a

(See **CHURCH** on page 14)

Is The King James Bible Inspired?

By David Cloud, Oak Harbor, Washington

Some have charged that we teach that the King James Bible is directly inspired of God, breathed out by the Holy Spirit in 1611 in the exact way as the original writings of Scripture. This is not the case, and I want to make my position in this matter clear.

I believe the Bible was inspired of God as it was given to the holy men of old (2 Pet. 1:21). An example of the historic Baptist position on inspiration is given in the Philadelphia Confession of Faith of 1742:

"The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek, which (at the time of writing of it) was most generally known to the nations, *being immediately inspired by God, and by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic*; so as in all controversies of religion the church is finally to appeal unto them. But *because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God* who have a right unto, and interest in, the Scriptures, and are commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search them, *therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come, that the Word of God, dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship Him in an acceptable manner, and, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope.*

I agree with this without reserve. I believe the Scriptures in Hebrew and Greek were "immediately inspired by God." I also believe, with the Philadelphia Baptist Association, that these inspired Scriptures have been "kept pure in all ages." It is obvious that these Baptists believed

the Received Text of Holy Scripture was the "authentic," preserved Word of God.

They further believed that proper translations of the Bible were also the Word of God and Holy Scripture.

I believe nothing more nor less than this historic position. To hold up my King James Bible and say, "This is the inspired Word of God," is to stand in the tradition of this great Confession. Any one of the Baptists who signed it would have done the same. *While they did not believe inspiration is a continuing process, they also did not believe that the inspired Bible had disappeared from the world.*

As accurate copies and translations of this inspired Scripture are made, these also bear the holy impression of the originals. I believe an accurate translation of the Greek and Hebrew text can properly be called the inspired Word of God because its inspiration is derived from the original text.

The King James Bible is an example. The German Martin Luther Bible is another example.

Let me make it clear that I do not believe the KJV is given by inspiration in the same way that the original writings were. I believe it has derived its inspiration from the Greek and Hebrew text upon which it is based.

I believe the King James Bible is an accurate and beautiful translation of the preserved Scriptures and as such is the inspired Word of God — inspired derivatively, not directly.

Further, I do not believe

(See **KJV** on page 13)

Tracing Fetal Development

By Susan Gray

Fertilization, the process in which a sperm joins with an egg, launches a complex procession of events that normally concludes about nine months later with the birth of a child. Fertilization itself is complex.

The nucleus of a sperm cell carries 23 chromosomes. Each chromosome is an incredibly long and complex molecule called deoxyribonucleic acid or DNA. The nucleus of an egg cell, likewise houses 23 strands of DNA. These DNA molecules carry all sorts of information about the people they come from — information about their skin color, the curl of their hair, and the size of their ears, as well as information about numerous less obvious traits, such as the structure of their vertebral column and the functioning of their heart muscle.

The instant the sperm cell enters the egg, chemical reactions occur over the egg's surface causing it to become impermeable to other sperm. The sperm nucleus then fuses with that of the egg so the cell now houses 46 chromosomes, half from the mother and half from the father.

Within these 46 strands lies all the information needed to direct the thousands of tiny, yet crucial, steps of the new individual's development over the next nine months.

The gender is determined, the eye color is decided, and the blueprint for the formation of fingers and toes is laid out. The new individual may consist of only a single cell, but all the necessary instructions for its development and growth are present.

Although all human beings have very similar DNA, the DNA from each individual is

Pastor Resigns At Central Baptist

No pastor! No building! No property! As of this writing, the Central Baptist Church of Little Rock has no building or property, and Bro. Raleigh Estes Campbell resigned as pastor of the church on December 5, 1993 after being pastor for a little over one year.

We urge our readers to pray for the church, as the church is temporarily meeting in the Community Room of the University Mall at 500 University Avenue in Little Rock. As of this writing, a pulpit committee has not yet been selected by the church, and we request special prayers for the church in their search for a pastor and new property.

truly unique.

Likewise, among the birds, robins all share very similar DNA while individually, each robin is unique. Thus, despite the great similarities in DNA shared by all members of a species, each member displays great individuality.

The new embryo is no different. Genetically, it's unique and absolutely complete. No additional genetic information will ever be added to this individual; it will never pick up any new DNA as it grows and develops. Pro-choice advocates have at times depicted the embryo as "just an appendage of the mother's body." If this were the case, however, the embryo's DNA would be identical to that of its mother.

Even at this early stage, scientists can tell plenty about the new being. Suppose researchers were given strands of an embryo's DNA and absolutely no other information. With enough time, study, and com-

(See **FETAL** on page 7)

Editor Requests Prayer

I make this request with a heavy heart after spending several sleepless night in prayer to the Lord asking God as to what His will is for my life and as to what I should do. It is miserable to reach retirement age and believe that you are now settled down to serve the Lord for the remainder of your ministry and then suddenly find out that all the plans that you and your wife had made as to how you were to serve the Lord in the "golden years" are gone.

When I retired I was certain that God was in my retirement and in the joint plans that Central Baptist Church and I entered into as to how I was to serve the Lord for the rest of my life. I had a peace in my heart that this was exactly what God wanted me to do. But how quickly Satan can foil all our plans. For this reason, I need the prayers of all of our readers as you will see by reading this article.

As most of you know, in September 1990 I resigned as pastor of Central Baptist Church ending nearly 60 years of a Moser being pastor of the church. My father, M. L. Moser, Sr. became pastor of the church on July 15, 1931 and retired because of ill health in October 1965. Following my graduation from the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in 1952, my family and I moved to Morelia, Michioacan, Mexico as missionaries of Central Baptist Church. While in Mexico, I started Latin American Baptist Theological Seminary and our students are now scattered all over Mexico. We remained in Mexico for 13 years until my father was forced to retire in 1965 because of ill health.

The church then called me as pastor.

I remained as pastor of the church for 26 years, retiring in 1991. Upon my retirement, I did not intend to retire or resign from the ministry, but to continue working with Challenge Press and our Mexican mission work as well as holding revival meetings and speaking in seminars and Bible Conferences. When I retired, I left the church with an educational building with a nearly full-size gymnasium, a full kitchen, facilities for our Christian school and printing ministry, and a new church auditorium with seating capacity of 1100 and which could be expanded to 2500, all bills paid, and over \$180,000 in the bank.

Upon retiring as pastor, the church with a unanimous vote agreed that I would continue to work with the church in charge of the mission work in Old Mexico, as well as continuing to be in charge of Challenge Press. My wife and I started Challenge Press with our own funds, buying all the equipment, etc. and finally after getting it financially on its feet, I gave it to the church with all of its assets with the understanding, and an agreement with the church, that I would continue to operate Challenge Press as I had been doing.

Upon my retirement, I was named by the church as "Pastor Emeritus" in recognition of my more than 34 years of service to the church, and for nearly two years I continued to work with both the mission work in Mexico and Challenge Press following my retirement. I intended to spend the rest of my life and ministry actively working with

Central Baptist Church. However, things have changed to the extent that I feel that I must now make a major decision as to my future. Under the leadership and recommendation of its last pastor, the church voted to phase out the financial support of the seminary in Mexico, phasing it out over five years, telling them that they are now responsible for the seminary and must raise funds themselves from churches in Mexico. They also voted to separate me completely from any connection with the work in Mexico.

Also, the last pastor of the church, recommended to the church that they place his father-in-law, as manager of Challenge Press, thus removing me from Challenge Press, so that I no longer have any responsibility with Challenge Press even though my wife and I began it with our own money and gave it to the church with the understanding and agreement that I would continue to operate Challenge Press as before, since I had been operating it as a personal mission project before turning it over to the church.

