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WHOLE NO. 428

Sin And Its Punishment *God's Justice -- Degrees In Hell*

All have *sinned*" — Rom. 3:23.

"Every transgression and disobedience received a *just* recompense of reward" — Heb. 2:2.

"A *just* God" — Isa. 45:2.

"It shall be *more tolerable* for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee" — Mt. 11:24

Reader, what you and I need to know concerning God's plan with the sinner, the lost, is not what some people think, nor what some teach, nor what some desire; but what God teaches. *God is just*. Fasten that in your mind; never lose sight of it. Over and over again is this fact impressed in the Scriptures. yet lurking in the minds of multitudes is a vague suspicion or dread that God will be *unjust* in sending some to Hell, and that He will be *unjust* in the way He will punish. Many who are thus disturbed lose sight of the fact that God is just; that *whatever God does in regard to the lost, one thing is certain— He will do no injustice*. With my loved ones, with your loved ones, with the most obscure, worthless creature, with the most refined, delicate nature, with the most cruel, debased creature that ever lived, God will do no

wrong.

Many have turned away to infidelity, not on account of the Bible's complete teaching as to future punishment, but because they have taken some one passage of Scripture and warped it or gotten from it a distorted idea of the Bible's teachings as to Hell; or they have taken some preacher's views as to the Bible's teachings on the subject.

For example, here is a boy fifteen years of age, whose mother died when he was an infant, whose father is a drunkard and gambler and infidel, who has given the boy but little moral training; and here is a man seventy years of age who had a noble father and mother, who gave their boy every advantage, the best of training, under the best of influences; yet he when a boy turned away from all these influences and spent his life in sin and debauchery, and in leading others into sin. These two, the unfortunate boy and the old hardened sinner, die. With many the idea is that God consigns them to a common punishment in Hell. But, reader,

By *T. T. Martin*

remember that *God is just*; and if that is justice, what would injustice be? *They were different in light and in opportunity and in sins, and yet punished alike? The Bible does not teach it.*

But let us go back and consider this question of sin. "All have sinned." That includes *you*, reader. "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas. 4:17). All have done this, have failed to live up to the light they have had; hence, "All have sinned."

Two questions arise: first, ought sin to be punished? Second, ought all sin to be punished, or only the coarser, grosser, more offensive sins?

As to the first, ought sin to be punished? There is a strong drift toward the teaching that sin ought to be punished only for the purpose of *reforming* the sinner. Intelligent men endorse this teaching without realizing that it is spiritual anarchy and absolutely horrible and detestable.

A woman and four little children are murdered in cold blood by three robbers for the purpose of robbing the home.

When the three are arrested, the first is found to be thoroughly penitent, thoroughly reformed, broken-hearted, over his horrible crime. If sin should be punished only to *reform* the sinner, this man should not be punished at all, though he murdered five people in cold blood; for he is already reformed.

The second is such a hardened criminal that he never can be reformed, and the more he is punished the more hardened he will become. Then if sin is punished only to reform the sinner, he should not be punished at all, though guilty of the murder of five people in cold blood.

The third is tender-hearted and easily influenced, and by sending him to prison for thirty days, he will be thoroughly reformed, though guilty of five cold-blooded murders. On this principle of punishing sin only to reform the sinner, all a sinner would have to do to make sure of Heaven would be to become such a hardened sinner that he could never be reformed, and then he would go to Heaven without any punishment at all.

People need to call a halt to realize that *sin ought to be*

(See **DEGREES** on page 23)

Editorial**The Independence of the Church**

The New Testament presents only one type of church: an independent, local assembly under the direction of the Spirit of God and under the authority of Christ, the Head of the church. Its relationships are purely voluntary, but a deep sense of kinship with other New Testament assemblies is felt and manifested. There is no earthly authority over a New Testament church.

The doctrine of the independence of the church is rooted in the competency of the individual Christian to ascertain the will of God for himself, the necessity for freedom to accept responsibility, and the accountability which individuals and groups have to God for their policies and actions.

The New Testament church has the right to own its prop-


erty free from all outside entanglements, denominational or otherwise; to select its own pastoral leadership; to ordain those called into its ministry; to select its own objects of benevolence; to choose for itself its own religious fellowships; to safeguard its faith; to reject error and to discipline the unruly. It must be free in order that it may give its primary loyalty to Jesus Christ and the Word of God, instead of ecclesiastical authority and the programs of men.

Individual churches should voluntarily associate themselves together in Christian fellowship and in Christian tasks whenever such cooperation is desirable or necessary for the larger work of Christ. Such fellowship must be based upon a common faith and common

spiritual objectives. The church has the right to fellowship with other churches or to refrain, and it has the right to discontinue any fellowship for reasons deemed sufficient by itself.

Organized denominationalism, depriving individual churches of their freedom or coercing free churches to abandon their freedom, often prevents local churches from meeting their full responsibility before God for purity of faith and life and full loyalty to the program of the Word of God. Organized denominationalism (Conventions, Associations, Organized Fellowships, etc.), invariably view the conscientious dissenter from its programs with disfavor and punishes by discrimination and sometimes ostracism in the case of the ministry. Organizations invariably produce a loyalty to human leadership which undermines the supreme loyalty to Christ which is the obligation of the church. Organizations, through the centuries, have a long record of refusing hospitality to the prophets raised up to call it back to God, often forcing them outside the camp in order to obey God. Organizations glorify its own program as if it was inspired of God, glorifies its own leadership in disobedience to the Word of God, coerces churches into a blind unquestioning loyalty which paralyzes that spiritual discrimination enjoined by the Word of God. It thus becomes the foe of that independence of authority which is the birthright of every New Testament church.

God's answer to the evils of ecclesiasticism is the independent church of Christ, free to do the whole will of God, free to accept or reject human leaders, free to support or refuse to

support human programs, free to fellowship or refuse to fellowship with other groups, free to support a prophetic ministry, free to resist apostasy. God's answer to the apostasy of our day, is the call to return to the New Testament faith, the New Testament church, New Testament methods, and New Testament fellowships. There will be no new Reformation unless there is a return to the New Testament church. 

Troubles for AT&T!

Several news reports this past year have shown that AT&T is suffering a serious decline in customers. People are leaving AT&T in droves and joining the new Christian long Distance Service in Oklahoma! While AT&T's loss of customers is hemorrhaging, so is its revenues! Income for AT&T decreased 10% last year and its stock is in sharp decline, with no improvement in sight. AT&T was once the largest and most respected telephone company in the world, but is now declining fast. Why?

Pandering To Perverts

Because its authorities allowed a few unworthy executives to pander to sodomites and to force its workers to attend "seminars" in which sodomy was promoted under the guise of "diversity" and "an alternate life style." When these workers protested they were threatened with loss of job or denial of promotion. Many of these workers called various religious organizations, especially Focus On The Family, pleading for help. And most would not

(See AT&T on page 24)

THE BAPTIST CHALLENGE

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10 Ways To Honor The Man of God

By Dr. L. K. Landis, Pastor
Fellowship Baptist Church, Liberal, Kansas

"Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour." Thus reads the Apostle Paul's admonition to the church at Rome (Rom. 13:7). In our day and age it has fallen out of vogue to give honor to honorable people. However, in the word of God we are commanded to give recognition and respect to certain ones in our society. We are told to honor the king (1 Pet. 2:17). We are told to honor our fellow-believers (Rom. 12:10). We are told that we are to honor the man that does good (Rom. 2:10). We are to honor our mother and father (Mt. 15:4), and widows who are widows indeed (1 Tim. 5:3). And certainly we are to honor our Savior and our Heavenly Father (Jn. 5:23).

Most Christians would echo a hearty "amen" when it comes to the honor that is due to each of these. We would and should give God the greatest degree of honor that mortal man can give. He alone is worthy and deserving of all our honor. As believers we should give honor to widows; we should hold the door open for them, help them carry their groceries, help them in and out of their vehicle in bad weather, etc. None would deny that we should give a very high degree of honor to our parents. I love it when I see a child giving honor to his mother or father. And most of the churches with which I am familiar have some kind of special recognition in their services on Mother's Day and Father's Day.

But dear friend, have you ever stopped to think that there is only one person in the entire Bible who is said to be "worthy of double honour"? Although I believe that God alone is deserving of our highest honor, to only one person among all of humanity are we admonished to give double honor. And that one person is the very one who receives more scorn and ridicule from the world (and even some Christians) than anyone else.

Of course I am referring to the pastor of one of the Lord's churches. "*Let the elders (pastors) that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine*" (1 Tim. 5:17). Very few of God's people ever stop to think what this means. And those who do think about this portion of Scripture seldom do anything to fulfill its requirements. However, for all of the faithful laymen who read **The Wilderness Voice** here are some suggestions as to how to obey God in this matter:

1. Practice The Principle Of "Double Honour"

Actually this command is given in connection with a financial overtone. The pastor who excels in Bible preaching and teaching of the doctrines of the New Testament is **WORTHY** of a double portion financially. I know of several churches who practice this doctrine of "double honour" toward their pastor and every one of these churches has been singly

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BOOK REVIEW

Study Guide To The Book of Revelation Enlarged and Expanded

By M. L. Moser, Jr.


The newly revised and enlarged **Study Guide To The Book of Revelation**, though previously published in four volumes, is now in one volume, perfect-bound, containing 318 pages, standard book size.

It was in the early 1970's that the author began a verse-by-verse study of the Book of Revelation in the Central Baptist Church of Little Rock, Arkansas. The study took over two years to complete, and was composed of 113 messages.

In 1981 the first volume was published which included some 13 messages covering the first

three chapters of Revelation. Three other volumes followed, and these four volumes have been translated into the Spanish language and are being used by missionaries throughout the Spanish-speaking world.

Bro. Moser's studies have continued in the Book of Revelation, and much material has been added to the previous four volumes, and have now been combined into one volume.

Study Guide To The Book of Revelation can be ordered from the Challenge Press for \$14.95 per copy plus postage and handling. 

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By M. L. Moser, Jr.

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HolyWord or Hollywood Style Service?

By Peter B. Durik

"Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error" — 1 Jn. 4:6b

We live in such a sophisticated world that even many who call themselves Christians will not be sufficed and satisfied unless they are able to attend a Hollywood style church service. They definitely consider this to be their privilege and prerogative. Anything less than this style is below their dignity and desires. In fact, their appetite for Hollywood style service is so enormous that they become extremely nervous when having something different. They become hysterical with a historical Word of God diet. Holy Word style service gives them indigestion with indignation. They dare to say right to the minister's face that they have not come to church to learn from the Bible since that is not a laughing matter; that they have not come to study the Bible as it is not a sensational experience; that they have not come to be trained as it is not a treat but a threatening situation.

Such "Christians" systematically and sinlessly stay synchronized to "Christian" radio and television stations so they will not skip a single church that sponsors such a sensational service. You will never lose your betting money as to what church they will attend from Sunday to Sunday. This is thanks to the great contributions that "Christian" radio and television stations are making for such unique and unprecedented phenomena. They keep "Christian" people informed as to which church is going to

have the holy honor to host "Christian" Hollywood style stars on its stage so people can see and stare from their padded seats.

These "Christian" stations keep such "Christians" informed of the services that will conform to their appeals, attractions and appetites. The demands for such Hollywood style services are such that these stations feel it is their whole and holy duty to fill their community calendar space with such services. Such services have priority and are aired on prime time. Such an endeavor and effort are of mutual benefit. Such "Christians" enthusiastically support such stations financially and also the churches that sponsor these artistic services. Without their generous contributions such sponsoring churches would not be able to defray all the costs of bringing "Christian" television stars to their theatrical stages. Their stadiums need to be packed so this people could have what has been packaged for them with several months of anticipation. This, then, is labeled as spontaneous and supernatural working of the Holy Ghost among such unique hosts.

At the same time as these "Christian" stations help sophisticated, sensational and secularized churches to defray their costs of operations, they are defrauding Scriptural churches of all types of support. Holy Word church services will not make the news for the community calendar station's space, as the Hollywood ones do. Just imagine how excited and enthused modern "Christians" will be to hear that the church will

have Bible study again as it always had in all its services since its existence. This is the most boring experience to him. He wants to be where there is action at the beat of "Christian" rock and roll or jazz or mariachi! With such unique phenomena he supposedly was born again and now is part of his behavior. His supposedly "new" nature has unique power, passions, propensities and pleasures for such fleshly music and fleshly manifestations: for such fleshly beat and fleshly behavior; for such worldly composition and weird conduct. Such "Christian" music has awakened and aroused carnal manifestations.

