

Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

Vol. XLI

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Mac Deaver's Present Day Spirit Baptism Heresy in *Biblical Notes Quarterly* *Daniel Denham*

Yet Another Misrepresentation

Where is the integrity of Mac Deaver? I have detailed the mathematical absurdities involved in Mac's theory that two baptisms (one in water and another in the Spirit) equal the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5. I have also documented his many misuses of Biblical texts, glaring self-contradictions, false implications, and logical fallacies relative to Spirit baptism. In his Spring 2011 *BNQ* response to my *Defender* article from February 2010, which was but one installment of an entire series dealing with his errors, he claims to have thoroughly rebutted my charges and exposed the weaknesses of my expose.

Yet, over and over again he makes counter charges that are not only wrong, but are founded on his obvious failure to have even read the materials as carefully as he claims to have read them. He charges that I took him out of context, for example, concerning what he claims is a "spliced quotation" pertaining to his theory that Acts 2, 8, 10, and 19 provide exceptions to the time-frame on conversion as taught in John 3:5 (cf. the July to September 2011 issues

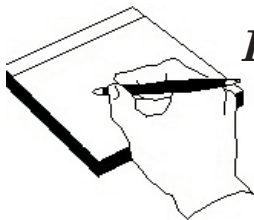
of *Defender* on this theory). There is an obvious intimation by Mac that there was something unscrupulous about the way I handled the statement. I "spliced" it; so, I must have been dishonest in handling it and in my criticism of his position.

However, this so-called "spliced quotation" came from his own **explicit** statements on page 317 of his book. He said concerning "the birth of water and the birth of Spirit" that these "would always occur at approximately the same moment." That statement is in his book; I did not make it up. That he contradicts himself in his handling of Acts 2, 8, 10, and 19 is not my fault. I did not write his book. He wrote it, supposedly even being guided by direct Divine wisdom in doing so. Here is the **precise** sentence from the book: "That is, the birth of water and the birth of Spirit would always occur at approximately the same moment." Now compare that to my quotation of it: "He speaks of 'the birth of water and the birth of Spirit,' and says these 'would always occur at approximately the same moment' (317)" (*Defender* 2:2011, 1). The

only difference is my documented insertion, "and says these," which alters the meaning not one whit! The insertion itself is set off by the quote marks used around Mac's own words showing that "and says these" are my words and not his. The entire sentence which he gave is found in the quotation without any alteration of its syntactic or semantic force. His charge is not only bogus, but outright deceitful!

Mac knows he has been caught in yet another glaring self-contradiction, and he has caught the self-evident force of that self-contradiction. So he trumps up a bogus charge to deflect from his blunder. He blundered in a field upon which he prides himself. He knows that it is not rational to contend that (1) these two actions "always" occur at approximately the same time and then argue that (2) in Acts 2, 8, 10, and 19 they did not occur at the same time. Does he not know the meaning of *always*? Where is the master of *precision* in speech on this? If it **always** is to occur that way, but did not as he claims concerning the

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Notes From The Editor

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Hatcher

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Sound Like

I recently read a comment on a messenger list written by brother Donald Fox regarding a comment made to him by a lady. After brother Fox became a Christian and began preaching, he became very close friends with the well-known preacher J. A. Thornton who has since passed away. This lady had been listening to a radio program of which brother Thornton was the speaker. She visited the congregation where brother Fox was preaching. After the services brother Fox greeted her and she told him, "You sound just like brother Thornton." Brother Fox's voice did not sound like brother Thornton; instead it was the message. The message was the same.

As many know, my father was also a Gospel preacher. Some who listened to him preach would, after hearing my preaching, tell me that I sounded like him. They mean that I physically sound like him (my voice), but also some of the expressions that I use come from him.

When we become Christians, we go through a change. We begin developing the nature of God in our lives (2 Pet. 1:3-4). His attitudes are to become our attitudes. We are to develop the mind of Christ (Phi. 2:5). Baptism as directed by the Holy Spirit is the new birth process (John 3:3, 5; 1 Cor. 4:15; Jam. 1:18). The new birth implies a new crea-

ture, and this is what the Scriptures teach. In Christ we become a new creature. "Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). We get into Christ through the new birth process where we become a child of God. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:26-27). We are children of God (a new creature) in Christ, and we get into Christ through baptism (the new birth process). As children take on the characteristics of their parents, so the Christian takes on the characteristics of God.

Since God is love (1 John 4:7), we must learn to love the way that God loves. God's love is not the mushy, sentimentalism of many today. It is a love that sees what man needs and gives to man what is necessary to take care of those needs. For example, God sees that man is separated from Him and needs reconciliation. Thus, He sends His Son to reconcile man to Himself. Jesus states, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Paul would add: "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:19). God's love was a giving love in doing what man needed. We must develop that type of a love for our fellowman that will do what is Scripturally right in teaching them the saving Gospel of Christ. So many Christians no longer sound out a warning to the lost, no longer teach them, or try to

win souls. We have become comfortable and have taken our ease in Zion (Amos 6:1).

Brethren we need to get on fire for the Lord once more and be "zealous of good works" (Tit. 2:14). Jesus "went about doing good" (Acts 10:38). Simply read the life of Christ

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Michael Hatcher, Editor

and you cannot help but be impressed with His good works. Jesus, in giving us a scene of the Judgment, basically taught us that we would be judged by our good works (Mat. 25:31-46).

However, God is a God of hate as well as being a God of love. The Scriptures convey certain things that God hates. “These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among

brethren” (Pro. 6:16-19). Just as we must learn to love as God loves, we must also learn to hate as God hates. He hates sin and wickedness and so must we. There is a great problem when we love and/or practice the things that God hates and dislike the things that God loves.

God cannot associate himself with evil. “*Thou art* of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity” (Hab. 1:13). John writes, “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie,

and do not the truth” (1 John 1:5-6). Why do we think we can fellowship someone who walks in darkness and still be right with God? Those who teach false doctrine and do not abide in Christ’s doctrine do not have God (2 John 9). If we act as if they are in fellowship with God and thus fellowship them, then we forfeit our fellowship with Him (2 John 10-11).

Let us learn to love the things God loves, hate the things God hates, fellowship with those whom God fellowships and be zealous of doing good.

MH

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12 apostles and the 120 in Acts 2, the Samaritans in Acts 8, Cornelius and his household in Acts 10, and 12 more disciples in Acts 19, then who messed up? Those are an awful lot of exceptions for the way it **always** is done. Instead of owning up to his own logical blunder, Mac shifts blame to me for daring to expose his folly.

He made his claim pertaining specifically to John 3:3, 5 which *antedated* the texts in Acts 2, 8, 10, and 19. “But as Jesus had plainly affirmed, both elements (water and Spirit) were necessary in order for one to enter the kingdom (John 3:3, 5)” (*The Holy Spirit*, p. 317). Yes, he argues for a transition period between the two, but he has **no** text after Acts 19 that shows that the two are to be simultaneous—he has none. He has to go back to John 3:5 to argue for this supposed simultaneity. If John 3:5 meant that they were **always** to be simultaneous, then it would have had to have meant it when Jesus first said it. Thus, Mac destroys his own transition period quibble. That he

cannot stand having shown! I have noted in my articles and lectures several times how he has argued for exceptions to this format. I have also pointed out the **inconsistency** of these claims with his use of John 3:5. Mac’s doctrine is incoherent; it does not hang together. The problem then is with Mac and his doctrine, and he is the only one who can correct his self-contradiction. He must **either** admit that John 3:5 never taught the two actions were simultaneous, which leaves him with no text describing the process, **or** else reject his doctrine of a transition period in Acts concerning them. He cannot have both as true.

More Imprecise True/False Questions

Also in his Spring 2011 issue of *BNQ*, Mac resorts frequently to imprecise true/false questions to try to do what he has so miserably failed to do through more direct means. Surely, he knows that only a precisely stated proposition is either true or false. Imprecisely stated ones suffer from the fallacy of ambiguity. He

needs to rework his statements very carefully and avoid that and other pitfalls.

It is obvious that Mac cannot set forth a basic 3-point argument from John 3:5 demanding the conclusion he urges. It is true that true/false questions are most helpful in defining the parameters of one’s case and focusing on and exposing the weaknesses in an opponent’s position. This writer has frequently made use of them. I noted earlier a number of them I asked of Mac and his followers in an article in the *Defender* series on his Spirit baptism heresy, which article Mac conveniently and completely ignored. But true/false questions are valuable only **when precisely stated**, because then and only then does the Law of Excluded Middle apply to propositions. Mac knows this as well as anyone. The statements must be **precisely** stated. Most of Mac’s questions are not precisely stated in his article. They often commit fallacies of thought—such as ambiguity, begging the question, and diverting the issue. As such, they

prove nothing other than the fact that Mac is resorting to deception to advance his case in such matters.

He gives the following true/false question (or statement): “T F 1. In order for a person to become a Christian, he must receive water and Spirit (**True:** John 3:5; Acts 5:32; John 7:37-39; Eph. 1:13,14)” (*BNQ* 9). Now, stop and think, folks! Notice that Mac marked this statement as “**True.**” Elsewhere Mac admits that the alien sinner cannot receive the Holy Spirit (cf. John 14:17). Now, he says that he must to become a Christian, i.e., to cease being an alien sinner. The “he” must be an alien sinner: for if he is already a Christian then the statement is absurd. A Christian does not need to become a Christian. He obviously already is one. What Mac means (but does not state) is that the alien sinner must receive Holy Spirit baptism, but according to Mac that entails immersion of the alien sinner’s human spirit into the literal essence of the Holy Spirit. Thus, his doctrine implies that the alien sinner not only can but must receive the Spirit directly and immediately to be saved. It is the alien sinner who needs to become a Christian and thereby cease being an alien sinner, Mac’s ridiculous “non-sinner but not a Christian” theory, as we have previously detailed, notwithstanding.

John 3:5 only shows that water and the Spirit are in some manner involved in the New Birth for one to enter the kingdom. John 3:5 does not teach that one must receive Spirit baptism to enter the kingdom. Mac must read that into the text from somewhere else. The other three passages he cites concern individuals who are already “obedient ones” (Acts 5:32), disciples (John 7:38-39), and members of the Lord’s church

(Eph. 1:3-23). They do not deal with the alien sinner, but rather with those who are already in the kingdom (or the church). Remember that Mac said “true” to the true/false statement here. It will come back to bite him in later statements in his article.

His second true/false question (or statement) here is as follows:

T F 2. In some cases of conversion in the book of Acts, if one receives water, but does not receive the Spirit or if one receives the Spirit but does not receive the water, he is still a Christian (False: However, when applied to the Samaritans (who received water but not Spirit for a while) Denham wants to claim that they were Christians, but with regard to Cornelius who received the Holy Spirit before he received baptism in water, Denham thinks he is not a Christian until he receives the water (*BNQ* 9)!

Again, Mac affirms that the alien sinner (e.g., the Samaritans and Cornelius) had to receive the Spirit to become Christians. Yet elsewhere Mac says that alien sinners cannot receive the Holy Spirit and cites John 14:17 for this conclusion. That Mac cannot see his own self-contradiction is astonishing. But he contradicts himself in his own book. He states expressly: “But I did say that sinners become Christians today by being baptized in both elements” (*The Holy Spirit*, p. 297). What are the elements? Water and the Holy Spirit. So, the sinner must be immersed in the Holy Spirit to become a Christian according to Mac Deaver, but the alien sinner cannot receive the Spirit to do so according to him as well. That leads to yet another quandary for Deaver—the inevitable conclusion that no alien sinner then can ever be saved. He must directly receive the Spirit to be saved, but he cannot do it because he is in the world and not in Christ (John 14:17). Let Mac wrestle with

his own predicament here awhile.

Let us now consider, while Mac contemplates his quandary, the supposed dilemma he posits for “Denham.” If Mac states that Cornelius received the Holy Spirit in the same sense as Acts 2:38, which he claims entails the personal indwelling of the Spirit, then he implies that Cornelius had the personal indwelling before obeying the Gospel. Remember Mac equates the gift in Acts 2:38 in every respect with the gift in Acts 10:44-45. However, Cornelius had not yet been baptized for the remission of sins and so still was in sin at the time. Thus, Mac implies that Cornelius received Spirit baptism to regenerate him while he was still an alien sinner.

Mac contends that Cornelius was a Gentile living under Patriarchy, but that really does not avail his case here, because Cornelius was still in need of salvation which implies that he was a sinner nonetheless. Peter told him “words whereby [he] and all [his] house **shall be saved**” (Acts 11:14). If he needed salvation, what was it from? Obviously, he needed salvation from sin like everyone else (Rom. 3:23). If Cornelius did not need forgiveness of sins, then why was water baptism even needed? Mac has just removed water from the plan of salvation. Baptists and Methodists ought to rejoice over his efforts here!

What Cornelius received was a miraculous demonstration or gift from the Spirit to convince the Jews present that the Gentiles had a right to hear and receive the Gospel as well as they. It no more meant that he was a child of God at that point than Balaam’s ass speaking with a voice of a man proves that he also was a child of God (Num. 22:28).

As concerns the Samaritans, Mac implies that they were not children

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The New Testament Church and Counterfeit Churches

February 22 – 26, 2012

Elders: Kenneth Cohn, Buddy Roth, and Jack Stephens

David P. Brown, Director

Wednesday, February 22

6:30 PM CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

7:00 PM What is the New Testament Church?

David P. Brown

8:00 PM What is the Independent Christian Church?

John West

Thursday, February 23

9:00 AM What is the Salvation Army?

Michael Hatcher

10:00 AM What is the Lutheran Church?

John Rose

11:00 AM What is the Church of Christ of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons)?

Johnny Oxendine

Lunch Break

1:30 PM What are the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches?

John West

2:30 PM What is Dispensationalism

Daniel Denham

3:30 PM Open Forum

Dinner Break

6:30 PM CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

7:00 PM What is the Restoration Principle and is it Scriptural?

Dub McClish

8:00 PM Are Faithful Children of God Found in the Denominations?

Bruce Stulting

Friday, February 24

9:00 AM What is the Baptist Church?

Danny Douglas

10:00 AM What is the Unitarian/Universalist Church?

John Rose

11:00 AM What is the Organization and Work of the New Testament Church?

Wayne Blake

Lunch Break

1:30 PM What is the Methodist Church?

Gene Hill

2:30 PM What Makes JW's, Mormons, Christian Scientists, and Seventh Day Adventists Different from Other Denominations?

Jess Whitlock

3:30 PM Open Forum

Dinner Break

6:30 PM CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

7:00 PM One Can Know One is a Member of the Lord's Church? (Identifying Marks of the Church)

Roelf Ruffner

Saturday, February 25

9:00 AM What is Christian Science?

Jess Whitlock

10:00 AM What is the Worship of the New Testament Church?

Johnny Oxendine

10:00 AM Give Your Daughters to Husbands (Choosing a Husband)—LADIES ONLY

Sonya West

11:00 AM What is the Emerging Church?

Daniel Denham

Lunch Break

1:30 PM What is the Community Church?

Danny Douglas

1:30 PM Thy Desire Shall be to Thy Husband (Having a Successful Marriage)—LADIES ONLY

Sonya West

2:30 PM What is the Presbyterian Church?

Gene Hill

3:30 PM Does the New Testament Authorize the Church Revealed on its Pages to Fellowship Denominational Churches?

Bruce Stulting

4:30 PM Is the New Testament Church a Denomination?

Roelf Ruffner

Sunday, February 26

9:30 AM The Apostasy of the First Century Church

Terry Hightower

10:30 AM Are Pious Un-Immersed Persons Christians?

Geoff Litke

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1:30 PM The Emergence of Catholicism from the Apostate Church

Terry Hightower

2:30 PM What is the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)?

Michael Hatcher

3:30 PM Has the New Testament Church Been Restored?

Dub McClish

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of God until several days after their baptism in water by Philip. That is brother Mac's problem, not mine. He is the one with the Samaritans being half born again for several days and poor Philip botching their baptism by not baptizing them

"into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

Thus, as I noted, the Samaritans were Christians upon their baptism, and Cornelius and his household were not until their baptism (Acts 10:48). What contradiction is there in that statement? Let Mac pick up and deal with what I have said rather than what he wishes I had said.

The Crux of the Matter Relative to Mac's Doctrine

After all the faldral over Acts 2, 8, 10, and 19, Mac finally comes back to the real focus of his error and the assumption essential to his position. In so doing, he makes yet another blunder and totally negates all of his claims concerning the preceding texts. He goes back to John 3:5 to try and establish his doctrine. Hear him:

I claim that to be a Christian one has to be immersed in both elements. And if water is an element (the thing to be baptized in) in John 3:5, there is no hermeneutical basis upon which to conclude that Spirit is not equally an element as is the water (see 1 Cor. 12:13 with John 7:37-39) (BNQ 9).

First, no one has denied that the Spirit is an element in the New Birth. I for one have said so repeatedly and taught so for over 35 years now. For

one to become a Christian one must be born of water and of the Spirit. That is absolutely true. There is no dispute over that. However, the verb *born* does not mean, "be baptized."

While water baptism is certainly part of the New Birth, it is not all

must be the case that whatever they did to do so they had to have experienced the New Birth in doing it.

Peter preached the Word of God by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and commanded those who sought a remedy for their sins to repent and

be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Does Mac deny any of this? And Mac himself admits that this baptism was in water. I note that Peter "with many other words, did exhort and testify, saying unto them, Save yourselves from this

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there is to it. There is more to the New Birth than baptism. The verb *born* is modified by both prepositional phrases. These phrases show some relationship of the parent noun of each phrase to the action of the verb. **It does not tell us what that relationship is.** In fact, Mac would not know what water's relationship to the New Birth is **except by virtue of other texts** bearing on the subject (e.g., Eph. 5:26). He cannot **by John 3:5 alone** establish immersion in water as the means by which one is born of water. Neither can he extrapolate from that the specific relationship the Holy Spirit has to the New Birth. Again, that must be determined by other texts bearing on the general subject.

As those who obeyed the Gospel in Acts wound up in the church, which is the kingdom of God (Acts 2:47; Mat. 16:18-19; Col. 1:12-13), it

untoward generation" (Acts 2:40). Those who *obeyed* his message (the force of the Greek idiom translated in the KJV as "gladly received the word") "were baptized; and there was added unto them about three thousand souls" (2:41). Again, the words that Peter spoke were directly from the Holy Spirit, or will Mac and his followers deny that? There is no mention of them being baptized in the literal element of the Holy Spirit here. There is no mention of Spirit baptism as being involved in their being added by the Lord to the church. There is only a mention of them receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, and Mac cannot prove that such was Spirit baptism. In fact, if he takes that position then he repudiates the text as a promise of the personal indwelling of the Spirit that he differentiates from the baptism of the Spirit. So, let him take his pick

which one he will give up here. If he says that the indwelling implies Spirit baptism, then he needs to prove it.