I preached the graduation for the seminary in Mexico last June and while there I was asked by the faculty of the seminary to return to Mexico as a missionary again and to continue to work with them in the seminary. Due to my age and the ill health of my wife (she has Alzheimer's disease) I do not feel it is the Lord's will for me to return to Mexico although I would enjoy it very much since my heart is still in Mexico.

Both the church and I were convinced that upon my retirement as pastor, that it was the Lord's will that I spend the remaining part of my ministry in working in the printing ministry

with Challenge Press, as well as our mission work in Mexico. That is why the church voted unanimously for me to continue in representing both our Mexican mission work and Challenge Press among the churches around the country as well as continue the printing work of Challenge Press. It was for that reason that I bought a new 34-ft Motor Home so that I could travel among the churches without the expense of motel bills. Now I am having to sell the Motor Home at a big loss. It was never my intention simply to be a "pew warmer" but since the former pastor led the church to remove me from Challenge Press and the mission work I have nothing to do other than being a good church member, but God has called me to preach and serve Him in more than just being a church member. Therefore I am now looking to the Lord for an open door as to what He would have me to do with the few remaining years of my life.

I have decided to sell my home here in Little Rock and to move. I have lived here since 1931 and still live on the old "home place" part of which was a two-room log cabin which we built ourselves in 1935 and which continues to exist. I do not know where I will go or what I will do, but I am asking the readers of **The Baptist Challenge** to pray with me that the Lord will lead me as to what He would have me to do. I will continue to edit **The Baptist Challenge** as long as the Lord enables me to, so you will continue to receive **The Baptist Challenge** each month, but I am not satisfied not preaching or working more in the Lord's work.

I write this so that you might know how to pray effectively me that I might have the Lord's leadership in the remaining part of my ministry.

How To Identify False Teachers

By M.H. Reynolds

The Lord Jesus Christ warned about false teachers whom He describes as “wolves even though they appeared to be “sheep” (Mt. 7:15). Christ also warned about deceitful teachers who would later come on the scene, astounding people with their prophecies and miracles accompanied with false claims that these wonderful works were done in the name of the Lord. To all such, Christ said, “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Mt. 7:21-23). These false teachers would have the right words but not the right relationship to Christ. Today, such false teachers abound and it is essential for true believers to know how to identify them and then how to expose them. It will come as no surprise to Bible-taught believers that, in these last days, there will be many false teachers and that many will be deceived (Mt. 24:11, 24).

Basic to the identification of false teacher is the necessity of comparing all that is seen, heard and written to the Word of God. Any person who questions, contradicts, subtracts from or adds to God’s Holy Word, the bible, is a false teacher. Any person who mixes God’s truth with error is dangerous to the cause of Christ. Beware of those who claim to be seeking the truth from sources other than the Bible. Those who continually make statements such as, “We cannot be sure of what God said or what He meant” are highly suspect. A “red flag” warning signal should be raised whenever anyone prefaces their teachings with statements of conjecture, theory, hypothesis, etc., saying “We

may assume” something to be true instead of saying, “This is what the Bible says.”

Especially dangerous and deceptive today are the many false teachings which are called “new.” We hear of “New Winds of the Holy Spirit” as though the Holy Spirit is giving new and different instructions than those given in the Scriptures. Some speak of “New Understandings” related to both doctrine and practice. Many evangelicals and even some fundamentalists are being deceived by those who promote new approaches to evangelism, worship, praise and prayer. Most of these involve the use of worldly and fleshly attractions which clearly constitute disobedience to God’s commands concerning worldliness (1 Jn. 2:15-17). The word “creative” is another buzz word increasingly used to promote unscriptural programs. We hear of “Creative Outreach,” “Creative Tension,” and “Creative Diversity,” etc. Years ago a faithful servant of Christ correctly warned about so-called new things in these words: “If it’s true, it isn’t new; and if it’s new it isn’t true.” Certain facts of Scripture are new only in the sense in which believers who study the Bible will learn more of God’s Word; but, beware of the many “new” programs that are becoming increasingly popular today at the expense of Bible truth.

Beware of those who make contradictory statements in their messages and books — stating truth in one breath and espousing error in the next. Beware of those who change their message depending upon the composition of their audience. In

Roman Catholicism, Pope John Paul II is a good example. What he says for public consumption is often the exact opposite to what he says to Roman Catholic gatherings. In his recent visit to the USA, the pope talked like a champion of ecumenical cooperation, whereas shortly before this, he warned Roman Catholic bishops in South America about the “hungry Protestants” who only wanted to proselytize. Billy Graham is the leading example in the evangelical world and his contradictory statements are too numerous to mention here. Numerous examples of similar double-talk are seen in the ministry and teachings of charismatic leaders like Benny Hinn, Paul Crouch, Pat Robertson and Oral Roberts to mention only a few. In recent years, fundamentalism has suffered from the same inconsistencies as men like Jerry Falwell and Jack Van Impe are now mixing truth and error in very deceptive ways.

Even the ecumenical movement is hopelessly adrift on the stormy seas of religious confusion. Our report of the recent World Council’s Commission on Faith and Order that appears in this issue of Foundation, will document the fact that the ecumenical ship is foundering. The liberal ecumenists are struggling and are reaching out in all directions for help — to Roman Catholics, Pentecostals and Charismatics, Evangelicals — and even to false cults and religions — instead of looking to God and His Word for solutions. All such are without hope.

One major reason why so many believers are being deceived today is because they refuse to recognize the dangers of modern Bible versions and translations. So popular have some of these new versions become (NASB, NIV, NKJV) that many fundamentalist pastors and leaders will not take a consistent, public stand on the divine preserva-

tion of God’s Word in the KJV. Some will give strong statements of support for the KJV but will not warn their people of the dangers of the modern versions which are being effectively used by false teachers since the wording of these new versions appears to support some of their unscriptural teachings.

There is an urgent need today to identify and expose all false teachers — and this includes not only those who deny one or more of the fundamentals of the Faith (Eph. 5:11), but also those disobedient brethren who have themselves been deceived and are leading others astray. To fail to do so is to disobey the Lord by remaining silent when the warning trumpet must be blown louder than ever (2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15). The testing of every teaching and every teacher by the pure Word of God is not forbidden; it is rather commanded by God and we cannot be true to the Word without exercising spiritual discernment with respect to wolves in sheep’s clothing (Isa. 8:20); Jn. 12:48; 1 Thess. 5:21; Heb. 5:13-14; 1 Jn. 4:1; Rev. 22:17-21).

Could It Be You?

“If you like to work in the kind of a church

Like the kind of a church you like,

You needn’t slip your clothes in a grip,

And start on a long, long hike.

“You’ll only find what you left behind,

For there’s nothing that’s really new;

It’s a knock at yourself when you knock your church;

It isn’t your church, it’s you!”

Experts Link Abortion With Breast Cancer

From Southern California Christian Times

PURCELLVILLE, Va.—After eleven months of controversy, cancer experts say they will not deny a possible link between abortion and breast cancer. But the major news media, strongly influenced by the pro-abortion lobby, refuses to publicize valid research regarding the connection.

Dr. Joel Brind, a breast cancer researcher unaffiliated with the abortion industry, first stumbled on to the connection in November, 1992, and since then, researchers in the field have reported growing evidence to support Brind's claims. Legislation is currently being drafted to ensure that women know about this evidence before they choose abortion.

Literature revealing the link, which circulated in San Diego last month during National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, indicated that breast cancer in America has become a growing epidemic—up 50% since abortion was legalized in 1973.

According to a special report, *Before You Choose: the Link between Abortion and Breast Cancer* published earlier this year by attorney Scott W. Somerville, a Harvard lawyer operating from his office in Purcellville, Virginia, claims that abortion is the most logical and plausible explanation for this epidemic.

During a woman's first full pregnancy, hormones flood into her body, and a branching and budding network of ducts develop in her breasts, permanently altering the structure of the breasts. Around the end of the first trimester, the hormone balance changes and a new phase of cell differentiation and maturation begins—continuing until a child is born.