It is fascinating and funny to hear that it is the Lord that gives these phony "Christians" the letters for mundane lyrics; that gives them the message for worldly music. In other words, the message is from the Word but the music from the world! They want you to accept the music from the world for the very fact and phenomena that the message is directly from the Lord! That is how they christianize the worldly music, the same way as they themselves were christianized also! They have to have it that way because they are not willing to part from but to be part of the world (1 Jn. 2:15-17).

They give the impression that their Lord is so potent when it comes to the message, but so mentally paralyzed and paranoid when it comes to the music. Therefore, the music needs to be taken definitely and decisively from the world. With such worldly music they are having great, gorgeous and glorious amusement. They resent, ridicule and revile sacred music and with their secular music they tell us they are bringing great revivals!

"Christian" stations do not want to run the financial risk as scriptural churches of losing

their constituency to sensational, sophisticated and secularized churches. No funds, no fun and no function. A lot of twentieth century "Christians," however, have the unique fun of withholding their tithing funds so that Holy Word churches will cease to function. They will not have peace until the scriptural churches cease to exist! They want all such parishes to perish, since they are not a treat but a threat to their carnality and worldliness. In fact, many of them savagely sabotage them and make sacrilege of them.

In the context of the ever changing and confusing world the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy of the never changing Word of God. The world in its sinful condition is undergoing and going under changes from bad to worse. The world knows only one direction and destiny for its changes and constituency. The world under its prince and perdition will bring persecution to those that will live pious, pure and productive lives. "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. 3:12-13).

The world will bring such pressure and persecution as to deviate and deceive Christians. Christians will strongly be tempted to depart from the Word or to dilute the Word to such an extent as to make compatible, competent, corresponding, conformable and comfortable to the world through compromise, so there will not be any conflicts and contradictions; so there will be no difference and discrepancies; so there will be no risks and reprisals from the world. Christians will be tempted to be popular with the world and to have its praise, prize, posses-

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sions, principles, procedures and programs and to evade and escape any price for the Word of God.

The Apostle Paul warned Timothy, saying: "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:14-15).

The person that gives up the Word is because he gives in to the world. To abandon the Word is to accept the world. When you reject one, you automatically receive the other. The temptation, tendency and trend has commenced; of not staying in the Word that one has started. When that happens that is a clear sign that one has been deceived, duped and deviated (Gal. 3:1-5). Staying in the Word of God will save and spare one from such deception and defeat.

The world never brought a solution or salvation from the sin that it brought in. In fact, the world is trying to remove the consciousness and culpability of sin by popularizing, propagating and promoting it, and by peer pressure (Rom. 1:32). Staying in the Word of God will save and spare one from such deception and defeat.

The world never brought a solution or salvation from the sin that it brought in. In fact, the world is trying to remove the consciousness and culpability of sin by popularizing, propagating and promoting it, and by peer pressure (Rom. 1:32). As a result, man is more contaminated and corrupt; more degenerated, degraded and doomed; more lustful, lascivious

and lost; more perverted, putrefied and in perdition.

In the past what was considered as sin now is style; what was vice now is virtue; what was blasphemy now is blessing; what was profane now is popular; what was degenerated now is dignified; what was rejected now is well received; what was abhorred now is well accepted; what was censured and condemned now is condoned.

The world has even passed such laws as to protect those that will practice sins and prosecute those that would dare to proclaim them as such! This does not come as a shock and surprise because the church has not been preaching against sin and has not been prescribing repentance for a long time. The church was too interested, inclined and involved in the social gospel. The church failed to denounce sin and demand repentance even from people that joined as members. Churches are packed with the unrepented and, therefore, unregenerated and unredeemed people (Lk. 13:1-5; Mt. 3:1-12; 4:17).

Even people in churches know nothing of remorse, repentance, regeneration and redemption; of contrition, conviction and conversion. They often have distorted ideas and interpretations. They refuse and resent to be instructed and to have biblical definitions and doctrines.

Churches do exist now for the sole purpose of sparing people from repentance. People now can evade, escape and be excused from repentance. What formal, formidable and fine favor the churches have done for the people, so that such churches are favored by such religious, reformed and refined people! Why repent when you can sneak into another church like a snake and receive a heroic welcome on a red carpet and with better padded pews and

with a pastor that is willing to pamper and pat you on the back? Who wants a pastor that will pester you with the unique and urgent need of repentance? Who wants a church that would club you with an insubordination to God and spiritual immorality. The Bible says: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (Jas. 4:4).

Worldliness is not only a sign of lostness but also of the last days, which will be characterized by people that will not have any appetite, attraction, appreciation, affection and adherence to the Word of God. After the Apostle Paul gave Timothy the charge and commandment or the responsibility to preach the Word in 2 Timothy 4:1-2, he gives the clarification or the reason in verses 3 and 4. He says: "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; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

The church with its Hollywood style, system and syndrome is paving and preparing the way for the harlot church or religious system of Revelation 17. Such a religious system is hell-bound. Just as ministers, who have cravings and craziness for popularity, power, possessions, politics and populace, are forerunners of the Antichrist, so the Hollywood style church with its worldly cravings is a forerunner of the harlot and hell-bound church of the Tribulation Period.

The Hollywood style churches have brought worldliness to its premises, pulpits, programs and people for the sake of money, materialism,

membership and multitudes; for the sake of possessions, popularity, prestige and people; for the sake of celebrity, cash, crowds, convenience and condonation, without realizing that has brought upon themselves condemnation. The Hollywood style services are turning churches upside down. Churches are being turned upside down by the world, by the tares that they have been sowing. And tares are not capable of being born again of the Spirit and, therefore, of bearing fruit of the Spirit. They were sown spiritually as tares; they were born as tares, as "the children of the wicked one" (Mt. 13:38). They are going to be as such to the end and they will end as such.

It must be observed that the tares are the opposite of wheat. They are opposite in terms of derivation, description and destiny; of existence, essence and end; of fountain, function and future; of commencement, character and conclusion. They are distinct and different, even though their resemblance is only in their foliage or leaves and not in fruits. Tares never change nor are they converted into wheat. As wheat from its beginning or birth to its end is wheat, so tares from their beginning or birth to their end are also tares.

Tares do not symbolize humanity in general, since they are the opposite to wheat. Humanity in its existence, essence and end divides into wheat and tares. Mankind of humanity in general is the field and by virtue of creation it could be said to be God's field, "his field" (Mt. 13:24). Humanity in general is referred to as men that slept in verse 25 or the "world" in verse 38.

There are two different and distinct sowers and seeds. There is the Son of Man and

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there is also Satan. There is the "good seed" and there is also the bad or bastard seed or tares. These two different seeds symbolize "the children of the kingdom" and "the children of the wicked one" as components or constituency of the human race (Vs. 38).

If the wheat symbolizes regenerated men, then, the tares symbolize degenerated men, the opposite of the first. The tares do not symbolize the old nature. The tares include the old nature just as the wheat does in its foliage. Regeneration is being symbolized by the fruit, true only of the wheat and not of the tares. The wheat and the tares have only foliage in common, which symbolizes the old sinful nature.

Tares do not symbolize the old sinful nature. Otherwise, the wheat must symbolize the new nature. If that is the case, then, the children of the kingdom have only one nature, the new one, and the old one is extinct, erased and eradicated. According to Scriptures and sense this is not true.

Humanity in general already has the old nature. One would not even be human without it. The two different seeds symbolize two different spiritual natures that come into existence through two different births. One is imparted by the Son of Man and the other by Satan. One is divine and the other is diabolical. One is holy and the other is hellish. By one, men become "the sons of God" and "the children of the kingdom" and by the other "the children of the wicked one" and the children of "the devil" (Mt. 13:38; Jn. 1:12-13; 8:44). By one, men are dead once, physically, and by the other, are "without fruit, twice dead" (Jude 12). By one, men bear spiritual fruit and by

the other, spiritual failure. By one, men have divine birth and behavior and by the other, diabolical birth and behavior. By one, men have divine conception and capacity and by the other diabolical conception and capacity (Mt. 12:43-45). By one, men become the sons of God and by the other, bastards by the bastard seed or tares (Heb. 12:8).

It must be observed that, by the fall, men are "the children of disobedience" and "children of wrath," but by deliberate and decisive falling for and following of Satan men are "the children of the wicked one" (Mt. 13:38; Eph. 2:2-3). Satan always wants to impart his nature to man by which he becomes unregenerated and unredeemable so he will be destroyed and damned (Gen. 6:1-22). Christ said: "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (Jn. 10:10).

Since man already has a sinful negative nature, such a nature makes it easier for him to accept also the nature that Satan imparts. Both natures, the sinful and the satanic, are compatible, comparable and negatively convenient. His sinful nature does not object and oppose to accept also the satanic. It does not give him a fit, but satanic nature fitly fits him from the head to his feet.

It must be observed also that nothing is being suggested so that the destiny of tares could ever be changed or canceled; could ever be modified or minimized; could ever be altered or annulled. Their being not uprooted before the harvest is not with the intention of tares being changed or converted into wheat. That is not the case since tares have no capacity or chance to turn into wheat and bear fruit. That is to allow the

tares and the wheat to run their natural course and both, at the conclusion or end, demonstrate their nature whether be divine or diabolical. According to their essence that will be their end or destiny also.

When the seed of the Word of God is snatched, scorched, strangled and squeezed out, then the only seed left is that of the wicked one. When one fails with the truth he falls for the tares (2 Thess. 2:10-12).

The two parables of the sowing of Matthew 13 proclaim and prove the shocking, said and surprising satanic situation of man described in 12:43-45. The last state of this man becomes worse than the first. The parables describe the process by which such a situation is produced. They explain when and why such a situation eventually envelops.

Hollywood churches, failing with the truth and falling for and following the trends, tenets, tunes and the traditions of the

world, are sowing tares. By sowing tares they are doing disgrace and great disservice to the human race, that is already lost in sin. If that is not bad enough, they, on top of that, are bringing upon sinful men an unregenerated and unredeemable situation making them tares. Even tears would not change them from being tares (Heb. 12:16-17). They are doing what the scribes and Pharisees did. Christ denounced them, declaring: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Mt. 23:15).

Both the causer and the candidate have the same fate (Rom. 1:32). Both the sower and the seeds of tares, having the same essence, will have the same end. Both Hollywood Churches and Christians will run their natural course so at

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Take fifteen hymnals and stack them one on top of another. Taken all together, that's about the number of hymns Fanny Crosby wrote in her lifetime! Of course, many of those have been forgotten today, but a large number remain favorites of Christians all over the world.

Francis Jane Crosby was born into a family of strong Puritan ancestry in New York on March 24, 1820. As a baby, she had an eye infection which a quack doctor treated by placing hot poultices on her red and inflamed eyelids. The infection did clear up, but scars formed on the eyes, and the baby girl became blind for life. A few months later, Fanny's father became ill and died. Mercy Crosby, widowed at 21, hired herself out as a maid while Grandmother Eunice Crosby took care of little Fanny.

Grandmother's Guidance

Grandmother took the education of little granddaughter on herself and became the girl's eyes, vividly describing the physical world. Grandmother's careful teaching helped develop Fanny's descriptive abilities. But Grandmother also nurtured Fanny's spirit. She read and carefully explained the Bible to her, and she always emphasized the importance of prayer. When Fanny became depressed because she couldn't learn as other children did, Grandmother taught her to pray to God for knowledge.

A landlady of the Crosbys also had an important role in Fanny's development. Mrs. Hawley helped Fanny memorize the Bible, and often the young

girl learned five chapters a week. She knew the Pentateuch, the Gospels, Proverbs, the Song of Solomon, and many of the Psalms by heart. She developed a memory which often amazed her friends, but Fanny believed she was no different from others. Her blindness had simply forced her to develop her memory and her powers of concentration more.

Fanny did not look on her blindness as a terrible thing. Even at eight she composed this little verse:

*"Oh, what a happy child I am.
Although I cannot see!
I am resolved that in this world
Contented I will be!
How many blessings I enjoy
That other people don't!
So weep or sigh because I'm
blind,
I cannot — nor I won't."*

Amazing Outlook

Blindness never produced self-pity in Fanny. In her adult years she would say, "It was the best thing that could have happened to me," or "How in the world could I have lived such a helpful life as I have lived had I not been blind?"

Fanny learned of the New York Institute for the Blind and knew this was the answer to her prayer for an education. She entered the school when she was twelve and went on to teach there for twenty-three years. She became somewhat of a celebrity at the school and was called upon to write poems for almost every conceivable occasion.

