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The Security of the Believer

By John H. Mattox

This doctrine is often presented in a summarized form as "once saved, always saved." This statement of the doctrine, while posing no difficulty to those who understand the full scope of salvation; seems to evoke a militant opposition from those who do not have such an understanding. To such individuals, the statement, "once saved, always saved," appears to imply that being saved amounts to acquiring a sin-license, so that a person, once he is saved, may thereafter sin with impunity. The fact that salvation involves regeneration, resulting in a new nature being implanted in the believer, seems to be unknown to those who oppose the doctrine.

However, since there is so much possibility for misunderstanding the doctrine when it is presented from this viewpoint, the writer has always preferred to refer to it as "the security of the believer" or as "the preservation of the saints." The doctrine, while taught in many passages of both Testaments, is given rather elaborate treatment by the Apostle Paul in the eighth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, verses 28 through 39. At least five different lines of argument are employed by the Apostle to prove that a believer

in Christ can never lose his salvation. These five arguments, for want of better terminology, may be called, "the general argument," "the theological argument," "the practical argument," "the legal argument," and "the devotional argument." Let us consider each of these arguments in detail.

The General Argument

Paul's general argument proving the security of the saved is stated in verse 28: "For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them which are the called according to his purpose." Had Paul referred in this argument only to "those who love God," it could conceivably be argued that the effectiveness of such a wonderful promise would depend upon the fervor of our love for God. Since we are all aware that our love for God is not what it should be, we might, therefore, find little consolation in this passage. However, Paul further identifies those who "love God," as those who "are the called according to his purpose." This makes the promise an objective, rather than a subjective, one; it does not depend upon the degree of our love for God, but rather rests

upon the fact that He has called us unto salvation.

Granted, then, that the subjects of this remarkable assurance include all who have been effectually called of God, what is the actual import of the statement? Simply this: "If it is true that all things work together for good to those who are saved (called of God), then they cannot lose their salvation; for to do so would certainly not be for their good. It is impossible to concede the truth of this passage and yet argue with any semblance of logic that these to whom "all things work together for good," could, nevertheless, be lost! The same assurance, although stated in negative terms, is found in the Old Testament, "There shall no evil happen to the just" (Prov. 12:21). However, if it were possible for the just to lose their salvation, that would be an evil happening indeed!

The Theological Argument

This line of argument is sufficient to convince the believer of his eternal security, but God not only comforts the hearts of His children through His word, but also stops the mouths of unbelievers. Thus, Paul is not content merely with stating a general argument as to the

believer's security; he passes on to what may be termed the theological argument. This argument is based on the known facts of God's dealings with the saved. They were first fore-known, then predestined to be conformed to the image of God's Son; they were then called, then justified, then glorified. While all five of these acts are spoken of in the past tense, it is obvious that glorification, as far as our experience is concerned, is yet in the future. However, Paul is stating the facts from the viewpoint of God, who "calleth the things that be not, as though they were." Thus our final salvation depends upon a five-link chain, whose links were forged by God, Himself, stretching from eternity past to eternity future. Who can break such a chain as that? From eternity past, when God foreknew His elect, to eternity future, when He shall glorify those same elect ones, every step in our salvation is the work of God. Having first purposed to save us, and then having carried out that purpose and having actually saved us, would He then, because of wrongdoing on our part, cast us out? We did not have to do good to

(See **SECURITY** on page 23)

The Book of Revelation -- Message #31**The Lord on the Outside**

By M. L. Moser, Editor

[This message on "The Lord On the Outside" was preached Sunday evening, July 1, 1979, and is printed "as preached." It is one of a series of 113 messages on the Book of Revelation preached at the Central Baptist Church, Little Rock, Arkansas over a period of two years, 1979-1981. 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.]

The Lord willing, we will go ahead and finish this chapter tonight. Next Sunday morning we will be bringing a message on the subject of "The Rapture." The Rapture takes place right here at the end of chapter three and before the beginning of chapter four,

and so we will be looking to the subject of "The Rapture" next Sunday morning.

Revelation chapter 3 beginning with verse 14, we will read that passage of scripture that relates to the church of Laodicea.

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold

tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Remember this morning that we talked to you about the chastening of the Lord, that the Lord talked about the fact that He chastens those that are His. That His chastening was because of His love for those that He chastens. That He chastens His own children, and that the Scripture says in the Book of Hebrews chapter 12 that if ye be without chastening, then you are not a child of God. You are a false professor, one who is simply a church member and nothing more.

Then the Lord urged them to repent. In verse 19 He says "*Be zealous therefore, and repent.*" The Lord then in verses 20 and 21, makes a promise to this church. He says, "*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*"

Now I want to note the promises made in this verse. First we need to recognize to whom this promise is made. This promise is made to a church. It is made to those who are, at least, profess-

ing Christians. I have heard messages preached from this verse many times. In fact, probably in my younger days, I also preached from this verse in a way in which I applied it to an unsaved person, a lost individual. I have preached it in a way in which I quoted "Behold I stand at the door and knock," and stated that here God is standing outside of a person's heart door and He is knocking for entrance to enter so that He might save. I do not know how many messages that I have heard preached concerning that, and preached along that line, but if you will note very clearly that is not the subject of this verse. Jesus is not standing outside of a lost sinner's heart knocking on that heart to gain entrance. In reality, this does not even talk about salvation at all. Nowhere do you find, or does it say, that "if any man hear my voice and open the door I will come into him and will save him." This does not say this at all. This is a picture of Jesus standing on the outside of His own church, the church of Laodicea. Here is the Lord on the outside of His church, and He is knocking on the door of that church and seeking admittance into His own church. It does not say that if He gains admittance that He is going to save, but the promise of Jesus is to sup with those that open unto Him. Now the condition is this, He will sup with them if they open the door.

The church of Laodicea had everything. We have read here in verses 16 and 17 "*thou sayest I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.*" This church had everything except one thing. They had everything except Christ. He was on the outside seeking to gain entrance by knocking. He is on the outside and excluded from that very church that claimed to

(See **CHURCH** on page 18)

THE BAPTIST CHALLENGE

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The Work of the Prophets -- Message #1

A Distinguished Ministry

By R. Nelson Colyar

This column has been designated by the Editor to carry messages on the subject which heads this column, "The Work of the Prophets." It is the privilege of the writer to present a number of studies on the subject for your reading.

The Purpose Of It.

The purpose of making these studies is to stimulate thinking upon a greatly neglected Bible theme. It is safe to say, I think, that the great majority of Christian people, including many of the ministry, have formed a bias against the subject of prophecy. The average person thinks of the work of the prophets solely as that of foretelling future events. It is true that foretelling future events is a part of the work of the Bible prophets, both of the Old and of the New Testaments. But if we stop there we shall miss the mark very widely.

Then there are many who are biased by much wild speculation indulged by some who would interpret the prophetic writings today. The subject has been played upon much, and not a little of it has been done more to gain a popular hearing than to accomplish the legitimate ends of preaching. So many interpretations have proved superficial and some so manifestly false that many unread in the subject have discredited all attempts at profitable study of the subject. Surely such is not a right attitude toward the Holy Scriptures. Conclusions based upon bias seldom square with the truth. They do great harm, particularly to the one who holds them, as well as to the

young Bible student who is influenced thereby.

There is one matter of caution, however, which must not be forgotten or waived aside as unimportant, in making these studies; namely, that as there were false prophets among the people in olden times, so there are false teachers among us now, as Peter tells us, "who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pet. 2:1). And the prophet Peter warns us, thus: "And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." This answers the question, Why do so many of God's people demur at the study of the prophets?

It is well to be cautious; but it is not wisdom to reject the word and work of the prophets. From the beginning of the world, "God hath spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets" (Acts 3:21). Is it good that this work of the ministry should be so universally neglected in Christendom? Certainly it is not good. We also need to be cautious lest false teachers influence us to the extent that the way of truth be evil spoken of among us. It is the purpose of this series of studies to stress the work of the prophetic office, especially as it pertains to our own times.

Fourfold Division of the Work of the Ministry

We learn from the Scriptures that the prophetic work is a New

(See **PROPHECY** on page 16)

The Deaconess?

By Ronnie Rogers
(From Arkansas Baptist
Newsmagazine)

Some who believe women cannot pastor, believe women can serve as deacons. Some of the debate revolves around the issue of ordination, whether deacons are viewed as administrative bodies or servants with no authority and historical practices. While these issues merit consideration, they can also obscure some clear biblical insights, such as:

1 Timothy 3:11 is assumed by some to refer to deaconesses. However, it does not use the word "deaconesses" but rather the word "women"—the Greek word translated "women" here is also found in verses 2 and 12 translated "wife." It can be translated wife or woman but never deaconess. Also He could have used the word "deaconess," maybe He didn't because He didn't mean deaconess.

If verse 11 refers to deaconesses, one must ask, why are there only four qualifications for her when the deacon has nine?

The progression of the text flows smoothly from elders (vv. 1-7) and deacons (vv. 8-13). If the women are wives of deacons, the text is not interrupted since a deacon's wife's lack of commitment could disqualify him. However, if these are deaconesses, Paul moves from elders to deacons to deaconesses and back to deacons. One must ask, "Why interject another office in the middle of setting forth the qualifications of another office?" It is contextually and grammatically best to understand women as wives of deacons.

There is not even a mention

of an official, organized body of deaconesses in the New Testament. This is in light of the undeniable and sufficient teaching related to male deacons in Scripture.

You might ask, "What about Phoebe, who is called a servant in Romans 16:1?" The word translated "servant" is the same word translated "deacon" in 1 Timothy 3:8. This leads some to conclude that Phoebe was a deaconess, thus sanctioning women deacons; however by that line of reasoning, Jesus, the disciples, Apollos, Paul, Timothy and others would be deacons because they're all called servants (Greek word for deacon). The fact is, Jesus and Paul were no more occupying the office of deacon than Phoebe; Paul was clearly stressing service, not office.

In light of these examples, it seems clear that the push for women elders and deaconesses is born out of societal pressure rather than scriptural principles.

[Ronnie Rogers, pastor of Lakeside Baptist Church in Hot Springs, is president of the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.]

Churches And Preaching

Some churches are lodged to death and some are clubbed to death and some are societyized to death and some are organized to death and some are starved to death and some are entertained to death and some are sung to death (but not with spiritual songs) and some are hugged to death by the world and some are unionized to death and some are lectured to death and some are ritualized to death, but you never heard of a Baptist church being preached to death. — From Why Be A Baptist.[]

Don't Believe Liberal Myths About "Late Gospels"

By Stephen Caesar

In the May 1995 issue of **The Baptist Challenge** there was an article entitled "Matthew Papyrus Threatens Liberal Theories." It dealt with the fact that a German papyrologist has recently dated three small fragments of the Gospel of Matthew to a time very close to the era that Christ walked the earth. Actually, this discovery is not the first, but merely the most recent, archeological find proving that the Gospels were indeed written shortly after the time of Christ's death and resurrection.

The German's discovery helped to explode one of the most popular myths engendered by opponents of Biblical infallibility, which is that the Gospels were written long after the time of Christ, thereby rendering them susceptible to additions, omissions, embellishments, and exaggerations. Twentieth-century discoveries of extremely ancient New Testament manuscripts, however, have proved this to be a fallacy. For example, papyrus fragments from the Gospel of Mark were discovered in the Holy Land and were dated by scientists to around the year 50 AD, proving that Mark's Gospel was in circulation within a generation of Jesus' death. Scholar Louis Cassels pointed out that this early date "indicates the people closest to the events — Jesus' original followers — found Mark's report accurate and trustworthy, not myth but true history."

Similarly, the Gospel of John has been proved to date from a

time very close to Jesus' life on this earth. Author, diplomat, and theologian Dr. John Elder, on the discovery of the so-called Ryland Manuscript in Egypt, observes:

"It is the oldest portion of the New Testament yet found [until the very recent discovery of the Matthew fragments mentioned above]; it is believed to date from about the year AD 125 ... [and] has been identified as a portion of the Gospel of John.... To find that it was in existence before AD 125, and long enough before so that a copy of it had reached Egypt, completely disproves the theory of a later date of composition."

With tangible evidence like that, it is no wonder the late Sir Frederic Kenyon, director of the British Museum and the world's foremost authority on ancient manuscripts, concluded:

"The interval between the dates of original composition and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed. Both the authenticity and the general integrity of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established."

Another equally eminent scholar of antiquity, Dr. William Albright, concurred, stating:

"There is no longer any solid basis for dating any book of the New Testament after about AD 80, two full generations before the date between 130 and 150 given by the more radical New Testament critics.... In my opinion, every book of the New Testament was written by a baptized Jew between the forties and eighties of the first century AD (very probably sometime between about AD 50 and 75)."

These discoveries and statements by modern archeology's

titans provide satisfying evidence that the liberal theory of the late Gospels is pure mythology. There is no longer any need for us to pay attention to the bizarre, mythology-filled religion of liberalism. We have the Bible — the archeologically proven Holy Bible — on which to lay the bedrock of our faith. Liberal theologians can have their "Late Gospel" mythology — as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!

[Stephen Caesar is head of Bible Proof Ministries and author of "Many Infallible Proofs: A Defense of the Holy Bible as the Infallible Word of God." For more information, call 1-800-PROOFS-9.]

Book Review

The Secret File On John Birch. Hannibal Books, 921 Center St., Hannibal, MO 6340. \$12.95 plus \$2. shipping and handling.