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FETAL...

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parison to DNA from other individuals, they could tell not only that this DNA came from a human being, but they could also identify that human being's gender, its parents, grandparents, and its more distant relatives. It would take time, but the position the embryo already holds in its extended family could be discovered.

Embryologists O'Rahilly and Muller attest to this uniqueness in their 1992 textbook *Human Embryology & Teratology* (Wiley-Liss), stating, "Fertilization is an important landmark because, under ordinary circumstances, a new,

genetically distinct human organism is thereby formed."

At this early stage of existence, the one-celled embryo is referred to as a zygote (ZI-gote). Within 24 hours of fertilization, the zygote's 46 chromosomes pass through a complex series of steps duplicating themselves. Then half of the chromosomes move to one side of the cell, half to the other side, and the cell splits down the middle. Now the embryo consists of two cells, each with a full set of 46 chromosomes. Another three to four divisions occur over the next three days and the embryo becomes a tightly packed solid ball of 16-32 cells.

The ball then begins to take on fluid from its surroundings and interior cells move aside to accommodate this. Soon it becomes a hollow ball, enclosing a fluid-filled cavity. The hollow ball is not completely symmetrical, however; one spot on it is especially thickened with cells. This thickened area is destined to become the embryo itself, while the rest of the ball will develop into its protective or nutritive structures.

While the embryo has been involved in all the chromosome duplication and cell division, it has also been doing a good bit of traveling. Fertilization probably took place up in the mother's Fallopian tube. The embryo then slowly moved down the rest of the tube, and into the uterus, or womb, coming to rest alongside the uterine wall by day six.

Some scientists believe that by now it is producing chemicals that partially suppress the immune system of the mother. By doing this, the embryo assures that the mother does not reject it as a foreign tissue. The thickened spot adheres to the uterine wall, sends out tiny projections into the wall's surface, and begins to draw nourishment from it.

A lot has happened in the first week. The embryo has traveled about five to seven inches down the Fallopian tube and into the womb, the number of its cells has increased at least 3,000 percent, and it's begun to take nourishment from the mother.

Although not normally mentioned in the abortion argument, there is one method available for interrupting this early progress of the embryo and aborting it. This is the "morning-after pill." Actually, the morning-after pill may be any one of several drugs, all of which contain heavy doses of synthetic hormones. The exact manner in which these drugs work is still under investigation. But the pills ultimately prevent implantation of the embryo and subsequently lead to its death.

Billed as a birth-control device, the intrauterine device (IUD) might also cause the embryo to abort. The device is a small metal or plastic piece that is positioned in the uterus by a physician and may remain in place for several years.

The way in which IUD's act is still unclear and a number of possibilities have been suggested. The IUD may interfere with sperm movement through the uterus, may damage the sperm or egg, may interrupt the normal development of the embryo prior to implantation, may interfere with the embryo's ability to implant, or, in causing the uterus to become inflamed, may create a hostile environment to the incoming embryo.

In the last three scenarios, the embryo fails to implant in the uterine wall and dies.

If implantation is not interrupted, however, the embryo launches into its next stage of development.

-- Arkansas Catholic

(How can anyone believe in evolution with the miracle of the human birth?)

New Typesetting Equipment. This is the first issue of **The Baptist Challenge** set in type on a new computer that I recently purchased. This was made necessary since our other equipment was obsolete and parts and service were no longer available for it. Since the previous pastor would not authorize the buying of the computer, it was necessary for me to buy the computer myself or else discontinue publishing **The Baptist Challenge**. The computer and programs cost me nearly \$2,000, so if there are any of our readers who would like to help me purchase this equipment, it will be appreciated. I will be doing the typesetting in my home since we do not have a church building, and tentative plans for the new building do not have an office for me. I still am having some "bugs" to work out, but hopefully we will have every thing working in a short time, so bear with us until we learn how to use these new programs. Also, any personal correspondence you may have for me may be sent to me at my home address: 1507 Bowman Rd., Little Rock, AR 72211-4207.

* * *

Crisis Not Over In Russia. Gleb Yakunin, a Russian human rights activist and Orthodox priest, says the dissolution of Parliament by President Boris Yeltsin Sept. 21 and new elections set for Dec. 11-12, doesn't mean U.S. Christians should stop

praying and working for religious liberty in Russia. "We must stay on guard even after the election," he said in Washington. "This legislation limiting religious freedom in Russia has been tabled for now, but the opposition will attempt to get it through the new Parliament."

* * *

Pastor Files Suit. A San Francisco pastor, fired from his city job, filed suit against the mayor who terminated him. According to the complaint filed in San Francisco County Superior Court, Eugene Lumpkin, pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in San Francisco, answered a television reporter's question concerning homosexuality by saying he believed it was immoral and condemned by the Bible. The lawsuit claims Lumpkin was fired by Mayor Frank Jordan on the basis of Lumpkin's expression of his religious convictions. Jordan, who appointed Lumpkin to the city commission for human rights, had commended Lumpkin in the past for his impartiality while serving on the commission, according to Lumpkin's attorney. The lawsuit asks that Lumpkin be reinstated to his former position and that Jordan be prevented from any further discriminatory practices aimed at religious expression. Feelings run high against anti-homosexual attitudes in San Francisco, where a Baptist church was recently attacked for inviting a pro-family speaker to the church.

* * *

O'Hair Despairs. Lifelong atheist Madalyn Murray

O'Hair, in an interview with the Austin American-Statesman newspaper in her hometown of Austin, Texas, said she believes she is losing her battle to sweep religion from public life in America. She expressed particular concern for the June "March for Jesus" campaign in Austin, who attracted over 20,000 people to the city where her wide-ranging atheist organization is based. "They have 20,000 out in the street, where when (atheists) were here for the convention, we got 300 or 400 out in the street in Austin — you can't have that." O'Hair has suffered several setbacks to her movement over the past several years, including her son's acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and his subsequent career in evangelism based on his powerful personal testimony. Fear of O'Hair among Christians remains high, however, as evidenced by the decades-old rumors still making the rounds that falsely describe her intentions to rid television of Christian programming and prevent astronauts from carrying Bibles into orbit.

* * *

Consent Law Stands In Mississippi. The U.S. Supreme Court let stand a Mississippi law that requires an unmarried minor to obtain consent from both parents before having an abortion. The high court declined to review and appeals-court decision that Mississippi's parental-consent law is constitutional. In recent years, the Supreme Court has given more flexibility for states to regulate abortion. However, this is the first time the court has allowed

a state to require the consent of both parents.

* * *

Californians Refuse Church's Messengers. In a series of close votes at the start of their annual meeting, Southern Baptists in California overruled their credentials committee and parliamentarians and refused to seat messengers from a San Francisco church because its pastor is a woman. "This is amazing," Julie Pennington-Russell, pastor of Nineteenth Avenue Church, said after the decision. "The tent has just gotten considerably smaller." During discussion, Robert Lewis, pastor of Temple Church in Fairfield, called the San Francisco church's choice of a woman pastor "unscriptural." Lewis urged the convention to overrule the parliamentarians' decision. Lewis' remarks were punctuated with a scattering of amens from other convention-goers.