Now, the apostle Paul taught that he had begotten the Corinthians through the preaching of the Gospel (1 Cor. 4:15). If that was true of an apostle through his preaching of the Gospel, then why is not also true concerning the Holy Spirit who inspired him to preach that Gospel? It can be rightly said that those who experience the New Birth are begotten by the Spirit thus through the preaching of the Gospel. It is also not surprising then that the Bible expressly teaches that we are begotten by God through the Word of truth (Jam. 1:18; 1 Peter 1:22-23). This then is the Spirit's role as one of the elements involved in the New Birth. In summary, we see both elements on Pentecost with the 3000. They heard, believed, and obeyed the Word of the Spirit, wherein is life (John 6:63, 68), and in obey-

ing they were immersed in water for the remission of sins and thus had those sins washed away (Acts 22:16). It is that simple. That is the New Birth succinctly demonstrated on the first Pentecost following the Resurrection of the Lord who made it possible through His atoning blood. Now, brethren compare that simple description of things, which brethren have long understood, held, and taught, with Mac's messed up and bollixed version that is so self-contradictory that Mac himself cannot even keep his story straight as to when Spirit baptism is in view and when it is not in view.

By the way, it is in obeying the teachings of the Spirit that one is baptized into the one body as per 1 Corinthians 12:13. Brother Mac needs to address the material we have presented elsewhere in other articles and lectures showing that such is the self-evident force of that text as per Greek syntax. He

needs to examine Paul's use of *en pneumatī* in his epistles, especially in 1 Corinthians 12 itself. Paul is not using it here of the **element** into which we are baptized, but of the Spirit as **agent** in the baptism. Mac has a tendency of only noticing those arguments that he believes he can poke a hole into and particularly seems to avoid getting into a discussion of the original text when it clearly does not support his theory.

Relative to John 7:37-39, it deals with one who is a disciple (*pisteuon*, literally, "he who keeps on believing," **present active participle**) and so also does not support Mac's theory of Spirit baptism for the alien sinner to enter the church. Or is Mac ready to admit that the alien sinner prior to complete obedience to the Gospel receives the Spirit and has thus "living waters" flowing out of his belly?

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Mac Deaver's Present-Day Spirit Baptism Heresy in *Biblical Notes Quarterly* *Daniel Denham*

More Questions from Mac, But More Woes for His Doctrine

Mac offers a bunch more true/false questions that are assumed by him to establish the truth of his "cleansing first and then regeneration" error, but they really create more problems for him than they are intended to solve.

The second true/false question, for example, actually unstrings his entire case. Mac writes:

T F 2. When a sinner is immersed in water for the remission of sins, following the moment at which he is forgiven of his sins and while he is still under the water, he is regenerated or made spiritually alive again (**True** – Tit. 3:5) (*BNQ* 11).

He cannot prove from Titus 3:5 that regeneration follows cleansing. He will not (and really cannot) deal with the phrase "the washing of regeneration." He cannot explain how one can receive the remission of sins without being in Christ (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14). For one to receive forgiveness he has to be, therefore, in the kingdom (the church). If he is not, he is still an alien sinner. So, Mac's statement is false, not true. That

destroys his line of argument.

Back in 1999, Mac endorsed the teaching of Bob Berard that the Spirit directly **cleanses and imparts spiritual life to** the heart of the sinner. Bob Berard wrote:

Summarizing, one remains spiritually dead until he is baptized even though he has willingly submitted to the Spirit's word and was thereby "indwelt" (as some imply) by the Spirit solely by means of the Spirit's word. The Spirit's word and man's submitted will leave man lost in sin until that man is immersed (Acts 22:16). It is in that immersion that God operates in addition to His word according to Colossians 2:12. At baptism (not before by the word alone) spiritual life is attained and this is simultaneously with the Spirit's personal entrance into the heart (Rom. 8:9; Col. 2:12-13). Since spiritual life is a working of God occurring at baptism (Col. 2:12-13) and since the indwelling Spirit is identified as the Divine Person giving life (John 4:10-14; 7:37-39; Rom. 8; [sic] 11,13). The Holy Spirit is the Person of the Godhead who personally imparts spiritual life in the heart of the person being baptized (*BNQ* 199/16).

Mac felt so compelled right here

to endorse Bob's new doctrine and explain it *more precisely* that as the editor of *BNQ* he added the following notation parenthetically:

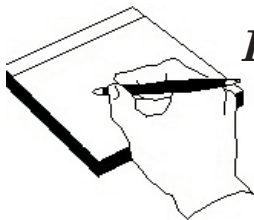
(If the reader would require even more precision, it could be said that the Holy Spirit changes the heart during baptism [Titus 3:5] and then moves into the heart to take up His indwelling after the heart is cleansed [Gal. 4:6], Editor) (16).

Bob then completed the summary by writing:

This is the personal work of the Spirit done in addition to (but in conjunction with) what He does through His word and this is precisely what is meant by the term "direct" as defined in the introduction of this article (16).

Here Bob and Mac equated the cleansing and the giving of spiritual life (or regeneration) and assigned the action to the direct work of the Holy Spirit on the heart of the alien sinner. Mac said the Spirit cleanses the heart and then moves in. Bob says the Spirit directly imparts spiritual life to the heart of the sinner in addition to and in conjunction with the Word of God. That was in 1999.

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Notes From The Editor

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Hatcher**

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Debating

The very idea of debating is detestable to many *Christians* in our day. Many *Christians* view debates as sinful. They certainly would never engage in such nor would they give their support to one. Debating goes against the idea prevalent in our society today of “friendship evangelism.” However, if one looks back on the history of the church, he will find debates are an important part of it.

Peter instructed us: “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear” (1 Pet. 3:15). *Answer* is from the Greek *apologia* and means: “a speech of defense, defense, reply” (BDAG), or “verbal defence, speech in defence” (Thayer). Paul uses this same word when he says of himself: “But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel” (Phi. 1:17). *Defence* is the same Greek word *apologia*. Jude informs us: “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that *ye* should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). *Earnestly contend* is from the Greek *epagonizomai* which means: “to exert intense effort on behalf of something, contend” (BDAG) or “to

strive, contend earnestly. To fight for or in reference to something” (Zodhiates).

These passages clearly show we are to be ready to debate our cause: “Debate thy cause with thy neighbour *himself*; and discover not a secret to another” (Pro. 25:9). Yet, many refuse to even entertain the thought of debating. Generally two arguments are made against such. First, is simply the idea that a person does not believe in arguing. Thus, they argue against arguing! Second, it is often said that debates will hurt the church. What evidence do they offer for proof? Their say so!

On occasion someone will bring up the passages where Paul lists debates with other sinful actions. “Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers” (Rom. 1:29) and “For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and *that* I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest *there be* debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults” (2 Cor. 12:20). *Debate* in these passages come from the Greek *eris* and means, “Engagement in rivalry, especially with reference to positions taken in a matter, strife, discord, contention” (BDAG) or, “contention, strife, wrangling” (Thayer). This deals with an attitude of strife and discord. While a few debates have degenerated into that type of an attitude, it is not a condemnation of debating. When it does degenerate to such, it is not the fault of the debate process, instead it is the fault of the participants. Debate as defined by *New Oxford American Dictionary* is, “a formal discussion on a particular topic in a public meeting or

legislative assembly, in which opposing arguments are put forward. An argument about a particular subject, esp. one in which many people are involved.”

Jesus was a debater. Matthew records Jesus debating first the Herodians, then the Sadducees, and last the Pharisees led by a lawyer (Mat. 22). Each group set forth their argument in the form of a question. Each one was put to shame by Jesus’ perfect response. Jesus had nothing to fear from meeting them or anyone else because He possessed the truth. However, they had everything to fear as is seen when Jesus places them on the spot by His questions. They did not possess the truth, thus “no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any *man* from that day forth ask him any more *questions*” (22:46).

Stephen, the first Christian martyr, was a debater. Notice what Inspiration says about him: “Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called *the synagogue* of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake” (Acts 6:9-10). When he was then brought before the council, he used the truth to show them the error of their way. The council not having the truth could not withstand him so they put him to death. It is interesting to note a couple of

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Michael Hatcher, Editor

things regarding Stephen's account. The antagonists are specifically named. (There goes that not naming names view that so many today are want to say.) Also Stephen, and Jesus, used a logical approach to the subject at hand. Both presented perfectly logical arguments. It was not simply railing against the opponents. They did not make simply emotional appeals to gain adherents to their views.

Other great Bible characters were debaters: Paul, Apollos, Silas, et al. None of these men simply made *ad hominen* attacks against others, or simply spoke evil and tried to ruin other peoples' reputation by evil reports. Faithful men of the past were debaters: Alexander Campbell, Moses Lard, Foy Wallace, Guy N. Woods, Gus Nichols, G. K. Wallace, Thomas Warren, et al. These men were not afraid to unsheathe the

sword of the Spirit and use it effectively in defeating error.

Sadly, men like this are dwindling. No longer are men being taught to defend the Truth and debating the Cause. Today what "men of renown" practice is to backbite and rail against those they oppose. They are challenged to debate, but they will not stand on the polemic platform to logically argue their case. You see it is much easier to get with your friends and simply attack the character of the other person instead of dealing with their arguments. When the problems started as a result of some desiring to fellowship Dave Miller, they were invited to forums to set forth their case. However, instead of standing on the platform and setting forth truth through logical argument, they decided to abstain from such and attack the character of faithful brethren.

When we publish challenges to these men to prove their accusations against us, instead of dealing with the issues they remain quiet and get with their friends and people they can influence and blaspheme us.

There is the old adage: Truth has nothing to fear. The wise man wrote, "The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion" (Pro. 28:1). These "men of renown" will remain quiet and no longer stand on the frontlines to debate truth because their works are works of darkness. Jesus said, "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (John 3:20). We pray for their repentance, but they have opened the door to compromise and once that happens, they have no stopping point.

MH

Continued from Page 1

Bob later applied this work to Holy Spirit baptism without any contradiction or opposition from Mac.

It will also be observed that Mac was using both Colossians 2:12 and Titus 3:5 during those years to affirm a direct operation by the Spirit on the alien sinner's heart to cleanse him (or impart spiritual life). I pointed this out in material dealing with Bob's articles. However, now Mac has concocted his absurd doctrine that an accountable person can be a non-sinner without being a Christian to try to extricate himself from the obvious problems confronting his theory on present day Spirit baptism. How many more changes will he make just in responding to these key points?

The text of Colossians 2:13, immediately after verse 12, shows that

the cleansing occurs at the same time as the regeneration. The text reads: "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses." The verb translated "quickened together" (*sunedzopoieesen*) is aorist active indicative and certainly refers to regeneration. It is modified by the participial form "having forgiven," which in Greek is *charisamenos*. It is an aorist middle participle. It is used here as a circumstantial participle. While aorist participles often (though not exclusively) indicate antecedent action relative to their relationship to the action of the principal verb, also called the main or controlling verb, which would be *sunedzopoieesen* (quickened together), the general rule does not hold for constructions

where the principal verb is also aorist tense, as is the case here. In such cases where the principal verb is aorist and the modifying circumstantial participle is also aorist the action is commonly **simultaneous** or **contemporary** (i.e., the action of each coincides with the other in time and effect) (cf. Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 624-625). Handley C. G. Moule, in his analysis of the Greek text, even specifically noted that the action of the forgiving here occurs "at the moment, in the act, of the 'quickening'" (*Studies in Colossians and Philemon*, 106).

It is perfectly logical that forgiveness and regeneration (making alive again) should be simultaneous in nature because the reason why one is spiritually dead to begin with is due to the sin he has committed. That is

why the Scriptures speak of the alien sinner as “being dead **in his trespasses and sin**” (Eph. 2:1; cf. Col. 2:13, “dead in your sins”). If one’s sins have been forgiven or cleansed then why is he yet dead? His sins have been pardoned and removed. How can his spirit in any meaningful sense still be “tainted”?

Mac’s third question in the *BNQ* article is also utterly disingenuous and reflects his lack of understanding of redemption itself. He asks:

T F 3. Forgiveness and regeneration are identical concepts (**False**—Look up the words) (*BNQ* 11).

He needs to deal with the phrase “the washing of regeneration” in the original language, as we have pleaded with him to do. Forgiveness and regeneration are differing terms looking at **the same general action** (namely, salvation) from **two perspectives**. The former, like the term justification, looks at salvation from a strictly **judicial** perspective (i.e., the condition of the saved person as one forgiven or pardoned as opposed to still being guilty of sin). The latter looks at it from a **moral** perspective (i.e., the condition of the saved person now made alive as opposed to being dead in sin). To try to separate the two as utterly distinct actions in time is patently absurd. Those who have tried to do so tended to be Arminian in theology (e.g., A. T. Robertson). Forgiveness and regeneration are two descriptive depictions of the same process. Mac needs to define the phrase “identical concepts.” Is he referring to the specific definition of each term? Or does he have reference to the process they implicitly describe? Maybe Mac needs a course in semantics, as well as in grammar and syntax.

How can one who is **not** in Christ have forgiveness in the

Gospel Age when one **must be** in Christ to even have it (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14)? How can one no longer be dead in sin, which is why he needed regeneration in the first place, when he no longer has any sin in which to be dead (Eph. 2:1; Col. 2:13)? Also, using Mac’s terminology, how can one’s nature remain tainted when that which tainted it has been cleansed?

Some Parallel Texts That Trouble Mac’s Theory

It will be observed that Acts 3:19 parallels Acts 2:38 in structure and promise in its key points. The former reads, “repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out” while the latter reads, “repent, and be baptized...for the remission of sins.” Conversion (hence regeneration) is equated with the action of baptism itself, which Mac also admitted concerning Acts 2:38 is water baptism. Thus, conversion (or regeneration) occurs in water baptism at the same time as the remission of sins.

The result of receiving “the gift of the Holy Spirit” or “the times of refreshing” would also be conditioned on the actions of the two verbs in each text by Mac’s own use of Acts 2:38-39. If the baptism in 2:38 is water baptism only, then so is the “be converted” in 3:19 a reference to water baptism only. If there is not involved in the verbs “be baptized” (in 2:38) and “be converted” (in 3:19) any reference then to Spirit baptism, then “the gift of the Holy Spirit” (in 2:38-39) and “the times of refreshing” (in 3:19) are not contingent on one receiving Spirit baptism. Thus, Mac has once more repudiated by implication his own doctrine. It will be recalled that he teaches that the gift of the Holy Spirit is the personal indwelling of the Spirit.

If so, then the only baptism upon which it is contingent, according to Mac’s own use of Acts 2:38-39, is water baptism. Spirit baptism is then precluded.

Mark 16:16 parallels Acts 2:38 as well. This is a fact that brethren have often noted in debate with denominational preachers and in Gospel sermons. To receive the remission of sins is clearly the same thing as to be saved. That implies that when one receives the remission of sins, he must be “in Christ” or in the church, for that is where not only the remission of sins found (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14) but also where those who are saved are (Acts 2:41, 47; Eph. 5:26). Mark 16:16 shows that Mac’s “cleansing first and then regeneration later” doctrine is false.

Mac’s Questions Resumed and Another Dilemma for Mac

Mac, however, is undeterred by the problems of his case. Ignoring them, he goes on to his fourth true/false question in this section of his article by writing:

T F 4. A sinner can be regenerated before he is forgiven (**False**—If he could be he would be both spiritually alive and spiritually dead at the same time. God would be making a guilty sinner spiritually alive while still guilty! Denham’s unfortunate claim that cleansing and regeneration are identical concepts (his words are: “one in the same”) means that he is unintentionally suggesting this impossible situation) (*BNQ* 11).

Again, the question is based on the either/or fallacy that one of the actions must precede the other. That is simply not so. They can be—and indeed are—simultaneous in nature referring to the same ultimate result which is salvation. That is why Paul said that God “saved us...through the washing of regeneration and

renewing by the Holy Spirit” (Tit. 3:5). Note again it is “the washing of regeneration” and not “washing and then regeneration”!

Mac’s question also devastates his distinction though he does not catch it. If the individual, where regeneration would precede cleansing, is both spiritually alive and yet spiritually dead in the scenario he gives, why is that so? Is it not because he would still be in his sins, even as Mac points out? Is that not why he is dead in the first place? Certainly, it is. But, watch it, what if he now has been forgiven and thus has no sins? If he has no sins, then how could he still be spiritually dead? If he is no longer dead in sins, then he must be alive. If not, then why not?

Is it not conceivable that in practical terms **the same act** by which one is forgiven **is the same act that makes him alive**? As there is no longer any sin, then there is obviously no longer any spiritual death. If one is no longer spiritually dead, then, as Mac admits, he must in fact be spiritually alive (he cannot be both at the same time as Mac admits).

Mac’s Muddled Thinking on Forgiveness

Mac’s confusion here arises from his muddled concept of cleansing itself. Again, Mac believes that man’s innate human nature is somehow literally tainted. As man is essentially a moral, spirit being, it would have to be the case that this “taint” literally attaches to either the mind or the spirit of the sinner. What is the nature of this ethereal filth? It would have to be some sort of spiritual substance adhering to the mind or spirit, if it literally exists as Mac claims. This is what, in Bob Berard’s thinking, necessitated the Spirit

directly contacting the human spirit of the sinner to cleanse thus imparting life. In Mac’s present thinking it is what demands the action of Spirit baptism to regenerate by changing this “tainted” nature. The quasi-materialistic impulse of this doctrine, however, is the very essence of its failure. It takes metaphorical language and tries to literalize it.

Where does forgiveness take place on the Divine side to begin with, folks? In the Mind of God, does it not? Is that not **where** also justification (i.e., the **accounting by God** that one is now righteous or in a right relationship with Him and thus now the object of His blessing rather than His wrath) occurs? Again, the answer is: Certainly! Thus, we are talking about essentially **an act of God’s will** that occurs **at the time man completes his compliance to the terms of pardon**. What is Mac missing here? What is so difficult for him to grasp as to the relationships of these terms and concepts to God’s action in salvation? Why does Mac not know these things?