General Claire Chennault, legendary leader of the Flying Tigers of World War II fame, lay dying.

"I loved that young man like a son," the Old Tiger rasped. "He should have been given the Congressional Medal of Honor and instead they covered up his murder.

"His work behind Japanese lines was rugged and dangerous

(See **BIRCH** on page 17)

Do You Appreciate The Baptist Challenge?

We have over 4,000 subscribers of **The Baptist Challenge**. As you know, it is sent free to all who request it, and we thank the Lord for the individuals and churches that contribute to its support each month in order that we might keep this magazine going. Few have any idea of the cost of producing and mailing this 24-page magazine each month.

There is one way that everyone of you can help support **The Baptist Challenge**, and at the same time help yourself. That is by subscribing to LifeLine Long Distance Service. Quoting a paragraph from the American Federation for Decency publication it says: "Nearly every group of radical left-wingers in America is being encouraged to switch its long distance phone service to carriers who give a percentage of their phone bills to causes such as the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Planned Parenthood of America and the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund. They are pooling their financial resources to promote their anti-family, anti-God causes."

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Angry Baptists Decry Sale of Church to "Pagan" Hindus

By Arthur B. Houk

In the spring of 1994 I became the pastor of Valley View Baptist church in Northridge, California. A few months earlier, in December of 1993, the church had deeded over its rather extensive property to the Conservative Baptist Association of Southern California (CBA). This was done because the congregation felt that the CBA leadership would protect the building and keep it available for our church. It should be remembered that this church has been and is now a CBA church. My name and the name of our church is listed on page 23 of the current CBA national directory.

However, when I became the pastor, I began to discover that the CBA leadership of Southern California had no intention of keeping the building for our church. The CBA refused to put in writing what they would do to keep the property for the church. When the congregation discovered this, they were appalled and frightened. With the congregation's full knowledge and approval, the officers and myself then wrote to the CBA headquarters here in Southern California and requested that they return the property to the congregation. This request has never been answered. I am still awaiting a letter from the CBA leadership telling us, one way or the other, whether they will save the property for our church.

Instead of helping us, the denominational leaders sold our church to a Hindu temple. It is now in escrow. Our building was sold to the Hindu Temple and Cultural Center, 21213 Devonshire, Chatsworth, California 91313.

As Baptists, we are horrified that our church building has been sold by the CBA leaders to a non-Christian group, and we are being literally kicked out. Where is compassion for those people who paid for the building? We feel that any honest person will agree that we should not be kicked out of the building we paid for.

Arthur B. Houk, Pastor

* * *

The **Los Angeles Times** in an article August 5 stated as follows: "The Valley View Baptist Church on Roscoe Boulevard 'has been sold out from under us' by the Conservative Baptist Assn.'s Southern California headquarters in Anaheim, pastor Arthur B. Houk said this week. The buyer, a Hindu group that has been seeking a place to worship for several years, plans to convert the church into the San Fernando Valley's third Hindu temple."

"Although the pastor conceded that the sale is probably legal, he complained in letters mailed to the more than 1,000 member churches of the national body that the association's leaders had betrayed his congregation as well as the Latino and Korean Christian congregations that share space in two buildings on the property.

"Much to the horror of our congregation, we discovered a few days ago that the CBA leadership has already sold the property to a Hindu cult," Houk wrote.

"David A. Hay, executive director of the regional Baptist association, declined to be interviewed. But in a July 28 letter to the denomination's

Young Pastor Knows His Bible

A young preacher appeared before a Pulpit Committee. The chairman of the committee asked, "Young man, do you know your Bible?" "Yes," the young man replied, "I know my Bible."

"What part do you know best?" The chairman asked.

pastors nationwide, responding to Houk's accusations, Hay noted that California law forbids property sellers to discriminate on the basis of religion.

"Prithvi Raj Singh, president of the Artesia-based Federation of Hindu Temples and Associations, took issue Friday with the labels that have been used. 'This group is part of a respectable Hindu tradition,' Singh said. 'And it is unfortunate that some religious people still use words like 'pagan' to describe another religion.'"

"The congregation turned its debt-free deed over to the regional office of the denomination on Dec. 2, 1993, believing that the step would preserve its status as a Conservative Baptist church. Deeding the land and buildings to the regional group was seen by the small congregation as a way of preventing a 'hostile takeover' — such as if 20 new members joined and voted to switch the church to another denomination.

"Houk, 66, of Sylmar, who pastored churches in Ohio and Indiana during most of his ministry declared that Hay had declined to meet alone with him and the congregation to answer questions about the property sale."

The property was sold for more than a half-million dollars. □

The young preacher replied, "Well, I know it all good ... the Old Testament and the New Testament.

The chairman said, "Well, why don't you tell us a story ... how about the story of the Good Samaritan?"

The young preacher replied that would be fine with him, so he began:

"There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus who went down to Jerico by night, and fell on stony ground, and the thorns choked him half to dead." He said "What shall I do?" "I shall arise and go to my Father's house." And he arose and climbed up into a sycamore tree.

The next day Solomon and his wife Gomorrah came by, and they carried him down to the ark for Moses to take care of. As he was going through the eastern gate of the ark, he caught his hair on a limb, and he hung there for 40 days and 40 nights.

And he was afterward hungered and the ravens came and fed him.

The next day the three wise men came and carried him down to Nineveh, and when he got there, he found Delilah sitting on the wall, and he said, "Chunk her down, boys," and they said, "How many times shall we chunk her down, till seven times?" And he said, "Nay, but until 70 times 7." And they chunked her down 490 times, and she burst asunder in their midst, and they picked up 12 baskets of the fragments that remained, and in the resurrection, whose wife will she be?"

After he had finished, the chairman of the committee turned to the other members and said, "I don't know about you, but I think we ought to call him. I know he's young, but he sure knows his Bible!" □

Berkeley Alumni Evolve A Standard of Scientific Openness

By Jessica Shaver

[This article was originally published in *The Orange County Register, Santa Ana, California*. The author received the second prize of \$5,000 from the Amy Writing Awards for this article.]

The University of California, Berkeley's alumni association did a gutsy and extraordinary thing recently. They invited Phillip Johnson to speak at their Southern California Cal Alumni Day.

Johnson, a graduate of Harvard and of the University of Chicago Law School, has been on Berkeley's law faculty since 1967.

But inviting him to speak was gutsy because he is also author of the controversial *Darwin on Trial*. As an expert on the structure of legal arguments, Johnson challenges the logical adequacy of the reasoning used by scientists in establishing their claim that Darwinian evolution has been proved. He argues that "contrary to what we are so often told, science does not know how life could have emerged from non-living chemicals, or how it could have developed to its present state of complexity."

Johnson spoke to several hundred Berkeley alumni about modernism, which he calls "the established religious philosophy of America." Modernism combines scientific naturalism—the view that the universe is a closed system not subject to supernatural influences—and liberal rationalism—the conclusion that we are all the accidental product of purposeless forces.

Evolutionists have been defensive to the point of "ferocious hostility," Johnson says, in their

denial that Darwinism has any unanswered questions or unexplained problems, when, in fact, no "missing links" supporting gradual purposeless evolution have turned up in the century since the publication of *Origin of the Species*.

Johnson challenged the scientific establishment to open the dogma of modernism to rational dialogue, to allow new data, new discoveries, new evidence to bring us to an increasingly more comprehensive and accurate understanding of our universe.

Perhaps the most recent and clear-cut example of this closed-mindedness is the continuing melodrama at San Francisco State, where senior professor of biochemistry Dean Kenyon, author of *Biochemical Predestination*, was removed from teaching for presenting some of the weaknesses in the theory of evolution when he introduced the theory to his biology classes.

Although the biology department reinstated Kenyon at the recommendation of the academic senate, it passed a resolution in mid-February forbidding discussion of intelligent design because "there is no scientific evidence to support" it. The resolution is the attempt of a group of people desperate to maintain the status quo and their status within it by trying to stifle dialogue. Kenyon called the resolution "almost comical, given the long and rich history of design arguments for the past 25 centuries. It's like doing science by democratic vote."

Science has failed in its search for a purely materialistic, rationalistic explanation for the universe. It has failed because of its

unreasonably narrow presuppositions. By definition, science has discounted any explanation that involves the possibility of intelligent design. It has refused to consider any evidence that does not fit the conclusion to which it has already come.

The fundamental question raised by Darwinism, as Johnson points out, is whether the evolutionary process was, in fact, purposeless. DNA alone implies otherwise. The evidence for intelligent design is all around us. If it is stretching credulity for us to believe that word processors, pyramids, and popsicles are the result of random processes, how can we conclude that eyes, brains, protective coloration, hinged tongue of some frogs, the sonar of bats, and an infinite variety of similar "adaptations" mutated into such finely crafted wonders by chance?

The universe screams purpose. No scientist has ever been able to get around the fact that the Bible puts so clearly, "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows His handiwork."

Modernism is a paradigm that has only succeeded in demonstrating its own inadequacy to describe reality. Those persuaded by the evidence have the courage to go beyond it to whatever lies ahead. Part of what this includes must be a redefining of science to consider *any* and *all* conclusions implied by the data.

By inviting Johnson to speak, by allowing his books and tapes to be sold at an official function, Berkeley's alumni exemplified the openness to which Johnson is calling us. They are going beyond the paranoia and rigidity of modernism. They are allowing the reigning dogma to be discussed and re-evaluated. They are setting an example for other institutions which are committed to genuine scientific progress and understanding. □

Divorce — Big Cultural Issue

By Mona Charen

Divorce is the next big cultural issue to be faced by this society. After a bit of a rocky start (remember Murphy Brown?), we have now successfully established that unwed parenting is often harmful and destructive. You don't hear today, as you did five years ago, cheery assurances that single-parent families are part of the "new family structure." Instead, across the political spectrum, you find acknowledgment that the two-parent family must be restored and strengthened.

But while unwed child-bearing took center stage, divorce was relegated to the shadows. Why? Its footprints are everywhere. The application form for my son's preschool asks for the fathers' name, mother's name, father's address and mother's address. When an American pilot is rescued in Bosnia, we find a young man who is every inch the central casting image of the American flyer, except for one new wrinkle—we hear from his mother and his father separately. Hallmark markets cards for divorced fathers to send to their children.

Divorce is such an accepted part of the national landscape that even cultural crusaders have sometimes held their fire. To condemn divorce is to rebuke not just strangers but your sister, your cousins, your best friend and yourself.

The wreckage divorce has created in the lives of children is too massive to be denied. Conservatives, particularly those who specialize in thwarting the aims of homosexual activists, must confront the truth that

(See **DIVORCE** on page 7)

Is This The America of Old?

Government bureaucrats control every aspect of Americans' lives and American business. They control . . .

Who gets hired and who gets promoted (**Dept. of Labor**). What is manufactured and how (**OSHA**), and with what materials (**EPA**). How its transported (**Dept. of Transportation**). How it's financed (**SEC**). How it's marketed and advertised (**FTC**). How it's taxed (**IRS**). What is grown, how much is grown and what it's sold for (**Dept. of Ag.**). How it's handled (**FDA**) and how it's served (**Health Dept**). The fuel that goes into it (**Dept. of Energy**). How the rivers and water are used (**Army Corps of Engineers**). How the raw lands and resources on them are used (**Forest Service and U.S. Bureau of Mines**). How the roads and vehicles are built and used (**Dept. of Transportation** again). What you watch on TV, how much a phone call costs and who provides the service (**FCC**). Government bureaucrats control how much your money is worth, how much credit is available and at what cost (**Federal Reserve**). They control how and to whom that credit is given (**FDIC**). **BATF** will break in your house without a warrant and search for suspected guns, shoot you if you resist and give no account of their actions.

More too numerous to mention. Big Brother regulates the piece of land you live on ... how you use it (**Endangered Species Act, Wetland**) ... the air you breathe (**Smog Alert**) ... the water you drink ... How you approach your workers ... How you approach a woman ... The vitamins you take ... The medicine you use ... The food you eat ... The bed you sleep in ... The stove you

Case Reveals Humanity of Unborn Child

By Haven Bradford Gow

Recently in San Fernando Valley, Calif., a drive-by gang shooting resulted in the death of one teenager and the wounding of three others. One of the persons injured in the shooting

cook on ... The car you drive, how you drive it and where.

Government controls how you are born. It controls how you are buried. It regulates your sex life. It regulates how you discipline and educate your children. If you cut grass, run a farm, drive a bulldozer, wash dishes, camp out or build skyscrapers, government controls what you do. It costs you huge amounts of time and money. Fight it and you risk being financially destroyed and imprisoned.

Government tells churches that they can't fly a flag, preach hate (**discriminate against homosexuals**). Hold street meetings (**risk imprisonment**), publicly protest against murder (**abortions**).

If the great American pioneers were alive today, they'd all be jailed or shot down dead in a week. So would their wives and children. Imagine carrying a gun, hunting, cutting down trees, digging a well, building roads or damming a river to run a grist mill.

Americans are no longer a free people. We have created a vast, bureaucrat-controlled economy. While the rest of the world is turning to free enterprise we are erecting a socialist system which is destroying incentive to produce and prosper.

May we pray for our country, that we might turn from our wicked ways and return to the ways of God and the God of our forefathers (**2 Chr. 7:14**). — Bible Baptist Blueprint. □

was pregnant, and she eventually suffered a miscarriage. Prosecutors have charged five defendants with fetal murder, citing a San Diego case which maintained that even a "non-viable" fetus — one which cannot sustain life on its own — nevertheless is entitled to California's protection against murder.