* * *

NAFTA, Good Or Bad? John Stormer says the 2,000-page North American Free Trade Agreement is "an ingenious plan to replace American sovereignty and what's left of states rights with a frightening array of perhaps 200 different costly three-nation councils, commissions ... tribunals, review boards, dispute settlement panels, working groups ..." Someone termed it a first step towards a "new world order," and said if "free trade" were the real agenda we could just remove our tariffs—NAFTA wouldn't be necessary. Letters

in the World says NAFTA moves us more into socialism, that: "NAFTA is 10 percent trade and 90 percent changing America," and that: "Side agreements (now make NAFTA) an agreement to surrender our national sovereignty to an international 'EPA' controlled by radical environmentalists." We must be alert to any erosion of God-given liberties! — CC

* * *

Swedish Pastor Imprisoned. In Sweden, a pastor who preached a sermon on Sodom and Gomorrah was convicted of "verbal violence" against homosexuals and sentenced to a four-week prison term. — BBB

* * *

Rush Limbaugh Interviewed. Rush Limbaugh recently did an interview with *The Door*, his first with the Christian press. The king of radio talk discussed his personal faith in God. He also discussed his Methodist upbringing, and spoke of the influence of "deeply religious" father had on his thinking. He explained that his father did not believe in Hell or the book of Revelation. — BBB

* * *

Walking On Water Fails. Minister, Students Drown Trying To Walk On Water. This was the headline of a recent Reuters news story from *Dar es Salaam*, Tanzania, and the report said: "A group of Tanzanian students and a minister who tried to walk on water have drowned in Lake

Victoria, police said yesterday. The members of the Seventh Day Adventist church were traveling in a flotilla of canoes to a religious festival when they decided to make the walk on water. 'They decided to test their faith by walking on the water like Jesus, but they all drowned,' a police spokesman said. Other participants in the pilgrimage looked on helplessly from the shore as the victims drowned." No doubt USA Seventh Day Adventists would not endorse such a supposed "test of faith" but the influence of the charismatic movement with its emphasis on miracles and a twisting of Scripture to encourage such so-called demonstrations of "faith" led to this tragedy in Tanzania. — Foundation

* * *

First Muhammedan Chaplain. Abdul-Rasheed Muhammad, 40, a Buffalo, NY social worker, was recently sworn in Washington as the Army's first Islamic chaplain, after which he was to attend the Army's school for chaplains and then be assigned to Fort Bragg, NC.

* * *

Teen-Age Smoking On the Rise Again. More U.S. teen-agers are taking up smoking after a 15-year decline while the number of American adults starting to smoke has dropped to nearly zero, a researcher reported. "The adults have dropped it like a stone," said John Pierce of the University of California, San Diego. Among teen-agers, however, smoking suddenly began to rise in 1988 after declining by about 1 percentage point per year

through the 1980s, Pierce reported in San Francisco at the first scientific conference of the California Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program. He said the turn around was the result of RJR Nabisco's introduction of its widely criticized Joe Camel advertising campaign. "That's an enormous effect," said Pierce. "Not only did they stop the drop, they turned it around to increase at almost the same rate." Donald Shopland, coordinator of the smoking control program at the National Cancer Institute said the continuing high prevalence of smoking by teen-agers is limited almost exclusively to white teen-agers. Smoking is declining significantly among black teen-agers, he said.

* * *

Some MacDonald's Restaurants Refuse to Sponsor "Wayne's World." Hundreds of McDonald's restaurants, reacting to complaints from their customers, are refusing to participate in a corporate promotion of the movie "Wayne's World." "It is sad that McDonald's, the largest restaurant chain in the world, decided to approve and promote the movie which endorses a lifestyle of promiscuity, irresponsibility, and profanity for teenagers," said Donald Wildmon, president of American Family Association. He said the movie is geared toward teenagers. "Traditional families can no longer trust McDonald's. They have decided to push the left-wing social agenda of Hollywood."

Email Address:

mlmoser@earthlink.net

Christian Boy Faces Blasphemy Charge In Paskistan. The powerful Muslim leader of Pakistan shares a common burden with a little Christian boy from a backwater town in eastern Pakistan: They're both accused of blasphemy. The crime can carry the death penalty in Islamic Pakistan, where religious blasphemy laws introduced a decade ago have put hundreds of people in jail. Eleven-year-old Salamat Mas-seih had been accused of scrawling insults against the Muslim prophet on a mosque wall in the town of Gujranwala. In Pakistan, Islamic law makes everyone answerable to the Koran, or the Muslim holy book. A series of measures introduced in the 1980s made it illegal to insult the prophets of Islam who also include Jesus Christ. The laws were amended last year by then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to provide for the death penalty. Two non-Muslim men have since been sentenced to death in separate cases. Both are appealing. Opponents say the measures discriminate against religious minorities. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's alleged offense was to criticize the blasphemy laws themselves during a September campaign speech. The Pakistan Movement Workers, a small, right-wing political group, lodged a complaint. "They said that it was blasphemy to be critical of the blasphemy law." The right-wing group claims Bhutto told a

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Christian group that the punishment for speaking against Islam should not be death. Salamat denies the charge against him. The gangly boy with a toothy grin spent nearly five months in a village jail before bail was granted. He was freed only after the human rights commission publicized his case. "Because I am a Christian, because I believe in Christ, I am suffering. Whatever they have said is all lies," Salamat said through an interpreter. "I didn't know what the punishment was, but now I know that it is the death penalty. I didn't do anything so I am not scared," he said. The case is a sensitive one in Pakistan, where all but a few million of the 120 million people are Muslim. Many of Pakistan's ruling elite, including judges and lawyers, have been educated in the West and are moderate when it comes to religious issues. They generally oppose the blasphemy laws in private. But clerics and religious groups are vocal, well organized and influential beyond their numbers. Salamat's first lawyer resigned after Islamic clerics threatened to burn down his office. During one of Salamat's court appearances, about 100 angry students surrounded the courthouse and demanded the boy receive the death penalty.

* * *

Clinton Mends Fences With Gay Leader. President Clinton and an adviser on gay rights have ended a rift that opened over the policy on homosexuals in the military. David Mixner met with Clinton for more than an hour in December in the Oval Office. Mixner angered the White House earlier by calling Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga.,

chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, "an old-fashioned bigot" for opposing Clinton's plan to lift the military ban on gays. Mixner also had accused the White House of misleading gays on the issue and accused Clinton of sacrificing the freedom of millions for your own political expediency." Also, the FBI has been ordered by Attorney General Janet Reno to discard a policy making it difficult for homosexuals to be hired. The bureau now will forbid discrimination based on sexual orientation. Until 1979, the FBI had banned homosexuals and since then its policy was that homosexual behavior made it "significantly more difficult to be hired." Reno issued a statement prohibiting all kinds of discrimination throughout the Justice Department.

* * *

Albanians Teach "Jesus."

An International School Project convocation in Tirana, capital of the formerly atheist nation of Albania, was attended by nearly 500 Albanian teachers who heard 70 educators from six western countries explain a curriculum that includes Bible-based, Christian foundations of morals and ethics. The teachers also had an opportunity to view the "Jesus" film during the meeting. Although Albania was officially atheist by edict of the now-deceased dictator Enver Hoxha, government officials screened the film shortly after Hoxha's death and asked that it be shown to the youth of Albania. The teachers received a translated set of the Christian curriculum in use in many of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (formerly the Soviet Union) as well as a Bible and an Albanian "Jesus" video. At the close of the four-day event, 58% of the

teachers wrote that they trusted Jesus Christ as Savior for the first time. In addition, 15% indicated they had reconfirmed their commitment to Christ during the convocation, reflecting the fact that many Albanians worshiped despite official prohibition. [How ironic, that there is more religious freedom in the former Soviet Union and in atheistic Albania than there is in the United States where prayer, the Ten Commandments, and morality taught from a Biblical perspective is prohibited in spite of the fact that our constitution says that Congress shall make no law prohibiting the free exercise of religion.]

* * *

Baptists Harassed In Bulgaria.