A False Charge from Mac Answered

As concerns my supposedly “unfortunate claim,” I explained exactly what I meant by my terms “one in the same” immediately following the phrase. Notice I also said **in the very same paragraph**: “These terms simply look at the **one action** from two perspectives—cleansing and regeneration” (*Defender* 5). It is in that they refer to the same action that they are one in the same. For all practical reasons they are in this respect. How often, brethren, have we compared Mark 16:16 and Acts 2:38 and noted that being saved in Mark 16:16 has the same **practical** force as

receiving the remission of sins? Has Mac ever done so? Most certainly he has, if he will be honest about it. Why did not Mac point out my expansion on the meaning of the phrase he uses here rather than try to mislead his readers into drawing a conclusion that I obviously did not intend? Again, is the man becoming incapable of telling the truth concerning certain matters?

I even added in the statement from which he clips the misappropriated phrase: “and are tied to the same event.” For one complaining earlier about spliced quotations, why did he clip this phrase out to use while obviously ignoring not only the explanation given bearing on the expression but even the rest of the specific sentence in which the phrase stands? Perhaps, it would be because his readers might realize the self-evident force of a plural verb (“are tied”)—it indicates that at least two items or things are in view.

Further, they might also from the phrase “to the same event” conclude that this is the sense in which I was saying the cleansing and regeneration were “one in the same.” Again, cannot the man be honest about anything pertaining to the subject and his opponents?

The Remaining Questions In This Section

His fifth and sixth true/false questions are really *non sequitur* to the central issue here, though Mac is going to try to make something from them. It is freely admitted that repentance is required for the validity of one’s baptism and that this entails the cessation of sin, but what does this have to do with his case?

His seventh true/false question is where he tries to twist the doctrine of repentance into meaning the alien

sinner is now no longer an alien sinner. There is an implication from his question (however, I suspect Mac will not accept it) which crushes his attempt. He writes:

T F 7. In the process of a sinner's becoming a saint, at some point while he is under the water, since he is no longer a practicing sinner and since he is no longer guilty of sin, he is no longer a sinner (**True**) (BNQ 11).

Now, watch his twisting of his question. He states:

Note: If he is not a sinner by practice and if he is not one by guilt, then how can he possibly be a sinner as distinguished from a saint? In baptism, does God forgive the sinner or does he forgive the saint? He forgives the sinner in order that the sinner may become a saint. By forgiveness, he becomes a non-sinner. By regeneration he becomes a new creature which is a Christian (Rom. 6:3, 4; 2 Cor. 5:17) (BNQ 11).

If he is not a sinner, then he is a saint. But if he is a saint, then he is a Christian. Mac seems to miss that point. Mac wants to place the saint between the alien sinner and the Christian. But if he is a saint, then he is already a Christian. It is the church that is said to be sanctified (Eph. 5:26). The church is comprised of Christians. Or is Mac ready to contend that others are sanctified under New Testament law without becoming Christians? Furthermore, one is either in the world or he is in Christ (the church).

The forgiven person in the scenario described by Mac, if he is not a Christian, is then not "in Christ" but is still in the world. The Law of Excluded Middle offers no other option for Mac. Additionally, how can the forgiven person even have forgiveness without having entered into Christ (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14)? Such is self-contradictory.

Certainly, it is the sinner who is being forgiven, but at the point he is forgiven he then becomes a saint and, thus, a Christian. The same washing that cleansed him also sanctified him. Ephesians 5:26 says that we are both **sanctified** and **cleansed** by the washing of water by the word (KJV). Mac admits in his book that this refers to the water baptism part of the one baptism of Ephesians 4:5 which he proposes (*The Holy Spirit*, 321). It should be noted that again we have an aorist main verb (*hagiasse*) with an aorist circumstantial participle of simultaneous or contemporary action (*katharisas*) in Ephesians 5:26. If he is a saint, then he is in the church, for it is the church (i.e., its members) that is said to have been sanctified in baptism. If he is in the church, then he is in the kingdom, and thus has experienced the New Birth (John 3:5). If he has received the New Birth, then he has been regenerated, and once more Mac's doctrine is defeated. Also, if he is in the church, he is "in Christ," which is where one must be to be a new creature (2 Cor.

5:17). So, Mac is defeated at every point.

Recall the parallel between Mark 16:16 and Acts 2:38. If it is the case that salvation is equal to having the remission of sins, then it must be the case that at the point one receives the remission of sins he is saved. If he is saved, then he is in the church where the saved are (Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23). He is therefore in the kingdom (Mat. 16:18-19), and so has received the New Birth (John 3:5). The forgiven person is a Christian. He thus has been regenerated, and once more Mac's doctrine is defeated.

It will be observed that Mac ignores the need in baptism for one to complete the *tupos* (pattern or form) of doctrine delivered by the apostles concerning the death, burial, **and resurrection** of Christ as mirrored by the act of Bible baptism (cf. Rom. 6:17-18). It will be noted by the careful reader of Romans 6:3-4, cited by Mac in his question, that one must be "raised up" like Christ to "walk in newness of life" to actually complete and comply with the *tupos*. In fact, Mac even adds to the text the necessity for one's spirit to **remain** submerged in the literal essence of the Holy Spirit as an essentially continuing process, while the text says nothing of that nature. So, Mac takes away an essential part while adding something else to Romans 6:3-4. Can you believe it?

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Out of the “Dark Ages”

Lynn Parker

At the nearby Home Depot, a young man—early twenties—was loading building material onto my truck. I extended an invitation to attend worship services with us. His eyes brightened when I mentioned, “church of Christ,” and he enthusiastically exclaimed that he, too, was a member of the church of Christ. During the short conversation, I learned that he was from west Texas and had recently moved to the Houston area to attend college. He volunteered that his home congregation was different from many other congregations in that they looked at doctrinal matters with a more open approach, and that he wanted to find a similar congregation here. That piqued my interest and in answer to my questions, this young man said that “back home,” they had come “out of the dark ages” and no longer thought “they were the only denomination going to heaven.” As he was completing his job, our conversation was cut short, but I did give him my phone number and ask if we could study the Bible. He promised to visit, but I have not seen him yet.

From this short episode, we can draw several lessons. First, we must be ever vigilant for opportunities to teach the truth. The old fisherman’s question,

“You gonna cut bait or fish?” might be applied here. After all the talk about efforts to convert the lost dies down, after all the planning is done, teaching others still involves personal action on my part and yours. Opportunities do not come whistling along each day—they are made! Seize them! They are all around you. Do not be timid and do not neglect the golden moments that are placed on your plate every morning. Too soon, they will be gone. “Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Eph. 5:15-16).

Second, never roll your eyes at the preaching of truth, and do not mutter: “wish they’d talk about something else”—even though you have heard it before. There are always new generations that need to hear the same great, old Gospel truths. Paul commanded, “And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2). Perhaps this young man is the product of a congregation that once told its preachers: “Don’t preach against fellowship with denominations—we don’t have that problem here.” **They do now.** Human memory is fleeting at best, and

even the most fundamental teachings deserve repetition and emphasis on a regular basis (2 Pet. 1:13-15).

Lastly, our children are not glued to their home towns, nor their *home* congregations. They eventually grow up, test their wings, and leave the nest. This young man is out on his own, without a solid Bible foundation. Somebody—maybe lots of “somebodys”—failed to impart the truth that leads to heaven to a precious soul. Timothy knew from childhood the Scriptures which make one “wise unto salvation” (2 Tim. 3:15), but this young man does not. Let every parent who remains in an increasingly liberal, spineless, stand-for-nothing, Bible-compromising, error breeding, sin loving congregation—one that marches persistently toward hell while refusing the truth—explain in 20 years what good that did for their children. Moreover, let them face judgment and have to admit, “I thought I’d try to stick it out at congregation ‘X’ but I lost my children in the process.”

The tragedy of it all is seen in a young man who thinks he has come out of the “dark ages” into the light of day, but, in truth, he was walking a poorly lit path to perdition. It could have, it should have been different.

Kingsbury, TX

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Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

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"Danger Will Robinson!" Thoughts Lost in Space and Brethren *Johnny Oxendine*

Many years ago a popular television program ("Lost In Space") had a robot that uttered those words (in the aforementioned title) when the young Will Robinson was unaware of impending danger. Today it is simply another phrase for warning someone when they are making a misstep or overlooking something important. I thought of this silly phrase when I happened to think of what many in the Bay Area have committed themselves to in the form of speaking engagements that include people from the Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver. This is where Neal Pollard preaches for the Bear Valley Church of Christ.

As we mentioned previously, Neal has a connection to the Deaver's (having preached a meeting at the congregation where Mac had preached—and his son now preaches), which means that there is obviously no objection to the doctrines that all Christians are baptized of the Holy Spirit, the direct operation of the Holy Spirit (in all of its manifestations), and other errors that Mac has pontificated. That some local preachers went to

the Bear Valley lectures last year says enough, but that a whole passel of them are soon heading down to Monterey with a Bear Valley troupe says, "Danger, Will Robinson," if truth and associations matter.

I spoke to one local preacher who actually had **no idea** of all of these goings-on, but there are others in the area who have made it clear that it really does not matter what association they have with these people as long as no one asks any questions about it. Of course, it does not hurt that Dave Miller, now becoming a local celebrity, actually recommended Mac Deaver for a debate a year or so ago. I can only surmise that Miller has no problem with Deaver's errors, or is as ignorant of them as he is elder reevaluation/reaffirmation (which he advocated and practiced).

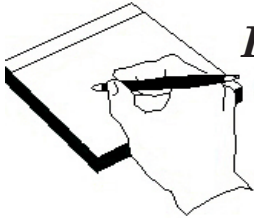
Now maybe the members at Bear Valley do not know what Mac teaches, or that Neal has a link on his blog to Weylan Deaver's blog, or what that means, but **they should**. Maybe they do not know Neal's link to Wayne Jones (University Church of Christ, San Marcos) has anything to do with Stan Crowley (infamous

for his marriage/divorce/remarriage errors). Nope, Neal and the rest are just another cog in the big party movement that has engulfed the church in many places, and brethren are no longer concerned about what it portends.

This all started with the idea that Apologetics Press was too big to fail, regardless of the fact that a false teacher was at the helm. The stubborn arrogance of that move led many to circle the wagons (some having to switch directions) into an enlarged fellowship circle (Grider, Young, MSOP, et al.) that would no longer address error lest it condemn itself of hypocrisy.

Years ago we warned, "danger, Will Robinson" to some brethren who were about to embark on a trip that included (totally unbeknownst to them) a false teacher, under the umbrella of a congregation we had intimate knowledge of regarding their fellowship with the Sunset School of Preaching. Oh, they did not think we could have such information, but they at least heeded the warning and avoided such associa-

Continued on Page 6



Notes From The Editor

Michael
Hatcher

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mhatcher@gmail.com

Elder Authority

Jesus promised to build His church upon the solid rock that He was the Christ the Son of God. "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Mat. 16:18). While Jesus was put to death, death could not contain Him; He was raised from the grave and established the church of Christ. God has made Him head over the church. God "raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:20-23; cf. Col. 1:18). He does not share that headship with anyone). Having authority over the church, He has complete "right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience."

Within a local congregation, God set forth a certain organization. We see that organization mentioned when Paul writes to the Philippians: "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons" (1:1). Within that congregation of saints,

there are bishops and deacons. The bishops are those who oversee the work of the local congregation. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). They have the exhortation to "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind" (1 Pet. 5:2).

Those "saints in Christ Jesus" (i.e., Christians) have the obligation to humbly submit to their oversight. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:7). Paul would write, "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves" (1 The. 5:12-13).

Our society went through a time of rebellion to authority in the 1960s. This rebellious attitude made its way into the Lord's church. The Crossroads movement and later the Boston Movement (which became the International Church of Christ) by-passed the bishops of the local congregation to establish a high-archal system like the Roman Catholic papacy.

In the late 1970s two brethren attacked the authority of the bishops within the local congregation. Reuel Lemmons, then editor for *Firm Foundation*, wrote an editorial titled, "Who Calls the Shots" (August 2,

1977). Around the same time frame, Waymon D. Miller wrote a book titled, *The Role of Elders in the New Testament Church*.

Both works attacked the authority of the New Testament bishops and taught the only authority elders possessed was through their example. Miller wrote, "It is well to remember that there is not one occasion in the inspired record of a body of elders independently arriving at a decision about **anything**. There is, therefore, **no New Testament authority or precedent for elders serving in the decision-making role for churches**" (47). Sound brethren recognized the danger of attacks against the eldership such as these and properly refused to fellowship those who advocated such false doctrines.

On April 8, 1990, Dave Miller preached a sermon (under the authority of the elders of the Brown Trail congregation in Bedford, Texas, advocating what has come to be known as the reevaluation/reaffirmation of elders. This practice (as was preached by Dave Miller and practiced by the Brown Trail congregation) attacks the authority God placed within the eldership. Many, at that time, separated themselves from Miller and the Brown Trail congregation and would not fellowship them. However, the majority of brethren did not know anything about Miller's sermon or what had taken place.

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Michael Hatcher, Editor

Bert Thompson hired Dave Miller to work for Apologetics Press. When the sins of Bert Thompson came to light, 60 brethren allowed their names to be placed on a statement of support for Apologetics Press and at the same time Dave Miller was promoted to executive director. Instead of withdrawing their support (as they should have done) it was instead decided that Apologetics Press was too important to fail. Thus, they continued their support of Apologetics Press and by implication, Dave Miller. These same brethren who would not fellowship others who taught doctrines that attacked the authority of the elders, now fellowshiped Dave Miller who taught and participated in a practice that attacked the authority of the elders.

When you accept doctrines that denigrate elder's authority, then other matters naturally arise. There are specific things which one begins to challenge as to whether the elders have a right to make decisions. Some

will argue that elders do not have the right to make a policy regarding the version of the Bible one is to use in the preaching and teaching program of the congregation. They challenge whether or not the elders have a right to have those serving in a public capacity to wear a tie and coat.

We are hearing more and more today contend that elders have no authority over attendance. They contend that God only obligates us to worship on the first day of the week and thus the elders have no right to obligate us to attend at any other time. If the elders have a mid-week Bible study, a person can choose to attend or not attend as it pleases them, or if the elders bring someone in for a Gospel meeting, members do not have to attend because elders do not possess authority in these matters.

The fact is elders do have authority to expedite the commands God has given. Members are to humbly

submit to their oversight. Thus, they do have the right to make a decision regarding what version will be used in the public teaching program (and make sure that perversions of God's Word are not used). They do have the right to make decisions regarding the proper decorum as to those who serve in a public way during the worship services. Elders are given the obligation to feed the flock and to do so they plan a mid-week Bible study or Gospel meeting efforts. To refuse to submit to these areas of the elders' authority is to be rebellious against God's delegated authority. You can see how that worked by reading Numbers 16.

However, when brethren compromised regarding Dave Miller when his sermon and the practice he took part in undermined the authority of the elders, they have opened the floodgates to challenge the authority of elders in any area.

MH

Mac Deaver's Present-Day Holy Spirit Heresy in *Biblical Notes Quarterly* *Daniel Denham*

The Problem of Time and the Text of Titus 3:5

Mac tries to extricate himself from the dilemma that he surely perceives by reducing the time distinction between **the cleansing and the regeneration** so he can slip Spirit baptism upon the human spirit of the candidate just after he is forgiven but just before he becomes a Christian. He posits that the person first becomes a saint and then upon regeneration a Christian. That way, Mac seems to think, he evades the

charge of a direct operation on an alien sinner. However, a saint does not need regenerating. If he is a saint, as noted above, he is a Christian. Thus, Mac will have to opt for a category somewhere between the alien sinner and the non-Christian saint. However, as we have already noted, there is no such category in between the alien sinner and the saint in the process. He has to invent it and ignore many passages to squeeze this nebulous category in between the two. As noted, he floats

this new category on page 14 under the rubric that he could be "a non-sinner who by regeneration is made a saint." However, Titus 3:5 speaks of "the washing of regeneration." Again, this is either the washing which regeneration produces, which would naturally entail simultaneous action, or the washing which is regeneration. *The renewing of the Holy Spirit* simply describes this same action in the form of hendiadys, as I have repeatedly noted. Mac cannot answer this! I am persuaded that

some of his supporters know this to be the case, even if Mac does not do so. We challenge Mac and them to deal with the original construction rather than making unsubstantiated assertions that syntactically are not only incorrect, but obviously absurd. Titus 3:5 does not read “first the washing and then the regeneration” which Mac’s theory must logically call for in the construction. Ignoring the obvious, brethren, is not an answer.

Returning to his material in the Spring of 2011 *BNQ* article, we note the following from Mac:

But now note that while conceptually forgiveness must precede regeneration, and regeneration must precede the indwelling, chronologically while they as events appear in due order, the whole process transpires in the blink of the eye while the person is under the water. Conceptually, we must make certain significant distinctions. But forgiveness, regeneration, and indwelling all transpire in a brief moment when the person’s body is under the water (*BNQ* 11).

The blink of an eye is indeed quick, but that blink can be the difference between life and death in driving an automobile or in facing the muzzle of a gun. Regardless of however fine Mac wants to pare down the time between the two actions, there is nonetheless implied a **difference in time**. He still has the Spirit contacting directly and immediately the naked spirit of one who is not a Christian and not a saint. Such a one is by definition still in his sins, because he is not in Christ where one receives the remission of sins (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14). Mac, like Arminian Baptists seeking to avoid their own dilemmas, tries vainly to reduce the time difference between the direct operation he envisions and the act of salvation. Nevertheless

he, like they, still has some minuscule gap of time between them that cannot be bridged. It may as well be a chasm like that between the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19ff.) for all practical purposes. It is still a direct working of the Spirit on the heart of an alien sinner. As such it is the death-knell to his doctrine. Also, the time would have differed in specific cases according to his own teaching on the subject. In the case of the apostles, for example, it would have lasted for 3 ½ years and for the Samaritans in Acts 8 for several days, if Mac’s doctrine were actually true (which it obviously is not).

The Mac-Ian Art of Missing the Obvious

Mac, after having made a bigger mess, bristles in writing:

Now, in all of that description, where did I imply that the Holy Spirit comes on “the naked heart of the sinner” as charged by Denham? Dear reader, can you find the evidence in the foregoing description of the conversion process that I taught some form of Calvinism? Where did Denham or anyone else ever find the evidence to charge Roy and Mac Daever with being Calvinists or as being “neo-Calvinists” as one reckless antagonist falsely claimed? I deny to the death that we have ever explicitly or implicitly taught Calvinism! And I would remind Denham and his friends that it is a serious matter to become a false accuser (cf. Rev. 21:8; cf. Matt. 26:59-66). And all of those who in their uninformed zeal have taught that we are Calvinists need to be reminded that while it is surely wrong for a man to become a *false teacher*, it is also wrong for one to become a *false accuser*! (*BNQ* 11).