On March 5, 1858, Fanny married Alexander van Alstine, a former pupil at the Institute. He was a musician who was considered one of the finest organists in the New York area. Fanny herself was an excellent harpist, played the piano, and had a lovely soprano voice. Even as an old woman (she lived to be 95) Fanny would sit at the piano and play everything from classical works to hymns to ragtime. Sometimes she even played old hymns in a jazzed-up style.

Making Much Music

After her marriage, Fanny left the institute, and in a few years she found her true vocation in writing hymns. She had an agreement with the publishers Bigelow and Main to write three hymns a week for use in their Sunday school publications. Sometimes Fanny wrote six or seven hymns a day. She was usually paid only one or two dollars for each poem. Those who composed the tunes usually kept all the rights to the entire hymn. Though Fanny could write complex poetry as well as improvise music of classical structure, her hymns were aimed at bringing the message of the gospel to people who would not listen to preaching. Whenever she wrote a hymn, she prayed God would use it to lead many souls to Him.

Music for the Masses

In her own day, the evangelistic team of Dwight L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey effectively brought Fanny Crosby's hymns to the masses. Today, many of her hymns continue to draw souls to their Savior for both salvation and comfort: "Blessed Assurance," "All the Way My Savior Leads Me," "To God be the Glory," "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior," "Safe

in the Arms of Jesus," "Rescue the Perishing," "Jesus Keep me Near the Cross," "I Am Thine, O Lord," and many more.


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STYLE...

(Continued from page 6)

the conclusion will endure supernatural curse. At the harvest time they will harvest hell. For their condonation of tares they will receive the condemnation of tares.

Of course, Hollywood Churches and "Christians" have good intentions as they give in to their worldly inclinations and alter and adulterate God's instructions. They want their message, manners, motives, music and motto to be worldly so with the world all these things will have approval, acceptance and appraisal. Acceptance and approval from the world is automatic disapproval with the Lord. The Bible says: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error" (1 Jn. 4:4-6).

The spirit of truth is in the Word and the spirit of error is in the world. Which one will you fall for and follow? The decision is yours, so is your destiny! Will you fall for and follow the truth of the modern trends? If you are saved by the Word, wouldn't you also be sustained and sanctified by it also? If you were born of the Word of God, wouldn't your belief and behavior conform also to the Word instead to the world? 

Science and the Deluge

By Harry Rimmer

[Parts 1 and 2 were printed in the February and March issues of **The Baptist Challenge**]

No modern railroad system would consider itself in operating condition without a full and efficient system of mechanical signals. As you speed along the right of way on any modern railroad at night, the brilliant lights flash like scintillating jewels in rapid sweeps of color, telling the story of safety or danger. Green for promises of peace and red for death and danger; the signals are there to be observed and obeyed!

I believe the Omnipotent Godhead has a signal system in this world in which we live. Credit Him with at least as much intelligence as a railroad Superintendent, and you must see that He does not expect His people to rush headlong through the night that leads to eternal day, without signals by the right of way. There are three signals we do well to heed. The first is

Earthquakes

No human power can control or bring about earthquakes. I was recently in Santa Barbara, and saw the wreck of some of the finest dwelling places and business buildings the ingenuity of man can devise. In a few seconds, while the hearts of sleepy folks stood still with terror, while no human hand could possibly aid them, the great concrete structures crashed and shattered to ruins in the street below. Men and women grabbed their babies and fled blindly for shelter — they knew not where. No *human* power can stay an

earthquake. It is a red light from God flashing in urgent warning. I believe it is a solemn admonition from the Deity who rules this world; and when *moral collapse* threatens this *physical* warning is given.

Famine

is another specter that stalks the footsteps of man, which no human power can control. Diversified farming, rotation of crops, animal husbandry, scientific distribution of harvests; all must fail without the Providence of God. A man may plant — the result is largely out of his hands. If God withholds the rain, the seeds will not grow. If He sends too much rain, the seeds will rot. There is no clearer evidence of man's dependence on his Maker than this; he feeds from His hand.

If all the crops of all the world were gathered in one central storehouse, and the whole human race was put upon starvation rations — just enough to keep them alive — every edible thing would be consumed in eighteen months. If in that time God withheld the rain and obscured the sun or flooded all the fields, life would perish from the face of the earth. We talk about men being "far away from God!" The whole world must stay close to Him and the farthest we can get away is a year and a half.

Famine is a danger signal from God. When moral collapse threatens in the Spiritual world this red light of death and danger flashes to bring men back to a sense of obligation to God.

Flood

is the third. Like earthquake and famine, a flood comes from circumstances beyond the control of man. Dams may be built to hold back the waters, but dams break, and the most disas-

trous flood I ever saw was when a dam that men called perfect broke with the sudden strain of waters from a cloudburst. Many lives were lost, homes were destroyed, ranches literally swept away and live stock drowned. Floods are warnings from God: *and I believe that when danger threatens in the moral world, God Himself flashes these red lights of warning in the physical world: for the physical voice is the only voice the world of men will hear!*

The Bible repeatedly states that earthquake, famine and flood are acts of God, and the insurance companies of the twentieth century recognize them as such. Some times they are punitive and sometimes admonitory, but they are beyond the control of man.

The Deluge of Noah

is a case in point. This was the most disastrous catastrophe that ever struck the world in which we live, and it came because "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). The antediluvian world civilization was wiped out, because it refused to hear the voice of God. God spoke His warning to them through the prophet Noah for a hundred and twenty years, but the sin and self-confidence of the people was so deeply rooted they laughed at both God and the prophet. The result was death and destruction.

But some will say: "The flood of Noah's time was merely traditional, and you can't build a case on tradition." Indeed, I had a young student in a mid-western college tell me the entire book of Genesis was pure tradition and Hebrew folk-lore, and there never was a flood! (It took him four years of study to

learn that: it took four minutes to so tangle him up in the fallacy of his foolish arguments he abandoned the four years' position!) I have had otherwise folks tell me the same thing in many places: *but they could never prove their case.* The Flood of the day of Noah is *not* tradition, it is fact. *It stands today scientifically attested!*

I will state the case briefly as I can, from the viewpoint of three recognized branches of Science. The mass of evidence is so overwhelming books can be and have been written on the subject, so I will just give a condensed account from these three sciences. First,

The Deluge In the Science Of Ethnology

This is the science of mankind as he is divided into races, with his customs and racial origins, and the peculiarities that distinguish one race from another. Ethnology has to do with living peoples. The Ethnologist studies the customs and traditions of all present races, and he finds that every one has an account of the Flood. If the Biblical account is true, this fact can be easily accounted for, as all living races came by lineal descent from the sons of Noah who were saved with him in the ark, and they handed the same story down to their descendants in all its essential details. Some of these races have progressed and developed since the sons of Noah gave them birth, and others have degenerated; but they all retain their accounts of the Flood.

The American Indians are very evidently of Mongolian or Asiatic origin, and they have traditions of the flood and its destruction of all life except a remnant, which Indian tradition bears a close resemblance to the

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ARK...

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Chinese. The only Indian legend I am personally acquainted with is the Modoc legend, but their story is of a man who floated his family on a raft of logs, while he picked up swimming animals of different kinds until he had two of each. He landed after many days of adventure on a high mountain, and from him the world was re-populated. I have heard other legends, however, from those who have worked with other tribes, and with some minor changes the story is essentially the same.

The Polynesian record closely parallels the Biblical account. While I was in the Islands last summer, I became immensely interested in the folklore and traditions of the natives, and I was most fortunate in acquiring the "Fornander Collection of Hawaiian Antiques and Folk-Lore," published by the Bishop Museum. In Volume Six — No. 2, Third Series, Part 2, there is the ancient Polynesian account of the flood.

The hero of the account is one Nuu, (pronounced noo-oo, a close approach to No-ah). In obedience to the commands of the god Kane, Nuu built a large vessel with a house on it, and it was called "Waa Halau." In this craft, accompanied by his wife Lili-Noe, he rode out the deluge in safety. When the flood subsided, the three gods, Kane, Ku, and Lono entered this "ark" and told Nuu to get out. He did so, and found himself on top of mount Mauna Keo on the island of Hawaii. He dwelt in a cave there, and called the cave after his wife, Lili-Noe, and the cave remains as proof, to this very day! When Nuu left the ark, he took with him a pig, coconuts and awa as an offering to his god, Kane. (Note that the ark must have contained ani-

mals, and he follows the action of Noah in sacrifice.) As he left the ark, he looked up and saw the moon, and thought that was Kane, so he offered his pig, coconuts and awa to the moon. Kane was very angry, and came down to punish him. The path he came down was a rainbow, and when Nuu explained his mistake Kane went back to heaven over his rainbow path, *but he left the rainbow as a sign of forgiveness*, which is another close parallel of the Genesis account. Nuu had three sons (another parallel) and as all the rest of mankind died in the flood, he became the progenitor of a new race.

The Chinese account is found in the book of Li-Ki. It has many similarities with the Genesis account, ascribing as the cause of the flood the wickedness of man who despised the councils and laws of Heaven. It gives the same causes for the flood from nature, saying the flood came when "the pillars of heaven were broken ... the earth fell to pieces, and the waters enclosed within its bosom burst forth with violence, and overflowed." A goodly remnant were saved, and re-peopled the earth.

The Descent of Man embodies the account of the flood in India. The warning was given to Manu by a great fish who said, "A deluge will sweep all creatures away. Build a vessel and worship me, and when the waters arise enter the vessel and I will save you." This Manu did, and when the flood began, the fish towed the vessel to the mountains of the North, where they fastened it to a tree, and as the waters descended they floated down. Since all save Manu died in the flood, he peopled the earth anew.

From British East Africa a friend writes me a weird account of a legend concerning the flood. From the wilds of the

South American jungles I am given a tribal tradition of the deluge. In the early records of Spanish explorers in the Islands of the sea and the mainlands of new continents we read of traditions of the flood, and even from the primitive Malays the record is the same. The summary is plain:

Whenever we find a similarity of account from living witnesses, we say the story is true and the fact proved. All living races tell us there was a deluge; the witnesses agree: the fact stands established.

Archaeology

The science of Archaeology bears the same striking testimony. As Ethnology is the science of the records and customs of living races, so Archaeology is the science of races that are dead and gone. The men who have lived and labored, and who left their works covered by the dust of ages, still speak with a clarion voice from the tongueless records of forgotten things. Many wondrous testimonies to the inspiration of the Bible have been advanced by this science of Archaeology, for every time we sink a spade into an ancient dwelling of a past age, we find new light on the customs and histories of other days. In Egypt, in ancient Briton, in Palestine, in Asia and Asia Minor, in South America and North America the Archaeologists have been gathering startling confirmation of the truth of the Genesis account of creation and its record of man.

The first voice we hear now is the voice of Ancient Babylonia. I give this witness first because it is the most striking and complete. This record is dated from about 3000 B.C. In a previous article I mentioned the clay tablets discovered by George Smith in 1870. These cuneiform tablets told the story of

the flood in hundreds and hundreds of words. It was an unabridged account.

The "Noah" of the Babylonian account was one Gilgamesh, who lived in a city noted for sin and violence. Warned by Istar of an approaching deluge, he followed instructions and tore down his house to build an ark. In it he took "seed of every kind of life." His ark was cube, 140 cubits each way, and had a mast and pilot-house. He finished the ark and made it watertight with pitch, or bitumen. When the gods repented of their anger, they turned the ark into the mountains of Armenia (called in Genesis "The mountains of Arrarat") where the man and his wife re-peopled the earth. The similarity to the Genesis account is striking.

Egyptian records also have been recovered. The ancient Egyptian account tells how a great flood wiped out all mankind except a few wandering shepherds who escaped under the protection of the gods by climbing to the high mountains of Armenia. This flood was sent by the God Ra the creator, who was angered by the insolence of man. He repented of his deed, and swore never to destroy the race again.

The Druidic legends of ancient Briton tell of a flood which the Supreme Being sent on the earth because of the gross sin of mankind. The waves of the sea came higher than the hills of Briton, and the rain fell from the clouds in such volume that the waters soon covered the earth. One ancient patriarch, a man of high piety, was shut up in a stout ship with a select company of worshipers, and after riding safely through the cataclysm, these few peopled the earth with its present population.

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FELLOWSHIPS AND CONFERENCES

BIG SPRING, TX

April 8-10, 1997, Birdwell Lane Baptist Church, 1520 Birdwell Ln., Big Spring, TX 79720, Lewis McGarity, Pastor

* * *

LYNCHBURG, VA

April 9-11, 1997, Gospel Baptist Church, 1415 Florida Ave., Lynchburg, VA 24501, Carl B. Mills, Jr., Pastor.