Another former communist country is locked in an internal struggle over how much religious freedom to allow. This time it's Bulgaria, an East Europe country of 9 million people located on the Black Sea. Bulgaria emerged from communist rule in 1989 and, like most post-communist countries, established religious liberty for its citizens. But the influx and growth of religions competing with the dominant Orthodox Church has produced tension and calls for new restrictions. Evangelical Christians, including Baptists, say they are the targets of a harassment campaign conducted by the Orthodox Church and abetted by the government. New laws that give preference to the Orthodox Church and restrict other faith groups have been proposed by Christopher Subev, chairman of the parliament's committee for religions. Already some non-Orthodox churches have been denied building permits and others forced to vacate government-owned buildings. [The same kind of harassment is carried on in

the United States as building permits and zoning laws are often used to persecute and harass Baptist churches as they seek to build new buildings.] — ABP

Fundamentalist Lawyer.

Actress Alexandra Powers portrays lawyer Jane Halliday on NBC's "L.A. Law." Some evangelical media watch groups have thus far given fairly favorable reviews for the portrayal of a fundamentalist Christian on the weekly series. Ted Baehr, head of the Christian Film and Television Commission in Atlanta stated in an RNS interview that he was "very encouraged" by NBC's handling of the character. To him, the portrayal represents "a step in the right direction" and "another sign of good will by the television industry." — RNS

* * *

Communism Not Dead.

The ideas of Marx and Lenin continue to seduce many idealistic students in our colleges and universities. The Communists in South Africa threaten to take control in that strategic country. In Peru, the Communists of the Shining Path continue on their murdering way, while an alliance of Communists and nationalists, similar to the historic Communist-Nazi Alliance, creates danger throughout Russia. The Communists in North Korea are about to secure a nuclear bomb. — Dr. Fred Schwarz, Christian Anti-Communism Crusade.

* * *

AFA Backs TV Series.

Tupelo-based American Family Association (AFA), well-known for campaigns against

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indecent television, is praising a program for only the second time in the organization's history. AFA president Don Wildmon is praising NBC's new series, "Against the Grain," because it presents positive family values, honesty in school, ethics in business and the true meaning of good sportsmanship. Wildmon said, "Against the Grain" is the kind of program we need more of on television. However, the networks have driven away the audience which normally would watch the program. They must allow it time to succeed." Wildmon added that the program is one of the best offered by the networks in recent years, but he is concerned that the network will not give it a "fair shake." "If they do, I think they will have a hit bigger than 'The Waltons,'" he said. AFA continues to campaign against such programs as "NYPD Blue," the ABC prime-time series that introduced full nudity to network television.

* * *

Moroccan Jailed For Becoming Christian. A Moroccan man has been sentenced to three years in prison for converting from Islam to Christianity. The French-language newspaper **L'Opinion** identified him as Mustapha Zemamda of Casablanca. He was sentenced in the district court of Casablanca in November. Nineteen Moroccans who signed up for a correspondence course in Christianity mailed from France were summoned by the court. Officials ordered them to sign a statement agreeing to sever relations with the correspondence school. Eighteen signed, but Zemamda refused. Summoned to court again four days

later, he still refused to sign or renounce his Christian faith. Sentencing followed. Officials took no action against a Brazilian named in the news article as Zemamda's religious mentor in Morocco because he is a "Christian," or foreigner. Christians in Morocco requested prayer for Zemamda and all Christian believers in the country. Morocco is almost 100% Muslim and is considered one of the countries most closed to the gospel. Concerns addressed to the Moroccan embassy in Washington, D.C., should note Zemamda's case number, 8075/93. —BP

* * *

Suppose A White Had Said

This. "There is nothing more painful to me at this stage in my life than to walk down the street and hear footsteps and start thinking about robbery, then look around and see somebody white and feel relieved." — Jesse Jackson

* * *

USA Today Cartoon. Mike Keefe, cartoonist's for the *USA Today* showed a school official saying to a student, "How do you expect to make something of yourself? You got a 35 in math. You got a 40 in English. You got a 20 in history." The student answers, "I got a .45 in my locker."

* * *

Christian Jewelry Illegal.

A fifth-grade teacher ordered a ten-year-old in Cedar Lakes, Indiana, to remove a wristwatch that contained the inscription "Jesus Loves Me." She declared, "It is illegal to wear anything Christian in school," and she told the student to "never wear the wristwatch again." The

American Center for Law and Justice is pursuing the case (*Law & Justice*, 10/93).

* * *

Christianity A "Cult"?

Our liberal media likes to link Bible-believing Christians with fanatics, terrorists and cults. Recently a media bias expert did a computer search of newspaper articles and found 148 stories where the media linked the name David Koresh with the term "fundamentalist." After the Waco tragedy, President Clinton expressed concern about a rise in religious fanaticism and said the government might have to deal with it again. A cult expert said: "The government had to search out an anti-hero — someone nobody likes — to set a precedent for taking religious liberty away" (8/23 *New American*). Dr. Cathy Moses of the Dallas Center for Religious Addiction and Abuse announced that her group is targeting mainstream Christianity. They are developing an intervention program to deal with religious addiction. Dr. Moses said the emotional dynamics of the fundamentalist families are similar to those found in alcoholic families. A pamphlet urges "dysfunctional religion" victims to heal themselves by diluting their Christian beliefs with humanist concepts of self-redemption. Dr. Moses claims those who believe "God is sovereign ... don't make decisions without His leading." — Frontline

* * *

TV Ignores Religion, Reporter Finds. "Why is religion so rarely seen in the media? Only 50 newspapers in America even have a full-time religion reporter. The major TV networks have none. The ongoing influence of religion in daily life goes

all but ignored. This, in a country where on any given weekend there are more people in houses of worship than attend major league baseball games all year long." — (Jeff Greenfield, *ABC's World News Tonight*, 8/13/93).

* * *

Billy Graham's False Doctrine. *Time Magazine*, November 15, 1993 quotes Billy Graham's answer concerning "Of Angels, Devils and Messages from God." He says: "**ON HELL.** The only thing I could say for sure is that hell means separation from God. We are separated from his light, from his fellowship. That is going to be hell. When it comes to a literal fire. I don't preach it because I'm not sure about it. When the Scripture uses fire concerning hell, that is possibly an illustration of how terrible it's going to be — not fire but something worse, a thirst for God that cannot be quenched." He then says that a believe in the Virgin Birth of Christ is not necessary for salvation. The article quotes: "**ON THE VIRGIN BIRTH.** That is a very tender and fantastic thing. Because I believe the Bible, I believe it's important. It is not necessary for one's salvation, but as we follow Christ it's one of the cardinal points we must accept."

* * *

Alcohol "Benefits" Are A Myth. A new study by medical researches in Oregon disputes a recent Harvard report of health benefits from alcohol -- that moderate drinking reduces heart attacks. The Oregon study says that alcohol in fact depresses heart function, and

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says: "Alcohol is a toxic substance — a poison — and shouldn't be used for health" (1/3 H. Times). Misuse of alcohol accounts for 100,000 deaths each year, and about 18 million Americans suffer from alcohol dependency. Alcohol is a killer!—CC

* * *

Islam Gets Away With

Murder. Islam is the fastest-growing religion, now at one billion. Nearly 90% of converts to Islam in the U.S. are African-American men. At the present rate, major U.S. metro areas will be mainly Islamic by the year 2020. The 11/93 *Charisma* says 400 Christian churches in London have been converted to Islamic mosques in the last 20 years. Muslims have used petro dollars to expand. Islam retains its people by intimidation. Iran and Saudi Arabia ban all non-Muslim worship, and any Muslim leaving Islam is subject to the death penalty. Muslims in Sudan wage genocidal campaigns against Christians that the international media ignore. In 1992, Saudi Arabia beheaded a convert from Islam who was evangelizing (12/13 CT). We see a double standard here. Suppose for a moment that the U.S. made Christianity its state religion and executed someone for becoming a Moslem.. Imagine the outcry in the UN and world media. Yet, when Christians are persecuted — or even killed — in countries like Saudi Arabia, the silence is deafening (Chr. News).—CC

CHURCH...