Abby Leibman, executive director of the Women's Law Center, acknowledges that "Any time you have a court ruling giving sanction to the notion that a fetus is a viable human being, it gives ammunition to those who would exalt the rights of the incipient human being over that of a viable, living woman."

Anne Kindt, executive director of the Right to Life League of Southern California, says the court ruling reveals the moral and legal schizophrenia regarding abortion: "It's a recognition of what resides in the womb is a person. It has to raise the question in people's minds (that) if we are prosecuting a third party for killing an unborn child, it's ironic that a woman can choose an abortion for a child at that same date and can't call it murder."

Regarding such cases, John Walker and Doris Gordon, officials of Libertarians for Life (13424 Hathaway Dr., Wheaton, MD 20906), insist that we keep the following principles in mind: "Pregnancy is automatically protective to the child. Termination of pregnancy terminates the protection and gravely endangers the child. But not wanting to be a parent doesn't excuse us from the obligation to protect the children we cause to exist . . . The point of abortion is to kill the child, and most abortions dismember and/or poison the child . . . The first question in abortion is . . . personhood. Since prenatal children are persons, we have the same obliga-

tion to them that we have to adults: Not to aggress against them." In other words, in abortion, the mother and the abortionist are doing exactly the same thing to the unborn child what the drive-by killers did to the unborn child residing in his pregnant mother's womb: Kill him.

Law professor Dr. F. LaGard Smith, author of **When Choice Becomes God** (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers), puts it this way: "Simply because a human fetus is not an adult human does not mean it is any less a human being. It shares the same essence in both forms. If we would not kill an innocent *adult* human being, how can we kill a *fetal* human being? At their different stages of life, they nevertheless are one-in-the-same. Like a chicken and an egg, they share the same unique nature. *Unlike* a chicken and an egg, they are both sacred human life." □

DIVORCE...

(Continued from page 6)]

heterosexual divorce creates more havoc in our society than homosexual unions. I don't believe that homosexuals should have the "right" to marry or adopt children. But if you accept the statistic that homosexuals, gay and lesbian, amount to no more than 1% to 2% of the population — not the 10% they claim — and recognize that the subset of homosexuals who want to be parents is quite small, then their conduct (what ever you think of it) is really peripheral. Arguably, men have benefited from liberalized divorce laws and customs far more than women. For every woman freed from a tyrannical husband, there were 10 men who traded in their 40-something wife for a younger model. And while men's incomes tend to rise following a divorce, women's tend to fall. □

Analysis of Alleged Problem Passages In The Bible

By Thomas Strouse

On Saturday, October 23, 1993, Dr. Strouse spoke at the Trinitarian Bible Society's 25th Anniversary Conference and Annual Meeting in Toronto, Canada. He addressed an audience of about 350 with the message entitled "An Analysis of Alleged Problem Passages in the Bible." This was a defense of the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew OT and the textus receptus of the NT. The following are some excerpts from Dr. Strouse's presentation which may be obtained for \$4.00 from Tabernacle Baptist Theological Seminary, 717 N. Whitehurst Landing Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 23464

A. The Definition of Inerrancy: The Scripture is entirely without error, including statements regarding history, science, morals, and doctrine, and the data of the Bible are exact and accurate."

B. Biblical Support for this theological definition:

1. "The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times" (Psm. 12:6).

2. "Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the Lord which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book" (Jer. 36:4).

3. "Which things also we speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor. 2:13).

4. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16).

5. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21).

C. Current Views On Inerrancy:

1. *Full Errancy:* the Bible is a product of errant, human thinking.

2. *Limited Inerrancy:* the Bible is inerrant in salvation passages but errant in historical and scientific areas.

3. *Full Inerrancy:* the Bible is without errors, but scientific and historic passages are phenomenal but not necessarily exact.

4. *Absolute Inerrancy:* the Bible is without error in all areas and is exact, as well as accurate.

D. The Real Issue With Errancy:

1. The teaching of errancy in the Bible is an attack upon God's character — *He is not deceitful!*

2. The teaching of errancy in the Bible is an attack upon God's nature — *He is not imperfect.*

3. The teaching of errancy in the Bible is an attack upon God's power — *He is not limited!*

E. Principles In Dealing With Problem Passages:

1. Realize many apparent problems are the result of trying to harmonize different events, or different occasions, or different people.

2. Be persuaded that all apparent problems are just that — *apparent*, and not real.

3. Be cognizant that we are removed from the author's original meaning by at least 2000 years, and we are in a different culture and in a different land.

4. Understand that many al-

"Cotton Candy" Religion

By Norman H. Wells

Religion has gotten popular! It's sweeping the country!! Juke boxes grind out the latest popular hymns! Movie magazines carry news of religious activities of the movie stars! More money is coming into religious treasures than ever before. Great new church buildings are being built. A greater percentage of folks belong to churches than leged problems in the Bible are leveled at the Bible by unbelievers.

5. Remember that the Bible is an ancient historical and archaeological record with superior weight over other historical or archaeological records.

6. Reject the liberal idea that there may be copyist errors; if we do not have the original wording extant, then the Lord has not preserved His Word in any manuscript.

7. Be cautious about accepting the fallacious position that the NT writers cited the *LXX* (Septuagint). It is unwise to suggest that any NT writer utilized the *LXX* as an authoritative source for divine revelation instead of the Hebrew OT. The NT writers were bilingual, knowing Hebrew and Greek, and there is no reason to think that the Holy Spirit could not have lead them to interpret the OT Hebrew and to express the new revelation in their own statements. The Lord did not need the uninspired *LXX* to convey His truth when He moved the Apostles to reveal new truth.

8. If the Lord Jesus Christ is your Savior, He is your Friend, so give your Friend the benefit of the doubt and accept His inerrant Word rather than His critics' fallacious attacks. □

ever before in history! Tremendous evangelistic campaigns are regularly held and thousands are in attendance and great numbers of decisions are recorded.

Quite regularly the current bestseller is a book on religion. The newspapers and magazines carry regular columns by religious writers. The radio and television carry religious programs! Religious Universities, Colleges, High Schools and Elementary Schools are growing by leaps and bounds!

Religion is booming! The cry of "Revival" is heard over and over!!

Religion is back — by popular demand! The tragedy is that it has been diluted, streamlined, whopped up, condensed, smoothed out, made palatable enough to meet what the public demands in a religion. Instead of meeting the demands of God, religion has been changed to meet the demands of the public!!

In the haste to get everybody aboard the "bandwagon" a "carnival" spirit has developed. The bands are playing, the flags are flying and everyone is invited to a hayride of happiness — a religious romp! Popcorn, peanuts and paper hats. It reminds me of the first time I took my youngest boy, David, to the Cincinnati Zoo. He was about four years old at the time. It was on this trip that he got his first glimpse of "cotton candy." We stopped and he watched with great delight as the man behind the counter very skillfully spun the large, beautifully colored sticks full of this wonderful stuff. After watching with envy the others who were receiving this delicious looking delight he turned pleading eyes to me and the purchase was made. I never will forget the look of delight that came on his face as he held the huge, colored concoction and took his first bite. As the

(See COTTON on page 9)

COTTON...

(Continued from page 8)

cotton candy dissolved into nothing in his mouth a look of amazement and disappointment took the place of delight.

Appearances had been deceiving. Thus it is with our modern "cotton candy" boom in religion! It's big and beautiful until you really try to get your teeth into it and dissolves into nothing.

It could also be compared to "bubble gum" — it makes a fine showing until it breaks and leaves behind a sticky mess!!

The popularity that religion enjoys has been purchased at a terrific price. The desire to please man has supplanted the desire to please God. Today's religion is designed to satisfy the carnal appetites of carnal Christians and the unregenerate. "What do I get out of it" is the approach made to this religion. When the services are entertaining and make the participants "feel good" they are stamped as successful. The world's methods and manner are as in the business world. Finances and figures have been made the test. A lot of people and a lot of money are interpreted as the sure blessing of God. It is considered sacrilege to question the doctrine or the ethics of anyone who has been successful in gathering a large crowd and abundant cash!

In view of the seeming boom in religion it would be well to consider what has happened to the gospel!! What little gospel is preached is of such a shallow, frothy nature that it would bring a snort of disgust from such a one as the Apostle Paul. The strong message of the gospel has been so diluted as hardly to be recognizable. Sickeningly cheap, sentimental appeals are made for sickeningly cheap, sentimental decisions! What has happened to the

sledge hammer messages concerning the hideous corruption of sin?

Has the day of identifying the sinner past? Today it is advertised so that no one will be offended at the preaching of the gospel!! What a change! What a come down!! The gospel has always offended! It offends Satan! It offends the guilty sinner and either brings him to repentance or hardens his heart! It offends the carnal Christian!!! It offends the false teachers and their followers! It offends the promoters of sin and sinful pleasure! In today's gospel the question of sin is dealt with in such generalities that it is almost impossible to determine who is guilty!

Repentance has become a forgotten doctrine confined to the yellowing pages of neglected articles of faith. What used to mean "Godly Sorrow" doesn't even involve mild embarrassment today! The crowds have never responded very well to true repentance so modern religion by popular demand has discarded it. Faith has been reduced to a mere head consent, a hand shake, and a card signed.

Today's gospel has been watered down so thin it has lost the miracle working power of regeneration and is producing a shallow, casual, unregenerated religion.

Contrary to the popular idea that we are in the midst of revival stand some undeniable facts that show we are in the midst of a time of apostasy!!! There is a great "falling away"!

First of all consider the moral condition of our country. The figures have been published so many times they do not need to be reprinted here. Crime is at an all time high!! Juvenile delinquency increases every year!! Divorce rates climb every year. Jail houses, penitentiaries and detention homes are packed to overflowing!!

Drunkenness and dope addicts mounts with each passing day! Illegitimate births and abortions increase every year. Murder, rape, suicide, robbery, scream the headlines of our papers!! Sex mad and whiskey soaked, the nation reels down the path of the pursuit of Pleasure!! Check the material in the popular books, songs, radio and television shows, movies, etc. and get a glimpse of what appeals to America. True revival will check the flood tides of sin!! This has not happened in today's so-called revival!!

It is not producing hatred for sin and love of righteousness!! It does not demand that Christians live a separated dedicated life to God.

Second, consider the rapid rise and growth of a multitude of cults and false religions. This is not revival!!

Real revival brings men and women a love for the truth. The entire revealed truth of God is not declared in the Gospel of today so the "converts" wander off after whatever religion suits their particular fancy. The keynote today is compromise. Everybody is to forget their "petty doctrinal differences" and join hands in a "great compromise." In the midst of this kind of atmosphere false cults and religions are booming! Modernism marches on!!!

Third, consider the shallow carnal Christian today's so-called "revival" produces, indeed, if it produces any Christians. May God help us to return to a gospel that glorifies God, antagonizes Satan, squelches sin, convicts sinners, produces repentance, routs false teachers, abolishes false religions, promotes sound doctrine, and brings about the miracle of regeneration that makes a hellbound sinner into a new creature in Christ Jesus.[]

The Hatred Of God**By Mark Osgatharp**

"God hates the sin but loves the sinner." This oft heard cliché, true insofar as it goes, is an oversimplification of a deeper biblical doctrine.

God hates sin and there is a sense in which he loves sinners. However, there is also a sense in which God hates sinners. David declared, "thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity. Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing (falsehood): the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man" (Psm. 5:4-6).

David did not say God only "hates the sin" but rather, "thou hatest all workers of iniquity." Psalm 11:5-6 further says, "The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, brimstone, and an horrible tempest."

God hates wicked men from the depth of His soul. This does not conflict with the truth that God loves sinners. God loves sinners in that He has compassion and pity on them. He loves them in that He desires their repentance and salvation. His love for sinners is so great that He sent His beloved son to bear the shame of our sin on Calvary.

But as for God's evaluation of the character of sinful men, the Bible not only says He hates, but also abhors and despises them (Psalm 10:3; 53:5). When God looks at a sinner apart from Christ He sees nothing good (Rom. 7:18). He sees only a filthy creature worthy of

(See **HATE** on page 22)

Grammatically, Heb. 4:4-6 Teaches Believer's Security

By Edward D. Baker

In the Book of Hebrews, chapter six, verses four through six, there is a very controversial passage of Scripture. Many have misunderstood it, and have used it against its proper meaning. Like many another passage, it has been made to say what the Holy Spirit, never intended.

While I lived in Leslie County (Ohio), I was making a trip to our Baptist School in Breathitt County, at Magoffin. On the way I picked up a young man who said he was a school teacher, a member of the Church of God, and a preacher. The first two I could believe, the last I could not.

In the course of our conversation, concerning the Bible, I used every Scripture that I could call to memory to try to convince that young man of the error of teaching that a saved soul could be lost.

Finally I thought of Hebrews 6:4-6, and I asked the young man "Do you know what the Subjunctive mood does in grammar?" He answered in the affirmative, saying, "Preacher, it does one of two things. It makes a statement contrary to fact, or expresses a doubt."

I now took the phrase, "If they shall fall away," out of the sixth verse, and after quoting the fourth through the sixth verses to him I said, "Now what does that verse of Scripture teach, with reference to what goes before, and what follows after?"

The look on that boy's face was one of amazement. He said, without hesitation, "Preacher, it makes a statement contrary to fact."