* * *

DALLAS, TX

April 15-17, 1997, Independent Baptist College, 3902 Blue Ridge Blvd., Dallas, TX 75233, Glenn Dotson, President.

* * *

GRAND JUNCTION, CO

April 24-26, 1997, Mesa View Baptist Church, 2876 "B" Rd., Grand Junction, CO 81503, Jim Allmond, Pastor.

* * *

CALVERT CITY, KY

April 27-May 2, 1997, New Hope Baptist Church, 1661 Griggstown Rd., Calvert City, KY 42029, Edgar Lee Paschall, Pastor.

* * *

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK

July 7-9, 1997, Beth Haven Baptist Church, 12400 S Western Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73189, Ivan G. Casteel, Pastor

RUSSELL, SPGS., KY

July 15-17, 1997, Union Independent Baptist Church, Hwy 3525, Russell Springs, KY 42642, Charles Whaley, Pastor.

* * *

GARLAND, TX

July 21-24, 1997, Rodgers Baptist Church, 2822 S. Jupiter Rd., Garland, TX 75041, Ron Thomas, Pastor

* * *

SIOUX FALLS, SD

October 6-8, 1997, Empire Baptist Temple, 412 S. Hawthorne Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57104, Ron Tottingham, Pastor.

* * *

FORT WORTH, TX

October 6-8, 1997, Lake Worth Baptist Church, 4445 Hodgkins Rd., Ft. Worth, TX 76135, Jerry D. Locke, 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.

ARK...

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The oldest written record of the flood is in the Sumerian legends, and as evidence of their accuracy we print this recent discovery:

Science Supports Flood Story In Bible

"NEW YORK, March 16, 1929 — (AP) — The Biblical story of the flood has the support of material evidence unearthed by science.

"Returning from an ar-

chaeological expedition to Mesopotamia, Professor C. Leonard Woolley said he had found an eight-foot layer of silt and clay deposited during an overflowing of the Euphrates river and the Biblical deluge.

"Professor Woolley headed an expedition of the museum of the University of Pennsylvania and the British museum which with a crew of 160 Arab workmen has been engaged for seven years in excavating the ruins of ancient Sumeria.

"Penetrating through a layer of evidence indicating a highly developed civilization of about 4000 B.C., they suddenly came upon a layer of silt or sand in which all manifestations of human life ceased to exist.

"Beneath this deposit were utensils in the native fashion and expertly molded brick, indicating a high peak of cultural development.

"Professor Woolley emphasized that he attempted to prove nothing by his finds.

" 'We are not out to prove anything or disprove anything,' he said. 'If we were we would be bad archaeologists. We, as scientists, use the things we dig up with any other kind of information which may be forthcoming. In this case the previous information was in Genesis and in the Sumerian and Babylonian legends.

" 'The eight-foot deposit of clay in three places as much as 200 yards apart can only have resulted from a flood of unexampled magnitude, and this can only be the flood of Sumerian legend and history, the flood of the book of Genesis.' "

Genesis Record:

There was a deluge.

The race of mankind was destroyed.

A remnant was saved.

These escaped by Divine aid.

A warning was given.

An ark was built.

Animal life was preserved.

The ark floated under Divine care.

The ark landed in the mountains of Arrarat.

The released remnant sacrificed.

The flood came because of sin.

God promised not to destroy man again.

A sign was given.

The saved few re-peopled the earth.

Archaeological Records state:

There was a deluge.

The race of mankind perished.

A select few escaped.

Through the care of the gods.

The remnant was warned.

A boat was made.

Animals were saved with the man.

The boat was saved by the gods.

The boat landed in the Armenian mountains.

The saved few worshiped with sacrifice.


The deluge came because of human failure.

The gods repented and pledged peace.

A sign was given.

All men came from these few.

And finally both agree that the causes of the flood were rain and marine catastrophe.

As in the case of Ethnology, the witnesses all agree. When we find such parallel agreement in legends among ancient people, we decide they lived together or had a common ancestry. So in this marvelous harmony of Scripture and legend, we see not only proof of the reality and historicity of the Deluge, but we have the additional proof of *common ancestry for all Noah's descendants*. [Part 4 next month] 

Church Sovereignty

By L. S. Ballard

Church Sovereignty is by no means a new subject. It has been hashed and rehashed over and over again by outstanding scholars among Baptists as well as by scholars of other faiths.. This subject is one among the many that can endure the hashing and rehashing of all theologians and still live. A few men dearly love this eternal fundamental truth, while many men dearly hate it and do all within their power to destroy it.

Strange as it may seem, some leaders preach and teach Church Sovereignty loud and long and at the same time deny the churches their rights and privileges to exercise and enjoy their sovereignty.

To be sovereign means to occupy the highest; to be most powerful; to be superior in position; to be independent of. This definition is according to the dictionary. Now arises the question, what does the Bible teach on the subject of Church Sovereignty? According to the dictionary, to be sovereign is to occupy the highest. In the Bible we find Jesus speaking to the church and saying, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Mt. 16:19). By no authority can it be said that any other organization, group or company has ever been so exalted, intrusted or commissioned as have the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus, while on earth, constituted only His church. He placed the ordinances in His church, and He commissioned His church to keep the ordi-

nances and to preach the gospel to every nation unto the end of the age. In Matthew 26:26-28 it tells of the institution of the Lord's Supper, and it was instituted in the church. In Matthew 28:19-20 we find recorded the world-wide and age-long commission to preach and make disciples of all nations, to baptize and teach the observance of all things as taught by the Lord Jesus Christ, and this sort of behavior guarantees the blessings of Christ upon the church even unto the end of the world. This commission was given solely to the church, and to the writer, this is church sovereignty. Nowhere can it be found where the Lord has exalted any other present day organization to this high, noble and honorable position. Only His churches have this high and exalted position, therefore they are sovereign. The fact that no other organization holds this high position; the fact that no other order can occupy this Christ elevated station, explains why the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ are sovereign. Only God could exalt an organization to this superior position. For many centuries men have been trying to exalt their organized agencies to the high and honorable position of the churches of Jesus Christ. According to the Scriptures they will continue their efforts, and according to the Scriptures they will never succeed.

New Testament churches do not only hold a unique position, but they possess a non-transferable obligation also. Nowhere can it be found where the Lord ever said anything about churches having the right to transfer authority or legislate laws or regulations. Christ com-

missioned His church to execute His will, and not to legislate new laws. The church that executes the will of Christ has no time for law making and for formulating. No New Testament church can transfer her rights and privileges to any other organization on earth. Transferred rights and duties cease to be authoritative. Church rights and duties were placed in the church by divine authority and for them to remain authoritative they must remain in the church. The keys of the kingdom of heaven cannot be transferred; they cannot be loaned, given, leased, sold or stolen. There is only one with authority over the churches of Jesus Christ and He is at the right hand of the Father in Heaven (Eph. 1:22). There is but one in all the world that has the right to direct the energies of the churches of Jesus Christ. He is the Holy Spirit and He directs according to the will of Christ, and Christ's will is recorded in the New Testament (Acts 1:8; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Churches are absolutely independent of all organizations. There is no possible way by which a New Testament church can affiliate with or become a part of any other organization regardless of the kind or nature. One church can't even affiliate or become a part of another church. A church can receive into her body members from other churches, but one church cannot receive another church into her body. Therefore, since one church cannot become a member of a sister church. to the writer, it is most absurd to speak of a Baptist church being a member of an Association or Convention. God has made or provided no plan by which such a union can possibly be had. Every scriptural church is complete within itself and it is most certain that they can have no union with man-made organizations and agencies.

Regardless of the fact that man-made agencies may be made up of men that hold membership with Baptist churches, such agencies do not have any right to dictate what Baptist churches shall do. Nor do they have authority to do the work Jesus Christ commissioned His churches to do. Man-made agencies have equally as much right to ordain preachers, call pastors for churches, conduct business meetings for churches, ordain their deacons and elect

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CROSBY . . .

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To the Urban Poor

Though her hymn writing declined in later years, Fanny was active in speaking engagements and missionary work among America's urban poor almost until the day of her death in 1915. She sought to bring others to her Savior not only through her hymns but through her personal life as well. What happened when Fanny died? Perhaps one of her later hymns tells it best:

"When my life work is ended
and I cross the swelling tide,
*When the bright and glorious
morning I shall see,
I shall know my Redeemer when
I reach the other side,
And His smile will be the first
to welcome me.*

CHORUS:

*I shall know Him, I shall know
Him,
And redeemed by His side I
shall stand!
I shall know Him, I shall know
Him
By the print of the nails in His
hand."*

— Pulpit Helps

change how society views and treats us.” — CC

Marilyn Manson’s Satanic CD Popular With Youth. Satanic death-rock band Marilyn Manson’s new album *Antichrist Superstar* was the third top-selling CD in its first week of release. With his stage name taken from suicidal sex symbol Marilyn Monroe and serial killer Charles Manson, this ordained Satanist priest and his head-banging band openly defy every moral principle. Wearing T-shirts that read “Kill God, Kill Your Mom and Dad, Kill Yourself,” the band celebrates hate, racism, sexual depravity, violence, and blasphemy. Religion is a favorite theme as they mock God and rant against Jesus. Marilyn said: “Raise your kids better or I’ll raise them for you.” He said, “I’m on my way down now, I’d like to take you with me.” — CC

The Koran’s False Jesus. Islam’s *Koran* depicts Jesus as a great miracle worker and one of the greatest prophets, but says He did not die on a cross. Muslims believe that when the Jews sought to crucify Him, God called Him up to heaven and threw His likeness onto someone else, who was crucified by mistake. Muslims deny the Trinity, deity, and lordship of Jesus, and His crucifixion and resurrection. The *Koran* offers a false

Jesus, and a religion that relies upon violence and force. — CC

Homosexuality Accepted. The media and cultural elite promote the idea that homosexuality is as virtuous as heterosexuality. Before, homosexuals were seen as immoral and mentally ill; today, those who oppose their wicked lifestyle are portrayed that way. The Jan. 4 *World* said: “Gays have been so favorably portrayed by movies, sit-coms, and the news media that popular opinion seems to be turning their way. The acceptance and legalization of homosexual marriage is a real possibility, something allowed in no other culture [in history].” Those who defend homosexual marriage logically have to also defend polygamy, marriage between siblings, or marriage between a man and a female animal. — CC.

Robertson Praises Pope. Religious broadcaster and Christian Coalition head Pat Robertson had a seat of honor at Pope John Paul II’s Oct. 95 Mass in New York. He praised the Pope profusely. In his 1993 book, **The Turning Tide**, Robertson said (pg. 279): “Pope John Paul II stands like a rock against all opposition in his clear enunciation of the foundational principles of the Christian faith.” He said the Pope at his 1993 Denver visit urged

American Catholics to reach out in fellowship to their Baptist brothers and sisters in faith. — CC

Judge Vows To Keep Praying In Courtroom. Circuit Judge Roy S. Moore has vowed to defy a Nov. 23 ruling prohibiting prayer in his courtroom. In a nationally publicized case, Circuit Judge Charles Price upheld Moore’s right to display the Ten Commandments in his Gadsden courtroom but banned prayers before jury summons in any Alabama courtroom. The ruling comes out of a 1994 American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) suit against the judge for displaying the Ten Commandments and saying a prayer. The ACLU case was thrown out of federal court, but Gov. Fob James filed in state court to settle the prayer issue. After counter suits by both parties, the ACLU and Moore agreed to summary judgment in September. Moore said he plans to appeal the case to the Alabama Supreme Court.

Population Explosion. The Central Bureau of Statistics tells us that Israel’s population has now reached 5.6 million people. The greatest increase has come in the south of the country. The city of Ashdod has almost doubled, and the Ashkelon region is up 65%. The increase in the population of community

Pro-abortionists’ Insane Logic. When the president of the U. S. defends a procedure [partial-birth abortions] that aborts babies who are three-quarters born — and does so in the name of morality — is it really so surprising that some people take the natural next step and assume that killing the baby a few seconds after the journey of birth is also a moral act? Is it logical or consistent that obtaining an abortion at nine months is fully legal but killing a newborn baby gets you prosecuted for murder? Roe v. Wade was the disastrous first step toward devaluing all human life. — CC

Marrying & Military Under Fire. Former Marxist David Horowitz says he and others who hated America concluded that it could be destroyed from within if feminists and homosexuals undermined the moral foundations of society. Their chosen targets — marriage and the military — are now under assault by activists and judges. In feminizing the military, sexual harassment has wrought havoc. Homosexuals plan to challenge laws banning same-sex marriages. An activist boasts that same-sex “marriage” is “the final tool with which to dismantle all sodomy statutes, get education about homosexuality and AIDS into public schools and

settlements is up more than 600%, from 8,000 to 51,000. — The Jerusalem Post.