(Continued from page 1)

because they rebaptized those who came to them from unscriptural churches. The only

baptism acceptable to God is one that meets these scriptural qualifications. There are still independent Baptists who believe in ...

III. Perpetuity of Jesus' Church and His Authority.

According to Matthew 16:18, Jesus promised regarding His church that "*the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*" Paul wrote, "*Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end*" (Eph. 3:21). Since Jesus Christ started the first church in Jerusalem, there has never been a time when scriptural New Testament churches have not existed. Many so-called "independent Baptists" today oppose this doctrine because they cannot prove it. Since when did we ever start accepting the Word of God only if we can prove it? Faith is taking God at His Word and acting upon it.

Historically, Baptists have been persecuted so that history regarding their perpetuity has been destroyed. However, I do not base my convictions or doctrine on history but on what God has spoken. The real problem why so many detest this doctrine is the matter of *authority*. If perpetuity is true, then many so-called "independent Baptists" have unscriptural churches and no authority to baptize. For many to admit this doctrine as true, they would have to humble themselves and face the fact that they have been wrong, which could bring embarrassment upon them. Furthermore, they would have to submit to baptism from a scriptural church and reorganize the assemblies that they pastor. You must be right on this matter, for the Scriptures state, "*if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive*

lawfully" (2 Tim. 2:5). Rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ will be lost if our labors are not done scripturally under the authority of a true church.

IV. True, Scriptural Church Is Only A Local Church.

The word "church" found in the Word of God is always translated from the Greek word "*ekklesia*." Ekklesia means "a called out group of people assembled together." Jesus used the word "ekklesia" or "church" 23 times. In all of these instances, He refers to a particular assembly in a particular place except one time where He is speaking in a general way about the church. The Scriptures never in any way speak of a mystical, universal, invisible church or body of Christ.

Some "pseudo independent Baptists" confuse the difference between the family of God and the church of God. They misunderstand that we are born into the family of God (Jn. 1:12) and that we are water-baptized into the church of God (1 Cor. 12:13). The Bible term "body of Christ" is reserved only for a local, New Testament church. Paul, in writing to the church at Corinth said, "*Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular.*" In the body (church), Christ is the head; in the family the Father is the head. The body (church) demands location; the family can be scattered. Baptism qualifies us for membership in the body (church); the new birth makes us a part of the family. Members can be put out of the body (church); family members can never be put out. The body (church) assembles regularly, the family does not assemble at this time. Members of the body (church) know and care for one

another daily, members of the family know very few of the other family members. Jesus only started one church in His ministry — the church at Jerusalem — which was a local, visible, organized assembly of baptized believers. True New Testament Baptists believe and practice that ...

V. The Imperative of World Missions Belongs To The Church.

Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20 gave His church her commission before ascending back to heaven. The authority was committed to His church to go into all the world, to make disciples, to baptize, and to instruct them in the Word of God. There is no other institution designated by Christ to carry out the work of the Great Commission. Yet some so-called "independent Baptists" believe that the plan of Jesus Christ to reach the world through His church is not enough. Therefore, they have organized their own man-made, man-headed, and man-glorifying institutions — mission boards, clearinghouses, mission societies, associations and fellowships — to do the work that Jesus Christ gave to His churches. To do God's work in a different way than the way He has instructed is either *ignorance* or *arrogance* on the part of man. There are no other institutions more capable of carrying out the Great Commission than the Lord's churches.

The church at Antioch in Acts 13 set the New Testament example and proved that God's churches are capable of fulfilling the command of our Lord. Here we see Paul and Barnabas proving their gifts in the church and their call being confirmed in the church. They were then or-

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dained in the church, sent out of the church, and were accountable to and reported to the Antioch church. Personally, I know that a scriptural New Testament Baptist church is capable of performing all the administrative duties, overseeing the missionary's doctrine and practice (since when did Christ give authority to a mission agency to discipline a man?), and fulfilling all the necessary functions to place and keep a man on the field. Scriptural, independent Baptists should be more zealous than any of the others because they understand that the imperative of reaching the world with the gospel is their purpose for existence. Furthermore, true independent Baptists are convicted that ...

VI. Salvation Is By Grace Through Repentance and Faith.

True, New Testament independent Baptists have faithfully proclaimed the message that John the Baptist preached, that Jesus Christ preached, that Peter preached, that Paul preached, and all other faithful brethren since then have preached and that is, "*Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out*" (Acts 3:19). Jesus said in Luke 24:47 "*that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations ...*" Salvation without repentance is damnation! Today, there are many preaching a false gospel without making people face the guilt and condemnation of their sin, consequently, if a man is never faced with his sin and the reality that he is lost (by his own understanding), he can

never be saved.

The Scriptures are clear on promoting house-to-house evangelism but it condemns "easy believism." Salvation decisions without repentance give people false hope and make them twofold the child of hell. "*If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed*" (Gal. 1:9)

Lastly, true New Testament independent Baptists adhere to and hold that ...

VII. The Table of the Lord Is Restricted To Members Only.

The church was given two ordinances by Jesus Christ — baptism and the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:2). Jesus instituted the ordinance of the Lord's Supper on the night before His crucifixion. This is His ordinance and His table; therefore, we must invite the participants according to the Lord's orders. The scriptural qualifications to observe the Lord's Supper are:

(1) One must be saved (1 Cor. 10:21). (2) One must be scripturally baptized (Acts 2:41-47). (3) One must be a member of the church observing the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:18). (4) One must have an orderly walk void of offense toward God and man (1 Cor. 11:27-31).

Scriptural observance of the Lord's Supper is inseparably connected with efficient church discipline; hence, only members of that particular Baptist church should participate in observing the Lord's Supper in the church which has the authority to discipline them. Restricting the Lord's table to members only will bring God's blessing and avoid the sure judgment of God (1 Cor. 11:30).

May God help you to have more than a name and reputation, but to know the reality of

being a true, New Testament, independent Baptist. "*For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth*" (2 Cor. 10:18).

KJV ...

(Continued from page 4)

the King James Bible corrects the Greek and Hebrew or is better than the Greek and Hebrew. Peter Ruckman teaches this, but I do not believe it. Consider a few quotes from Ruckman's writings in this regard:

"A short handbook, such as this, will not permit an exhaustive account of the marvelous undesigned 'coincidences' which have slipped through the A.V. 1611 committees, unawares to them, and which give advanced light, and advanced revelation beyond the investigation of the greatest Bible students 300 years later" (Peter Ruckman, **The Christian's Handbook of Manuscript Evidence**, p. 127).

"If all you have is the 'original Greek,' you lose light" (**Ibid.**, p. 336)

"We shall deal with the English Text of the Protestant Reformation, and our references to Greek or Hebrew will only be made to enforce the authority of that text or to demonstrate the superiority of that text to Greek and Hebrew" (Peter Ruckman, **Problem Texts**, Preface, p. vii).

"We candidly and publicly confess that the King James text of the Old Testament (Authorized Version) is far superior to Kittel's Hebrew text, Derossi's Hebrew text, Kennicott's Hebrew text or any Hebrew text that any of you are reading. We do not hesitate to state bluntly and openly that the King James text for the New Testament (Authorized Version) is superior to Erasmus' Greek text, Aland's Greek text, Metzger's Greek text and any other that you are reading (or will read in the fu-

ture)" (**Ibid.**, page xii). [Editor: Why does Ruckman put the Critical texts on the same playing field as the Received Text?]