First, notice again the false canard about Calvinism! Mac is the one who needs to be reminded about the consequences of the sin of lying

against others here. Let him show where I accused his father of teaching Calvinism. He cannot find it. Let him find where I taught that his daddy taught Calvinism. He definitely did not present the evidence in the quotes he has given so far. I have specifically set forth the case that he is teaching what John Wesley taught on salvation during his earlier years due to his Anglican roots and the Arminian influence among the Anglicans of his period. Such are not false charges. They are based on historical fact. As N.B. Hardeman often said, “If it walks like a duck, looks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, pardon me if I call it a duck!”

Second, what he is doing is falsely equating the charge of a direct operation on the alien sinner with the charge of teaching raw Calvinism. This is diverting the issue yet again. Arminianism and its perfectionistic step-child Wesleyanism both teach a direct operation on alien sinners. **This is not a false doctrine peculiar to Calvinism.** To imply that it is not only false; it is patently dishonest, if the man knows anything of these systems. The brethren at Tennessee Bible College ought to know of these things! Or do they not study Systematic Theology there? What say ye, Malcolm?

Third, Mac pouts over having the unsavory implications of his doctrine tossed at him, but rather than answering them honestly, he smears his opponents with false charges. In his arrogance, the man shows both his abject ignorance and immaturity. One would think that for one claiming to have direct help of the Spirit in organizing his material and making his case that he would avoid such blunders in both logic and manners.

Parrish, FL

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7:45 pm False Teachers John West

Sunday, June 10

9:00 am Morality Gene Hill
10:00 am Worship Ken Chumbley
Lunch Break
2:00 pm Bible Translations John West
3:00 pm The Tongue Dennis "Skip" Francis
Dinner Break
7:00 pm Holy Spirit Charles Pogue
7:45 pm Satan Gary Summers

Monday, June 11

9:00 am Inspiration of the Bible Michael Hatcher
10:00 am Home Tim Cozad
11:00 am Works of the Flesh Roelf Ruffner
Lunch Break
1:30 pm Emotions Charles Pogue
2:30 pm Conflict Gene Hill
3:30 pm Open Forum:
Dinner Break
7:00 pm Christian Growth Wayne Blake
7:45 pm Baptism Dub McClish

Tuesday, June 12

9:00 am Authority Ken Chumbley
10:00 am Divorce and Remarriage Don Tarbet
11:00 am Love David P. Brown
Lunch Break
1:30 pm Christian's Fruit Lynn Parker
2:30 pm Hate Tim Cozad
3:30 pm Open Forum:
Dinner Break
7:00 pm Modesty John Rose
7:45 pm Salvation Dennis "Skip" Francis

Wednesday, June 13

9:00 am The Second Coming Dub McClish
10:00 am God the Father Wayne Blake
11:00 am Drinking Alcohol Don Tarbet
Lunch Break
1:30 pm Covenants John Rose
2:30 pm Christ Roelf Ruffner
3:30 pm Open Forum:
Dinner Break
7:00 pm Hell Gary Summers
7:45 pm Heaven Lynn Parker

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Continued from Page 1
tions. Today, warnings like that go unheard. Brethren simply disregard the obvious. Yet, let them ask those brethren from Bear Valley if they knew anything about Mac Deaver's

false doctrines relating to the Holy Spirit (baptism of and direct operation of) before Neal Pollard (their preacher) went to speak at the Deaver Den. They will likely brush

off the question and the questioner, hoping it will all be forgotten—and it will be, by both parties because neither of them care enough about the Gospel to contend for the faith.
San Mateo, CA

Does There Come a Point at Which Doctrinal Soundness Becomes a Hindrance to One's Relationship with God?

Charles Pogue

If one had asked brethren forty years ago if doctrine can be so emphasized that it becomes a hindrance to one's relationship with God, he would have been identified as a would-be peddler of denominational nonsense. Now, however, Rob Hatchett must think so, for he wrote it with boldness in his *Think*, article, "Where Are The Future Leaders?" Brad Harrub must think so, because he was willing to be the original publisher of the chockablock of error. Barry Grider must think so, because he was willing to foist the liberal lies upon the Forest Hill congregation. If Grider is to be believed, the Forest Hill membership must think so, too, because according to brother Grider, he received about as many accolades for printing it in the Forest Hill News as Abraham Lincoln did from the slaves for issuing the Emancipation Proclamation!

The foolishness of the above parties is clearly reduced to the scriptural ignorance it purveys by one single verse of Scripture (in fact, many single verses of Scripture will achieve that end), John 14:21 where Jesus said, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and

he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Is to say that one loves God, and is loved of God, an accurate way to express that one has a very close relationship with Him? Surely none would deny it. That mutual love (relationship), Jesus said, is established by an individual having and keeping His commandments. To have the commandments implies that one must either study to learn them on his own, or be taught them by someone else. For instance, God has chosen "by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). That those things are to be brought to our attention with consistency and frequency is clearly understood by Hebrews 2:1: "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." Hatchett, Harrub, and Grider would have us to give less heed to the very things upon which Jesus said our relationship with both Him and His Father is established and enjoyed.

Gospel preachers who teach the doctrine of Christ are doing nothing more or less than what Paul

admonished Timothy to do. "If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine whereunto thou hast attained" (1 Tim. 4:6). There is an open challenge, not made by man, but by God himself, to prove by a single Scripture reference that it is possible to prevent, diminish, stymie, slow down, or hinder one's relationship with God by focusing too much on doctrine. We hope, brethren, that everyone can recognize the subjective standard the false suggestion implies. If it is possible for too much doctrine to hinder one's relationship with God, how much is too much, and when is the point reached? Would the point not be different for one individual than it is for the next? If a person apostatizes from God, may he be returned to the fold by providing him with a sense of social relevance and entertainment or must it be done by doctrine? To ask is to answer.

If social relevance and entertainment were even necessary (which they are not) to developing a close relationship with God, one might have expected Paul's last words to

the Ephesian elders would have been for them to load the Ephesian brethren into a ship and sail them all (or at least the younger generation) across the Mediterranean Sea to the arena in Rome for some gladiatorial entertainment. That

would have contained an element of social relevance to boot! He did not. Instead, Paul told them, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among

all them that are sanctified" (Acts 20:32). Choose this day who you will believe, whether it be Hatchett, Harrub, or Grider. As for me and my house, we will put our trust in the words of the inspired apostle!

Granby, MO

"Let Me Not Be Ashamed"

Brad Green

Enemies surrounded the psalmist David. He was chased into exile by his father-in-law (King Saul), faced rebellion from his own son (Absalom), and was always harassed by the enemies of God. In many of the psalms, we find David praying for deliverance from his enemies. In one such occurrence, we read:

Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul. O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, Let not mine enemies triumph over me. Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: Let them be ashamed which transgress without cause (Psa. 25:1-3).

Though David prayed often that his enemies not triumph over him in a physical sense, knowing that such a triumph would bring shame and disgrace to David, it seems that an even sadder principle is here proclaimed. Sorrowfully, in regards to faithfulness to God, those who **should** be ashamed are not, while those who need **not be** ashamed (due to their obedience to God) are. David proclaims his trust in God and prays that no temptation will cause him to be ashamed of his faithful service to God. If an individual becomes ashamed of doing the Will of God, apostasy from the Truth will follow. The enemies of God will stop at nothing to assault the faithful child of God and seek to make him ashamed. Harsh

statements like: "You are unloving, unkind, and without compassion," and "You think you are the only ones going to Heaven" are attempts to make the Christian ashamed. If such an attack is successful, it is indeed a triumph over one's faith.

The Bible teaches that the faithful child of God, one who waits on the Lord (25:3), has nothing of which to be ashamed. The apostle Paul states, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). Jesus proclaimed: "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38). If we desire to be with Christ in eternity, we cannot allow anything today to make us ashamed of being wholly obedient to His Word.

On the other hand, those who should be ashamed are those who are not obedient to God. The psalmist states that disobedience to God is without cause, because there is no rational cause for transgressing God's Laws. God is good and upright (Psa. 25:8), just (25:9), merciful and forgiving (25:7, 10). Anyone who will not or who has not obeyed

God should be ashamed.

Paul writes, "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, **that he may be ashamed**. Yet count *him* not as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother" (2 The. 3:14-15). Paul also states by inspiration: "godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2 Cor. 7:10).

Let us remember the words of the inspired psalmist, "O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be ashamed, Let not mine enemies triumph over me." Let us never be ashamed of the Truth of God's Word, and let us never be made to feel ashamed because we submit to it. Let us trust in the Lord and seek Him often in prayer that we do not succumb to the attacks of those who desire to triumph over our faith. Let us, with patience and love, seek to help those who are lost and those who have erred from the faith to understand that it is not shameful to preach and practice only that which God authorizes. The shame is to have a lifetime of opportunity to be faithful to God, but to choose to reject His loving call to "come unto me" (Mat. 11:28; Rev. 22:17).

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Are We Drifting?

J. Noel Merideth

J. D. Tant, a famous Texas preacher of times past, would often end his articles by saying "Don't forget, brethren, we are drifting." He voiced his alarm as to the drift which he felt was taking place within the brotherhood. This "drift" was during the years in which the fight with the digressives began to subside, and brethren began to try a "new approach" to the denominational world. It was an approach in which debating and discussions would have an ever-decreasing emphasis. There was also the problem that brethren would not invite sound preachers to hold meetings in the summers; they wanted "big preachers" saying that if they could not get a "big preacher," they would not have any. There are the same problems today and the question might well be asked: Are we drifting?

When one reads bulletins today it is obvious that some are acquiring a vocabulary quite different from the Bible and that of everyday life and contrary to the sound speech which God commands preachers and teachers to use. They forget to preach the Gospel in its simplicity and power, beauty, and glory. They fail, if they do not even refuse, to

follow the example of the learned Paul, that is determine to know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

We are now treated to questionable remarks about fellowship. We are told to be tolerant of error. There are those who say we may be wrong on some of the basic matters in Christianity and that there ought never to have been any division over such issues as instrumental music in worship, premillennialism, and marriage and divorce. [We might now add the organization of the church to that list—editor.] We are actually told by some that we may be wrong on these matters. This is evidence that some are drifting in the wrong direction. Paul wrote, "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*" (Eph. 5:11). John writes:

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds (2 John 9-11).

It is thus clear that God wants us to follow the doctrine of Christ and not fellowship false doctrine not even bid them God-speed. To come along and say we may be wrong on these matters is like showing cowardice in the face of the enemy and betraying the Lord with the kiss of compromise. There is such a thing as truth, it is accessible, it is within our mental reach; we should seek it, find it, believe it, and preach it! We should not be ashamed to preach that instrumental music in worship is sin, premillennialism is false, and the only grounds for scriptural divorce and remarriage is fornication.

We are also told by some that we should get out of the judging business and into the loving business. We as preachers are sometimes lectured that we see too much black and white, right and wrong. Blessings are sometimes sprinkled over the denominational world even the Salvation Army. Now it is true that hypocritical judgment is wrong (Mat. 7:13), but it is also true that there are things we are to judge. The Corinthians were to judge the case of fornication among them and put away the wicked person from

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Notes From The Editor

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Knowing God

God exists. While the Bible does not set out to prove the existence of God, it does give evidence of His existence. The Bible begins with God existing: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). God has also revealed Himself to man. He revealed Himself through nature (Psa. 19:1; Rom. 1:20) so only a fool would say there is no God (Psa. 14:1). However, this knowledge is incomplete. God has also revealed Himself through His Son and our Savior, Jesus the Christ (John 1:18; 14:9), thus Jesus' life exemplified God and His nature (Heb. 1:3; 2 Cor. 4:4). Then God has revealed Himself by the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:11). He does this by the prophets and apostle who spoke by the inspiration of God (1 Cor. 2:7-13; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

It is, thus, man's responsibility to seek after and find God. Paul would tell the Athenians:

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him,

and find him, though he be not far from every one of us (Acts 17:24-27).

We have this need because God created us with a need to worship. We often speak of the need for air, water, and food, God also placed within man that need to worship. We must make sure our worship is directed at the proper object. The Psalmist writes, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" (42:1-2). Later we read, "O God, thou *art* my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so *as* I have seen thee in the sanctuary" (63:1-2).

God is a jealous God, so He will not share man's loyalties with anyone or anything else. When He gives the Jews the Mosaic Law, He begins with this idea by saying:

I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments (Exo. 20:2-6).

There are certain blessings that come as a result of knowing God. Peter writes:

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as

his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust (2 Pet. 1:2-4).

There are at least five blessings Peter reveals to us that come from knowing God. First is grace. *Grace* is generally defined as unmerited favor or words to that effect. It has an application of God's gift of His Son to die on the cross for sinful mankind. God's grace is extended to all men (Tit. 2:11) in that Christ died for all (Heb. 2:9). However, only those who know God are recipients of God's grace in saving them from their sins.

Second is peace. While said by Eliphaz the Temanite, it is nonetheless true: "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee" (Job 22:21). We can first have peace with God (Rom. 5:1). Having peace with God brings peace with self (John 14:27) and peace with others (Rom. 12:18). Because we have peace with self, we can also have peace with whatever circumstances we might find ourselves in (Phi. 4:11-12).

He then tells us through a knowledge of God we have life. This would certainly include the life we have here on this earth. Jesus states, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I

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Michael Hatcher, Editor

am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly” (John 10:10). God, our Creator, knows what is best for us and has shown us the way in which to live so we would have the best life available in the example of Christ. However, there is much more than simply this world. There is the world to come. In Jesus’ high priestly prayer, He prayed, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (17:3). Peter continues in this letter to state that “an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1:11).

The fourth thing Peter mentions that comes from a knowledge of God is godliness. *Godliness* is the translation of the word *eusebeia* and means devotion or piety toward God. Paul tells us, “But godliness with content-

ment is great gain” (1 Tim. 6:6).

The last thing Peter mentions in this context is that we have exceeding great and precious promises. Paul speaks of this in writing to the Ephesian brethren by saying, “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ” (1:3).

On the other hand, a failure to know God leads to eternal destruction. Paul would write, “Seeing *it* is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his

power” (2 The. 1:6-9).

Sadly, in our society today most do not have any concept of God. The majority that do, simply do not know God in all that it means. They do not obey the Gospel (which is implicit in knowing God) or follow the teachings given in the Bible. This is why we see the world in the condition it is now in. Evil and wickedness abound. People call evil, good, and they call that which is good, evil (Isa. 5:20-23). The words of God to Israel are apropos for our times: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children” (Hos. 4:6). We, as Christians, need to be teaching people about God and His will for all men today.

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among them; they were to judge them that are in the church (1 Cor. 5:1-13). Jesus said, “Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment” (John 7:24). The problem today is that people are not making the right kind of judgments. We love the souls of all men and should try to teach them the truth. We even love the souls of men in denominationalism, but we believe they are wrong religiously, even the Salvation Army. Instead of trying to compromise with those in error we should try to convert those who are in error to the way of truth. This takes patience and teaching but this is our job.

Christ came and died to purchase the church with His blood. Surely Christ would not have made such

sacrifice for the church unless it was to have a mission in some measure worthy of its cost. The great mission of the church is to preach the Gospel to the world, to build people up in the faith, and to help the worthy poor. It is not the mission of the church to furnish amusement for the world or its own members. We all know that a certain amount of recreation is necessary to the health and happiness of the individual, but it is not the function of the church to furnish amusement for people. The New Testament teaches that bodily exercise is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and that which is to come (1 Tim. 4:8). To quote an old preacher: “As the church turns its attention to amusement and recreation, it will

be shorn of its power as Samson was when his hair was cut.” A church is drifting in the wrong direction when it turns from its true course and moves to relatively unimportant matters. May we never lose sight of our goal nor drift away from it. Brethren, are we drifting?

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Sunday, June 10			11:00 am	Love	David P. Brown
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10:00 am	Worship	Ken Chumbley	1:30 pm	Christian's Fruit	Lynn Parker
<i>Lunch Break</i>			2:30 pm	Hate	Tim Cozad
2:00 pm	Bible Translations	John West	3:30 pm	Open Forum:	
3:00 pm	The Tongue	Dennis "Skip" Francis	<i>Dinner Break</i>		
<i>Dinner Break</i>			7:00 pm	Modesty	John Rose
7:00 pm	Holy Spirit	Charles Pogue	7:45 pm	Salvation	Dennis "Skip" Francis
7:45 pm	Satan	Gary Summers	Wednesday, June 13		
Monday, June 11			9:00 am	The Second Coming	Dub McClish
9:00 am	Inspiration of the Bible	Michael Hatcher	10:00 am	God the Father	Wayne Blake
10:00 am	Home	Tim Cozad	11:00 am	Drinking Alcohol	Don Tarbet
11:00 am	Works of the Flesh	Roelf Ruffner	<i>Lunch Break</i>		
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2:30 pm	Conflict	Gene Hill	3:30 pm	Open Forum:	
3:30 pm	Open Forum:		<i>Dinner Break</i>		
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Mac Deaver's Present-Day Holy Spirit Heresy in *Biblical Notes Quarterly* *Daniel Denham*

Denying Obvious Parallels Does Not Make Them Non-Parallel

Leaving the impression that he is following along with my line of argument to answer my article in order, Mac now says: "Now let us continue with Denham's own words" (*BNQ* 11—all quotes from this page). In actuality he has gone back a page or two to pick up on a point of linguistics and language that he had previously chosen to ignore because it strikes at the fundamental structure of John 3:5, the central text upon which he bases his position, and to have done so at the time in keeping with the flow of my article would have placed his response in the midst of the discussion of his supposed transition period texts in Acts 2, 8, 10, and 19. This would, as we shall show, have proven quite enlightening to his readers as to how he really is using John 3:5. He is going back and forth between two completely different approaches to the text—each of which is mutually exclusive to the other. The deception was carried out in his book, but would have been made even more obvious in a shorter space. So, what he has done is separate, as best he could, this material on John 3:5 from the discussion on the transition he sees in Acts, as though they have no relevance to one another. The deception, however, does not help him.

Mac depicts the quote he uses from me as "such confusion," and refers to it as "a mangled mess of ideas!" (*BNQ* 11). So, let us break down the quote sentence by sen-

tence and see if that is so, or if the confusion is really with Mac. Where is the "mangled mess of ideas" really to be found?