* * *

Creationism Museum Stalled. Plans by a Florence, Kentucky creationist group to build a \$4 million museum, nature park, and office complex are on hold after a county fiscal court voted 4 to 0 December 10 to deny a rezoning request. Answer in Genesis (AIG) had received a 9-to-4 approval from a county zoning commission in October on the proposed 97-acre Genesis Park. But a petition drive spearheaded by university professors and Free Inquiry, a secular humanist group, helped sway county officials, even though they received 700 letters and faxes in support of Genesis Park. AIG Executive Director Ken Ham says opponents falsely accused his organization of being a right-wing cult. "It really had nothing to do with land use," Ham says of the zoning defeat. "It was a philosophical battle." Land purchase was contingent on the rezoning. "We're still going ahead with the project," Ham says. "It will just have to be in a different place." Ham noted, "the Church needs to wake up to the fact that it's not just the public schools where humanists have censored Christianity, but now they are attempting to do this in the culture as a whole. So why are these humanists 'running scared' of ministries like ours? Why are they so op-

posed to us? When people build their thinking on the Word of God, then the structure of Christianity and its doctrines, such as sin, marriage, clothing and so on, can be built. The humanists recognize the foundational nature of the battle. They are out to destroy the foundation of the authority of the Word of God beginning with Genesis, which is foundational to the rest of the Bible."

* * *

Fined For Giving Away Ballpoint Pens With Crosses On Them. Man Thi Jones, a 54-year-old nurse from Folsom, California, was released December 3 after two months under arrest in Phan Rang, Vietnam. Her husband, Jack Wade Jones, paid a \$1,000 fine because his wife gave away ballpoint pens with Christian crosses on them. Man Thi Jones is a native of the Vietnamese village; she became a naturalized U.S. citizen 22 years ago. Since the United States normalized trade relations with Vietnam in 1995, at least 10 Americans have been fined and expelled for religious activities.

* * *

Madonna and Child. Controversial pop singer Madonna says she'll baptize her new daughter Lourdes as a Catholic, but isn't sure what role religion will play in her upbringing. "There are things about Catholicism that I disagree with, but there are a lot of things I'm

still intrigued by. I still go to church and light candles. The church provides a kind of sanctuary and a sense of community. I'll teach her about Catholicism but also about all religions, especially Buddhism, Judaism and the Kabbala [Jewish mystical teaching]. My own religion combines all those. I would rather present the Bible to my daughter as 'Some very interesting stories you could learn from' rather than "This is the rule."

* * *

"FOB" (Friends of Bill). An article by Charles Krauthammer in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* (3/3/97) points out the unusual friends of SBC member President Bill Clinton, many of which were invited to spend the night in the White House. He writes: "As for Clinton's actual friends, one is staggered by their sheer number and variety. Start, as he did, with James McDougal, Susan McDougal, David Hale, Webb Hubbell, and other Arkansas

cronies now shuttling to and from jail. Liars, felons, swindlers, fraud artists. These were his closest business associates. Then there are his coffee-mates. Among these friends and friends of friends we now find a Chinese arms dealer, a fugitive Lebanese businessman sought for eight years on an Interpol arrest warrant for embezzlement, and assorted home-grown ex-cons and parolees. For example, Eric Wynn, convicted thief and tax cheat, reputed associate of the Bonanno family: at coffee with Clinton, Dec. 21, 1995; in the news just last Tuesday, when his bail was revoked for failing to report his five arrests since his sentencing on 13 counts of conspiracy and fraud. And then there are the special friends, the 938 Lincoln Bedroom over-nighters who together gave \$10 million to the Democratic Party — an assortment of more Arkansas cronies,

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Services "Live" On the Internet

The 11:00 A.M. Sunday morning service of the Central Baptist Church of Little Rock can now be heard "Live" in both audio and video on the Internet. Though the Sunday morning service is the only one carried "live" every week, at times other services are also carried live. To receive the service in video you must have a modem greater than 14.400. The service can be received by searching:

www.centralbaptistchurch.org

School Abuses Provoke Public Backlash

On September 13, 1996, Mary's (not her real name) 13-year-old son came home from school badly upset. At first he was reluctant to talk, but finally, tearfully, he let it out: The school counselor had labeled him a possible homosexual in front of his entire class.

Nor was he the only one. Earlier that day, student counselor Debra Blumthal entered a middle school classroom in Pana, Illinois. She administered a personality test to students, asked them to raise their hands to indicate their individual scores, and announced the personality traits of each group to the class. Those who received one particular score were told that they could be gay.

This incident and others have sparked a raging controversy that has engulfed the entire school system. In this small (population 6,000) Illinois town, crowds of between 400 and 500 have packed school board meetings, and approximately 40 students — perhaps more — have been withdrawn from school.

Much of the concern has centered on the counseling program, which runs from kindergarten through grade 8. Parents are outraged by violations of their rights, including intrusive questioning about home life and counselors telling children that they will have "special secrets" from "mommy and daddy."

Sometimes parents who have explicitly refused permission for their children to take part have had their wishes overridden. Mrs. Danielle Wright, for example, denied permission for her shy five-year-old son Jack to undergo psychiatric examination. A few days later, while waiting to pick up her other son from school, she saw

Jack with a strange man — a counselor, she later discovered, who had told Jack that they could discuss "any secrets."

Like many parents, Mrs. Wright is outraged. "I raise my kids," she told *Illinois Family Bulletin*. "That's the job God gave me as a parent."

But parents' concerns go beyond the counseling program to such federal programs as Goals 2000, which school officials have cited in support of the "counseling." They are disturbed by a trend away from traditional educational standards and toward political correctness. (Fourth graders, for example, read stores about how to create a perfect world through environmentalism, as well as numerous tales about Indian spirits.) Parents are bothered by what they consider an arrogant attitude on the part of school officials.

In recent months they have formed Concerned Taxpayers of Pana (CTP), which advocates a rejection of Washington-based programs and outcome-based education, as well as a return to educational basics. At an October 15, 1996, school board meeting, CTP spokesman Troy Karback read a petition signed by 450 people calling for the school district to return all Goals 2000 money and revive an educational curriculum emphasizing phonics and fundamental math and science.

On October 21, however, the board voted to continue with Goals 2000 another year, leading CTP to consider its next move. Parents claim the board's action is likely to be a major issue in the next election. "We voted them in," said Mrs.

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rich executives, movie stars and other useful friends and not-yet-friends."

"Vice President Meets with Gays" was the title of an article in the January 24, 1997, Washington Blade, "The Gay Weekly of the Nation's Capital." The paper, distributed free in the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area, includes a huge amount of advertising, some of which is for grossly sinful activities. Vice-President Albert Gore, Jr., met on January 17 in his White House office with Kerry Lobel of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Keith Boykin of the National Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum, Martin Ornelas-Quintero of the National Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Organization (LLEGO), Elizabeth Birch of the Human Rights Campaign, Jeff Trammel of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, gay Democratic activist Jeff Soref, Roberta Achtenberg at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Richard Scarides at the Department of Labor, and openly gay Gore staffer Philip Dufour. Gore among other things reiterated the Administration's support for a federal gay civil rights bill.

Carter Comments On Conversion. Former President Jimmy Carter in his newest book, **Living Faith**, "Being born again is a new life, not of perfection but of striving, stretching and searching — a life of intimacy with God. Being born again

didn't happen to me when I was 11. For me, it has been an evolutionary thing. Rather than a flash of light or a sudden vision of God speaking, it involved a series of steps that brought me steadily closer to Christ. My conversion at 11 was just one of those steps." This is the kind of flawed theology one might expect from someone whose four favorite theologians/thinkers were notorious liberals Barth, Niebuhr, Tillich, and Kierkegaard. It also helps explain his liberal stance on social issues, and his 1993 endorsement of the moderate/liberal wing of the SBC. — CC

Abortion Is Justifiable Homicide? A new book praised by NOW president Patricia Ireland and feminist abortion crusader Eleanor Smeal says: "[E]ven in a medically normal pregnancy, the fetus massively intrudes on a woman's body and expropriates her liberty. If the woman does not consent to this transformation and use of her body, the fetus's imposition constitutes injuries sufficient to justify the use of deadly force to stop it" (2/15 *World*). The book, **Breaking Abortion Deadlock: From Choice to Consent**, is by Eileen McDonough who concedes the humanity of the unborn child "just as a homeowner concedes the humanity of a thief in the night but shoots him dead." But when a woman consents to conception, the unborn baby is an invited guest, not a freedom-stealing burglar. — CC

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Immigration Crisis Needs Top Priority

By G. Russell Evans, Captain USCG (Ret.)

President Lyndon Johnson back in 1965 is the man who opened the flood gates for today's run-away immigration when he signed the Immigration Reform Act, cheered on by long-time liberal Senator Ted Kennedy, D-Mass. This was a radical law that trashed out time-tested and fundamental policy on controlling immigrants and gave us the most open-door policy in history — a policy that escalated into a million *legal* immigrants each year, more than three times as many as can properly be assimilated, according to the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Adding to the problem are another one million illegals per year!

Without question, insufficient attention has been given to the immigration crisis by our media and Washington politicians. Moreover, this crisis is rapidly destroying our American culture and cries out for *top priority* to save our heritage, history and values. At this point, let us note the devastating results of this 1965 Johnson Immigration Reform Act, festering for the past 32 years:

It gave us "chain immigration" where a single immigrant generates visas for his relatives, who, in turn, generated visas for their relatives, *ad infinitum*. Even a new-born baby of an illegal immigrant mother becomes automatically a U.S. citizen with "rights" to visas for relatives.

It abolishes the requirement that one-half of immigrants from each country possess "skills urgently need in the United States," thereby giving us masses of under-skilled and under-educated newcomers seeking welfare and other programs,

costing us \$65 billion in 1996!

It also abolishes the guidelines to assure that the ethnic background of immigrants be roughly in proportion to America's so as to avoid drastic cultural change. Now, demographic studies prove, America is being transformed from European-based to a Third World culture.

Proponents of a liberal immigration policy argue that there is no "American culture" — only diversity. Others argue that our love of freedom, our proud heritage of representative government and use of the English language are compelling examples of our "American culture" — and they demand they be preserved and protected.

Do our Washington leaders understand this? Apparently not! President Clinton's selection of Rep. Bill Richardson, D-NM as U.S. ambassador to the UN, is certainly *no example* of preserving the "American culture" when this man on Jan. 17, 1995 told 400 radical Hispanics at the University of California-Riverside:

"We have to band together and that means Latinos in Florida, Cuban-Americans, Mexican-Americans, Puerto Rican-Americans, South Americans. We have to network better, we have to be more politically minded, we have to put aside party and *think of ourselves as Latinos, as Hispanics* more than we have in the past (my emphasis)."

Just what, may we ask, is wrong with thinking of ourselves as *Americans*? Richardson's inflammatory speech to the Latino Leadership Summit opposed California's

Proposition 187, a measure to deny welfare benefits to illegal aliens. Richardson and his mates demonstrate racist and anti-Gringo bias, hardly an appropriate temperament for a U.S. ambassador to the UN, that hotbed of anti-Americans from around the globe. Besides, a man who cannot support American values should not even be in the U.S. Congress, much less U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

Efforts to slow immigration and curb illegals have been half-hearted for political reasons and pressure from Hispanic-Americans.

The 1996 Immigration Reform Bill was a farce and did virtually *nothing* to solve the critical problem of run-away immigration. Washington is obviously afraid of this issue, even with a Roper poll showing 83 percent in favor of drastic reductions in immigration. According to the American Immigration Control, a non-profit organization based in Monterey, Va. 24465, here are some of the consequences of the irresponsible immigration policies of our government:

Our pride in America's history, heroes and values is being replaced with political correctness and a guilt complex of "America as an oppressor nation."

Our taxes provide services to legal and illegal immigrants costing approximately \$65 billion annually — \$981 from each American family of four.

Two-thirds of our population growth are immigrants who are straining our schools, highways and resources — and changing the face of America.