"Observe how accurately and beautifully the infallible English text straightens out Erasmus, Griesbach, Beza, Nestle, Aland, Metzger, Trench, Vincent, Davis, Wuest, Zodhiates, Elzevir, and Stephanus with the poise and grace of a swan as it smoothly and effectively breaks your arm with one flap of its wings. Beautiful, isn't it? *If the mood or tense isn't right in any Greek text, the King James Bible will straighten it out in a hurry* (**Ibid.**, pp. 348, 349). [Editor: Why does Ruckman put critical, Modernistic textual editors Nestle, Aland, and Metzger on the same level with Beza, Elzevir, and Stephanus who honored the Word of God and handed down to us the Text Received from the Apostles?]

"The original Hebrew had nothing to do with Genesis 1:1-3 at all [referring to Ruckman's unique idea that the flood of 2 Peter 3:5-6 speaks of a flood that took place in Genesis 1:2]. It only muddled the issue. *Hebrew is of no help at all in understanding the passage*" (Peter Ruckman, **The Unknown Bible**, p. 67).

"The King James test is the last and final statement that God has given to the world, and He has given it in the universal language of the 20th century ... The truth is that *God slammed the door of revelation shut in 389 BC and slammed it shut again in 1611*" (Peter Ruckman, **The Monarch of Books**, p. 9).

While I believe the Authorized Version is an accurate translation of the preserved Word of God, I reject Ruckman's contention that the Authorized Version is superior to the Hebrew and Greek from which it was translated, or that God slammed shut the door of revelation two different times,

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church that was characterized by the greatest purity in doctrine and walk. There is not one word critical of their doctrinal position. There is not one word critical of their walk. This is a godly, orthodox, doctrinal church, sound in the faith.

In verses two and three we find there are things that are commended about this church. He says: *"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted"* (Rev. 2:2-3).

Notice these things in these two verses that were commendable about this church. First, their work. This was a working church. Secondly, their labor. Labor goes beyond work. They labored even unto weariness. Their patience and their endurance mentioned twice, once in service, and once in suffering. Their abhorrence of evil, holiness; the discipline of the ungodly; their endurance, and in verse 6 it says that they hated the "deeds of the Nicolaitanes."

Now let's remember this, that it is no small praise to love that which Christ loves and to hate that which Christ hates. Don't ever get the idea that Christ does not hate. Here we find that it says that Christ hates the deeds of the Nicolaitanes. In the book of Proverbs we find that there are some six things, yea seven, it says, that the Lord hates. *"These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and*

he that soweth discord among brethren" (Prov. 6:16-19). We'll not take time to go into those now, but here we find this church is commended by the Lord because they love certain things and because they hate certain things. They are commended by our Lord for abhorring that which is morally bad as well as that which is theologically evil.

If you'll note in the 14th and 15th verses, here is something about the Nicolaitanes. We'll get into more of that when we study the church in Pergamos. In these verses he says: *"But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate"* (Rev. 2:13-14). Now these Nicolaitanes then were Balaamites, that is, they repeated the same sins of Balaam in the Old Testament and sought to overcome and to destroy the people of God by the same kind of temptations that Balaam used. That is the fleshly sins of heathenism. They caused them to eat meat that was offered to idols and then to commit fornication. You want to know more about that, read the Book of Numbers chapter 25 and read the first nine verses of that chapter.

Now what these Nicolaitanes did is that they sought to introduce worldliness or heathenism into the church. Here it is said that the Nicolaitanes were hated by the Ephesians, while in the church in Pergamos we find that they embraced the Nicolaitanes: *"So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes"* (Rev. 2:15). However, there are many things though that were commendable about the church at Ephesus.

But now notice, *"Neverthe-*

less I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate" (2:4-6).

The first thing that we find Him censuring this church for is that He says *"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left [it does not say lost, but it says thou hast left] thy first love."* Indifference! Here's a church that is a working church, a church that at one time was well organized, a church that at one time was just bustling with activity, so much so, that they were actually turning the world upside down (Acts 17:6), and it is said that all Asia had heard about the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ from them. But now, just a few years later, it says "thou hast left thy first love." Their's was now a service without love. You mean it is possible to serve without love? They did! It may have been a service of just duty; a service based upon responsibility. They had to do it; but not a service based upon the love of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the Lord appreciates our work, our labor, our patience when we have love in our hearts for Him, but it is always a failure without this love. That's why it is possible for believers, Christians, to just work and serve the Lord and never accomplish anything. Why? No love! This was the great sin of the church at Ephesus, they had left their first love. They hadn't lost it, they just ran off and left it. Their defect was a matter of the heart not of the head. Their love had grown cold. And yet, just 30 years before, look what Paul wrote and said about this same church at Ephesus. Paul says: *"Wherefore*

I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers" (Eph. 1:15-16). Paul writing to the church at Ephesus says the one thing I have heard about you is your love. And now, 30 years has gone by. The church is still a working church. It is still a doctrinal church, but they have left their love. *In just 30 short years.*

This is the beginning of the decline that led to the Laodicean church. That's the first step. How does Central Baptist Church test? How do we measure up? As I think about it, it reminds me of the old men of the nation Israel when they went back to the land of Israel to rebuild that temple, and how after the walls were built, the younger people began to look at it, and they rejoiced and were glad, but the older ones who could remember the old temple wept and cried.

It may be some of our younger members, and maybe even some of our newer members do not remember what this church was 30 years ago, but brethren, we don't have the same love today that there was 30 years ago. Our church has already started that decline. Where is our love? Where is your love? Do you know what your attendance is in your Sunday School department? Or your Sunday School class? Do you know if it's on the decline, if it's going down hill? Where is your love? Have you left it, or have you lost it?

Now listen. The Lord intends for us to take these letters and apply them to ourselves. These are letters to test ourselves by. It's like a thermometer. You take your temperature. Where is your love?

Now don't look at somebody else and put the blame on somebody else. Make it personnel. Each one of us ought to ask our-

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selves the question, for this is the first step of developing into the Laodicean church.

In verse 5 the Lord tells them what to do. Now if you want to correct it, if you want to straighten it out, if you want to change matters, then here is what He says. "*Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works*" (2:5). Remember! They were now a fallen church. They have fallen from their first love, and He says "remember." Think of where you ought to be and look at where you are. That's the first thing that's necessary, and if you want to work for the Lord, if you want to be a real servant for the Lord, the first thing you must do is to evaluate yourself. Find out where you are! Remember!

Secondly, repent. Now the word repent means a "change of mind," but it is a change of mind that results in a change of your attitude and a turning from and a turning to. If you have been turning the wrong way, if you have let worldly things interfere in your life, maybe not sinful things, but worldly things; if you have let the activities of this world so usurp your thoughts, your time, your talents, your efforts that you have no time to demonstrate your love unto the Lord, then you need to evaluate and see where you are, and then to repent.

We have some members of our church that seemingly let anything in the world interfere with their service for the Lord. Priorities are out of order. Any kind of an excuse comes along and we use that to absent ourselves from the house of the Lord. It may be a school activity. If so, we have to decide is school going to come first or does God come first. It may be something extra at the job, not required. We have to determine, does God come first or

does that activity come first.

Where are our priorities? Have we left our first love? We ought to love the Lord first. We ought to love lost souls first. There needs to be real genuine repentance. Now repentance is preceded by godly sorrow. As the Scripture says "*Godly sorrow worketh repentance not to be repented of.*" Are you sorry for your sins? Can we reach the place that we have godly sorrow because we know that we are out of fellowship with the Lord, and we have no real love for the work of the Lord. We do the work of the Lord if it does not interfere with something else we want to do, if it is convenient. Repent!

Then He says, "*Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works.*" We must return then to a doing of the first works. The three "Rs" are: **Remember, Repent, and Return.** To correct any departure from God, one must go back to the place of departure. If you've jumped the track, you've got to return to the place where you got off the track and get back on the track. Now this is what God told the church at Ephesus was the solution to their problem.

Then He issues them a warning. He gives them the admonition to start with of what to do, and now He says this is what's going to happen if you don't. "*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God*" (Rev. 2:7).