(1) Mac quotes the following from me: "Mac's error on John 3:5 implicitly takes the construction as **an order of operation** type of construction." **Order of operation** simply refers to an order of actions that are involved in the syntax of **the sentence or clause** to which the actions belong. What is so difficult or confusing about that?

"Mary went to the store and bought apples" is an example of an order of operation construction. The sentence entails an "order of operation" in that Mary first goes to the store and then (at the store) buys the apples. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). That too is a sentence involving "an order of operation." One must first believe and then be baptized to be saved. Does Mac dispute any of these as entailing an order of operation?

(2) The next sentence in my statement is: "He is reading the text in this fashion, 'One must be baptized into water and into the Holy Spirit to enter into the kingdom of God.'" What is so confusing about that observation which is simply based on how Mac has reasoned from John 3:5? If there is confusion, it has to be in Mac's use of the text to teach both water and Spirit baptism as essential to enter into the kingdom of God.

(3) Then I said: "The problem is this wrongly equates born with

baptized." The sentence simply means that Mac takes *born* to mean "be baptized (in)" when he uses John 3:5. What is confusing about that? Is Mac willing to admit that the verb rendered *born* does not mean, "be baptized"? If so, then we have already made good progress in driving him off his main argument, whether he will acknowledge it or not. While baptism is part of the New Birth, it does not follow that *born* means "be baptized (in)," as Mac's use implies.

(4) He next quotes me as saying: "While baptism is part of the New Birth, baptism **alone** is not the New Birth." The New Birth consists of more than being dipped in water. In fact, even prior to Mac's new doctrine on present-day Spirit baptism, I suspect Mac would not have argued that water baptism alone comprised all that was involved in the New Birth. That is my point. Baptism alone is not all that comprises the New Birth. Again, what is so confusing about that statement? Is faith a part of the New Birth? Is repentance essential to the New Birth? What about confession of Christ?

(5) "The New Birth involves two key elements here—water and the Spirit." That is pretty self-explanatory as well. I do not state here how the two relate to the action of the verb "born." I simply note that there are two elements in the text that do. The genitive forms in which they are couched grammatically modify the action of the verb. That is a simple fact. So, where is the "confusion" or

the “mangled mess” here, Mac?

(6) Let us move to the next sentence which reads: “The form of construction is the same as that given in John 4:24, where worship is said to be ‘in spirit and in truth.’” This is also a simple statement of fact. The constructions are the same in that we have a verb modified by adverbial phrases. The only difference is that John 3:5 employs the preposition *ex* (or *ek*) with the genitive constituting the phrases “of water...of the Spirit,” while John 4:24 uses the preposition *en* with the dative case, “in spirit...in truth.” In the Greek text of each, one preposition actually governs the two nouns conjointly creating the two phrases in our English translations. The effect is ultimately the same in that the action of the main verb is modified by prepositional phrases that are acting **adverbially**. What does Mac not understand about this point? What is so confusing about it to him? Does he need a refresher course on how adverbs and adverbial phrases function in a sentence? Again, was he not listening when his own Daddy, one of the best Greek students in our lifetime, covered such subjects in Greek class? Was Mac not paying attention, or is he suffering from selective amnesia?

I suspect that he really does see the significance of my point and feeling the force of the argument, which he cannot answer. It is much easier to dismiss it *a priori* as confusing, a “mangled mess,” etc., rather than actually dealing with the syntax of the constructions.

(7) I then said regarding John 4:24: “Clearly, that is not an order of operation construction.” Again, where is the confusion here? Let Mac show us and engage us on the syntax of the statements. “Jesus is

not saying that we,” I went on to say, “must worship first in spirit and then in truth.” First, notice that I “spliced” the “quotation,” and yet did not alter its meaning one whit. Second, this statement is another simple statement of fact. Does Mac deny the statement? Does he believe, teach, and practice that John 4:24 involves an order of operation in which one must first worship in spirit and then worship in truth? Yes or No. If no, then he admits what I am pointing out in the statement. Where is the confusion here?

(8) I then draw the appropriate conclusion demanded by the consideration of the John 4:24 construction, by stating: “Neither is He affirming in John 3:5 that we are to be baptized in water and then in the Spirit.” What is confusing about this, folks? It is another simple statement of fact based on the preceding fact.

(9) So, I said: “That does not follow from the construction.” And it does not! That is another simple statement of fact proven by the example of the construction in John 4:24 where a verb is modified by adverbial phrases.

(10) I conclude: “Yet, Mac acts as though it does (289-299).” That is another statement of fact. He does act as though that is its significance and so employs the text of John 3:5 in his discussion of it in the pages cited. If Mac wants to go on record saying that such is not the case, and that he rejects the uses of John 3:5 as an order of operation construction, then let him say so. Here is his chance to be on record on that point! I suspect that he will not touch top, bottom, or sides of the matter, however, because to do so would mean to explicitly repudiate his main argument on John 3:5.

Now watch how Mac tries to twist what is so basically simple. He writes:

Dear reader, just where shall I begin in answering such confusion? What a mangled mess of ideas! First, he attempts to deny that the process of conversion is, in fact, an orderly process. The process, per Denham, is not “an order of operation.”

This statement makes me again wonder if Mac can tell the truth about anything. **Where did Denham say that “the process of conversion” is not an “orderly process”?** What Denham said was that there is **not an order of process taught or demanded by the construction of John 3:5!** And there is not. If Mac believes there is, then John 4:24 would also involve the specific order I set out in my comments above, which surely Mac would not accept. I was dealing with the syntactic and semantic structure of John 3:5. I said the construction of John 3:5 is “not an order of operation type of construction.” It is not. That is a simple fact. An order of operation construction entails the use of conjoined **verbs** or **verb forms** (e.g., infinitives, participles). If Mac really knew anything about syntax (whether Greek or English) he would know that. Why conjoined verbs and verb forms? Because that is where the action is expressed! Let brother Mac be honest about the matter and address it as such.

Mac continues his obfuscation of the matter, by next claiming:

Second, he then affirms that conversion is not merely baptism alone (which I take to mean water baptism alone), but he says that the new birth involves “two” key elements—water and Spirit. Now, dear reader, which comes first today? Water or Spirit?

What did I say about his arguing

that John 3:5 involves an order of operation? Does he so soon forget that Acts 2, 8, 10, and 19 come after the Lord's teaching in John 3:5? Whatever Mac claims that John 3:5 teaches today it has to have taught when first spoken, and that brings us right back to the force of the syntax of the exceptive clause which **precludes** all of the exceptions to the order of operation he implies is indicated by John 3:5. Now, let us see him extricate himself from this self-contradiction.

Brethren, this is why he separated this material on the order of operation from the fuller discussion of the exceptions in Acts 2, 8, 10, and 19, which he says are not really exceptions. He feels the force of the point and it has hit home despite his attempt to avoid it. Thus he immediately cautions against bringing the case of Cornelius in Acts 10 into the discussion at this point. Why? Because Cornelius received the Spirit

first and then the water according to Mac's own statements which are reversed from what he says John 3:5 binds upon us today. It does not dawn upon him that John 3:5 was spoken **before** Acts 10:44-48, which then violated his pattern as per John 3:5. If it does, he is conveniently ignoring it and being deceitful about its meaning. Let him tell us whether it is incompetence in handling the chronology of the Bible's teaching or duplicity concerning it as to why he is doing this.

Mac writes:

Don't be confused over the case of Cornelius which case cannot now be duplicated. No one in the world today is in the same situation that Cornelius was in (the case of Cornelius is explained in much detail in our book). Today as in all other cases of conversion in the book of Acts, we see that water comes first, followed by the reception of the Holy Spirit. Will Denham deny this order? No, he will not (BNQ 11-12).

Denham does deny that the Spirit is received today as Mac claims as per the 120 in Acts 2, the Samaritans in Acts 8, and the twelve disciples in Acts 19. Denham does deny that Spirit baptism was involved in each of these cases. (By the way, the 120 are not even mentioned in Acts 2. I challenge Mac to show from the original text that **they** received Spirit baptism on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. He cannot do so. The original text refutes this silly notion.) Denham does deny that Spirit baptism occurs when the candidate is submerged in the water of water baptism, which is what Mac claims John 3:5 teaches. Again, if it teaches that today, it taught it when first spoken. None of the examples given here fit that teaching. So, unless "except" really does not mean "except," these cases did not entail Holy Spirit baptism as per his main argument.

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Defender

"I am set for the defense of the gospel"

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My God—My God—Why?

Wayne Coats

I do not understand how anyone could be more distressed, discomfited, and heartsick than I, as a result of the discord, ill-will, chaos, non-fellowship, and attitudes which border upon hatred between, among, and toward brethren. What kind of mentality would a human have, if one tried to assert that God is the author of such fightings among brethren? The obvious truth is that many brethren apparently do not care one whit what God thinks. Division is sinful and sin is damning.

If we can be honest enough to admit that division exists between congregations, where unity, harmony, goodwill, and peace prevailed a few years ago, then why can we not be honest enough to admit the causal factors that surely make the devil rejoice? There was a time in the not too distant past when brethren would travel across the United States and they felt perfectly at home and had no problem stopping and worshipping wherever they might be on the Lord's Day. That has drastically changed. Who changed and why? It is as dishonest and deceitful as the devil can ever cause one to be, when we refuse to admit the source of our divisions.

Anyone who has an ounce of integrity certainly knows and will admit that a great number of brethren in numerous congregations have not moved one iota of a hairsbreadth from the position and ground which they have occupied for long decades. Who will deny this? The simple worship has remained the same and the sermons that are preached are true to the Book, and sound forth the old Jerusalem Gospel. Is this wrong? Are brethren to be damned, ostracized, ridiculed, rejected, maligned, and avoided who seek to follow the old paths? Yes, that is the purpose and practice of an increasing number of liberal brethren who sneer at, snarl, and look with disdain upon those brethren who refuse to turn aside from the faith.

There is no longer any fellowship between brethren and congregations in a great many areas. Let us use a bit of common sense coupled with Scripture. When you bring into the worship, the playing of mechanical instruments of music, I cannot possibly fellowship you in such actions. We enjoyed fellowship before you brought in the instrument. Who destroyed our fellowship?

We worshipped together and

enjoyed wonderful fellowship for years, but you brought in all sorts of special entertaining solos, duets, quartets, and choral groups. I cannot justify such antics in worship to God. We had fellowship with each other before these new fangled practices were introduced. Who introduced them and destroyed our fellowship?

In days gone by, we treasured the fellowship of brethren more than the fellowship of denominational pastors, but that has changed drastically. I cannot with a clear conscience condone the practice of hob-knobbing with false teachers. I will not fellowship such false teachers. When brethren bring in false teachers and I stubbornly and scripturally refuse to fellowship them, please tell me who causes the breach of fellowship?

When preaching brethren become saturated with liberalism, modernism, Pentecostalism, and cultic theology, I cannot fellowship such foolishness. Is this sinful upon my part? Who causes the break in fellowship?

Please get this point well. If liberal compromising brethren desire

Continued on Page 4



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

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Prayer And Providence

God works in the affairs of man. He always has and He continues to do so. God has worked in two ways: through miracles and through providence. It is important that we understand the terms. A miracle is the setting aside of the natural laws God established. Providence is God's working through (or by means of) the natural laws He established.

God has used both miracles and providence to accomplish His desired will. For example, it was God's desire that Egypt (Pharaoh) allow the children of Israel to leave Egypt, as it was time to bring them into the Land of Promise (and bring justice upon the nations inhabiting the land). Pharaoh refused to allow the Israelites to leave. His refusal brought about ten plagues upon Egypt till he decided to fulfill God's will in allowing the children of Israel to leave Egypt. God's will was accomplished by means of miracles on this occasion.

At a latter time, God used providential means to accomplish the saving of the Israelites. Before Israel even knew they needed help, God was arranging for their deliverance from extinction. While it, no doubt, began long before we are introduced to the scene, God used the refusal of a queen (Vashti) to show herself to some drunken men at the request

of the king (Ahasuerus), God's hand was in her removal as being queen and the rise of Esther to take her place. It involved Mordecai's being in just the right place to hear the plot against the king, and then his learning of the plot by wicked Haman to destroy the Israelites. God also used a sleepless night by the king and the reading of the book of records at the exact location regarding Mordecai's exposing the plot to kill the king. God used all these events and many others to bring about the deliverance of the Jews. Nothing found in all the events surrounding this deliverance involved a miracle, but God was behind all of it using providential means to accomplish His purpose.

God's use of miracles was for a limited time and for a limited purpose. His use of miracles ended with the completed revelation of His Word. The Bible states the end of miraculous activity at this time in 1 Corinthians 13:8-13 and in Ephesians 4:7-16. We also understand the end of miraculous activity would be when the last apostle and the last person the apostles laid their hands on died. The apostles received miraculous power directly from God (along with the house of Cornelius), however others had to have the apostles lay hands on them and impart those powers to them (Acts 8). Additionally, there is no longer any purpose for miracles. The purpose of miracles was for confirmation. They confirmed the messenger and his message as being from God. We no longer need such confirmation as we now have a confirmed Word, and once something is confirmed, it does not need continual confirmation. While miraculous activity has ceased, God's providential care has and does continue.

God has instructed us to pray. Paul's admonition was: "Pray without ceasing" (1 The. 5:17). Again he exhorted: "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phi. 4:6). Note that Paul shows to whom we are to pray—God. *God* should be understood as referring to the Divine Three unless the context indicates One as opposed to the others. In this context God has reference to the Father as is evidenced by the contrast in the next verse that the peace of God comes through Christ. This corresponds to what Jesus stated in John 16:23-24. (Those who teach we can pray to Jesus are teaching error and are false teachers.) Paul says we can let our requests be made known. What requests? Any request. Notice what John writes, "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 John 3:22). We are not to request things simple to consume them upon our own pleasures. James points out: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts" (4:3). Thus, we have the right to ask for anything as long as it is according to God's Will and not to consume it upon our own lust (pleasure).

In our prayers, we can go to our heavenly Father and cast our anxiety or worry upon Him. Peter writes,

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Michael Hatcher, Editor

What The Bible Says About:

37th Annual Bellview Lectures

June 9-13, 2012

Saturday, June 9			7:45 pm	Baptism	Dub McClish
7:00 pm	Truth	David P. Brown	Tuesday, June 12		
7:45 pm	False Teachers	John West	9:00 am	Authority	Ken Chumbley
Sunday, June 10			10:00 am	Divorce and Remarriage	Don Tarbet
9:00 am	Morality	Gene Hill	11:00 am	Love	David P. Brown
10:00 am	Worship	Ken Chumbley	<i>Lunch Break</i>		
<i>Lunch Break</i>			1:30 pm	The Christian's Fruit	Lynn Parker
2:00 pm	Bible Translations	John West	2:30 pm	Hate	Tim Cozad
3:00 pm	The Tongue	Dennis "Skip" Francis	3:30 pm	Open Forum:	
<i>Dinner Break</i>			<i>Dinner Break</i>		
7:00 pm	The Holy Spirit	Charles Pogue	7:00 pm	Modesty	John Rose
7:45 pm	Satan	Gary Summers	7:45 pm	Salvation	Dennis "Skip" Francis
Monday, June 11			Wednesday, June 13		
9:00 am	The Inspiration of the Bible		9:00 am	The Second Coming	Dub McClish
		Michael Hatcher	10:00 am	God the Father	Wayne Blake
10:00 am	The Home	Tim Cozad	11:00 am	Drinking Alcohol	Don Tarbet
11:00 am	The Works of the Flesh	Roelf Ruffner	<i>Lunch Break</i>		
<i>Lunch Break</i>			1:30 pm	Covenants	John Rose
1:30 pm	Emotions	Charles Pogue	2:30 pm	Christ	Roelf Ruffner
2:30 pm	Conflict	Gene Hill	3:30 pm	Open Forum:	
3:30 pm	Open Forum:		<i>Dinner Break</i>		
<i>Dinner Break</i>			7:00 pm	Hell	Gary Summers
7:00 pm	Christian Growth	Wayne Blake	7:45 pm	Heaven	Lynn Parker

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Meals

The women of the Bellview Church of Christ will provide a free lunch Monday – Wednesday. For all other meals, a list of restaurants will be available at the registration tables.

Books

The lectureship book, *What The Bible Says About:* will be available for purchase. The price of the book is \$11 plus \$3 shipping charges per book. For those attending the lectures

the price will be \$10. The book will contain 29 chapters. This will be a soft-cover book. Everyone will want to purchase a copy and perhaps additional copies for gifts.

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“Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you” (1 Pet. 5:7). These cares might come in various ways: family, business, personal, friends, and even cares about the church. As a Father, God will do those things that are good for us. Jesus said, “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” (Mat. 7:11).

In all these things, God knows what is best for us. Thus, sometimes, even if we are asking according to God’s Will and casting our cares upon Him, God will not grant the request. Paul prayed three times that his “thorn in the flesh” would be removed (2 Cor. 12:7-8). God’s answer was that His “grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness” (12:9). God knows what is best for us even if we do not. Thus, we might pray for something (as Paul did), yet that something (Paul’s “thorn in the flesh”) is not what is best, thus God overrides our request.

One important question, however, is: How does God accomplish working these things out for our good? He accomplishes His will today through providential means. We have the right to pray for the sick (Jam. 5). When we pray for the sick, do we not expect God to heal them? Certainly we do. How is God going to accomplish that healing? During New Testament times healings were often accomplished by miraculous activity. However, that type of activity has ceased. Does that mean God cannot heal someone today? Certainly not. God can heal the sick today by means of providence. An example of this is when Hezekiah was informed by God that he would die and not live (2 Kin. 20:1). Hezekiah prayed to God upon which God informed him that fifteen years would be added to his life (20:2-6). They then took “a lump of figs. And they took and laid *it* on the boil, and he recovered” (20:7). God used the lump of figs (a common remedy for boils in the East) to bring about the healing of Heekiah based upon his

prayer; however, God used natural means to accomplish the healing, not a miracle.

We, as we have seen previously, have the privilege to take our troubles to God in prayer. God, in answer to our concerns, can work things out for our good. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose” (Rom. 8:28). How does God do this, the same way He worked out the problem of the Israelites in saving them from wicked Haman. God, who declares the end from the beginning (Isa. 46:10), can work on the solution to the problems we come across even before we know they are problems. Then when we pray, God has through providential means, worked out the solution to the problem that we face.