Non-citizen immigrants in 1996 collected \$7 billion in benefits: food stamps, housing, unemployment and medical assistance. 50 percent are more likely to get welfare than natives.

25 percent of federal pris-

oners are immigrants. Illegal immigrants, moreover, commit 34 percent of auto thefts and 25 percent of burglaries.

Immigration costs American workers \$133 billion annually in job losses.

400,000 immigrants collect Social Security without ever having worked a day in the United States. Immigrants get Medicare 64 percent more often than natives.

Bilingual education has doubled the cost of schooling — with immigrant families costing 90 percent more.

With this record of run-away immigration and the Roper poll showing 8 out of 10 voters demanding real reform, immigration control deserves *top priority* in Washington. In the 1996 elections, *not a single congressman* advocating immigration control was defeated. The people demand action. What is wrong?

[Editor's Comments: An additional concern that I have over this huge influx of immigrants into the United States is that few, if any, have the same religious values that we as a nation have possessed and exercised during our over 200 years of history. The Eastern Religions with their idolatry, the Moslems with their worship of Mohammed, and the more radical form of Roman Catholicism that comes from the Latin countries, serves to dilute the Christian values that our nation was founded upon, and as they become more numerous, their values and culture will replace the values and cultures of the founding Fathers of our country, and the United States will not only become a Third World Country economically, but in culture and religion as well.

Nearly all of these immigrants, both legal and illegal, vote for the Democrat Party. It

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Obeying The Lord In Mission Work

By W. A. Reece

"Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" — 1 Sam. 15:22

To have the fullest blessings of the Lord upon the work we do for Him, it is necessary that our efforts be in obedience to His commands and teachings. To this no doubt all Christian people will agree. We, as Baptist people, have ever believed this and boldly declare that the Word of God is the standard by which all human creeds and conduct must be tried. The Lord makes it clear in His Word that *obedience* is better than sacrifice, and no matter how great the efforts we make for Him they cannot be altogether pleasing if they are not in obedience to His Word.

Perhaps the idea prevails with some that in mission work the object is to do the job, and it is permissible to use whatever plan or means we choose. But the Lord's Word tells us that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). This being true, we have in the Bible complete instructions for everything the Lord requires us to do. Now the one preeminently great thing He commanded His church to do was, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have com-

manded you." Can we believe He would give such a task to His church without telling them *how* it was to be done — then declare that His Word thoroughly furnished them unto *all* good works? No! Such an idea would be preposterous. He did exactly what, He said — He not only gave the command to evangelize the world, but He tells us *how* it is to be done. It is just as essential to obey Him in mission methods as it is to obey in the mode of baptism. "To obey is better than sacrifice." Let us therefore seek with an open heart to know and obey His will in spreading the gospel to the world.

Commission Given To The Church

When Christ gave the Great Commission recorded in Matthew 28:19-20, He was addressing His church. To this all Baptists agree. Had He been speaking to individuals as such, then that commission ended when those who heard Him died. But He spake to something that would continue, for He said, "Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world." Today only one thing remains that existed among men when Christ spake those words, that is His church, against which He said the gates of hell should not prevail (Mt. 16:18).

We must conclude, therefore, that the world-wide, age-long commission was given solely to the church of Christ, which He established while here upon earth. The sacred, vital relationship of Christ and His church is brought out in the fact that

Christ Is Head of The Church

"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church" (Eph. 1:22).

"And he is the head of the body, the church" (Col. 1:18).

Jesus made His church a great brotherhood, with no head but Himself. From the figure used here we see the vital relationship of Christ and His church. No body can live apart from the head, so the church lives because the Head lives, from which we cannot be severed (Rom. 8:35-39). Also we learn that Christ is the great *wisdom* of the church, since in the head is the seat of mentality. We are not to go forth in our fallible judgment, but be guided by His unerring wisdom. Most of all, we should learn that as Head of the church, Christ is the One who has the right and authority to direct *all* her activities. The head is the nerve center which controls every movement of the body. So should the church be completely obedient to Christ in all she does. It is also declared that

The Church Is the Body Of Christ

"... the church, which is his body" (Eph. 1:23).

As the body of Christ, the church is to carry out the commands of the Head. The body has the members of service — the feet to go, the hands to work. It is the business of the body (the church) to *go* and *do* the will of Christ, the Head.

But it is the idea of some that churches have a right to organize co-operative movements to do the work of the Lord. If such right is given in the Bible, they have, otherwise they do not have. Search the Bible as much as you may, you never find either by precept or example any authority for any organization in

mission work but the local, independent church. The nearest thing to modern mission organizations to be found in the Bible is:

(1) The special offering made by the churches under Paul's instructions for the poor saints in Judea, as mentioned in the 16th chapter of First Corinthians, etc. But note that there was no common treasury. Each church selected her own messengers to bear her letter and offering to Jerusalem. Thus each offering went direct from the church to the object for which it was given (1 Cor. 16:1-3). The messengers never formed any kind of organization, and they never met again.

(2) The church at Antioch sent Paul, Barnabas and others to Jerusalem to counsel with the church there about the question of circumcision (Acts 15:1-35). This was only a church counsel — they formed no organization, and they never met again. So in the Bible we find no record of churches ever organizing themselves into any kind of general co-operative movement. Such organizations, therefore, are wholly of human origin and contrary to the will of the Lord. God's plan of "church co-operation" is that each church shall be subject unto the same great Head (Christ), be obedient to the teachings of the same Bible, and be led by the same Holy Spirit. This produces perfect and harmonious co-operation.

The Divine Plan In Action

As noted above, our Savior just before He went away gave the world-wide commission to His church. He also gave to His church the promise of the Holy Spirit, who would come to empower and

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direct them in the work He had commanded them to do. They were commanded to do nothing but wait at Jerusalem until the Spirit came to take control of the work (Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:4).

When the Holy Spirit came on Pentecost, that first church began preaching the gospel with mighty power. But they remained at Jerusalem, until a persecution came and "they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word." As a result of this, a great revival broke out about Antioch. "Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was at Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch" (Acts 11:22). This is the first record of a missionary being sent out after Christ left His church in the world. Notice that Barnabas was sent out by the church, not by the Apostles or some organization.

Barnabas secured the assistance of Paul, and a thriving church was established at Antioch. After while, when the Lord wanted to extend His work further, He, by the Holy Spirit called Paul and Barnabas to go as missionaries to other lands. The Holy Spirit also directed the Antioch church to set apart Paul and Barnabas to the mission work, which they did by fasting, prayer and laying on hands (Acts 13:1-3). All of this was done by the one local church at Antioch under the leadership of the Holy Spirit. No other organization had anything to do with it. Not even were the Apostles or the church at Jerusalem consulted. Christ gave the commission to the church. As Head of the church He has a right to direct that body, and He never did direct that the missionary be set apart


and sent out except by a local, independent church.

It has been charged that if one church sends out a missionary, unless she assumes full support of the missionary, that church is dictating to all the other churches what they shall do in mission work. Such a claim is too absurd to be seriously considered. It's wholly a matter of voluntary choice with each church whether they support a missionary or not. But such a charge against the practice of one church setting apart and sending out a missionary is in fact a charge against the Holy Spirit, and against the Bible. For all are bound to acknowledge that the Holy Spirit *did* direct it to be done exactly that way, and the Bible thus records it for our instruction.

These church missionaries made the report of their work directly to the church (Acts 14:26-27). And the churches supported them by sending their offerings directly to them (Phil. 4:10-18). There is no record anywhere in the New Testament of a central treasurer. All contributions were sent direct from the church to the person or object for which they were given.

Later, when Paul and Barnabas were preparing to go out again, they had a dispute over the proposition of Mark accompanying them on the journey, and the contention became so sharp that they parted asunder (Acts 15:36-41). Although they were at Antioch at the time, they never went to the church with the matter. Baptists have in all ages recognized the inalienable right of any person or persons to choose whom they will work with, and to refuse to work with any individual if friction or trouble is caused thereby. Paul, the greatest missionary of all time, recognized and exercised this right.

These and all New Testa-

ment preachers went out by *faith*. Not one of them ever had a guaranteed salary. They lived as the Lord provided for them, sometimes abounding, sometimes hungry, perhaps. But with unfaltering faith in God they went on. All the powers of earth and hell could not defeat them, for their Master had said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth ... Lo I am with you alway even unto the end of the world." 

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appears that at least one Congressional race in California may have been stolen by illegal immigrants voting. Because of this, there is little incentive for the Democrats to have any desire to control this immigration since most members of Congress (from both parties) are more concerned on getting re-elected to Congress than principles.

What is the solution? Barring a change in the laws (which I think is very unlikely with the present Congress), we must have home missionaries to preach to these various ethnic groups and seek to win as many of them to Christ as we can. There now are missionaries seeking to do this very thing in the inner city of Chicago, and there are probably others in other cities. If we care about our posterity, we must realize that America is now a mission field that is growing greater every day that goes by. We need to remember in prayer (and financially) these home missionaries that are seeking to reach these immigrants while there is still time. — MLMJ].

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Wright, "If they don't respond, we can vote them out."

Some citizens are forming tutor groups, where children will be trained to read using phonics. And it's not only parents volunteering for this job; several children who have already learned via phonics are eager to help their peers. "We don't have to be helpless," said one of those parents, Kathy Jones. "We just have to be willing to do what it takes to help our kids."

Events in Pana, state-level activists say, are only the most dramatic example of a larger problem afflicting Illinois and most of the nation. "The real problem is the whole restructuring of education to take power further from parents," according to education lobbyist Robert Vanden Bosch. "It's the presumptuous attitude that parents don't have rights and that 'professionals' know better than parents what our children need. That's what we have to fight." — The Baptist Bulletin. 

Missions A Privilege

It makes a lot of difference whether missions is a privilege or a compulsion. Too many things we do in our Christian experience are done under the feeling of necessity. A Sunday School class is accepted because there doesn't seem to be anyone else to take it. This compulsion drives us to Christian service. There is a job to be done and Christians must do it. I thank God for the compelling power of the Holy Spirit that urges me to serve Christ. My

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“The Baptism of John, Was It From Heaven, Or of Men?”

By J. A. Hulse

“And it came to pass, that on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon him with the elders, and spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? Or who is he that gave thee this authority? And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me: The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?” (Luke 20:1-4).

SCRIPTURAL BAPTISM

What is scriptural baptism? We say (1) it is the immersion in water, (2) of a proper subject, (3) by a qualified administrator.

1. Baptism is immersion in water. “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water” (Mt. 3:16). “And he commanded the chariot to stand still: *and they went down both into the water*, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him” (Acts 8:38). “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death” (Rom. 6:4).

2. A proper subject is one who has repented toward God and accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior — a regenerated person. When the Pharisees and Sadducees came to John for baptism, according to the third chapter of Matthew, John required that they bring forth fruits to prove their repentance (Mt. 3:8). While Peter was preaching, on the Day of Pentecost, that Jesus was the Messiah, the people were “pricked in their heart” by the Holy Spirit

and cried out: “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Peter told them: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). “For,” in this place, means because of the remission of sins. Peter continued to preach and, “... they that gladly received his word (of repentance,) were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls” (Acts 2:41).

After Peter had preached to the household of Cornelius and they had believed, Peter said, “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord” (Acts 10:47-48). A proper subject, then, is a regenerated, or saved person.

3. A qualified administrator is one who has authority from heaven. John had authority from heaven, according to the Word. “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John” (Jn. 1:6). Therefore, John’s baptism was the immersion of a saved, or regenerated person, in water, by authority of God, who sent him to baptize.

John the Baptist Was Sent From God

“The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?” This text shows clearly that this baptism could not be from God and from man too. *John was sent from God to baptize.* “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus

Christ, the Son of God; as it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare the way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins” (Mk. 1:1-5).

John baptized Jesus. “Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer (allow) it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him” (Mt. 3:13-15).

Jesus Established His Church Using The Baptism of John

John also baptized many others, some of whom followed him as “disciples,” and who later left John and became disciples of Jesus (Jn. 1:37 — 2:2). Jesus set these disciples together as His church. “And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles” (Lk. 6:12-13). Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, said: “And God hath set some in the church, first apostles” (1 Cor. 12:28). So we see that when Jesus ordained apostles He must have had a church. And in the third and fourth chapters of John we see the church baptizing. “After these things came

Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized” (Jn. 3:22). John was baptizing near by and the Jews disputed with John’s disciples about purifying. They tried to make John jealous of Jesus, but he answered them that which Jesus was doing was authorized by heaven (Jn. 3:27); and that Jesus was the Christ, and that group which was with Him was the church or bride; that the Christ must increase but John the Baptist must decrease. John continued, and said he was rejoicing because he was the friend of the bridegroom and was permitted to hear His voice. We see in John 4:1-2, that Jesus Himself did not baptize, but the disciples, or the church, did the baptizing, and that by authority from Him.