When a sentence, or a part of a sentence begins with the

preposition "if" that places that preposition in front of the verb, and places that structure in the Subjunctive mood. I say, "If I were you." I cannot be you, therefore, that statement is contrary to fact. I say, "if I go to the city tomorrow, you may go along." There is a doubt, as to whether I shall go to the city or not. Each sentence structure is in the Subjunctive mood.

So, it follows, that Hebrews 6:4-6 is teaching that, it is contrary to fact, against reason, and not according to the Biblical meaning to say, that one who has "been enlightened, and has tasted of the heavenly gift, and has partaken of the Holy Ghost, has tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and therefore they cannot fall away, and if they could fall away, it would be impossible to renew them again to repentance."

If I say, "If I were you" I have simply made a statement contrary to fact, I cannot be you. This young man said, "Preacher, why haven't I seen that before?"

So very many people, many of whom are sincere, and many truly saved, are so misled, that they fail to see the beauty of eternal security. One who does not understand grammar, would fail to understand the meaning in Hebrews 6:4-6, nevertheless that failure on one's part to comprehend, does not alter the fact of the teaching of the Bible. □

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Is The Grace of God Enough?

By Roy Mason

It has been truly said that there are foundationally only *two religions* in this world — one of *works*, the other of *grace*. One is a religion of "*do*" the other is a religion of "*done*." One religion holds that one must "*do*" their way to Heaven — the other holds that all depends upon what Christ has "*done*" in dying for us. One is a religion that says "*Something* in my hands I bring." The other sings, "*Nothing* in my hands I bring, simply to Thy cross I cling."

Man has his try at "doing" back under the Law. Israel said there at Sinai, "All these things we will do." But Israel never rendered even passable, let alone perfect obedience. No member of the fallen human race ever perfectly kept the law of God. God's indictment is, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." God has virtually said, "I have sent My Son who has kept the law which all of you have broken. He has died to pay the penalty of your law breaking, and I waive all requirements and ask nothing save that you receive Him as the One who makes complete settlement for your sins." God thus puts up His Son as the one test and issue between Himself and man, and the question now, in this age, is not the *sin* question, but the *Son* question. Any one receiving the Son, receives remission of his *sin*.

Satan Seeks To Inject Works

The devil hates grace and the doctrine of grace. He seeks to get men to plus Christ and plus grace with other things. Most of

the religions of the world are either religions of human effort, or else are mixed religions of works and grace. And works and grace, really amounts to *works* — for grace can't really be mixed with works. Ephesians 2:8 sets forth the truth as follows:

1. We are saved by grace through faith.
2. Not of works.
3. The reason for this is to preclude man's boasting.
4. But we are saved *for the purpose* of doing good works. Works therefore become the result of salvation, and not the *cause* of it.

What Form Do Works Take As Satan Makes It To Supplement Grace?

1. Altar work to get saved. The altar or the "mourner's bench" has been devised so people will depend upon human exercises to get them right with God. Such makes tears, prayers, agonizing, etc., meritorious exercises which induce God to save.

2. "Falling from grace" doctrine, adds work to grace in the matter of salvation. The idea is that one is saved by grace, but must finish the job by "doing." This is the error of the Galatians (Gal. 3:3; 2:16-21).

3. Dependence on ordinances to finish out salvation, is to add works to grace for salvation. Baptism is a human act, and as such it is in the nature of a work. If baptism is essential to salvation, then salvation is partly by works. But the Bible distinctly says, "and *not* of works." The Bible says that the "gospel is the power of God unto salvation" — not baptism. The Bible says that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin." If from *all* sin, there is none left for water to cleanse from.

The Lord's Supper is turned

(See **GRACE** on page 17)

Women's Conference In China

When about 50,000 people converge in early September, in Beijing, China, for the fourth World Conference on Women and an accompanying non-governmental organization meeting, a clash between disparate world views could dwarf attempts at a widespread consensus on furthering the cause of the feminine gender.

In the months prior to the United Nations-sponsored meeting, pro-life/pro-family organizations charged radical feminists were controlling the conference's agenda. As the meeting neared, their criticisms intensified. When delegates from about 180 countries gather in the People's Republic of China for the Sept. 4-15 meeting, about one-third of the 121-page Platform for Action will remain open for debate. The undecided portions of text include abortion and other controversial issues.

Focus on the Family President James Dobson has gone so far as to call the conference the "most radical, atheistic, and anti-family crusade in the history of the world."

Weighing in almost equally strongly, Diane Knippers, president of the Washington-based Institute on Religion and Democracy, called the Platform for Action the "most intrusive, arrogant, and radical restructuring of the social order in human history."

Not only has the conference been decried for its agenda but for its location. The inhumane nature of China's human rights record, including coercive abortion and sterilization, is well-documented.

"I find it really overwhelming that this conference is being held in China, where women absolutely have no rights," said Nancy Schaefer, a member of

First Baptist Church, Atlanta, Ga., and president of the pro-family organization Family Concerns. Schaefer has been designated by the Christian Life Commission to represent it in Beijing.

The radical feminists "are sharing with everyone in this country that they are going to protect the rights of women and human rights for all, and that's really not the case," said Schaefer. "What they are going to do is promote abortion and the blurring of gender and the total redefinition of gender.

"God creating us as man and woman doesn't even seem to compute."

United States officials and promoters of the conference have defended the conference, calling the Platform for Action a consensus document and the site immaterial because the conference is about women, not about China.

Nevertheless, critics cite the following as evidence of their charges about the document:

— It fails to describe gender as male and female, though the word appears more than 200 times. Some critics have charged the drafters want to include homosexuals, bisexuals, and transsexuals, under the definition of gender, a position espoused in some feminist literature.

— The words "husband" and "wife" are not to be found.

— The words "mother" and "family" have been bracketed throughout. Some have said this opens the door for the words to be changed to "caretaker" and "household," respectively.

— It stresses the sexual and reproductive rights of adolescents with rare references to the rights of parents.

— Abortion rights appear to be elevated above other rights.

Critics also point to the influ-

Our Apologies

We really need to make two apologies to our readers. First, you received both the August and September issues of **The Baptist Challenge** late. About three months ago we began using a professional mailing company to mail TBC. Though we had minor problems with them, we felt it was because of the unique nature of our publication, having many foreign subscribers. The owner of the company was arrested this past week (Sept. 13) and charged with several violations of the law. After six weeks, we found the August issue of TBC stored in an 18-wheeler parked at his place of business. Several times they told me it had already been mailed, but it had not. We finally got it into the mail.

The second apology is concerning the books of Challenge Press. Most of you know that the Central Baptist Church has moved into a new building about five miles from its previous location, and during that move, all of the books were stored in an 18-wheeler of well-known feminist Bella Abzug on the document. Abzug and her Women's Environment Development Organization had preferred access at a recent meeting on the document in the U.N. General Assembly hall, The Washington Times reported. At the Cairo population conference last September, Abzug served as a government-paid private sector adviser for the United States.

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton is expected to attend as honorary chair of the U.S. delegation. Among others in the 46-member U.S. delegation are Secretary of Health had Human Services Donna Shalala, Undersecretary of State Timothy Wirth, and 1984 Democrat vice-presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro. □

wheeler where we were not able to get to the books. We were told that the Challenge Press building would be completed sometime in July, so we expected to be able to mail the books no later than the middle of August. The building to be used for Challenge Press is still not completed, though it has been promised to us for several weeks. Just this week we have begun to move the books into the building where we can once again begin to fill book orders. In fact, the first book orders have already been mailed.

We are sorry for any of the delays this may have caused you, and if during this transition you fail to get your books, please call us and let us know and we'll try to get them to you as soon as possible. □

41st Annual Bible Conference In Little Rock October 23-25, 1995

Begins Monday evening at 7:00 and goes through Wednesday, closing with the evening services.

New address for the church is: 15601 Taylor Loop Road. To get to the church, take I-430 to the intersection of Cantrell Rd. or State Highway 10. Go west about two miles to the Harvest Food store which is on your left. Turn left on Taylor Loop Road and the church will be about two miles on your left. If you have problems, the church phone is (501) 868-7703.

Kmart Still Refuses To Discontinue Porn.

The Kmart corporation has dismissed Joseph Antonini as chairman due to the failing financial performance of the retail chain. However, Kmart will continue to sell pornography through its Waldenbooks subsidiary, even though this has led to a consumer boycott by anti-porn activists. The Rev. Donald Wildmon of the American Family Association contacted new Kmart chairman Donald S. Perkins and asked him to remove pornography from Walden books. Perkins responded that the company has no plans to pull pornography from Walden books but will try to sell the bookstore chain. "It is regrettable that Mr. Perkins has decided to keep Kmart in the porn business," Wildmon said. "Good business sense would try to regain those Kmart customers lost by the boycott. I doubt very seriously if Kmart will ever regain those customers." — EP

Congressional Family Caucus Formed.

A group of GOP congressmen, seeking to restore voluntary school prayer, reaffirm parental rights, establish abstinence-based sex education, enact tougher laws against obscenity and child pornography and eliminate the federal financing of abortion, has formed the Congressional Family Caucus. Co-chaired by Representative Tom Coburn (R.-Okla.) and Ed Bryant (R.-Tenn.), the group has been

officially registered as a Congressional Member Organization and already has nearly 60 members. Coburn, a physician by trade, stressed the need to rejuvenate "family, faith and freedom." "We must offer a vision beyond simply cutting the budget," said Coburn. Fellow Oklahoma freshman Rep. Steve Largent (R.) added that the caucus "will bring to the attention of the 104th Congress the need to recognize that it is the well-being of the family that is most vital to ensuring America's success." — Human Events

Navy Pilot Disciplined Over Christian Views.

The Navy may expel a highly regarded Christian pilot because of his view that women should not serve in combat. The Navy's Separation Board recommended that Lt. Cmdr. Kenneth Carkhuff be discharged from the service for privately telling his commander that he objects to placing women in combat roles. Carkhuff, who six weeks earlier received a glowing performance report from his superiors, was judged to have a "glaring, irreconcilable conflict with Navy policy." He told the board his religious views require him to obey his superiors' commands as long as they don't conflict with God's laws. "My intent was never to disregard my duty or refuse a command." — NIRR

Yeltsin Rejects Maneuver To Limit Religious Freedom.

President Boris Yeltsin has

turned back Russian hard-liners who planned a maneuver to crack down on religious freedom by making 11th-hour changes to new legislation outlawing dangerous religious groups. Yeltsin sent parliament a message rejecting the proposed amendment in principle after he received word that communists and nationalists were using a legislative committee to tack on harsher limits than those for which lawmakers voted. He said the Russian Federation's new constitution already makes room for ideological pluralism, and freedom of religion must be allowed in a democracy. Twice before, Yeltsin has vetoed other proposals to reverse religious freedom. Still, political leaders are continuing to prepare other versions of restrictive proposals. — BP

Clinton Asked To Ensure Religious Expression In China.

Due to recent statements which imply that China may censor religious materials at the upcoming Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW), John W. Whitehead, President of The Rutherford Institute, wrote President Clinton and asked him to secure specific guarantees from the government of China. The Rutherford Institute is seeking to obtain a commitment by the Chinese government to allow the entry and distribution of materials related to the Conference issues and which may have specific or implied references to religion or religious values. Statements issued by both the Chinese government and the U.S. Department of State have

threatened religious expression, and the threat of censorship looms even larger in light of the recent capture and imprisonment of human rights activist and American citizen Harry Wu. "I believe that censorship of religious materials would be a violation of basic human rights," said Whitehead. "And I am especially concerned about the security and freedom of expression of delegates that will represent a pro-life perspective based on religious doctrine and conviction." The Rutherford Institute is an international, nonprofit civil liberties organization specializing in the defense of religious liberty.

Apology Demanded From American Bar Association.

The Rutherford Institute is demanding an apology from the American Bar Association (ABA) because of the use of a sacrilegious image in a recent ABA publication. The image, which portrayed a pregnant woman about to receive an abortion strapped to an operating table in a crucifix-like pose, appeared on the cover of the summer edition of **Human Rights**, an ABA magazine from the group's "Section of Individual Rights and Responsibilities." The Rutherford Institute is demanding that **Human Rights** offer an apology in their next edition. The Institute asserts that this image is deeply offensive to Christians and other religious groups to whom the cross is paramount. If a parallel image mocking the Star of David or the symbol of any other prominent group had been suggested, it

would have undoubtedly been rejected before publication.

* * *

AT&T Anti-Religious Bias.

The Heritage Free Will Baptist Day Care in Shreveport, Louisiana, will not get funding from an AT&T fund because the day care's programs "are based on a religious mission..." The day care facility, located near an AT&T plant, serves many AT&T families. A group of AT&T employees approached Pastor Ron Parker to suggest that the day care facility request a grant from AT&T's Family Care Development Fund. After months of paperwork, AT&T requested a copy of the day care's curriculum. The facility uses ABeka, a well-known, Christian curriculum. Soon thereafter, Pastor Parker received a letter from AT&T stating: "The committees feel that the child care programs that teach religion serve a subset of the community, and since the Heritage Free Will Baptist Church Day Care does offer religious instruction, the committees found that the project does not meet our need to support projects which provide the broadest possible benefit to AT&T employees." This anti-religious bias by AT&T parallels other corporate activities and policies such as their promotion of the homosexual agenda as reported in previous issues. (Quoted from AFA Journal). [As our readers know, we formerly were subscribers to AT&T's long distance service, but have dropped it in favor of LifeLine, a Christian organization that provides long distance service. We urge our readers to call

LifeLine and change your service to LifeLine and request that 10% of your long distance bill be contributed to **The Baptist Challenge**. Many have already done so, and it has been a tremendous help in our enlarging TBC to 24 pages. All you need to do is call their number [1 (800) 800-7550] and they will change you over and at your request 10% of your long distance bill will come to **The Baptist Challenge**. They will also pay for the change from your present service to LifeLine. It won't cost you anything and in most cases, your long distance phone bill will decrease and it will help us continue publishing **The Baptist Challenge**.]