Our admonition then is that we “ought always to pray, and not to faint” (Luke 18:1). We can rest assured that God, through providential means, will work things out for our good.

MH

Continued from Page 1
to bring false teachers into a city or county and prefer their fellowship in preference to the goodwill and fellowship of numerous brethren in congregations within the area, so be it. Such brethren have serious problems too horrible to take to the judgment. This is the same sort of low, sleazy attitude that will bring in the mechanical instruments—even though good brethren protest strongly.

Does congregation A absolutely have to have preacher X to come into the area, when it is established, documented, and proven beyond

question that preacher X is a false teacher? Of course not! Why persist in that which raises barriers, destroys fellowship and brings about division—over a matter that could be left alone?

But one answers that brethren in other congregations have no right to tell elders in another congregation what to do. Amen! In matters of human opinion such is the case—when human opinion does violate divine principles—such ceases to be human opinion. Try that argument between individuals within the same congregation. When does one man’s opinion become the concern of other

brethren? A Solomon is not needed to answer this.

To assume that my influence, efforts, teachings, oppositions, helps, hindrance, speech, and writing must be limited, restricted, confined, and kept to myself, within my home congregation and never to be directed towards, or deal with the problems within a brotherhood, or sister congregation is to take a position which **would set aside** the very books of much of the New Testament. No, we are not inspired writers, but we do have the inspired Book.

Tis a strange quirk in the thinking of brethren when they prefer the

fellowship of a heretic rather than that of fellow-saints who are sound in the faith! Moreover, liberal elders in a congregation will absolutely refuse to invite a sound, conservative Gospel preacher to come in and preach the Word. They bar the door against such men, yet they whine and moan when they are exposed and opposed. Brethren need to be united in the faith, like the Bible teaches. Brethren are divided, disjointed, dissected, split asunder, snarling, backbiting, fighting, and going to hell, and no one is willing to admit being guilty, at least I am not. You probably will not either, so the church of Christ will continue to present to a hell-bound world the sad spectacle of a divided church, a weakened church, a worldly church, and a disgraceful church.

What is the solution? Knowing the mentality, stubbornness, arrogance, hard-headedness, and self-centered attitude of my brethren, I do not believe the problem will be resolved this side of judgment. To

some, even the preceding sentence presents a problem. According to the Bible, evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse whereas the faithful will continue to comprise a very small minority.

Heretics, false brethren, and the compromisers will flourish and as usual the weak and sickly will succumb to the ways of the carnal church.

To think that there will be a solution to resolve the problem is to be naïve indeed. Such would mean that the devil will go away. This will not happen. The battle will never cease for faithful saints until the crown is finally won.

What can and must we do? The answer is clear.

Mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them (Rom. 16:17).

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them (Eph. 5:11).

For what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement hath a temple of God with idols?... Wherefore Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, And touch no unclean thing; And I will receive you (2 Cor. 6:14-17).

It is sheer folly to think that the liberal, soft, mushy, all positive, compromising brethren will lift even a little finger to support, encourage, assist, or help brethren who sound forth the clarion call to stay with the Book. There is no fellowship existent, so why not go ahead and announce it and explain why? Tell who the culprits are and expose them. What have you to lose? You cannot lose that which you do not have. Sure, the liberals will laugh at you, but consider the source and go ahead. Who wants the devil on his side when a battle is to be fought?

Mt. Juliet, TN

The Crisis in Religious Authority

Dub McClish

The challenges of recent years to authority in home, school, marketplace, and military were bound to have their parallels in religion. The very foundations of pontifical authority in Roman Catholicism have been jarred in recent years with unprecedented open debate between priests and pope over such matters as contraception and a celibate priesthood. A few years ago Italian legislators ignored the pope's objections to a national divorce law and passed such a law. Among other results, many sources indicate that previously unheard of numbers of priests

and nuns are deserting their orders. Some predict that within twenty years or less Catholicism will not be distinguishable from Protestantism. All of this is happening because, one by one, the legs are being knocked from under the pontifical chair, the seat of authority.

Protestantism has felt the effects of this challenge, too. Until two or three decades ago most Protestant churches claimed to believe in the Bible and its authority, but in the intervening years the seminaries have all but destroyed that faith by producing a constant stream

of unbelieving pulpитеers. Many Protestants have quit in disgust, but many others have gladly embraced the non-authoritative approach. (The age-old Protestant slogans claiming that "one church is as good as another" and that "it makes no difference what you believe as long as you're sincere" did a good job of preparing the soil for this liberalism.) Many Protestants seem to be bewilderedly hanging on to the only vestige of religion they know, sickened at what they see and hear on Sunday, but knowing of nothing better.

The crumbling and discarding of their traditional authorities has gone on long enough to produce an offsetting reaction among both segments of Christendom. Especially can this be seen in Protestantism. While the *anything-goes* liberals have occupied the headlines with their attempts at out blaspheming each other, there has been a quiet, but steady interest generated in conservative, Biblical study and teaching. This is visible in both pulpit and pew. Unfortunately, “fundamentalist” independent and holiness groups have profited most from this fallout. Widespread religious liberalism has served to accent the folly of a non-authoritative approach to religion! (This phenomenon is well documented in Dean M. Kelly’s book, *Why Conservative Churches Are Growing*.)

In the church of the Lord, the source of religious authority has never been in question on any large scale; it has been the Bible, particularly the New Testament. There have been some in every age since Pentecost who would not endure the sound doctrine and have turned away from the truth (2 Tim. 4:3-4), but upon exposure they have either been restored or have left the church entirely. In recent years the anti-authority approach has seriously invaded the Lord’s church. It now appears that the question of religious authority is an open issue, perhaps even a divisive issue, among us. Such statements as: “Not one of us can give chapter and verse for everything we do in our worship, nor do we need to,” and “The right spirit is more important than the right practice,” and “There is no one right way” are frightful indications. The attack that has been mounted against the authority of elders in the

local church is also symptomatic. It is a sad fact that some brethren have decided they have outgrown the need for biblical authority. What a tragic irony that at the very time when many sincere religious people are taking a turn toward conservatism, many influential brethren have moved toward liberalism.

A Christian is distinguished from all other religionists and is constituted a Christian by virtue of his submission to the authority of Christ through the Scriptures. There is no such thing as a Christian without the Scriptures. Since a church is simply a body of Christians, it is evident that the church, by scriptural definition, cannot exist in the absence of scriptural authority. The seed of the kingdom is still the Word of God (Luke 8:11).

In the face of this incontrovertible principle, it becomes even more lamentable that there are those in the church (including teachers, preachers, and elders) who have lost their respect for the authority of God’s Word. Sadder yet is the fact that they feel comfortable, are tolerated, and repeatedly given a platform in many quarters. Some have fallen into the old error of conceiving of the church as merely a denomination. Some no longer have a conscience about instrumental music in worship or the observance of the Lord’s Supper every Lord’s day and only on the Lord’s day. This same loose attitude toward Scripture has set some up for embracing, or at least being tolerant toward, neo-Pentecostalism. An increasing number of our pulpits no longer ring with a distinctive, Scripture-filled, authoritative message. Some have a difficult time deciding what to tell people to do who want to become Christians. Many are moving the

church into the entertainment field. More and more the local church is being pressured to assume the responsibilities of parents and home. Probably none of these people would openly attack the Scriptures, but the result of their efforts is the same. The disguised wolf is always more dangerous than the unmasked one (Mat. 7:15).

The church has weathered many stormy issues through the centuries. Some of the great issues of the first century involved Judaism (Acts 15), the coming of the Lord (2 Pet. 3) and incipient Gnosticism (1 Tim. 6:20-21; 1 John). These were all met with an appeal to authoritative preaching by inspired men. When their voices ceased to be heard, apostasy resulted and the church of Christ disappeared from history books for several centuries. In the last century and this one, all issues from the missionary society and the instrument to communion cups and orphan homes have been faced with an open Bible. Its authority has been appealed to in countless sermons, debates, articles, and books. Most brethren on both sides of these issues agreed on one point: the only court of appeal was the Word of God. Because of this appeal to God’s authority, the truth on these matters has shone forth to the majority of God’s people and one by one these issues have been decided and left behind.

The issue before us now is not so simple or singular as those before. It revolves around a certain type of “worldly wisdom.” It thrives upon what it considers to be intellectualism. Its proponents are loud on *spirituality*, as they define it, and are correspondingly soft on strict adherence to God’s Word, as though these were incompatible!

All saints should weep that the time has come in the kingdom when there are those who almost boastfully disregard the finality of Scriptural authority. It is now being preached that one cannot take a definite stand on any Scripture truth because what we “think” is truth may only be our “subjective interpretation.” If that be true, then that which by scriptural definition has been termed *error* may only be mere “subjective interpretation” and may in reality be truth! (Are those who are preaching this **absolutely sure** that their view is not merely **their own** “subjective interpretation?”) If this line be followed, there is no way to discern truth from error. Therefore, doctrine becomes altogether inconsequential. In such case, lines of fellowship cannot be drawn over whether one is Scripturally baptized, whether one is dedicated to the Lord’s teaching on

worship or the divine pattern for the church, or any number of other issues. To these *free* brethren (as they picture themselves) such matters are “legalistic” and “traditional.” To contend for such things makes one “judgmental,” “intolerant,” and “Pharisaical.” To stand firmly upon God’s definition of a Christian and upon the terms by which the Lord adds one to His church is to “play God” or to be derisively called a “five-stepper” by those loose-thinkers.

If contending earnestly for “the faith once for all delivered” makes me a legalist, that is what the Lord wants me to be, for He gave that directive (Jude 3). If insisting that only those immersed for remission of sins following faith, repentance, and confession are in the Lord’s church means that one is an intolerant judge, then one is such with Heaven’s approval. Standing for

the terms of spiritual fellowship demanded by the Scriptures is not *playing* God, it is **obeying** God (1 John 1:7). Like Paul in Ephesus (Acts 20:31), those who love the truth and the church it produces dare not “cease to admonish” or “warn” (KJV). The time seems to be fast approaching when those who desire their children to be a part of the simple church of Christ that they have known are going to have to by-pass brethren who are steadily working against this purpose. If the cancer of liberalism will not respond to the treatment of scriptural admonition, radical surgery is the only recourse. Otherwise, the cancer will devour the whole body. The issue we are fighting now embraces all other issues. Simply put, it is this: is the Bible our religious authority or can we teach and practice what we please?

Denton, TX

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What Should We Teach Our Children?

Danny L. Box

We have the entreaty to "Train up a child in the way he should go" (Pro. 22:6) and also to bring our children up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). To do this, there are some things that our children must be taught both at home and in our assemblies. Let us examine those things that should be included in our teaching.

We Should Teach Our Children About God

We should teach our children that God is the creator of all things (Gen. 1-2). We should also teach them that He is the Father of all mankind (John 8:41). We should teach them about His love (1 John 4:16-20; John 3:16) and His mercy (1 Pet. 1:3). We should let them know that God is all powerful (Gen. 1:31) all knowing (Psa. 139:1-6) and that He is everywhere present (Psa. 139:7-10). Yes friends, we should teach our children about the one true God.

We Should Teach Our Children About Christ

We should teach them that He was the only begotten Son of God (John 3:16) and was with God in the beginning (John 1:1-4). We need to teach them that He left His

home in heaven and was made flesh and lived among men (John 1:14). They need to know that the purpose for His coming to earth was to "seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10) and that He is "not willing that any should perish" (2 Pet. 3:9). We should teach them about His temptations (Mat. 4:1-11) and about the way He handled His temptations (Heb. 4:15). We should teach them about His death on the cross, His burial, and His resurrection on the third day. This is the Gospel or "good news" that is the whole basis for Christianity (1 Cor. 15:1-4). We must teach them that it is only by the blood of Christ and our coming into contact with that blood that we can be cleansed from our sins (Heb. 9:12-22). We also must teach them that to receive our crown of life, we must walk in His steps (1 Pet. 3:21). Yes, we must teach our children about Christ!

We Must Teach Our Children the Plan of Salvation

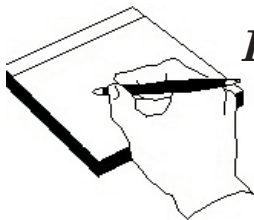
Many people put this off until their children reach the age of accountability (and sometimes even longer). Instead, we should start at an early age letting our young people know that God expects us to

obey the plan that He has put into place if we expect to be saved. We must teach them that they have to hear the truth of God's Word (Rom. 10:17), and once they have heard it, they must believe it (John 8:24; Heb. 11:6). Then we must teach our children about repentance, "a change of heart, that leads to a change of action" in our lives (Luke 13:3). We must teach the importance of the good confession (Mat. 10:32; Rom. 10:9-10), and, finally, we must stress the importance of baptism for the remission sins (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21). We begin laying the ground work at an early age so when our children do reach that "age of accountability" they will not put off doing what the Lord would have them do. If we wait until junior is asking for the car keys to try to teach him what he must do to be saved, we have waited too long!

We Must Teach Our Children About the Church

We must teach them there is only one church (Eph. 4:4), and that it was built by the Lord (Mat. 16:18) and purchased by His blood (Eph. 5:25). We need to teach them that

Continued on Page 4



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

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Bellview Lectures

The Thirty-Seventh Annual Bellview Lectureship took place beginning on June 9 and continuing through June 13. It began in the midst of the floods that took place here in Pensacola. There were a couple of the speakers who had difficulty in their travels. While we had to make one schedule change, everyone did arrive safely. Thus, instead of beginning the lectures with the vital subject of truth and what the Bible says about it, we began with the subject of the Bible's Inspiration. It is important to understand that the Bible not only claims to be from God (other books make such a claim also), it bears all the marks of being God's production and not man's. After the lesson on Bible Inspiration, we had a lesson dealing with false teachers. In this lesson brother John West showed some facts about the nature of false teachers and the danger they bring. He showed that the Bible teaches that we must expose them and stand for the truth. This lesson brought to a close the first day of the lectures. The rains and flooding might have kept some away from the lectures, however they were well attended throughout the lectureship.

On Sunday morning we had our regular Sunday services and at the 9:00 hour brother Gene Hill spoke on the subject of morality. He pointed out there is an absolute standard of morality to which

all men are amenable, and that standard is revealed to us in the Bible. At our regular worship hour brother Ken Chumbley spoke on the subject of worship. He defined what constitutes worship and that God is the only proper object of worship. He then set forth the objectives to worship and the relationship of worship to our live (including the false doctrine of all of life except sin is worship) and the guiding principles of worship. After the lunch break brother John West spoke on Bible translations, knowing that we need God's Word in the common vernacular. He taught us about the languages God used to give us His Word and then dealt with the various text types and how they relate to translation. After this lesson, brother Skip Francis spoke on the important subject of the tongue and how that even though it is small it is still consequential. He centered his lesson on James 3 and going through that great passage to show we must learn to use our tongue in the proper way. After the supper break brother Charles Pogue went through a study of the Holy Spirit. He covered seven points regarding the Spirit: He is a person; His work in creation; His work in inspiration, revelation, and confirmation of the truth; His influence in conversion; the baptism of the Spirit; the indwelling of the Spirit; and His influence in the life of the Christian. After this lesson brother Gary Summers presented a lesson on Satan. He looked at the origin of Satan and the various names of Satan as used in the Scriptures. He discussed the power of Satan and his purposes, then looked at his use of temptations and other techniques he uses to accomplish his purpose. It was then noted his reward of eternal punishment. This brought to a close

the first full day of the lectures.

On Monday morning we began with a lesson on truth. This was the lesson originally planned to start the lectureship. Brother David Brown emphasized that we can know the truth and know that we know it. He also covered that fact that simply because we affirm that we can know some things does not mean that we know all things (as some falsely charge). He also noted that we do not have the right to be wrong, and that the truth must be defended. Brother Tim Cozad then led us in a study of great importance—the home. Sadly, there is the need to define what a home is according to God. He also noticed the problems in the home and the responsibilities in the home. Following that study, brother Roelf Ruffner spoke on the subject of the works of the flesh from Galatians 5:19-21 and its four different categories: sins against purity, atheism, disposition, and excess.

Lunch was then provided by the ladies of the Bellview congregation, as they did on Monday through Wednesday. They always do an excellent job in preparing and serving the meals for those attending the lectureship. They are to be commended for a job well done.

After the lunch break brother Charles Pogue spoke on the subject of emotions. Emotions are an important part of Christianity, however they are not to be the controlling factor of our lives. Our knowledge

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Michael Hatcher, Editor

of God, His Word, what God has done for man, et al., is to control our emotions. After the study on emotions, brother Gene Hill taught about conflict. To listen to some Christians you would think that conflict of any kind would be sinful, but that is not the case as brother Hill pointed out. However, his lesson centered on some areas where conflict can arise and how to resolve it. After the open forum, we broke for supper.

Monday evening we had two lessons, the first by brother Wayne Blake dealing with Christian growth. If we are not growing, we are dying. Brother Blake looked at the importance of growth and the hindrances to it. He then gave some practical ways to grow spiritually. After his lesson, brother Dub McClish led us in a study of baptism, dealing specifically with the baptism Jesus commanded in the Great Commission—the only one in force today. With this lesson we concluded the lessons for Monday.

Tuesday began with a study of authority led by brother Ken Chumbley. While many have no respect for authority today, we cannot escape it, and Christianity is the religion of authority. However, he noted there are false standards of authority and noted that the Bible is the only objective standard and how we determine authority along with looking at generic and specific authority in this study. Next brother Don Tarbet led us in a study of the subject of divorce and remarriage. He went back to study the background of the teachings of the New Testament which is Deuteronomy 24. He showed the various views regarding this passage and the errors of those views and the view he believes to be correct. After this study,

brother David Brown led us in a study of love and the true meaning of love as is seen in the Bible.

After the lunch break brother Lynn Parker taught about the Christian's fruit. Not only did he show that God demands that we bear fruit, he led the study to study the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. After this we had a study on the subject of hate led by brother Tim Cozad. He looked at the Biblical definition of hate and how we are to hate the sin but love the sinner. Then he asked the important question if we are willing to be hated by the world. There is an added question that must be asked today and which brother Cozad dealt with: are we willing to be hated by brethren.

After the supper break, we came back to hear two lessons, the first was a study of modesty by brother John Rose. He went back to a study of the word and its etymology to show us what modesty is about. Then brother Skip Francis presented a lesson on salvation showing us the need for salvation and God's love for man in the offer of salvation to man. Thus brought to a close another wonderful day of study from God's Word.