Jesus Commissioned His Church

When Jesus met the disciples after His resurrection He again commissioned them to preach the gospel, to baptize and to teach: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Mt. 28:19-20).

Just before His ascension, which after He had been with the disciples for forty days after His resurrection, His parting words were: “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth” (Acts 1:8). This was spoken to the “they” and the “them” of

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JOHN...

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the first chapter of Acts. This "they" and "them" was His church — the 120 which received the baptism of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost. That baptism of the Holy Ghost, which Jesus had promised them (Jn. 14:16-17; Acts 1:5), made this called-out assembly *a living organism*, and it, and none other, has John's baptism, which is from heaven. Any other baptism is of men and cannot be scriptural. When Jesus Christ had finished giving the disciples (the church) the commission to preach, baptize and teach the doctrines, He added, "And, lo, *I am with you always, even unto the end of the world*" (Mt. 28:20). I believe that there has never been a moment of time since then that the Lord has not been present in His churches in the world.

His Church Had None Other Than The Baptism of John

You remember that when John the Baptist was in prison and greatly discouraged, he sent disciples to Jesus and asked Him: "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?" (Lk. 7:20). Jesus performed miracles before them, proving who He was, and after the messengers left He spoke to His congregation concerning John, saying: "What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts. But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. This is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare the way be-

fore thee. For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist" (Lk. 7:24-28). Now what result did this testimony of John bring? "And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John" (Lk. 7:29). Since John was in prison at that time, who gave them the baptism of John? We say the Lord's church did. These people declared the justice of God by being baptized with the baptism of John at the hands of the Lord's church, the only authorized administrator of scriptural baptism.

John's Baptism Was Never Abolished

Now someone may say, "But John's baptism was done away and we now have Christian baptism," and will give Acts 19:1-5 as proof. We say that these "disciples" did not have John's baptism, even though they thought they had. After Paul told them that John baptized "with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus," they acknowledged their immersion was in error, by accepting valid baptism, believing on the Lord Jesus as Savior. John's baptism is *Christian baptism*. It was good enough for Christ and the apostles, so let's not do away with it.

There is not one bit of Scripture to justify the argument that John's baptism was abolished. The first church, in selecting an apostle to take the place of Judas, laid down this prerequisite to apostleship — that is, "he must have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto the

same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection" (Acts 1:21-22). In other words, he must have been baptized by John the Baptist and have been with the company (the church) all the time since — a charter member, if you please.

True Churches In All Ages Since Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus had churches with the baptism of John, here on this earth every day — yes, every minute of every day since He established the first one while He was here in person. We believe that for a church to be a true church of His today, it must have come through the genealogy or lineage of the church which Jesus established. Somebody will immediately say, "But you cannot trace the genealogy of your church back to Christ." Suppose I cannot. Neither can I trace my genealogy back to Adam, but I know I am a son of Adam. Baptists have plenty of history which was written by our enemies, which proves that Baptist churches have been here in every century since Christ, and all that we have to do is to prove that we came from a true Baptist church. Yes, we know that we have not been called Baptists all the time. Historians have traced us by various names, but always by the same doctrines since the time of Christ on the earth.

Counterfeits, and Why

Why do we have counterfeit money? Because there is genuine money. If there were no genuine there would be no counterfeit, but since there is genuine money there is imitation money. The same is true with churches. Since there are true churches, there are also imi-

tation churches who have imitation or counterfeit baptism, which looks just like the baptism of John.

Apostate Churches

In the early life of the Lord's churches some became apostate — that is, they departed from the faith, and in 251 A.D. the true churches declared non-fellowship with those who had departed from the faith and were practicing infant baptism, etc. Those apostate churches lost John's baptism, for John did not baptize unbelievers, infants, as they did.

The Catholic hierarchy grew out of those churches and their first pope was chosen in about 606 A.D. The Roman and Greek Catholic churches are both without authorized baptism, therefore not true churches of our Lord. All other major denominations in the world have come directly or indirectly from the Roman Catholic church, therefore they cannot have the baptism of John. The Lutherans were the first to split off and that was in 1530. The Church of England was established next, by Henry VIII, in 1531, because the pope wouldn't let him divorce his wife and marry another woman. In 1541 the Presbyterian church was established by a reformed Catholic priest. The Congregationalist church came into being in 1602, directly from the Catholic. In the eighteenth century Methodist societies were organized in England in America, which, in about 1784, grew into what is now the Methodist church. This group came from the Church of England, or Episcopal church, as it is known in America.

In 1810 the Cumberland Presbyterian church came out of the Presbyterian, and in about 1811 to 1827 the Disciples of

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MISSIONS...

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response ought to be a gracious willingness to accept the privilege of Christian Stewardship.

Because of My Love For Christ


I know that He died for the sins of the whole world. He is not willing that any should perish. Because I love Him, my desires ought to be the same as His. Pleasing Him brings joy to my heart. It cannot be a burden to serve if any love for Christ is deep. This becomes a privilege and a happy one!

Because of My Love For Mankind

I am concerned with the needs of others. When someone suffers I am pained. When he hungers I, too, feel the pangs of need; you and I are made that way. All charitable organizations grow out of this desire to help our fellowmen. Can I then enjoy salvation in Christ and refuse to give it to another? I am glad when someone else is helped. "It is more blessed to give than to receive" is proven again and again every day.

Because It Gives Me An Opportunity To Be Totally Unselfish

So many things I engage in are for personal gain of one kind or another. At the door of missions self is forbidden entrance. Here I lose myself in Christ. Here all that matters is the glory of God and of His Christ. Here "others must be first and I must be last." There is no thought of what I shall gain only that I "may win

Christ." It is a privilege and I will not let it return to the place of compulsion. Yes, missions is a privilege. 

Missions, A Test For the Church

A church that is not missionary will cease to be a church. A church cold in missions has lost the cross. It may have social friendliness, human sympathies, good music, intelligent views, excellent intentions, but not the power of the gospel.

Where the spirit of the cross is, there is pressure of

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JOHN...

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Christ, or as they call themselves, "The Church of Christ," better known as Campbellites, came on the scene, coming also from the Presbyterians. The Disciples of Christ split into two groups, the other calling themselves "The Christian Church."


There are hundreds of so-called churches which have come into existence in the last hundred years or less, that have direct and indirect connection with these. They are all far too young to be the true church which our Lord established. I don't know if the Lord had this in mind or not, when He had Isaiah pen the following: "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach" (Isa. 4:1).

Some people believe that anything that calls itself a church is all right, and that we should accept it as such. If

somebody pops up and calls himself a god, are you going to accept him as such? No! Well, why not look into the church matter and be as careful about the Lord's bride as you would be about the Lord?

One Lord, One Faith and One Baptism

The Book says: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. 4:4-6).

We believe that there is *one* body and only one — not several, so we can take our choice. We believe that there is *one* Spirit who dwells in the Lord's true church. We believe that there is *one* Lord, even Jesus Christ, the head of the *one* body. We further believe that there is but *one* faith — "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." There is not a multitude of faiths that we may take our pick. We believe that there is but "*one* God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all." And last, but not least, we believe that there is but *one* baptism — *John's Baptism*, and it is from heaven. Do you have it? If not, why not? It is available to all regenerated persons. 


CHURCH...

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all Sunday School officers and teachers as they have to send out missionaries, recommend missionaries or handle church mission money. Such organizations have just as much authority to handle the pastor's salary as they have to handle the salary of the missionary.

There are ways by which churches can cooperate when the Holy Spirit is leading.

Churches can recommend missionaries to other churches as being worthy of their support. One church has authority to recommend to another church, and churches only have authority to recommend to churches. Churches claim the right to give letters of recommendation to sister churches recommending transferring members to their fellowship. This is a common practice among Baptists and this is church cooperation. Sister churches release their pastors to each other for revivals, ordinations, etc., and this is cooperation. I have known of churches giving assistance to a sister church in building a much needed meeting house, and this is cooperation. I know of sister independent, direct, orthodox, missionary Baptist churches that are working together in missions, and this is cooperation; but, there are no outside home-made go-between organizations handling the business of these churches. These churches are handling their own business and this is *Church Cooperation*. It is church sovereignty also.

Christ wills to direct His churches through the Holy Spirit. He is jealous of His churches and He does not want any organization to come between Him and His churches; therefore, He left no room for such agencies, not even standing room. Man-made agencies have just as much authority over the angels in heaven as they have over the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. To preach Church Sovereignty is fine, but according to my way of thinking, it is much better to practice it along with the preaching. God help true Baptist churches to remain true; to forever keep their Christ exalted sovereign position and execute their God-given sovereign rights as the Holy Spirit shall direct. 

HONOR...

(Continued from page 3)

blessed by the Lord. It is a given that you cannot out-give God. And the church who takes good care of the man of God financially is rewarded for its obedience to God.

1 Timothy 5:18 reads, "*For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.*" The ox that was yoked to the grind stone was allowed to eat all of the corn that he wanted. He was not to be muzzled, but allowed to eat all that he wanted all day long. In actuality here, God is saying that the man who does all of the spiritual labor around His house should be able to take all he desires for his own livelihood. In other words the pastor should be allowed to set his own salary. I do not know of many pastors, if any, who would dare do this for fear of criticism from the people who are supposed to give him the double honor.

I well remember many years ago when the church wanted to purchase health insurance for my wife and me. I was not present, but was told that one of the men was indignant that the church would do this for us. His attitude was, "If the preacher wants health insurance, let him buy it himself." With the salary they were paying us at that time, we could not afford health insurance. I ended up in the hospital for 121 days with no insurance, and the church ended up spending thousands more in helping us to pay off a \$75,000+ medical bill. At that time, it would have only cost them \$140.00 per month for health insurance.

God takes care of tight-wads when it comes to His man. The church that is liberal in its giving to the man of God is

blessed of God.

2. Have an Annual "We Love Our Pastor" Day.

I know of one church who sets aside a certain day every year as their "Pastor Appreciation Day." It was up to the officers in that church to invite a special guest, pay all of his expenses, do all of the neat little things such as preparing red-heart pins that said, "We Love Our Pastor" for everyone to wear, etc. These people were grateful for the leadership their pastor provided. They recognized that he was a gift from God (Jer. 3:15). They let the whole community know that they were proud of their pastor, supported his ministry, and that he was worthy of their love. And, by the way, that church has been blessed in unbelievable ways.

Many years ago, they even had a lost man leave several hundred thousand dollars to that church in his will. Today it is a large church numerically, owns several million dollars in property, and is totally out of debt. My, how God has blessed them.

3. Be Vocal In Your Support and Praise Of The Pastor.

Let him know often that you stand with him. Tell him that you love him, that he is very important to you and your family. Do not tell him alone of your love, affection and support, but let others know as well.

Years ago a man who stood firmly with me, came to me and said, "Preacher, why don't people ever come to me with complaints and criticisms of you?" The answer was obvious. Every disgruntled member knew where this man stood. He was vocal in support and would not tolerate anyone making his ears garbage cans for complaints against his pastor. This man is

still in our church and still is a very vocal supporter of this pastor. He will never know how much I love him for it.

4. Treat Your Pastor Honorably When In The Presence Of Other Preachers.

I never cease to be amazed at how calloused some people can be in the treatment of their pastor when other ministers are around. I have heard people say to the guest evangelist, "That's the greatest message I've ever heard," or even worse, "I wish I could hear you preach all the time." And they say this in the presence of their pastor who labors daily trying to do his best for the Lord. The person who is content with the man that God has placed as pastor of that local church (Phil. 4:11), will not say things to "put down" or hurt his pastor.

I suppose I've seen it a hundred times. A layman tries to impress a visiting preacher and acts like a real "hot dog." Most preachers can see through that in an instant. Most evangelists I know are more impressed by someone who puts their local church pastor above the evangelist.

Those who have the proper attitude toward their pastor will always treat him with respect and courtesy, even when around visitors. Here is a thought: when your pastor is in a group of ministers, always extend your hand to him first. It is a signal to all around that "my pastor is first with me."

We have two men in our church that are experts at that. One is a deacon who makes it a point to let me know in front of other ministers that while they may be "good," his pastor is "great" (I have him fooled and although it always embarrasses me, I like it). The other man before every service asks me, "How is my favorite preacher?"