* * *

Promise Keepers Is Most Dangerous. Promise Keepers appears to be the most dangerous ecumenical device to come down the religious pike in the last decade (6/95 *Fund. Digest*.) It has astonishingly succeeded in uniting huge throngs of laymen across denominational lines. It preaches a non-doctrinal gospel — one accepted even among Mormon leaders, whose theology and Christology are aberrant, and Catholic clergy, who, while espousing salvation by grace alone, insist that true salvation rests in the Church sacraments (*Media Spotlight*). PK encourages men to share intimate sexual secrets and fantasies with one another in group therapy sessions (7/3 *C. News*). — CC

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Zondervan And Promise Keepers Strike Partnership.

Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich., and Promise Keepers, Boulder, Colo., have entered into a partnership to create a Promise Keepers study Bible that contains notes and guides specifically designed for the hundreds of thousands of men who attend PK conferences. The partnership was announced in Denver at the annual Christian Booksellers Association international convention. — Christian News

* * *

An Open Letter To Florida Baptists.

In the July 13 issue of the **Florida Baptist Witness** is an open letter from Stetson University to the churches of the Florida Baptist Convention. One paragraph in the letter seeks to defend Stetson University's recently policy of allowing alcohol on campus and in the dormitories of this Baptist university which was founded by Florida Baptists and still receives much of its financial support from the Florida Baptist Convention. The paragraph states: "We fully understand the controversial nature of some decisions, such as the recent change in the approach to the alcohol problem, which the university has had to make in the best interests of all its students. Universities are in a no-win situation in trying to deal with alcohol abuse: one either claims an alcohol ban which is impossible to enforce or tells the truth about alcohol use on campus and tries to do something about it, which leads to strong criticism. I have come to accept the direction we are taking as the only honest

way to address the problems facing us, but I respect the opinions of those whose conclusions differ from ours." The letter was signed by Doug Lee, President.

* * *

Fired BSU Director Sues.

A woman who was fired from her job as a Texas Baptist Student Union director after being ordained to the gospel ministry is suing her former employer, claiming gender discrimination. The woman, Raye Nell Dyer, 44, who now lives in Houston, was removed from her campus ministry position at University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston because of controversy over her ordination. Later, after turning down a demotion, she was terminated by the Baptist General Convention of Texas, her employer for 10 years. While several controversies have erupted in the past over the issue, Dyer's is thought to be the first lawsuit in Southern Baptist life involving women's ordination, said a spokesperson for Baptist Women in Ministry, a national clearinghouse based in Louisville, Ky. — ABP

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Spanking Sets Norwegian Dad Back \$470. A father in Oslo, Norway who smacked his 4-year-old daughter on the bottom ended up feeling a sting in

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his own back pocket when police ordered him to pay a \$470 fine. Norway's strict child protection laws bar corporal punishment, even in the privacy of a family's home. Violations are punishable by fines. Ove Brudevoll, police spokesman in the town of Kristiansund, said the 30-year-old father, whose name was not released, admitted spanking his daughter in May because she disobeyed him at home. The father can now pay the fine or take the case to court. — AP

* * *

Four Moroccans Jailed For Proselytism Are Released.

Four Moroccan Christians arrested in early August for proselytism were released after a trial August 17 in Tangier, Morocco. Despite their release, it remains unclear whether there are still any charges pending against them, according to a report from News Network International. One source indicated they were questioned at a police station in Tangier after the trial. Some people pushing for the Christians' release see this as a landmark case because it could bring more religious tolerance in Morocco, sources said. Morocco's constitution officially guarantees freedom of worship, but it is illegal to try to entice someone to change religions. — BP

* * *

Latest On Sandi Patty.

Sandi Patty, the gospel singer, admitted having had an extramarital affair with the backup singer she just married. Patty, 39, who holds five Grammy awards, said the affair began in 1991, about 17 months before her

divorce from her manager at the time, John Helvering. She and Don Peslis, 34, married on Aug. 6. "I admit that I have sinned and have made past mistakes," Patty said in a statement. "I have been seeking counsel from my pastor and my church council, and through this process I feel I have made significant progress toward wholeness, both personally and with the body of Christ." Her label, Word Records, said it will postpone her Christmas album, "O Holy Night," because of the matter. Patty's gospel hits include "They Say" and "I've Just Seen Jesus," and she has performed at Billy Graham crusades. Last year, Michael English quit gospel music and returned six Gospel Music Association Dove Awards after the disclosure that he had had an affair with another gospel singer.

* * *

Queen To Attend Catholic Service.

For the first time since 1688, a reigning English monarch will attend a Roman Catholic worship service when Queen Elizabeth II visits Westminster Cathedral in November for a vespers service led by Cardinal Basil Hume. Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury George Carey (an ecumenical charismatic) and other Protestant and Orthodox leaders will participate in the prayer service. — CC

* * *

China: Vampire Gangs, Fetal Cannibalism.

Clean blood and donors are rare in Red China today, so "vampire gangs" kidnap dozens of street urchins and young workers, forcibly bleed them several times a week, and sell their blood to hospitals. Human fetuses have begun to appear on the menus of Chinese restaurants as a delicacy and health tonic (8/95 Dobson Ltr.).

Doctors take them home to eat. In terms of nutrition, a fetus would be a good source of protein, fats and minerals (8/95 Light). Eating aborted fetuses is barbaric and shows what happens when a culture devalues human life. — CC

* * *

South Africa Is World's Most Murderous Country.

What happens when a country installs a godless communist government, and abolishes the death penalty? The 8/21 USN&WR said South Africa is the "most murderous country in the world." Almost one million women are raped every year (6/26 Chr. News). Its health services have slipped from one of the best in the world to banana republic status. Southern Africa is now the world's fastest-growing AIDS region. — CC

* * *

"Jane Roe" Professes Faith In Christ.

The woman whose unwanted pregnancy led to the legalization of abortion in the United States has made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ and renounced her role in the abortion rights movement. Norma McCorvey, known as "Jane Roe" in the controversial *Roe vs. Wade* case, was baptized Aug. 8 in the swimming pool of a Dallas area home. She says she placed her faith in Christ at a July worship service at Hillcrest Christian Church in Dallas. Flip Benham, director of Dallas-based Operation Rescue National, baptized McCorvey at her request. Her baptism by Benham, an ordained Free Will Methodist minister, came only four months after Operation Rescue National moved its offices next door to the Dallas abortion clinic at which McCorvey worked. She resigned as marketing director of the

clinic, A Choice For Women, Aug. 7, according to an ABC news report. "I think abortion is wrong," she told ABC. "I think what I did with *Roe vs. Wade* was wrong. And I just have to take a pro-life position on choice." Also, McCorvey has had a lesbian relationship for 21 years with Connie Gonzalez, ABC reported. Her newfound Operation Rescue friends have not asked McCorvey to "say goodbye" to Gonzalez, ABC said.

* * *

Suit Dismissed Against Judge.

A lawsuit against an Alabama judge who displays the Ten Commandments in his courtroom and begins each session with prayer was dismissed July 7. U.S. District Judge Robert Propst said the parties bringing the lawsuit — the American Civil Liberties Union and three residents of Gadsden, Alabama — lack legal standing to challenge Judge Roy Moore because they have not demonstrated that his actions injured them. The plaintiffs argued that as potential jurors and visitors to the courthouse, and as taxpayers in the county, they had the right to sue Moore for him to stop the prayers and remove the Ten Commandments. Propst dismissed that claim, noting that none of the grounds for standing cited "present the real and immediate threat of future harm required to maintain the action." The plaintiffs vowed to continue their battle. Moore said the decision sends the message that "an acknowledgment of God is not a violation of the doctrine of separation of church and state."

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Christian Action Network Wins Case.

A federal court

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dismissed claims by the Federal Elections Commission (FEC) that the Christian Action Network (CAN) violated federal campaign laws in the 1992 campaign. The FEC claimed that CAN violated the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 by expressly advocating the defeat of Bill Clinton and Al Gore during the 1992 general election in television and newspaper ads, by using corporate treasury funds to finance the ads, and by failing to file public financial disclosure statements in conjunction with ads. CAN argued that the ads in question did not expressly advocate the election or defeat of a particular candidate, but merely addressed political issues. Judge James C. Turk granted CAN's motion to dismiss. He wrote, "The advertisements at issue do not contain explicit words or imagery advocating electoral action. On the contrary, the advertisements represent a form of issue advocacy intended to inform the public about political issues germane to the 1992 presidential election. Therefore, the advertisements are fully protected as 'political speech' under the First Amendment. Their financing is not governed by [election law] and the [FEC] lacks jurisdiction to bring this suit." Turk continued, "The issue of gay rights addressed by the CAN's television commercial and newspaper ads raised strong emotions amongst viewers and readers. However, there is no requirement that issue advocacy be congenial or non-inflammatory. Quite the contrary, the ability to present controversial viewpoints on election issues had long been recognized as a fundamental First Amendment right."

Late-Term Abortions Banned. The State of Ohio has banned late-term abortions of viable fetuses and the dilation and extraction method of abortion. Doctors who perform the banned procedures face up to five years in prison and fines of \$2,500. The law bans all abortions after 24 weeks, and requires women seeking abortions after 21 weeks of pregnancy to have their unborn children tested for viability. Ohio is the first state to ban a specific abortion method; Congress is considering a similar measure.

* * *

Court Bans State Hostility to Religion. Two weeks after the Supreme Court ruled 5 to 4 that the University of Virginia had violated the 1st Amendment rights of student journalists by denying them funds to publish *Wide Awake*, a campus evangelical Christian magazine, liberals are still in a frenzy. The case, *Rosenberger vs. University of Virginia*, arose after the university, citing the constitutional separation of church and state, refused to allow student fees to be used to subsidize \$5,862 of *Wide Awake's* printing costs. The university took this step even though it continued to use student fees to fund many other student groups, including a campus Jewish organization, *Al-Salam*, a campus Moslem publication and even *The Yellow Journal*, a humor magazine that consistently targets Christianity for satirical treatment. Liberal reaction to the court's ruling ranges from despair to panic and in their rhetorical responses they have conjured up images of everything from explosive sabotage to Christians as pickpockets. "The Supreme Court," editorialized the *New York Times* on July 5, "has blown a hole through the wall of separation the Constitution was supposed to

maintain between church and state." "This is a miserable decision," lamented Barry Lynn, director of Americans United for the Separation of Church and State. "Christians ... shouldn't be allowed to pick other students' pockets to pay for it [their right to publish on campus]." "A dangerous precedent," complained Joan Brown Campbell, general secretary of the left-leaning National Council of Churches. And, perhaps the bitterest howler of all was Supreme Court Justice David Souter, who, writing for himself and Justices Stephen Breyer, John Paul Stevens and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, penned the dissent. "The court today, for the first time," wrote Souter to the amazement of many who wondered if he was talking about a different case, "approves direct funding of core religious activities by an arm of the state." Writing for himself and the four other justices — William Rehnquist, Clarence Thomas, Antonin Scalia and Sandra Day O'Connor — who saw the case altogether differently was Justice Anthony Kennedy. He reasoned: "Vital 1st Amendment speech principles are at stake here. The first danger to liberty lies in granting the state the power to examine publications to determine whether or not they are based on some ultimate idea, and if so for the state to classify them." — Human Events.

* * *

Pregnant Naval Students May Avoid Dismissal by Obtaining Abortions. A proposed U.S. Naval Academy policy on pregnant students would allow students to avoid dismissal by having abortions, the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) charges. Douglas Johnson, legislative director of the NRLC, said he obtained what he believes is a copy of a proposal

which would allow pregnant students to continue as students if the pregnancy were terminated within 30 days of notifying the academy of the condition. — The Sword of the Lord.

* * *

Delegates to China Conference Warned. U.S. delegates to the international women's conference in China were warned that they may be arrested if they take Bibles into the country or participate in religious activities while there. A State Department official warned representatives of American groups planning to attend the United Nations-sponsored conference in Beijing that the United States will not be able to protect them if they violate laws of the communist nation, the *Washington Times* reported. "You may be thinking of taking a lot of Bibles," Georgia A. Rogers, the State Department's director of consular affairs, said. "That is not a good idea. They don't like that." House Speaker Newt Gingrich said the location of the conference should be changed in light of the warnings about religious activities. "If the State Department is actually saying it's dangerous to take a Bible, then we clearly should move immediately to move the U.N. conference," Gingrich said. — RNS

* * *

Public School Teachers Choose Private Education. Urban public school teachers often send their own children to private schools, says a new study based on 1990 Census data. The study says that in about 33% of the nation's 100 largest cities, public school teachers are more than 1.5 times as likely as others to send their

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PROPHECY...

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Testament work also. Among the spiritual gifts which are given by the Holy Spirit to Spirit-born men is the gift of prophecy (Cf. 1 Cor. 12:8-10). In turn, Christ as the Master of all spiritual services gives spiritually endowed men to His churches. Lastly, God uses God-fearing, Christ-centered, Spirit-filled men to accomplish His own spiritual purposes.