Wednesday was the final day of the lectureship and we began with a study of the second coming presented by brother Dub McClish. He considered the conditions of man when Christ returns and the events that will take place at His return. Brother Wayne Blake then preached about God the Father. He noted that the Father is our Creator and thus loves mankind. The Father is a giver of perfect gifts and has a special love for those who obey Him. The last lesson that morning dealt with the sin of drinking alcohol presented by brother Don Tarbet. He studied

specifically about John 2 and proved that what Jesus made was unfermented grape juice and was not alcoholic. He also considered *wine* in connection with the Lord's Supper to show that it is grape juice. He also studied several other passages (Eph. 5:18; 1 Pet. 4:4) before considering the passages dealing with the leadership of the church.

After eating lunch together, we came back for a study of the covenants preached by brother John Rose. He looked at the word itself and then the elements that make up a covenant: the parties making up the covenant, the law of the covenant, and the sign or token of the covenant. He then went through several Bible examples showing these three aspects of covenants. After this study, brother Roelf Ruffner taught a lesson on Christ (we had lessons dealing with each one of the Godhead). After considering that He is God in the flesh, brother Ruffner showed that He is the Son of the Living God, our Savior who lived a perfect life and that He is coming again. After the final open forum of the week, we broke for supper.

The last two lessons of the week dealt with man's eternal destiny. Brother Gary Summers preached about hell and its reality. He gave a vivid description of hell before dealing with God's love and justice. He also let us know who would be the inhabitants of hell. The lectureship concluded with the lesson on heaven presented by brother Lynn Parker. He let us know that heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. He discussed how that heaven is our real home and what it means to us. It is also a place of rest and eternal happiness along with being a place for the victorious. What a beautiful picture was presented to us as we

concluded this wonderful study of "What the Bible Says About:" series. The book, containing more information than the speakers were able to cover in their oral lessons, is only \$11.00 plus shipping and handling (see page 8 for ordering information).

We certainly express appreciation to all those who worked so hard to make the lectureship a success.

While the weather presented a few problems to start the lectureship, everything ran very smoothly. The lessons presented were of excellent quality and greatly appreciated by those in attendance. All those in attendance also enjoyed the fellowship of faithful brethren. We appreciate the elders of the Bellview congregation (Paul Brantley and Fred Stancliff) for their foresight in having

these lectureships through the years. The elders have decided to have the lectureship next year. There will be a small change in that we will begin on Friday night instead of Saturday night. The date will be: June 7, 2013 and will continue through Tuesday June 11, 2013. The theme will be: "Innovations." Why not start making plans now to attend.

MH

Continued from Page 1

the church is the body of Christ and the body is the church (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18). They need to know that the church is also the kingdom of our Lord (Mat. 16:19; Col. 1:13; 2 Pet. 1:11). We must also teach them that to be saved one must be a member of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12-28). Yes we must teach our children about the church of our Lord. We must teach our children about the worship and the importance of assembling ourselves together to worship God (Heb. 10:25; Psa.

122:1). We must teach them that the worship must be done decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40), and that it is not a time for playing but for reverence and respect. We must teach them that proper worship is composed of accapella singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), giving of our means (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:7), preaching and teaching the truth of God's Word (Acts 2:42; Acts 20:7), partaking of the Lord's supper on each first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1; Acts 20:7), and offering up public prayers (Acts 2:42). We must teach

our children not to add anything to this worship nor take anything away from it, or else our worship will be vain and not pleasing to God.

There are so many other things that we must teach our children: the inerrancy of the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16-17), the way we should live (Tit. 2:12; Rev. 2:10), the work of the church (Mark 16:16; 1 The. 5:11; Eph. 6:10), the Christian graces (2 Pet. 1:5-10), and other things such as this. One thing we must remember—**We must teach our children!**

Deceased

"The Both/And Church"

Ken Chumbley

The above was part of a response from the preacher of a church in the Fort Worth, Texas, area following the announcement that this congregation was going to begin having services on Saturday night beginning the second weekend of February 2007 that would use instrumental music in the assembly as well as observing the Lord's Supper. He stated, in a lesson to the congregation, December 3, 2006, concerning this announcement: "I greatly appreciate *a cappella* praise. There is no intention of this leadership to force anyone to worship any other way if that is their choice.... But I firmly believe that if

Richland Hills is to be most faithful to God's Word and Christ's mission, we must become a both/and church with regards to instrumental and *a cappella* praise." He also stated with respect to the decision: "This has been part of about a three-year journey that the leadership has been on." Rick Atchley also told the congregation that the decision should help ease crowding at the two Sunday morning services and it will allow the congregation to "reach more people who need Christ." He also stated that the decision of the congregation might "inspire many other Churches of Christ to be courageous

in their kingdom efforts" while, at the same time that he was "not trying to promote instrumental praise anywhere else."

Such is not surprising to those who have known of the growing apostasy of this congregation and preacher for the last twenty plus years. Some would wonder why such took so long! Atchley has been a leading proponent of union with the Christian Church (specifically what is known as the Independent Christian Church) that had apostatized from the truth over a hundred years ago and was recognized by the United States government in

the census of 1906. The centenary of the recognition of this division has been a time when liberal and apostate preachers and congregations have sought to bring about a union between the groups. The Christian Church separated themselves by the introduction of instrumental music into the worship and the use of the missionary society. They are not planning to give up such sinful innovations, but some who claim to still be faithful churches of Christ are willing to now fellowship such, without Biblical authority. Atchley told the Richland Hills Church that "there has never been a moments discussion of changing the name of this church or our affiliation with Churches of Christ." They do not have to! Many of the Independent Christian Churches, particularly in the northern states as in countries overseas call themselves "Churches of Christ" sometimes with the bracketed designation "Instrumental." Anyone who has traveled and sought to find a congregation with which to worship has encountered them.

Such action, as that taken by Atchley and Richland Hills, as well as others, shows that they believe that those who opposed the innovations into the worship and work of the church that split multiple congregations a hundred or so years ago were in error in their opposition to such practices, and that they were thus responsible for the division that occurred. They will not, usually, articulate it in this manner. However, such is clearly what they believe by their actions and their fellowship with those who use these innovations. It would be interesting to see if Rick Atchley or any other who espouses this philosophy would be willing to defend their position in a

public debate of these matters.

Atchley seeks to defend his position on the matter of instrumental music in the worship based on a supposed parallel with the Jerusalem meeting of Acts 15 concerning the matter of circumcision as being a requirement of the Gospel. His argument is that while circumcision was a longtime tradition of the Jews, the mission of the Gospel required allowing Gentiles freedom in that regard referring to Acts 15:19. However, the two situations are **not** parallel, despite Atchley's protestations! The matter of circumcision is clearly taught as not being part of the Gospel. Indeed, those who sought to impose such were clearly condemned by inspiration. The letter to the Galatian churches clearly teaches this to be true. The same writer, under inspiration, along with other inspired writers, clearly teach that praises to God were to be with singing with no inference that such could be accompanied by instrumental music. Indeed, the thirteen passages that deal with the matter of praises to God clearly state that it is to be singing.

In addition to the introduction of instrumental music into the worship of the church, as we have noted, they plan to begin having an assembly on Saturday evening in which they will have the Lord's Supper served. From whence do they gain the idea that it is in harmony with the will of God to meet to observe the Lord's Supper on any other day than the first day of the week? The Scriptures teach that the brethren met together on the first day of the week to partake of the Lord's Supper (Acts 20:7). There is **no** teaching of Scripture that grants approval for the partaking of the Lord's Supper on any other day or gives an example

of the early church meeting on any other day of the week to partake of the feast.

The bottom line in all of this is that Rick Atchley and the Richland Hills church have **no biblical authority** for their announced plan to have worship on Saturday night with the Lord's Supper and the singing to be accompanied by instrumental music. The "about three-year journey" that the leadership of this congregation has been on has been a journey in the "wilderness of sin" and not into the authority that comes from "Mount Zion." They need to repent. If they refused to do so, then they need to give up all pretense of being a "Church of Christ" for they have rejected the teachings of the head of the church and supplanted them with teachings of men.

Over forty years ago, I rejected and renounced the unscriptural teachings and practices of the Independent Christian Church. In the years that have passed since then, I have seen many who have sought a *union* with the Independent Christian Church. In each of these instances, there has been a **rejection** of the authority of the Bible for what is taught and practiced and as a result apostasy ensued.

Brethren, we must **not** allow ourselves to be deceived by those who in the guise of "unity" would seek to get us to compromise the authority of the Word of God and, in so doing, reject the supreme authority of the King of kings. As faithful brethren stated over 100 years ago, with respect to those who rejected the authority of the Scripture, quoting the Word, "Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone" (Hos. 4:17).

Belvedere, SC

The Dastardly Damage of the Doctrine of Depravity

Charles Pogue

A number of years ago when this writer was scheduled to speak on a lectureship in Texas, I took some 75 copies of a book I had written on the subject of Calvinism. Although I sold quite a few of them, I was very surprised to overhear another speaker, who did not know I was nearby, say that brethren had really already written enough on that subject, and he doubted that this book added little if anything to the subject. I am not writing this article to defend, or even to judge, my work in that book, but to strenuously disagree with the notion that enough has been written on the subject.

There are a fairly large number of talking head political conservatives who apparently perceive themselves as experts in the matter of religious doctrine. These persons often make the mistake of identifying anyone who disagrees with their belief in the Calvinistic doctrine of depravity (or original sin as the Catholics call it) as members of that group designated as secular humanists who maintain belief in the doctrine of the perfectibility of man by man. All the while, these pseudo-defenders of religious people are drinkers, users of profanity, gamblers, in adulterous marriages, and preachers of tolerance toward those who differ with their personal beliefs or who are living in perverted lifestyles.

One of the two most obvious dastardly damages done by the doctrine of Calvinistic depravity is that it spreads the notion that one cannot help but to sin, and that it really does not matter if one sins, because if he has claimed Christ as his Savior, heaven is in his future no matter how

he lives. This error has resulted in an American population claiming to be Christians, but who live every bit as much like a child of the devil as the most atheistic hedonist around. John wrote:

Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:7-8).

Not everyone who is in religious error lives a life characterized by a regular practice of sin, but enough do that they contribute to religious people being made a laughing stock among those who are marginally or totally irreligious. Why was Moses willing to suffer affliction with the people of God (Heb. 11:25) rather than choosing to enjoy the pleasures of sin? Because he was no Old Testament version of a Calvinist! Both Protestantism and Catholicism, because of the doctrines of total depravity or original sin, are just plain hypocrites who know not God, and who refuse to acknowledge the truth that those who are the people of God are dead to sin (Rom. 6:1-2). They are not walking after the law of the Spirit, but after the law of the flesh (8:1-2), which is: you sin, you die. When we witness the debauched lives resulting at least partially from the doctrine of depravity, it is very alarming that even some members of the churches of Christ are moving in the direction of Calvinism.

The other dastardly damage done by the doctrine of depravity is that it stands in the way of people accepting the terms of pardon as set forth

in the New Testament. Most people embrace the falsehood of salvation by faith alone, because they accept the untrue proposition that people are born so depraved that they are incapable of contributing anything toward their salvation. Why do people reject God's command to be baptized for the remission of sins? With many, likely most, it is because they believe in hereditary depravity. Brethren, if we seek greater response to the requirements of the Gospel by men, just showing the verses that teach the efficacy of baptism is not enough, we have to convince them that idea of inheriting a sinful nature from Adam and Eve is as foreign to Scripture as a thing can be.

Man can choose who he serves (Jos. 24:15). Jesus said no man can serve two masters (Mat. 6:24), and He said those words on the heels of the words that a man decides for himself and acts upon the decision, to lay up his treasure either in heaven or upon the earth (6:20). The apostle Paul turned to the Gentiles because the Jews put the Word of God from themselves, and thereby judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life (Acts 13:46). Those Jews were obviously not powerless to obey the Gospel, but unwilling to do so.

In the cases of obstinate Jews in John 8, the receptive Samaritans and the Ethiopian in Acts 8, the Corinthians in Acts 18, men have the capacity to choose to believe or not believe. If they have the ability to believe, they have the ability to choose to obey or not obey in putting Christ on in baptism (Gal. 3:26-27). Have depravity proponents never read that a group of disciples in Ephesus

believed, but had never even heard that the Holy Spirit was given (Acts 19:1-2)? Paul knew to ask unto what they were baptized, and when they answered unto John's baptism, he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. It was not until after they were baptized that Paul laid his hands on them and the Holy Spirit came on them (19:3-6).

There is not a hint that anyone inherits a sinful nature (i.e., depravity) from one's parents, or their parents from their parents, and all the way back to Adam and Eve.

Calvinists argue for a direct operation of the Holy Spirit upon a sinner's heart to convict and convert him. Catholics *baptize* infants to remove the stain of original sin. Not only can it not be both ways, it cannot be either way, because both are foreign to what the Bible teaches about the nature of man, and man's individual responsibility to hear the Word of

God and to believe it.

There is one great contradiction in the doctrine of depravity that its adherents cannot answer. If it is the case that baptism cannot be essential to salvation, because God has already done everything necessary for salvation, and man cannot do anything toward it anyway, then why is he required, indeed, how can he, have faith? Even if he has faith, since he can contribute nothing toward salvation, why can faith be essential? What a tangled web the doctrines of men do weave!

The dastardly doctrine of depravity is definitely devastating, but it is popular. Its popularity is enhanced by the insidious implications that one has to do nothing to be saved, and he can do whatever he wants to do and remain saved. There was an occasion in the history of man when he assumed he could do whatever he wanted to do. God sent a universal

flood and washed those sinners away. Jesus used the flood to describe how it will be when He comes in judgment (Mat. 24:38-39). How sad, tragic, surprising, and devastating it will be to Calvinistic sinners who find themselves in the lake of fire and brimstone, because their doctrine hindered them from obeying the Gospel and encouraged them to live (as the contemporary saying goes) like the devil.

Granby, MO

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A Leadership Crisis in Israel and the Church

Harrell Davidson

Israel had many leadership crises in her history as does the church as we face the twenty-first century. We have fewer Bible majors in our Colleges each year on the whole. There are fewer men preparing themselves to be song leaders, class teachers, prayer leaders, elders, and deacons. We face a serious crisis in the church. We have declined in this area sharply in the last thirty years according to my own recollection and experience. In an effort to overcome this crisis, we sometimes appoint men to do certain tasks who cannot "fill the bill" scripturally. Men are appointed to lead congregations who are unworthy seeing that they do not meet the qualifications for the position they have been appointed to serve in. The result is a weak congregation on the brink of ruin.

In Judges 9, we have a fable to help us see our own problem, if we will open our eyes. In Judges 8, we have the record of Gideon's final conquest and his death. While Gideon was faithful to God in most things, he had utterly failed in at least two areas. He had many wives according to Judges 8:30 and a concubine in Shechem (one of the cities of refuge). By this concubine he had

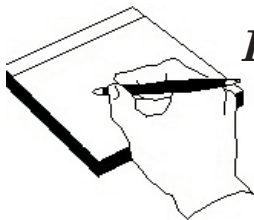
an illegitimate son whose name was Abimelech. Gideon soon dies and the leadership crisis sets in. Abimelech wanted to be the leader after Gideon died. In Judges 9, we have a most interesting story to develop. Some call it a fable while others call it a parable. We favor the first of these two ideas. A fable is a story that leaves a moral. A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. So, this narrative just will not fit the latter of the two. The lesson that follows still is very effective and the moral is very apparent.

Abimelech went to Shechem to his mother's brethren with a proposition. He asked their opinion of who should become the leader over them. Should the seventy sons of Gideon or Abimelech be the new leader? He then lays his personal claim: "I *am* your bone and your flesh" (9:2). He does a real good *snow* job because his family then says, "He is our brother" (9:3). He proceeds to his father's house at Ophrah and kills the seventy sons of his father, Gideon. Jotham, the youngest son of Gideon escapes for he hid himself (9:5). In verse 6 Abimelech is made king. In verse 7, when Jotham found out about this

matter, he went to the top of mount Gerizim to lift up voice against what had just taken place. He cried against the men of Shechem trying to get them to repent so "that God may hearken unto you." It is now time for the fable to begin.

He said, "The trees went forth *on a time* to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive-tree, Reign thou over us. But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honour God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees" (9:8-9). The olive tree is native throughout much of the Bible Lands. While in Athens, Greece, in 1980, we observed that the cooks there seasoned almost all things with olive oil. The olive would even grow in the wild. The reply of the olive tree indicates the following observations. First, I am good for oil. Second, I am good for light for when I burn I give off light. Third, I am good for food. Look at all the qualifications that the olive tree had. He was a natural leader known and respected by both God and man. He would not serve and did not want to serve, so pass me by was his attitude.

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Notes From The Editor

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Sin In The Camp

Moses under the direction of God went to Pharaoh and demanded him to allow the children of Israel to go worship Him. After the proper prodding by God in the form of ten plagues, Pharaoh acquiesced to God's demands to allow the children of Israel to leave Egypt. God again demonstrates His power at the Red Sea by opening a way for the Israelites to pass through on dry ground. When the Egyptians tried to follow them, the sea closed on them to swallow them resulting in their destruction and the Israelites salvation.

Israel then went to Mount Sinai and received God's law including the Ten Commandments. They were given all the instructions for the worship of God and the sacrifices they were to offer. God was then going to bring them into the Promised Land. When they arrived, but before entering the land, they sent twelve spies to spy out the land. Ten of the spies came back with a negative report that they could not take the land while Joshua and Caleb encouraged the people to go up at once and possess it. Because of their rebellion (sin in the camp) in heeding the evil report of the ten spies, God caused them to wander in the wilderness for forty years. During those forty years, that generation died out. God took care of the sin in the camp.

God had given instructions as to the individuals who were to officiate

at the altar. He also gave detailed instructions regarding that officiating. Aaron and his sons were the ones who were to officiate at the altar of sacrifice. They were correct in taking their censer, putting fire in the censer, and putting incense on it. However, they offered to God an unauthorized fire. Sin was in the camp, but God took care of it. God took care of this sin immediately and decisively.

God brought Israel to the Promised Land and now under the leadership of Joshua, they enter the land and take Jericho according to the instructions God gave them. God had likewise told them not to take any of the spoils from Jericho. All the spoils were consecrated to God and were to go into the treasury of Jehovah. However, Achan "saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them" (Jos. 7:21). There was sin in the camp. Thus, when Joshua sent men to Ai, which was so small he did not send the whole army but only about 2-3000 men, the army of Israel was defeated with 36 men being killed by the men of Ai. Joshua was *heartbroken* over the events at Ai. God instructed Joshua:

Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put *it* even among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, *but* turned *their* backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. Up, sanctify the people,

and say, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *There is* an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you (7:10-13).