What an uplift and encouragement.

5. Show Affection For Him.

The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Hebrews, actually told them to show affection for their pastors. Hebrews 13:24 says, "*Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you.*" This salutation spoken of by the venerable Apostle, was in actuality an affectionate greeting. It was what we would call a hug. In some cultures it is considered disrespectful if you do not greet your relatives and friends with a kiss on each cheek. In our culture, a simple hug seems to suffice.

I know of a church in Kentucky, where as the people mingle before services, the men hug the men and the ladies hug the ladies. I have been there and seen this demonstration of genuine affection and I must say that it is impressive. It is difficult to hug your brother in the Lord before the services and then stab him in the back afterwards. It seems to me that this is a time of bonding, a time when that church family is drawn closer together. And believe me, in this day and age, most churches I know anything about could use a little "bonding."

There is a man in our church whom I have known since he was less than three years old. In my mind, I can still see him as a toddler if I try hard enough. But today he is a grown man much taller in stature than I, with a family of his own. This man always hangs around until most of the worshipers for that service are gone and then he comes and gives me a hug. This man loves his pastor and doesn't care who

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HONOR...

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knows it. What a blessing!

6. Do Little Unsolicited Deeds Of Kindness For Him.

Kindness is something that is shown, not purchased. Opening the door for him, shoveling snow off his sidewalk at home, helping his wife in and out of her car, allowing him to go first in the food line at fellowships ... All of these are just little acts of kindness that speak loudly to the man of God and tell him he is loved and his position is respected. It costs nothing to be nice to someone and usually it pays marvelous dividends. Use your imagination in finding things to do and ways to show your love and support for the pastor.

7. Teach Your Children To Honor, Love And Respect The Pastor.

Only God knows how many times I have told the little story that I am about to relate to you, but it made such an impression on me that I shall never forget it as long as I live. It seems that many years ago our church was going through some very deep water. The old devil had raised his ugly head and caused some division among us. Try as I did, there were just some folks that would not be satisfied until I was gone.

During this time, I was sitting on the platform going over my notes for the sermon that morning and, I must admit, feeling pretty low. Times were hard and things were rough for me. My mind was preoccupied with problems, worries and woes. As I sat in my chair, my mind a million miles away, the son of one of our deacons marched right up on the platform. He had not been prompted by mom or dad,

he just bolted up there before anyone could catch him. This little fellow, I suppose about four or five years old at the time, walked right up to me, climbed up in my lap, took both of his little hands and turned my face to where I was staring eyeball to eyeball with him. He looked into my eyes, got a very serious look on his face and said, "Pweachah, I wuv you."

At that moment my heart broke as did the dam that held back my tears. I held that little boy so tight and told him that I loved him too. That morning as I mounted the pulpit, I could have whipped wildcats. And that all because a little boy was echoing the sentiment that he heard from his parents at home. Truly that little one saved the day. God used that child to encourage a very discouraged preacher. Today that man and his family live in another city and attend a different church, but I will never forget that little bit of comfort from a very little boy.

8. Give Him Little Inexpensive Gifts That Convey The Message Of Love And Say To Him That He Is Worth The Extra Effort To Select Those Gifts.

Just recently I was in the hospital for eight days with pneumonia. Being a diabetic, it is very important that I eat regularly and right. However, the medication I was on had robbed me of my appetite. Without ever saying a word to anyone about it, I thought to myself that if I were home, I believe I could eat a couple of graham crackers.


Now, folks, I assure you that I said nothing about this to anyone, not even my wife. That evening one of our deacons and his son showed up at the hospital and came to my room and you will never believe what they had in a little plastic bag. That's right! Graham crack-

ers! How precious that they were sensitive enough to the Lord's leading that they would even think of something as insignificant to most people as graham crackers. To me, it was as if they had purchased the Taj Mahal or the Empire State Building and presented it to me as a gift. That didn't cost much, but the message that it sent was like a lighted billboard.

9. Write A Little Note Or Send A Card To Your Pastor Telling Him You Enjoyed A Particular Message Or Just A Word Of Encouragement.

As many of you know Bro. Bill Prater is my Associate Pastor and, Lord willing, he will one day be my pastor. From his first Sunday as my associate in 1984, he has written a note every Saturday night and slid it under my office door for me to read on Sunday morning. I have kept every one of those notes. They are prized possessions to me. There is not enough money in this world to buy even one of them from me (well, okay, but just one). Over the years I have received my share of good notes and discouraging ones as well. But the notes, cards and letters I cherish most are those written for no specific reason other than just to encourage me.


10. Remember Your Pastor And His Wife's Birthdays, Wedding Anniversary, And Their Anniversary With The Church.

It need not be an elaborate celebration. For most pastors I know, just recognition that it is a special day in their life is sufficient. On those days, do a little something extra, go a little out of your way to let the man of God know what he means to you. Make him feel special. We have people in our church who are experts in this field. 

A Short Description of Edwards' Famous Sermon

"Sinners In The Hands Of An Angry God" has become the most famous sermon ever preached on the American continent. It was delivered in the mist of one of America's greatest revivals. Mr. Edwards preached this sermon at Enfield, Conn., July 8, 1741. It was at night, and while he was reading it to a large congregation, the lights became dim and he read it with difficulty. The influence of the sermon was so great on the congregation that strong men and women cried and screamed for mercy, and even grabbed the seats for fear that they would slide into hell that very moment! A fellow minister who was seated in the pulpit cried out, "Mr. Edwards! Mr. Edwards! is not God merciful too?"

May the publishing of this sermon, more than 200 years after it was preached, be used of God as a means of bring about another truly great Revival in America. That is our prayer.

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DEGREES...

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punished because it is right to punish it, because it is just. But this means the punishment of all sins, the sins of the *refined* as surely as the sins of the *de-based*, the *smaller* sins as surely as the *greater* sins. Hence the teaching of God's Word, "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Rom. 1:18). But we need to keep in mind that it is discriminating wrath, and God's Word makes this plain. "Every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward" (Heb. 2:2). "A just God" (Isa. 45:21).

Many sneer at a "God of wrath" and say they believe in a "God of all love." God is love, but He is just as surely a God of wrath; and were He not a God of wrath, He would not be God, but a fiend. He who loves purity and chastity and has no wrath against impurity and unchastity, but loves them, too, is a moral leper. He who loves the defense of the poor and the helpless, but has no wrath against the cold-blooded murderer, the one crushing the defenseless, but loves him, too, is a fiend. Character, from God to Devil, can only be told by what one loves and what one hates.

Notice how clearly the Savior teaches this same great truth. "Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not. Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, *It shall be more tolerable* for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art ex-

alted to heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you that *it shall be more tolerable* for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee" (Mt. 11:20-24). Notice, "more tolerable," difference in punishment.

The same teaching Jesus gives in Mark 12:40. "These shall receive *greater condemnation*." Jesus revealed to Pilate God's judgment of a difference in sin. "He that delivered me unto thee hath the *greater sin*" (Jn. 19:11). And Paul teaches the same, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7), the reaping according to the sowing.

Let the reader notice the clear teaching: *the punishment of sin will be graded, first, according to light and opportunity.* A writer, a great scientist, held that heredity and environment largely determine one's destiny. That is what Jesus taught. The people of Sodom were more wicked than those of Capernaum; but heredity and environment were against them. The people of Capernaum had not sinned so terribly as the people of Sodom, but they had more light and opportunity; they had better heredity, better environment; Jesus says that therefore the people of Capernaum shall be punished more severely than the people of Sodom. And that is right; that is just.

Those to whom Jesus spoke were born under better conditions than those of Sodom; they grew up under more favorable surroundings; hence, they were more responsible; hence, they are to receive greater punishment at the judgment.

Apply to your own case, reader: for every added ray of light, for every added opportunity, there will be that much

added punishment for your sins. And that is just; that is right. The opportunities that wealth brings, the light that education and culture bring, will but add to the punishment at the judgment. The most highly educated, the most refined, the most wealthy, those who have lived under the most favorable influences, will suffer most at the judgment.

But punishment will be further graded by the **number of the sins** — "Every transgression received a just recompense." Hence, the more one sins, the greater the punishment. *If one knew that he was going to Hell, corrupt human nature would say, "Sin and enjoy while you live," but reason and Scripture would say, "Stop! add no more to the degree of Hell."*

Punishment for sin will be further graded by the **character of sin**. "He that betrayed me to thee hath the greater sin." While a small sin is just as surely sin as a great sin, yet God recognizes degrees in sin, and as a consequence, there are degrees in the punishment of sin.

Following from degrees in the punishment of sin comes inevitably the fact that no wrong will be done any one at the judgment; that no one will be treated wrong in Hell. *He who fears only injustice and wrong, has nothing to fear from the judgment or in Hell.*

Two reflections for the reader: If you have heretofore rebelled against the idea of future punishment, what can you say when now you see that God will make all just allowance for surroundings and conditions, and will take into consideration the number and kinds of sins? God has a right to have laws; His laws are right; *a law without a penalty amounts to no law*; the penalty, God assures us, will be absolutely just. *What can you say when you*

stand before such a judge and receive such a sentence?

The other reflection for the reader: Let not this teaching of the Bible lead you into thinking that Hell, then, will not be so terrible after all, and that you need not fear it. Instead of letting it allay all dread of the future, it is enough to make the blood run cold through your veins; for those who will have the most terrible suffering will be the most enlightened, the most cultured.

Another thought: not some far distant, cold, harsh, unsympathetic God will be the judge at the Judgment Day, but the Lord Jesus, "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," will be the one who will judge you and condemn you and give you your just degree of punishment in Hell. Hear Him, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (Jn. 5:22). Peter reveals the same fact, "He commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick (living) and dead" (Acts 10:42). Remember, that He whom the world praises as so good, so just, so discriminating, so loving, so tender, will be the judge at the Great Day, who will pronounce each sentence. Oh, reader, the very fact that the Lord Jesus will be the judge is absolute proof that no one will be treated wrong, that no one will be punished unjustly in Hell; and the bare possibility that He may pronounce your eternal doom is enough to cause you to turn today. "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?"

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MISSIONS...

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spiritual debt and Christian chivalry. Missions are compulsory in a church by its own high law if it is to remain a church. By the law of the spiritual life the missionless church betrays that it is a crossless church; and becomes a faithless church, a mere religious society, and finally, perhaps, a mere cultured clique. 

AT&T...

(Continued from page 2)

even give their names for fear of retaliation from AT&T. When various customers and religious leaders called AT&T executives for help, they were rudely brushed off and told it was "none of their business." So Bible believers began taking

"none of their business" elsewhere.

An Atheist Saved

Meanwhile, in Oklahoma a man was wonderfully saved from a life of atheism and sin (Recently his experience was published in a leading religious magazine.) Since he was a trained business man he wanted to use his experience for God's glory, and the Lord led him to establish a Christian phone company. The company struggled the first few years, but as Bible believers across America learned of it they began changing to his company in ever increasing numbers. In the past three years the gross income of his company went from one million to over eleven million. And this past year the Christian phone company, AmeriVision (LifeLine), donated over a million dollars to various ministries. Its policy is to donate 10% of a customer's bill to missions!

Recently we received a list of Christian organizations that are switching to the new Christian phone company, AmeriVision, and we were surprised. The list included some of the most well known Christian groups in America.

Apple Also Suffering

Also, Apple Computer Company has been in steady decline since announcing three years ago that it promoted sodomy and paid benefits to live-in perverts. This is especially sad because Apple has been a pioneer in the computer industry. It bucked the entire computer mainstream and made its own way, even forcing others to copy its advanced innovations. But when it openly began pandering to queers, its sales started a decline that is getting


worse.

IBM Too

Finally, the giant IBM announced last summer that it would begin supporting the sodomite "lovers" of its workers. Known as Big Blue, it has been losing in the business machine market, but after announcing its sodomite pandering, its decline has worsened. Sales are way off and its stock price is going down.

Space will not allow further description, except to mention that Disney is also suffering. Most of America's large denominations (led by Southern Baptists) have voted to boycott Disney because of its promotion of sodomy.

These big companies are learning the hard way (like K-Mart) that there are not enough sodomites in America to keep a business going, especially when that company insults Bible believers. Every scientific survey has revealed that the actual number of committed "gays and lesbians" is less than 2% not the 10% that the false scientist, Kinsey, boasted of in the early 1950's. Sadly, Bible believers are far too timid in dealing with social sins, but these reports certainly indicate that Bible believers at least are "voting with their pocketbooks"! Wonderful! — The Missionary Challenge.

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