The fourfold division of the work of the ministry is stated in Ephesians 4:11. There it is said that Christ gave (1) some, apostles; (2) and some, prophets; (3) and some, evangelists; (4) and some, pastors and teachers. This is the Lord's own division of labor for the work of the ministry. Hence it is that each worker is equipped with special gifts for special services; and also "unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ," meaning that the divine favor is measured out to every worker, whereby he is empowered to perform his assigned task in fulfilling the will of God.

Let it be carefully noted that a definite work is assigned to the prophets, just as certain works were appointed severally to the apostles, to the evangelists, and to the pastors and teachers. While it is true each division of work is coordinated with all the others, it should be noted that each one has its own characteristic message and its own objective.

The Work of the Apostles

The apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ were men whom Christ through the Holy Spirit had chosen and to whom He gave commandments (Acts 1:2). The Twelve, including Matthias in the stead of Judas, and Paul constitute the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. To them cer-

tain work was assigned and certain credentials given which belonged exclusively to them. They had no successors in the apostolic office. Certain men in the church at Ephesus claiming apostolic powers were found liars (Rev. 2). The apostles had authority conferred upon them which was never conferred upon others. They were in the church first (1 Cor. 12:28), and they did the initial work of establishing the New Testament Church order by founding churches, setting them in order, establishing them in the faith, and giving them the New Testament, all through the Holy Spirit. They did the work of the evangelist, of the prophet, and of the teachers, and indeed of pastors also. They gave us most of the New Testament by divine inspiration (some New Testament writers were not apostles of Jesus Christ). Their work endures until this day, a mighty work which need not be done over.

A point should be noted here, which many overlook. There is a vast difference between "an apostle of Jesus Christ" (i.e., in 1 Cor. 1:1) and "apostles (messengers) of the churches" (2 Cor. 8:23). The apostles of Jesus Christ had the right to do whatever Christ directly commanded them; the apostles of the churches had the right to do only that which the churches sent them to do only what the Lord had commissioned them to do. Apostles of the churches who claim it within their individual right and power to do what the apostles of Jesus Christ did are in error. They err, "not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God."

The Work of the Evangelist

The evangelist is a proclaimer of good tidings, an herald of salvation. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad-

tidings of good things" (Rom. 10:15). He tells the whole world of salvation in Jesus Christ the Savior. His work is characterized chiefly by the preaching of the gospel of Christ. Philip is called "the evangelist" (Acts 21:8). Note the record of his work in Acts 8:5-8, 29-35. The evangelist is the messenger of life. His message is a limited one, driving to one point, soul-winning. It is deplorable that the great evangelists have about disappeared from among us these days. There is a reason for it which I will point out in another place.

The Work of the Pastor and Teacher

The pastor is the shepherd of the flock. It is his to lead the sheep into green pastures and beside the still waters. He is the feeder and the defender of the flock. He seeks after them that stray and binds up the wounded. As a feeder and defender, he must be a teacher also. No pastor can feed his flock upon the word of God, or defend them against heresy, who is not a teacher. The Lord gives spiritually gifted teachers to the churches also (1 Cor. 12:28). They are the pastor's helpers, helping in the work of feeding the sheep; and their work comes directly under pastoral supervision.

The Work of the Prophets

The work of the prophets has been reserved to the last, that we may readily get the distinction between it and the works of the apostles, of evangelists, and of pastors and teachers.

The prophetic work of the ministry stands in a class all its own. It differs in its dominant characteristics from the other classes of the ministry already named. His work does not consist only of inspired predictions.

If so, then the work of the prophets ended with the writings of the Revelation, about 96 A.D., by the Apostle John. But that certainly did not complete the work of the prophets. The prophets who work today are God-called, Christ-centered, Spirit-filled heralds of the word of God. They are not simply preachers of the gospel of Christ, but more: they are God's mouthpieces who "preach the word" to God's professed children. They flourish in times of great apostasy. When God's professed people begin to forsake the word of the Lord, the worship and the work of God, then God calls out His prophets, "rising up early and sending them," that He might turn His people back again unto Him. Hence it is the work of the prophets to speak that word of God to His people which applies to them. God calls to them: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgressions" (Isa. 58:1). The burden of their message is repentance, confession of sins, and obedience to God. "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isa. 1:16-20).

That message was spoken by Isaiah the prophet to Judah and Jerusalem, God's professed "children" which had "rebelled" against Him. It is typical of the

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PROPHECY...

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prophet's message. It is not Isaiah the evangelist but Isaiah the prophet calling Israel to repentance and to obedience to their God. Isaiah the evangelist speaks on this wise: "Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: that have no knowledge that set up wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save ... Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:20, 22). Salvation is the burden of the message of the evangelist.

John the Baptist is a New Testament example of the prophet-evangelist. When the penitent multitudes came confessing their sins and believing on Christ, he baptized them. He was doing the work of an evangelist. But when the unsaved religious professors, the Pharisees and Sadducees, came to receive his baptism, he charged upon them, saying: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." Here he was doing the work of the prophet.

The work of the prophet must precede the word of the evangelist to unsaved religious professors. The work of the evangelist languishes where the work of the prophet has been neglected. It is when Zion travails that children are born unto her. Where there is no burden of soul for the lost on the part of God's people, few are saved. Where there is no travail of soul the prophet must bear the Sword of the Spirit against the sins of God's people. That's why few great evangelists are amongst us today. The prophets have not done their work well today. Apathy has seized upon God's children. There is little either of travail of soul for the lost or of

sympathetic support for the true evangelist nowadays. He has been starved out.

Some evangelists have also the prophetic gift. They denounce sin in high places and low. Their work is often coolly rejected by the churchanity of our day for a work of softer finish. □

BIRCH...

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He wanted to be a pilot, but he was more valuable to me than any pilot. See, he set up the spy system that enabled us to provide the Chinese army with air support. I'd also send him out to rescue American airmen who were shot down in remote areas. I can't tell you how many pilots owe their lives to that remarkable young man.

"He was in full uniform. Walked right toward them, and they fired a volley in his face with no warning. They murdered one of the most loyal men I ever had."

Tears were rolling down the leathery old cheeks. "Forgive me for losing my composure. I'm not the tough old bird people make me out to be."

The man the General was speaking of is the "unsung hero" of the China War Theater of World War II. Captain John M. Birch landed in China in 1939 when he was barely twenty-two years old. Entering language school, he became fluent in Chinese to begin work as an independent Baptist missionary. The advancing Japanese army soon changed his plans.

On April 27, 1942 Birch, with his hair blacked and dressed as a coolie, was traveling in the dangerous no-man's land of rural Chekiang Province. Stopping to eat at a small cafe, he was approached by a Chinese man who whispered surreptitiously "You American?"

Without looking up from

his meal, John gave a barely perceptible nod.

"You finish. Follow me. Be very careful. Enemy eyes watching."

Finishing his meal, John shouldered his pack and casually walked out the door. The man started down a path toward the river and stopped before a small enclosed sampan river boat, motioning for John to jump aboard. He did and peered into the little hold where he was stunned to see five American flyers, all grinning from ear to ear.

The commanding officer gave him a little mock salute: "I'm Colonel James H. Doolittle, United States Army Air Force. The boys and I just delivered a little present to Tojo, and we're having a bit of trouble getting back home."

Birch got the flyers to safe territory and turned them over to Gen. Chennault. This contact marked the beginning of John's career as an intelligence officer for the Flying Tigers.

Hannibal Books Publishing Company's recent release of the book, **The Secret File on John Birch** by James and Marti Hefley, reveals the story of this patriotic young man who was murdered by Chinese Communists 12 days after the war was won. Thirteen years later, the John Birch Society was named in his honor.

The book is a biography of Birch's life, and the subsequent cover-up of his murder by U.S. government officials. The truth of who John Birch was, and what he stood for negates the preconceived notions many Americans may have of John Birch. The story line takes the reader through a gamut of emotions, from the sense of security created by his warm, loving family, to his love for the people of China. John's strong

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GRACE...

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by the Catholics into a thing that has saving power. They teach that the actual body of Christ is eaten — that the actual blood of Christ is partaken. They lay the cracker — supposed to be the flesh of Christ on a dying man's tongue, and that is supposed to assure his future. Jesus never intended that these two ordinances should be understood as having supernatural power.

4. Keeping the law is added by such people as the Seventh Day Adventists, as necessary to salvation. They utterly ignore such passages as Galatians 3:10-12, 24-26. Those who hold to the necessity of doing anything for salvation don't grasp God's true way of salvation at all. They don't see the point. Whole religious systems with millions of adherents don't even begin to see the truth as to how God saves men. It is not accidental that this is true, for "the god of this age, hath blinded the minds of men, lest the light of the glorious gospel ... should shine unto them."

The Rarest Person To Find

One of the rarest persons to find anywhere is the preacher who and truly and consistently preaches the *grace of God*. Many preachers are mentally muddled and their preaching is a scramble of law and grace. If one is wrong about grace, he is wrong on just about everything. □

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CHURCH...

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be His.

You'll also note that the appeal is not made to the whole church. The appeal is not made to the entire church, but to any individual member who will respond. When a church finds itself to be in the same state as this Laodicean church; when a church finds itself to be spiritually lukewarm; when a church finds itself to be in a spiritual state like this, the Lord does not speak to the church as a whole, but He speaks to particular ones within that church. "*If any man will hear his voice,*" so that if the church of Laodicea is to have a change in their character, it is going to have to be done as individuals within that church respond to the knock of the Lord.

I wonder if while we have been bringing these messages relative to the seven churches of Asia, and as we are now drawing to a close with this last church, the church that typifies the general run of Baptists just prior to the return of the Lord, I wonder if any of us have heard the knocking of the Lord as He seeks to gain entrance to our hearts so that He might sup with us. He doesn't do it by means of going outside and knocking on the front door of the church. Nor does He enter the vestibule and stand there at the entrance to the auditorium and knock on the door there seeking to gain entrance. But when the Lord seeks to gain entrance once again into His churches, He does it by means of knocking at the doors of the individual members of that church. Have you heard or felt the Lord knocking at your heart as we have been preaching?

Now I'm not talking about unsaved people. This is talking about Christians. This is talking about saved people. Have you

felt, have you heard, have you become aware of the fact that God has been speaking to you as an individual and knocking at your heart telling you that if you will repent that He will come in and sup with you? You see, this must be done on an individual basis within the church. God does not deal with the church on a mass scale where He comes in just a general fashion, but the Lord comes and speaks to each of us in a personal way. "*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*"

You see, some members of this church responded. There will be some members of the church that will listen, and they will let Him in. But the church as a whole will only open their door to the Lord as the members as a whole open their door to the Lord.

It's as we talked about this morning concerning spiritual temperature. The spiritual fervor and zeal and temperature of a church will increase only as the spiritual temperature and fervor of the membership's hearts increase. We're all involved in this together. It is each man who will open up and listen and heed.

Now why does the Lord want to do this? Why does He stand at the door and knock? Did you ever wonder why the Lord wants to have your heart open to him? I'm talking about Christians now, did you ever stop to think, why would God want me to open my heart unto Him? Let me give you some reasons.

The first reason is for companionship. You see, the church is the Lord's companion, or the Lord's bride, and He longs for companionship with His bride. Did you ever realize that God loves you as a husband loves a wife, as a groom loves his bride? The Lord wants fellowship. He wants companionship with you.

You're His bride, that is, this church, Central Baptist Church is a part of His bride and He longs for and desires companionship and fellowship with His bride.

Now what kind of bride would it be who did not long for and desire fellowship and companionship with her husband? I believe that we can safely say that the Lord feels this cold treatment, this lack of companionship more than it is possible for us to understand. After all, He loves you, and He longs for your companionship. He wants you to have fellowship with Him. And how would it be for a husband to love his wife, and then his wife not want anything to do with him at all, not to want to be around him? She only wants to be around him just enough to satisfy the minimum requirements. And is that not the way most Christians are today, most church members are today, most of us are today? We come into companionship and fellowship with the Lord just as little as we can, so that we can reserve the rest of our time for other things. Worldly things, it so happens that it was in this church.

The second reason that the Lord desires for us to open our hearts where he might come in and sup with us, first is for companionship, but secondly because of things that He wants to do for His bride. You see, the Lord made the supreme sacrifice for His bride. When you turn to the book of Ephesians chapter five we read in verses 25-26, "*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.*"

Here we find that He made the supreme sacrifice. Because of this His desire is to protect and care for her. According to this verse, He has determined that He is going to cleanse His

bride, and He is going to do it by the washing of water through or by the Word. That's why He wants to have fellowship and companionship with us; that's why He wants us to open the door of our heart and invite Him in, so that He might cleanse us by the washing of water by the Word.

Just as the Lord is determined to cleanse us, we must realize that Satan is just as determined to defile the Bride of Christ, and usually we generously accommodate Satan by our lack of attention to leaven within the body. That is, we allow things to enter in that contaminate and defile rather than to cooperate with the Lord in keeping our body pure.

As a church, there are certain things we learn will come in as leaven into a church body that will make it defiled and will cause impurities to be there, things such as alien baptism, that is allowing people to become members who do not have scriptural baptism. If we're not careful, we can be guilty of some of these things.