Without repentance He says there's going to come judgment. The church will remain. The assembly is going to remain, but the candlestick is going to be removed. After its removal, though a church may continue to meet under the name of a church, it would no more be a church in the eyes of Christ. A shell!

What applies here to the

church can also apply to the individual believer who has left their first love. I don't mean to say that you can lose your salvation, but you can be placed upon a shelf where you can no longer be used of the Lord. God has different ways of placing people on a shelf. Sometimes He can do it by taking your health away from you. That can come through illness, it can come through accident, it can come through various ways. If no repentance, then this church is forfeiting their right to exist as a church. Now the cure is to turn unto the Lord. "*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*" Hear means to obey. "*He that hath an ear, let him hear.*" Not hear for the sake of knowledge, but hear for the sake of obedience, of doing what the Lord wants us to do.

He then gives them a promise. "*To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.*" So there are those who do overcome, and there are those who are overcome. Which are you? Will you be an overcomer or will you be one that is overcome? The Apostle John says, "*Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God*" (1 Jn. 5:5). Those who are the overcomers are those who are the saved, and who are those who are overcome? The Apostle Peter says, "*For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning*" (1 Pet. 2:20). Those who are overcome are those who are the unsaved.

Now listen. This is a test. God has given us this letter to the church in Ephesus so that we might test ourselves. Not only test ourselves as a church, but test ourselves as individuals. **Remember! Repent! Return!** That

means be an overcomer, and if you're not an overcomer, then you are going to be one of those overcome, for the world will overcome you.

This Epistle that the Lord has written to the church at Ephesus is to be read throughout the world, but there are none in Ephesus to read this Epistle tonight. None! They left their first love. They returned not to their first works, and the church in Ephesus is dead and gone. There is none in Ephesus to read this letter now. *It can happen to Central Baptist Church.* It happened to the church at Ephesus in a period of just 30 years, and even this letter did not bring about the desired result. Why? I don't know, but probably the same thing occurred in Ephesus that is going to occur here in Central Baptist if we're not careful. What is the danger? We're going to forget it. We're not going to make it personal. Even though we may recognize the truth of some of these things, we're not going to change. We're going to go right on with our life just like we always have.

It may be the Lord will put you on the shelf, and you'll be useless as far as your service to the Lord. That's the way a church can end up, like the church of Laodicea. They first lose or leave their first love, and then it's down hill from then on.

Now God's request, recommendation, advice and council is — *remember, repent, return.* Will you do it? It's up to you. God is not going to compel you, God is not going to force you, but He asks you. As Paul says in Romans, I beseech you, therefore, I beg you, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies unto him a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto the Lord which is your reasonable service. What are you going to do?

Do you believe I have told

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FELLOWSHIPS

and

CONFERENCES

RIO RANCHO, NM

February 28 - March 2, 1994,
Mesa Baptist Temple, 1411 Golf
Course Rd., Rio Rancho, NM,
87124, Jeff Carr, Pastor.

* * *

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

March 10-11, 1994, Bodine
Baptist Church, 3501 SE 59th St.,
Oklahoma City, OK 73135, Joe
Hocking, Pastor.

* * *

PINCKNEYVILLE, IL

March 15-17, 1994, Holts Prai-
rie Baptist church, Rt. 4, Box 163,
Pinckneyville, IL 62274, Mark Cox,
Pastor.

* * *

CALVERT CITY, KY

April 27-29, 1994, New Hope
Baptist Church, Rt. 2, Box 339,
Calvert City, KY 42029, Edgar
Lee Paschall, Pastor.

* * *

RUSSELL SPRINGS, KY

July 12-14, 1994, Grace Bap-
tist Church, P.O. Box 98, Dowell
Rd., Russell Springs, KY 42642,
Paul H. Godby, Pastor

CHURCH...

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you the truth? God holds me ac-
countable and responsible for
taking these Scriptures and open-
ing them up and explaining what
they mean. I am then to exhort
you, and urge you, to do what it
says. But I can't make you do it.
God can, but He won't make you
do it. It's going to be up to you,

whether you want to or not.

How do you measure up? If
you find that this picture fits
you, doctrinally sound, working,
but without love, not putting
God first, but serving the Lord,
working for the Lord only when
it does not inconvenience your
time, then it is time to remember,
to repent, and to return.

Now I'm not going to give an
invitation. In most churches, if
one were to preach a message
like this, they would urge the
members to come down to the
front, and confess it, if they feel
like this fits them. They would
then ask them to get on their
knees before God, and to cry out
and pray unto the Lord in repen-
tance under the results of godly
sorrow. I'm not going to ask you
to come down here to do that. But
I am going to ask you to do it in
your own home. Will you get
before God? Search your own
heart.

Maybe you don't think this
fits you. If not, that's fine. That's
good. But I find it fits me. I hope
I'm not the only one, because if I
am, then I'm having a real prob-
lem all by myself. But I feel there
must be others. Have you left
your first love? Put Jesus Christ
first. Make Him your priority.
Whatever He says, do it!

KJV...

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or that the English text straight-
ens out the Greek text, or that
the Authorized Version con-
tains advanced revelation.

I know the man enjoys
speaking for effect, saying
things simply to shake people
up, but words mean something.
If a man puts something into
print repeatedly, year after year,
and sends those books out
across the land, we are not
wrong to take him seriously.

To put the critical Greek
texts on the same level with the
Received Text, as Ruckman
does when arguing for the supe-

riority of the Authorized Ver-
sion, is wrong.

God chose to inspire His
Book in the Hebrew and Greek
languages, and I am satisfied
that He knew what He was
doing. I'm not going to say that
the English language has be-
come a *better* vehicle for God's
revelation. English is an excellent
vehicle, a satisfactory vehicle,
but not a better vehicle. Do you
see the difference? I believe it is
an important one.

Let me hasten to say that I
do believe God had His hand
upon the translation of the KJV
in a marvelous way. I *do not*
believe there are mistakes in the
King James Bible. The King
James Bible has played a crucial
role in the preservation of the
Word of God in the last four
centuries because of the impor-
tance of the English language.
God gave the English-speaking
people an accurate translation.

I do believe there are places
which could be translated more
clearly. I do believe there are an-
tiquated words which could be
brought up to date. To say,
though, there are changes which
could be made in the KJV is en-
tirely different from saying there
are changes which *must be*
made, or that it contains mis-
takes.

I believe the KJV is superior
to all other English versions —
superior in its textual basis, su-
perior in its method of transla-
tion, superior in the scholarship
of its translators, superior the
time of its translation.

The key New Testament
passage on the inspiration of
Scripture is 2 Timothy 3:15-17.
Verse 16 says, "*All Scripture is
given by inspiration of God . . .*"
This refers to the original giving
of the Word of God. The thrust
of this passage, though, is that
Timothy should have confi-
dence in the Scriptures that he
possessed. Verse 15 says the
Scripture Timothy had known
from a child was "holy Scrip-

ture." What Scriptures had
Timothy known? Were they the
original autographs of Moses
and David? Certainly not.
Timothy had been taught either
from copies of the Hebrew text
or from a translation thereof,
most likely the later since his
father was a Greek and his
mother and grandmother had
instructed him (2 Tim. 1:5; Acts
16:1).

Further, verse 17 encourages
Timothy that the inspired Scrip-
ture "is profitable." Any defini-
tion of inspiration which does
not involve this doctrine of
profitability is wrong. God did
not intend that His Word be in-
spired, then lost. The inspired
Word of God has been kept by
God. There is inspiration, and
there is preservation, and this
guarantees profitability.

I don't intend to mix inspi-
ration together with preserva-
tion, for these are two distinct
things. But I also don't intend to
remove preservation from the
formula as so many do. One
without the other is useless.

-- O Timothy