Secondly, inactive church members or delinquent church members. Who's responsible for this? Satan is. Just as the Lord is determined to cleanse His bride, His church, Satan is determined to defile these churches, and often times he does so by causing us to be either delinquent or inactive in our membership within the church.

Another means is by our conforming to the world. We become conformed to the world. We imitate the world; we pattern after the world. We let the world set our standards. We let the world set our rules. Also, embracing sometimes doctrines that belong to Protestantism and their practices, but mostly a general indifference. We see here at this church of Laodicea, that this was the main problem they

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had, it was a state of indifference. Indifference to everything. So the Lord says that He desires to come in and sup with them so that He might cleanse them by the washing of water by the Word.

Now then, He tells us what the reward will be if we respond. He says in verse 20, "*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*" Now what happens? "*To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne*" (Rev. 3:21).

Now how does He knock? He knocks by means of the Word, by means of the Holy Spirit who applies the Word and by means or through His providence. These are ways that God gets our attention. That's what you knock for. When you go to a door and knock, it is to get the attention of that person who is on the inside of the door. The way that God attracts or gets our attention is by knocking through the Word, by the Holy Spirit, and even sometimes, by means of His providence as He allows certain things to occur and to happen to us.

Now for those who respond and who open unto Him, it says that He enters in and sups with them. It is possible for some within this church to have a very close spiritual relationship with the Lord where they have daily communion and fellowship with the Lord. At the same time there can be those within this church who are saved and yet are so far out of fellowship that God says they are just plain lukewarm and He is not there and having fellowship with them. It's possible to have some of both, and probably do.

I mentioned to you this morning that there were two articles that were of particular concern in **The Baptist Challenge** for this month, and I only got around to mentioning one of them, and it's in the editorial column. The second one is an article written by Bro. Edwin Zellner who is a staff-writer on the paper. He is pastor of the Victory Baptist Church in Denver, Colorado. In his article he is talking about spirituality within a church, and he raises the question. He asks, Do we have anybody in our churches today like Daniel, like John the Baptist, like the Apostle Paul, or like Matthew, or Peter, or any of these men of Bible days? You say, no we don't have Apostles today. Well, they weren't apostles to start with. But remember that they were just regular ordinary everyday men like we are today. They weren't super men. They were just plain everyday common flesh and blood like you and me. And why should we think it unreasonable for us to have somebody in our churches today like Paul who loved the Lord that much? Is there anything that is unnatural about a Christian loving the Lord as much as did Paul or John, or Daniel, or Isaiah? Why can't we have men like that today. What's to stop it? They had their sins. They were sinful fleshly people just as we are, but they loved the Lord. It is possible that within Central Baptist Church we could have a man who loves the Lord that much, so that he could have daily communion so that the Lord comes in and sups with him.

And why can't we have women in our church like a Eunice, a Phoebe, a Mary or a Martha? Why can't we have women who are that spiritual today? There's no reason why we can't. Our world today is no different from what it was when they lived. You look at the moral

standard of the world of that day and time, and I'll tell you now, it was just as wicked as our world is today. Look at the churches of that day and time. Churches like the church at Corinth, or even the church at Antioch, or the church at Jerusalem, and you find that those churches had as much wickedness within those churches, and some of them even more wickedness than even some of our churches. And yet, within those churches there were people who had daily companionship with the Lord. They had responded to the knock of the Lord, and the Lord came in and supped with them. It can happen today. And for those who will respond, who will hear Him knock, He promises that He will do that.

Again, He says, "*To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne*" (Rev. 3:21). The overcomer then will be permitted to rule with Him.

Now the Lord doesn't make that promise to any of these other six churches. This is the worst church. This is the church that the Lord says that they are so lukewarm that He simply is going to spue them out of His mouth. Yet, it is to this church that He now offers a seat upon a throne. You see how ready God is to forgive? Do you see how long-suffering the Lord really is? Do you see how God is so merciful that a church that even reaches the point that they have actually pushed Jesus out of the church to where He is on the outside knocking to get in, that He is still ready to allow them this privilege of being seated upon the throne along with Him, which makes us say that the highest place is in reach of the lowest. No matter how far you may have gotten away from the Lord; no matter how cold spiritually you may be; no matter how far you have gotten from God, the highest place is still there

ready if you will repent. God says this to the worst of the lot. A church that He could not say anything good about at all, He offers them the highest reward that there was.

So you see, even for this church of Laodicea, it was not hopeless, and if any individual within that church would simply respond, God has these great promises for them.

Now how does all this apply to us today? Well, I've tried to make some applications as we have gone along, but I want to sort of summarize all of these applications.

The church of Laodicea was the worst church of the lot. If you or I were to pick out the worst church, we'd probably pick out the church of Thyatira which was representative of the rise of Romanism, the Roman Catholic church and all of their apostasy, their false doctrines, their persecutions, their inquisitions, etc. Or we might have picked out that church that was representative of Protestantism, but the Lord picks out this church of Laodicea. You see, the Roman Catholic church was already an apostate church. The Protestant churches were never really true churches of the Lord, and they have gone into apostasy now. When we look to the church of Laodicea, we're looking at a Baptist church, and that shows that we are going to see even Baptist churches going into the apostasy as well. There are already some.

In case you don't know it, that is the big fight that is going on within the Southern Baptist Convention right now. Apostasy! Apostasy in their schools. Apostasy in their seminaries! Lindsell, a former editor of **Christianity Today** and a leader within the Southern Baptist Convention says so. If I said it, they would ignore me and reject

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what I have to say, but here's a Convention man saying so. And the big fight that they had on the floor of the Convention in Houston last month was over the fact that they said that not one single seminary and not one single college of the Southern Baptist Convention is sound in the faith. Furthermore, they said that all of their colleges and their seminaries are riddled with men who do not believe in the verbal inspiration of the Word of God. Now that is from men who are in the Southern Baptist Convention themselves. That's what the issue was about. The issue is apostasy, and the seminaries and colleges are a part of the apostasy, and they are infecting and leading others astray into the apostasy. And Lindsell and these others of the Baptists Faith and Freedom Committee (I believe that's what they call themselves), whether they realize it or not, they are still part and parcel of the apostasy as they are supporting the apostasy when they urge people to stay in the Southern Baptist Convention, and to fight it from the inside. God never said to stay in but He said to separate. And when they still urge and recommend their churches to continue the support of the Cooperative Program, which is where these leaches get their money to teach their apostasy, they become part and parcel of the whole system which supports false doctrine that is now permeating all of the schools of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Now I don't always speak second hand on some of these things, because I went to Southern Baptist Convention schools. I graduated, and I got my degrees from Southern Baptist Convention schools, including the New Orleans

Baptist Theological Seminary. I know what's going on there from personal, firsthand knowledge, and it's gotten far worse than what it was even when I was there.

In other words, the church of Laodicea refers to Baptist churches that are going into the apostasy which is going to culminate in the complete rejection of Christendom by all denominations including Baptists. And here we see Jesus Christ outside of His own church showing that He has been rejected.

Now the church of Laodicea as we pointed out, is a picture of this present church age. What is the picture then? It is a place where we find the domination of preachers who stand for the truth. Paul says in Second Timothy chapter four that they will heap to themselves teachers having itching ears. Why? Because they will not endure sound doctrine. What happens with a preacher who tries to preach the truth in the Southern Baptist Convention? He is ridiculed. He's mocked. He's made fun of. They try to keep him down. They dominate, control.

We also find the church of Laodicea is a picture of the injection of the world and worldliness into the church. So much so that you cannot tell any difference between the conduct of the membership of the church and the conduct of those that are of the world. No difference. Moral standards are identical. Dress standards are identical. Moral code is the same. No distinction made between the church and the world, it's all the same. It didn't use to be that way, but today you can't tell the difference. It's reached the point of lukewarmness. Churches that will not take a strong position. They are non-positioned churches. Compromisers!

Reminds me of the fellow they tried to put on the carpet as

to what he believed. They said "Well, what do you believe?" He said, "I believe what my church believes." They said, "Well, what does your church believe?" "Well my church believes what I believe." And that's about all they could get out of him. He just never told them anything. Churches have compromised today to where you can't pin them down as to what they believe. They don't want to be pinned down.

They have now developed so many different organizations within these churches that are foreign to the word of God, that churches have been completely divorced and separated from the real work that God gave them to do, the work of preaching the gospel to the whole world. They have their boards, their mission societies, their mission secretaries, their mission committees, their mission Directors. None of these are scriptural. God intended that every New Testament church was to be their own mission society. God intended that each New Testament church was to be it's own mission board, and not to have any outside of the New Testament church. Each church was to do their own mission work. But instead they now organize their Conventions. They now organize their Associations. They have now organized their Fellowships and other organizations, and all of these are extra-scriptural organizations, and all of them are man-made. The church of Laodicea is typical. Churches increased with goods. Great church buildings, great educational institutions, great publishing houses, wealthy mission boards, large endowments, and the emphasis is on nickels, noses and numbers. This is the Laodicean church.

Today, we've reached that point. That's the way to determine a church's greatness. We count up their numbers. If they

don't have great big numbers, there must be something wrong. If they don't have baptisms every Sunday, something must be wrong. If they don't have people walking down the aisle every Sunday, having rededications, or this or that, something must be wrong. All that they are using are fleshly means to build and promote numbers, because they are interested in nickels, noses and numbers. But God doesn't say all of these things. Yet in spite of all of this, Christ is on the outside.

A church's wealth may indicate that they have money, but it doesn't indicate that they have spirituality. A church's size may indicate that they have numbers, but it does not indicate the spirituality of that church.

Here was a church, the church of Laodicea that was large, wealthy, increased with goods, and didn't think they had any need of anything at all, but they had no spirituality at all. It was a church that was lukewarm, ready to be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord. What is so sad is that they were not aware of their condition, even as there are churches like that today that are not aware of their condition.

But somebody says I thought the church was to make the world get better and better and better under the influence of the church; that the world was going to improve. Really we find the very opposite. The world is the same but the church has absorbed the world. It is not the church having its influence upon the world, but it is the world that is having its influence upon the church.

In First Timothy chapter four we read in the first verse, "*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter time,*" that means the last days, "*some shall depart from the faith, giv-*

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ing heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." Second Timothy chapter four, verses 1-3, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears."

Notice in chapter three of Second Timothy beginning in verse 1: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as their's also was. But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra;

what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim. 1:1-13).

Now these verses are not a description of the world, but a description of the churches of the last days, the Laodicean church age. In these verses that I read to you from this third chapter of Second Timothy, there are some eighteen sins listed here as affecting the churches of the last days. Of these eighteen sins, how many affect you? How many of these sins are true in your life? Let's don't make it so broad and general that we evade it. Let's make it personal. Let's read these verses. Let's look at our own lives in comparison with this, and let's ask ourselves a question, "Am I guilty of these things? Am I guilty of the sins of the Laodicean church, the churches of the last days? Am I guilty?" If so, then you are a part of the problem not the solution. But you can be a part of the solution if you will simply listen to Jesus as He speaks.

Speaking to you now as a member of one of the Lord's churches, He says to you, not to your neighbor, not to your husband, not to your wife, not to your children, not to your parents, but Jesus Christ is speaking to you as a member of one of His churches, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man," that is, if you will "hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." There's the solution.

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (3:19). Their's the solution. If you want to be part of the solution as to what you can do to make Central Bap-

tist Church a more spiritual church, there's the answer, and it has to be done by individuals. You cannot be concerned whether sister so-and-so or brother so-and-so does it or not. It has to be whether you personally are ready to get right with the Lord or not.

Let's don't be concerned about what so-and-so does or does not do. Let's be concerned about us personally as individuals. Do I want to help make this church a more spiritual church? Do I want to help reclaim this church from spiritual lukewarmness? Do you? If I were to ask for a show of hands, every hand would go up I'm sure, but there's more to it than saying yes I do. Will you? Of all the seven letters that we find here, this letter has more meaning and more application to you and me today than all the other six because we are living in the times of the Laodicean church.

Finally He says, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev. 3:22). Will you hear?

Now God will not force you. He will not make you. He will not drive you, but He will beg you. He will plead with you. He will implore you. He will try to love you to where you will respond with love toward Him, but this Laodicean church was so lukewarm and so cold that they would not even respond to the love offered to them by their own Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Will you?

As we have gone through these seven churches, I have tried to make these as personal as I could, to me as the pastor, and to you as a member. As I preach, and as I discuss these matters with you, they are to me as well, for, as your pastor, I feel like I am just as guilty as anybody else. I believe all of us can find a place where we fit, but simply to admit it and do

nothing about it is no solution at all. There must be real genuine repentance.

How spiritual are you? What is your temperature? Is God on the outside knocking at your heart? Do you need to be more spiritual than what you are to help bring more fervor and zeal into our worship of the Lord? Only you can change it. I can preach until I am black in the face, but if you will not, all my preaching will be in vain.

I close with one statement that I just happened to think about right now. My dad was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Van Buren, Arkansas before he came to this church. That church was a wealthy church. They had lawyers, doctors, the president of the largest bank of the city. In other words, it was where all the wealthy people had their membership if they were Baptists. He preached in that church for several years, but he said they didn't care how much he preached as long as they had a man who would preach the truth to them, that was all they wanted, but they weren't going to do it. And Dad said that as long as he preached at that church, not one person ever said one word against what he preached. Occasionally somebody would say that's really what you ought to preach. We need it. But no changes ever came about.

Finally one day the Lord opened the door here for Central Baptist Church to call him, and he came here. To show you the respect that that church had for him, they maintained that pulpit empty for six months, hoping that he would change his mind and go back, but Dad said all the time that he was there, that church stayed cold, indifferent. It didn't matter what he preached, they just would not change. They didn't care. They were rich, increased with goods.

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HATE...

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eternal damnation.

Titus 3:3 says that man is "hateful." This does not refer to a hateful attitude in the modern use of the term. That idea is expressed in the same verse which speaks of men "hating one another." Hateful is used here in the sense of being deserving or worthy of hate (see Rev. 18:2).

Man cannot fully appreciate the love and mercy of God without first realizing just how unworthy he is. There was absolutely nothing in man that caused God to send Christ to die for us. That gift was an act of pure grace towards worthless, hell deserving sinners.

The acceptance of this fact in no way creates self-esteem in man, as the purveyors of modern psycho-theology teach. It does promote humility and induces self-loathing (Ezk. 36:31). Above all it produces the love and gratitude for the Lord Jesus Christ that He justly deserves (Lk. 7:36-50).

No wonder the Apostle John exclaimed, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 Jn. 3:1). We should be awe stricken and humbled to our knees to think that God could pity us when we were void of any redeeming quality and unworthy of the least of His mercy.

Knowing that God hates wicked men, we too should hate them. As David said, "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee: and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies" (Psm. 139:21-22).

"But," someone says, "did not Jesus say we should love our enemies?" Yes! We should love them and have compassion

on them, in that we desire their salvation. But we should hate them in that we abominate what they are.

This renders crystal clear the saying of Jesus, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk. 14:26). If our family members set themselves against God then we must stand with God and count them our enemies. Even when our own lives are in opposition to God, we must hate our "own life also" and mortify ourselves that we might become the true disciples of Christ. (See 2 Chr. 19:1-2; Tit. 1:8).

Proverbs 29:27 says, "an unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked." There is an eternal enmity between God and the unrighteous on the one hand and Satan and his followers on the other. This antagonism can only be removed in Christ, and more specifically as men are reconciled to each other and to God in the church (Eph. 2:13,16).

Moses went so far as to say that God abhors His children when they turn from Him (Dt. 32:18-19). While for His grace He does not abandon us to hell, yet our lives become despicable in His sight. If we follow Him, He loves us in the sense that we have His approval. As Jesus said, "He that hath my commandments, keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him" (Jn. 14:21).

As for Satan's children who continue in impenitence, God will eventually withdraw all offers of mercy and love and then His disposition toward them will be unmitigated hatred. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the

Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (Jn. 3:36). "The wicked... his soul hateth. Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest" (Psm. 11:5-6). "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever" (Rev. 14:11). — *Missionary Baptist Seachlight.* □

WNR...

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children to private schools. For example, 44.6% of Boston's public school teachers enrolled their children in private schools, compared with 28.9% of all families.

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Court Acts on Graduation Prayers. The U.S. Supreme Court has set aside a federal appeals court ruling that prohibited student-led prayers at public school graduation ceremonies in nine western states. The case involved an Idaho school district that allowed graduating seniors to make their own decisions regarding prayers in commencement activities. The policy grew out of "the school district's desire to remain neutral and to allow the students to dictate the content of graduation." By dismissing the case, the Court removes any legal bar to student-led prayers in the states covered by the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. However, nothing prevents the appeals court from issuing the same ruling if a similar case is brought before it. The dismissal of this most recent case on what amounts to a legal technicality does little to clear up the Court's opinion on the question of student-led prayers. The Christian Coalition has urged Congress to provide greater protection for religious speech in public places.

ELCA Book Rejects Literal Resurrection. "We can no longer understand the resurrection of Jesus in a literal sense," wrote Dr. Gerd Luedemann in *The Resurrection of Jesus*, a 263-page book recently published by Augsburg/Fortress of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Luedemann, professor of New Testament and director of the Institute of Early Christian Studies at the University of Groettingen, added: "And about the fate of Jesus' corpse: Did it decay? At any rate I regard this conclusion as unavoidable" (p. 180). The Jesus Seminar, a group of about 70 scholars from most of the major denominations, including the Roman Catholic Church, also concluded that Jesus did not rise from the dead. The Jesus Seminar scholars contend that their views are promoted on the campuses of most church colleges and seminaries of the major denominations.

* * *

Goals 2000. New history curriculum introduced by the Clinton Administration's 275-page *Goals 2000* contains nothing about Paul Revere, Thomas Edison, the Wright brothers and the first U.S. Congress; only a tiny mention of George Washington; a brief note about Abraham Lincoln and the Gettysburg Address and no reference to Robert E. Lee. It has 19 references to McCarthyism, 17 references to the Ku Klux Klan and other revealing examples. One science teacher commented, "I have not met anyone who felt the book was any more than an attack on traditional American values."

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SECURITY...

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be saved; why then should we have to do good to remain saved?

The Practical Argument

This argument is likewise sufficient in itself to reassure the believer; but Paul is not content to stop here. He continues to pile assurance upon assurance. Passing from the theological argument, he takes up another line of proof which we have called the practical argument: "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?" The practical argument which Paul here summarizes is too often ignored by both sides of the controversy. It requires a curious type of mentality indeed to believe that God, having delivered up his beloved Son to shameful suffering and death in order to save guilty sinners, would then cast aside those saved sinners, merely because they proved themselves, though saved, to be still sinners. Such dealings would be most impractical on the part of a God who knew from the beginning that salvation would not make men sinless. Paul's point is this: Having given us, or on our behalf, the dearest possession He had, will God then withhold from us those things which, though exceedingly precious, are yet of far less value than the Son of God? Would God devote His Son to suffering and death in our stead, and then deny us that salvation which Christ died to secure?

The Legal Argument

Paul then considers the believer's legal status before the judgment bar of God. "Who," he asks, "shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" The expression "lay to the charge of" is the Greek word *enkaleo*, which means "to accuse," or "to bring charges against." In its technical sense, the word appears to refer primarily to the original charges because of which a person is called into court. (The word literally denotes "to call in." Note its usage in the following passages:

"Therefore, if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies: let them *implead* one another" (Acts 19:38).

"For we are in danger *to be called into question* for this day's uproar" (Acts 19:40).

"And when I would have known the cause wherefore they *accused* him, I brought him forth into their council: Whom I perceived to be *accused* of questions of their law" (Acts 23:28-29).

It seems obvious from these illustrations that the word in question refers to the original charges which result in the accused being brought before a tribunal for judgment. The accusations made in the course of the trial, whether by a prosecutor, or by witnesses, are denoted by the word *kategoreo*, "to accuse." It therefore appears that Paul's dialogue with himself in verses 33 and 34 signifies the following:

"Who has the authority to call one of God's elect before the bar of judgment? Only God, Himself, the very One (v. 30), who has previously justified them.

In our system of jurisprudence, the person who officially summons a citizen to court to be judged is the public prosecutor, variously called district

attorney, state attorney, prosecuting attorney, etc. In the court of heavenly justice, God Himself, is the prosecuting attorney — the adversary with whom men are advised to agree quickly, lest He deliver them to the judge (Mt. 5:25). The word "adversary" here refers to a legal, not a personal, enemy. Paul then inquires, "Who is the one who pronounces judgment?" He answers: "Christ, who died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." "Who is the judge?" "It is Christ, the very one who died to save us from judgment; He who also rose and now sits at the right hand of God, interceding for us." Thus the believer's legal position is incredibly unassailable. He finds himself, legally, in the position of having for a prosecuting attorney, one who has, on unimpeachable grounds, already declared him to be righteous before the claims of the law. Furthermore, he finds, sitting on the bench as judge, the One who took his place under the sentence of the law as his substitute, and who bore all of the punishment he deserved in his stead. Moreover, this same Person who sits as judge *is the believer's own defense attorney, who even now represents him before the heavenly bar of justice*. Can anyone ask for a more impregnable legal position than this?

It will be remembered that in Rev. 12:10, Satan is called the "accuser of the brethren," and it is asserted that he accuses them before God day and night. How does Satan's position as accuser of the brethren fit in with what has been said above? In the passage cited, the word *kategoreo* is used primarily to refer to giving testimony, or making accusations, in court. It is often used in a nonlegal sense with the simple meaning

of "to accuse." In a legal setting it refers to making accusations against the accused, whether by a prosecutor, or by witnesses. Note Acts 24:2, 8, & 18, where the word "accuse" stands for *kategoreo*; also verse 19, where the Greek word is translated "object." Thus, by the use of this term, Satan is depicted as making accusations, or giving testimony, against the brethren, before the throne of God. However, since only God has the authority to call His elect into court, which He obviously will not do (since He has already pronounced them to be righteous), Satan is in the position of attempting to give testimony against persons who have not been indicted, or called into court! No wonder he is finally ejected from the heavenly premises and "his place is no more found in heaven!"

The Devotional Argument

Having pointed out by four different lines of proof the believer's perfect security, Paul then proceeds to the fifth and last argument, which we may call the devotional argument. The Apostle has shown that our eternal security is the result of the various positions which are ours by the marvelous grace of God. Our general position is such that all things work together for our eventual welfare. Our theological position is that of having been foreknown by God, and predestinated to be made like His Son. Our practical position is that God gave His dearest possession to effect our salvation. Our legal position is that only He who justified us can initiate legal charges against us; furthermore, even if we could be brought into court, the judge is the very one who became our substitute to save us from judgment. More-

(See **SECURITY** on page 24)

FELLOWSHIPS

and

CONFERENCES
LIBERAL, KS

September 18-20, 1995, Fellowship Baptist Church, 216 Wilson, Liberal, KS 67901, L. K. Landis, Pastor

* * *

GRENADA, MS

September 19, 1995, Central Baptist Church, 327 Second St., Grenada, MS 38902, Cecil A. Fayard, Pastor.

* * *

SIOUX FALLS, SD

October 2-4, 1995, Empire Baptist Temple, 412 S. Hawthorne Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57104, Ron Tottingham, Pastor.

FORT WORTH, TX

October 2-4, 1995, Lake Worth Baptist Church, 4445 Hodgkins Rd., Ft. Worth, TX 76135, Jerry D. Locke, Pastor

* * *

LITTLE ROCK, AR

October 23-25, 1995, Central Baptist Church, 15601 Taylor Loop Rd., Little Rock, AR 72212, B. Lawrence Jones, Pastor.

* * *

CINCINNATI, OH

November 7-9, 1995, Central Baptist Church, 7645 Winton Rd., Cincinnati, OH 45224, James W. Love, Pastor.

* * *

MATTOON, IL

November 27-30, 1995, Bible Baptist Church, 34th & Marion Sts., Mattoon, IL 61938, Tom Pullen, Pastor.

* * *

HUMBLE, TX

January 11-12, 1996, Northway Baptist Church, 5939 Bender Rd., Humble, TX 77396, David Stone, Pastor.

* * *

WESTCLIFFE, CO

January 23-26, 1996, "The Retreat In the Rockies". Wetmore Baptist Church, P.O. Box 84, Wetmore, CO 81253, Brian Withrow, Pastor.

We shall be happy to list the dates of fellowship meetings of independent Baptist churches throughout the country. Please send the dates far enough in advance.

CHURCH...

(Continued from page 21)

They had need of nothing. And he could preach all he wanted. They liked his preaching. They thought he was a good preacher. They knew he preached the truth, but they just weren't going to do it. So he left, and came here to Central Baptist Church.

I wonder why a church will listen to the truth, know the truth, know that it's what they need, and yet still will not do it. I don't know. But that's the way it was with the church of Laodicea.

I don't know whether we're like that church of Laodicea or not, but I'm afraid that we're getting pretty close to it if we're not, and we are the only ones that can do anything about it, but we won't do it unless we want to, and it's going to have to be done by each of us as individuals.

Do you want to be more spiritual? Would you like to see the blessings of God really poured out upon this church? The solution then is to respond to the knock of Jesus Christ when He knocks upon our door.

As we preached during this period over these seven churches, has God spoken to your heart? Has He knocked on your heart? What will be your response? Most of those in the Laodicean church ignored it. They heard Him knock. They knew He was knocking, but they went on their worldly way satisfied to be lukewarm. Satisfied! Are you? You're the only one that can make the change. □

SECURITY...

(Continued from page 23)

over, that same person is our defense attorney, or advocate.

Paul now shows that our eternal security is unquestionable because of our *emotional* position. We are the objects of

Christ's devotional love (agape). If this be true, how can we ever be separated from His love? In the strongest terms possible, Paul asserts that we cannot be separated from the love of Christ. He runs the entire gamut of things that might be supposed to have the power to do so; then he rules out any unmentioned possibilities by saying, "nor any other creature (created being) shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." It is unthinkable that anyone who is the object of such unchangeable love could ever find that he has been cast aside because he did not measure up to the expectations of God.

The following poem was found written on the wall of a room in an insane asylum. The writer had apparently been adjudged insane by ungodly men. Would God that we all suffered from his form of insanity!

"Could we with ink the oceans fill,

"And were the skies of parchment made;

"Were every stalk on earth a quill,

"And every man a scribe by trade;

"To write the love of God, above,

"Would drain the oceans dry;

"Nor could the scroll contain the whole,

"Though stretched from sky to sky. □

BIRCH...

(Continued from page 17)

viewpoint on patriotism, coupled with his romance with a Scottish nurse give a sense of joyous release when victory is won in China. This contrasts vividly with the visualization of his mutilated boy and the ensuing cover-up of his murder. □