Joshua needed to act, and act quickly in removing the sin from the camp. The very next day, Joshua began bringing ones before him till Achan was discovered to be the one who sinned. We then find Joshua acting in taking care of the sin in the camp.

And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones. And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day (7:24-26).

What if Achan had simply told Joshua that he would leave the camp of Israel and then tried to take the spoils and leave. How far do you think he would have gotten? Would Joshua have said something along the line of, "He is gone now, so there

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Michael Hatcher, Editor

is nothing we can do,” or maybe, “Guess we put enough pressure on him to leave, now we can go back to our battles”? Obviously, Joshua did not think along those lines, yet we have *leaders* in the Lord’s church who seemingly think that way—just get the person to go away so we do not have to deal with him in a Scriptural manner.

Paul wrote to the Corinthians about sin in the camp. There was a man who had taken his father’s wife. Instead of taking care of the sin in the camp, the Corinthians were puffed up (disinterested or not caring about it) and had not mourned about it. Surely the brethren at Corinth knew better and knew this was sinful, as this was so wicked that it was “not so much as named among the Gentiles” (1 Cor. 5:1). Yet, they sat back and did nothing. However, Paul, by inspiration of God, spurred them to action. He told them the next time they met they were to withdraw fellowship from the ungodly fornicator (it was to be done in the assembly so all would know). He wrote:

For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, *concerning*

him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us (5:3-7).

They were not to allow the fornicator to continue in their midst as if nothing happened. They were to do this for the salvation of the fornicator (when we do nothing regarding sin in the camp, we demonstrate we do not love the sinner). They were also to withdraw their fellowship to allow the world and other Christians to know this sin is not acceptable. If one sin is tolerated, then why are not other sins tolerated? Thus, Christians are encouraged to sin by doing nothing about sin.

It is sad that today sin is often tolerated. A person can teach false doctrine or can practice error with impunity. “There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Rom. 3:18). The

reason there is no fear of God is because congregations do not do anything when someone sins except close their eyes to the sin. This is what took place several years ago when seemingly only a small few held Dave Miller accountable for his false doctrine of elder r/r. Later he added to his false doctrine regarding his marriage intent. Then some who “were of reputation” among the brethren and “seemed to be somewhat” decided they would support Miller in spite of his false doctrines. We are now witnessing a continued liberalism and lack of respect for God and His Word in the church (as evidence see *The Forest Hill News*, Feb. 10, 2009 and July 12, 2011).

However, is what took place then any different than other situations where sin is ignored? Certainly not! We have congregations and elderships that simply ignore various types of sins and false doctrines. Many of these congregations and elderships claim to be sound, conservative, Scriptural congregations. When we allow sin to continue unabated in a congregation, then we are on the road to destruction.

MH

Continued from Page 1

In verses 10 and 11 we read, “And the trees said to the fig tree, Come thou, *and* reign over us. But the fig tree said unto them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?” The fig is also a very usable fruit. Its leaves are big enough that under the tree one can find shade. It is also a sweet food and therefore much desired. Additionally, the fig was very popular with the people because at certain stages it promised

fruit to individuals. The fig was very useful already so why should he leave his regular duties and be promoted to serve over the other trees? He refused to serve. Is not this beginning to sound like some brethren you know?

“Then said the trees unto the vine, Come thou, *and* reign over us. And the vine said unto them, Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?” (9:12-13). In the vine there was prosperity. The vine was

something that was much cherished by all the peoples of the land. People were killed over vineyards. Remember Naboth’s vineyard in 1 Kings 21? The vine also was a joy to everyone. The vine’s attitude seems to have been: “I’m happy—everybody else is happy—so why choose me?” Here is a vine that represented a man that had the qualifications just as the olive and the fig had. Neither of them were willing while being qualified, to serve in a leadership capacity.

“Then said all the trees unto the

bramble, Come thou, *and* reign over us. And the bramble said unto the trees, If in truth ye anoint me king over you, *then* come *and* put your trust in my shadow” (Jud. 9:14-15).

The picture that Jotham paints is now crystal clear. It is obvious that Abimelech should not be crowned king over the people. He was the least of them all, being an illegitimate son. Some of the others among the seventy could have done a better job of leading. They had God out of the picture. They did not propose to have His blessings in this matter. They were willing to run ahead of God. They appeared to have thought that God was too slow for them. Sarah thought the same thing when a son was promised. When it did not happen right away, she gave Hagar to Abraham so a son could be born. She was impatient and ran ahead of God. God did not accept what she did and He would also not accept what Abimelech had done.

Further, the bramble represents someone that is mean and vile—a worthless and scheming individual. The bramble also represents one that

would lie about certain things if it meant accomplishing a certain goal. The bottom line is that the bramble is not worthy to serve. But, serve he would!

We promised that a fable leaves behind a moral. The moral is this: there were three men who met qualifications who were good men and already in use by all. People had confidence in them because of their several abilities. They were natural born leaders. All they had to do was see the need to become leaders, but they blinded their eyes to the great need that God had for scriptural leadership. They chose to pass by the opportunity to serve in a greater capacity. The bramble, the most worthless tree of them all, was ready to thrust itself forward to serve. “I will be glad to serve, just point me in the right direction pledging your allegiance to me, and I will take over,” was his attitude.

My Brothers, Please Hear Me:

When you are approached to serve, having the qualifications to serve, but refuse, remember that someone is standing not having the

qualifications, and will gladly serve. If good men refuse to serve, evil men will be glad to serve. It is not uncommon to hear a report of an elder who does not attend all the services of the church. One congregation of about ninety in a northern state has three preachers. Mind you, three preachers for such a small number. One of them feels no compulsion to attend all the services of the church. Class teachers are in desperate need. The supply is short of qualified teachers. Do you say, “Well, I have taught so long now just let me rest.” Are we being the olive, the fig, the vine, or the bramble?

Remember, when good men refuse to serve, there are evil men who gladly will serve. The lesson did not set well with Abimelech. Jotham fled for his life to Beer out of fear. He had given an inspired message. Now he must run for his life. Instead of looking at the negative, seeing all the reasons that you cannot serve, think of the reasons why you should serve. That is, if you are vines, figs, or olives. Think about it!

Obion, TN

Can the World Hate You?

Lee Moses

“The world cannot hate you” (John 7:7)

These were the words of rebuke spoken by Jesus Christ to His unbelieving brothers. It is difficult to conceive that Jesus’ own flesh and blood, brought up under the same roof as He, did not believe He was the Messiah (7:5). Yet, the Lord’s manner of rebuking them is similarly remarkable. One has to wonder exactly how much offense was taken at this simple statement. Consider

how insulted the most popular girl in school would be if she were told, “There is nobody who does not like you.”

Yet, the context indicates that this was indeed a rebuke, given by the Lord to address error in the lives of His brothers. As such, any living today whom the world cannot hate likewise stands in need of correction.

Should One Desire the World’s Hatred?

It is perfectly natural for each

human being to desire the friendship and approval of other human beings. As our Creator said Himself, “*It is* not good that the man should be alone” (Gen. 2:18). As such, it would be very unnatural, against the goodness of God’s creation (1:31), for a human being to **desire** to be hated by other human beings.

The Lord commands His people to be a positive influence upon the world (Mat. 5:13-16). Paul stated that one of the reasons the Thes-

salonians were to keep his commandments was “That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and *that* ye may have lack of nothing” (1 The. 4:12). Prerequisite to one’s becoming an elder in the Lord’s church is that “he must have a good report of them which are without” (1 Tim. 3:7). While one can positively influence another who dislikes or even hates him, the effectiveness of that influence will be greatly lessened. People are more generally motivated to emulate and enjoy the company of those whom they love than those whom they hate. In this sense, being hated by the world even hinders one from serving the Lord’s purpose—to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10). Such things should cause one to avoid being hated by the world—when possible (notice also Rom. 12:18).

God Himself never **desired** the enmity of the world—if He did, would He express disappointment and disgust at the world’s sin (Gen. 3:13ff; Isa. 1:4; Mat. 7:23)? Would He have had a desire for reconciliation (Isa. 1:18; 1 Tim. 2:4)? Would He have given His own Son to obtain a reconciliation that most would reject (John 3:16; Acts 13:46; Rom. 5:8)? When Jesus spoke of being hated by the world, He was not speaking of a **desire** that one must have, but of a **capacity** that must exist.

Whom Does the World Hate?

The world could not hate Jesus’ brothers—“But me it hateth” were the words the Lord immediately added (John 7:7). Why would the world hate Jesus, the compassionate Son of God, the Savior of all humanity, and the fulfillment of the great promise of God to bruise

the head of Satan? Jesus knew the answer: “because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.”

People generally do not enjoy being told or shown that they are wrong, even when it is for their benefit. Yet, this is what Jesus did. Jesus was the light of the world (8:12; 9:5):

And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God (3:19-21).

Seeing that “the whole world lieth in wickedness” (1 John 5:19), “the whole world” was rebuked by Jesus. Jesus did this through preaching the truth. And as Christians are to be “the light of the world” (Mat. 5:14; see also Eph. 5:8; Phi. 2:15-16), they are to preach the truth and rebuke sin: “But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light” (Eph. 5:13).

The world hated Jesus for preaching the truth and thus rebuking their sin. Certainly the world climate has changed since the first century, but is it that much—more favorable to true Christianity? We live in an age in which peace has been struck between atheists, Jews, and professed “Christians”; a peace based upon the premise, “We can agree to disagree, just don’t tell me I’m wrong.” However, because sin is ever present, Christians are compelled to bear with unrelenting zeal the sword that Jesus sends into the earth (Mat. 10:34). Christians are compelled to be distinct from a world of sin, yet, “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye

are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you” (John 15:19). Do you strive to please your Lord in your conduct? Do you stand up for truth? Do you oppose wrong? If so, “Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you” (1 John 3:13).

Where Do Your Affections Lie?

Since the world hates those who reprove the world’s evil works, all must make a choice: Do we desire the world’s affection or God’s favor? One cannot seek both: “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will [“desires to...planning accordingly” (*boulomai*)] be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (Jam. 4:4). Not only can one not seek both, one cannot **have** both. As Paul said, “if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ” (Gal. 1:10). Whether we desire the world’s affection or God’s favor hinges upon where our own affections lie.

There is no doubt as to where Jesus’ affections lay. While He had compassion on the multitudes of lost humanity and always sought their good (Mat. 9:36), His loyalty was to the Father and to the truth (John 8:28-29). The Pharisees and Herodians were trying to deceive Christ through flattery, but certainly spoke truth when they said, “neither carest thou for any *man*: for thou regardest not the person of men” (Mat. 22:16).

Yet in the religious world, and even in the Lord’s church, there is an increasing regard for the persons of men over the will of God. Churches’ efforts are directed toward erecting large gymnasiums and providing social functions to attract people, rather than toward pricking sin-laden hearts with the truth. Churches

poll their neighborhoods as to what they would like in a church, and give them what they want, regardless of whether it is according to truth. Contrast this approach with that of our Lord (Who apparently never read Rick Warren's *Purpose-Driven Church* or other such drivel, intended to bend the church of the Lord to the will of the world).

If our affections lie with the Lord, pleasing men cannot be our primary goal. As Jesus told the highly esteemed Pharisees: "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15). If we are seeking to please men, it will compromise our purity and truthfulness (1 The. 2:3-6). As Jesus warned, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets" (Luke 6:26). Are we "strangers and pilgrims" in the world (Heb. 11:13; 1 Pet. 2:11)? Those who are not at home in the

true church will be at home in the world, but those who are not at home in the world will be at home in the true church—and in heaven. Do we savor the things of God or of men (Mat. 16:23)? That is, do we insist upon the hard truth, or do we rather choose the easy way, avoiding persecution and the reproach of men (compare with 4:8-9)? To His apostles Jesus gave this warning and assurance which should resound for us today: "And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (10:22).

Conclusion

Jesus gave His brothers a memorable rebuke when He told them, "The world cannot hate you." However, this was directly related to His brothers' lack of faith in Him. After His resurrection we know at least some of them believed in Him (Acts 1:14; Jam. 1:1; Jude 1). Was the world later able to hate Jesus' brothers? Read the book of Jude! Its firm stand against sin and false

doctrine could never be palatable to the world, and, according to Josephus, Jesus' brother James was stoned to death. The world could not hate them when they lacked faith, but that certainly changed once they gained faith. If the world cannot hate you, it could be related to your lack of faith.

The hatred of the world is not a goal for which one should ever seek. Neither God the Father nor Jesus ever desired to be hated by the world, but by reproving its sin, the world's hatred was assured. If your affections lie with the Lord in a life of obedience to Him, the world's hatred is nothing to fear, as the Lord's favor is assured. As He said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated you*" (John 15:18).

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Mammoth Springs, AR

The Envy of Ephraim

David B. Watson

Isaiah wrote the following concerning Ephraim: "The envy also of Ephraim shall depart, And the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off: Ephraim shall not envy Judah, And Judah shall not vex Ephraim" (Isa. 11:13).

The Exposition

The Pulpit Commentary gives the following exposition of 1 Kings 12:1-24:

Yet the sixteenth verse of this chapter reveals to us very clearly one of the secret springs of the dissatisfaction which existed at the date of Rehoboam's accession, one of the influences which ultimately led to the disruption of Israel. Jealousy on

the part of Ephraim of the powerful tribe of Judah had undoubtedly something to do with the revolution of which we now read. The discontent occasioned by Solomon's levies and the headstrong folly of Rehoboam were the immediate causes, but influences much deeper and of longer standing were also at work. The tribe of Ephraim had clearly never thoroughly acquiesced in the superiority which its rival, the tribe of Judah, by furnishing to the nation its sovereigns, its seat of government, and its sanctuary, had attained. During the two former reigns the envy of Ephraim had been held in check, but it was there, and it only needed an occa-

sion, such as Rehoboam afforded it, to blaze forth (248).

The Expectation

The proud tribe of Ephraim remembered the glowing words of Jacob, who said:

Joseph *is* a fruitful bough, *Even* a fruitful bough by a well; *Whose* branches run over the wall: The archers have sorely grieved him, And shot *at him*, and hated him: But his bow abode in strength, And the arms of his hands were made strong By the hands of the mighty *God* of Jacob; (From thence *is* the shepherd, the stone of Israel;) *Even* by the God of thy father, who shall help thee; And by

the Almighty, who shall bless thee With blessings of heaven above, Blessings of the deep that lieth under, Blessings of the breasts, and of the womb: The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: They shall be on the head of Joseph, And on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren (Gen. 49:22-26).

They also remembered the words of Moses speaking of what they believed was their future eminence:

And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the LORD *be* his land, For the precious things of heaven, for the dew, And for the deep that coucheth beneath, And for the precious fruits *brought forth* by the sun, And for the precious things put forth by the moon, And for the chief things of the ancient mountains, And for the precious things of the lasting hills, And for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, And *for* the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: Let *the blessing* come upon the head of Joseph, And upon the top of the head of him *that was* separated from his brethren. His glory *is like* the firstling of his bullock, And his horns *are like* the horns of unicorns: With them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: And they *are* the ten thousands of Ephraim, And they *are* the thousands of Manasseh (Deu. 33:13-17).

Thus, *The Pulpit Commentary* states: “They remembered, too, that their position—in the very center of the land was also the richest in all natural advantages. Compared with their picturesque and fertile possessions, the territory of Judah was as a stony wilderness” (248).

The Exaltation

The Pulpit Commentary further states: “And for a long time they had enjoyed a certain superiority in the nation. In the time of Joshua we find them fully conscious of their strength and numbers and the leader himself admits their power” (248).

And the children of Joseph spake unto Joshua, saying, Why hast thou given me *but* one lot and one portion to inherit, seeing I *am* a great people, forasmuch as the Lord hath blessed me hitherto? And Joshua answered them, If thou *be* a great people, *then* get thee up to the wood *country*, and cut down for thyself there in the land of the Perizzites and of the giants, if mount Ephraim be too narrow for thee. And the children of Joseph said, The hill is not enough for us: and all the Canaanites that dwell in the land of the valley have chariots of iron, *both they* who *are* of Beth-shean and her towns, and *they* who *are* of the valley of Jezreel. And Joshua spake unto the house of Joseph, *even* to Ephraim and to Manasseh, saying, Thou *art* a great people, and hast great power: thou shalt not have one lot *only* (Jos. 17:14-17).

When the tabernacle was first set up, it was at Shiloh, in the territory of Ephraim ([“And the whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there. And the land was subdued before them”] Josh. xviii. 1) and there the ark remained for more than three hundred years (248).

Further we read: “And the pre-eminence of Ephraim amongst the northern tribes is curiously evidenced by the way in which it twice resented... campaigns undertaken without its sanction and cooperation” (248). They chided with Gideon: “And the men of Ephraim said unto him, Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites? And they did chide with him sharply” (Jud. 8:1). Gideon was able to pacify them with a soft answer but later, they did the same with Jephthah: “And the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and went northward, and said unto Jephthah, Wherefore passedst thou over to fight against the children of Ammon, and didst not call us to go with thee? we will burn thine house upon thee with fire”

(12:1). Jephthah had to actually fight against them.

Concerning Ephraim, *The Pulpit Commentary* continues:

It and its sister tribe of Manasseh had furnished, down to the time of David, the leaders and commanders of the people—Joshua, Deborah, Gideon, Abimelech, and Samuel—and when the kingdom was established it was from the allied tribe of Benjamin that the first monarch was selected... It was natural, too, that for seven years it should refuse allegiance to a prince of the rival house of Judah. Even when, at the end of that time, the elders of Israel recognized David as “king over Israel” (1 Sam. v. 3), the fires of jealousy, as the revolt of Sheba and the curses of Shimei alike show, were not wholly extinguished. And the transference of the sanctuary, as well as the *sceptre*, to Judah...would occasion fresh heart burnings (248).

The Ending

The Pulpit Commentary concludes: There probably had been an attempt on the part of Jeroboam the *Ephraimite* to stir up his and the neighboring tribes against the ascendancy of Judah in the person of Solomon. That first attempt proved abortive. But now that their magnificent king was dead, now that the reins of government were held by his weak and foolish son, the men of Ephraim resolved, unless they could wrest from him very great concessions, to brook the rule of Judah no longer and to have a king of their own house (248-9).

Thus, one of the root causes of the cleaving of the congregation of God’s people in 1 Kings 12 was the envy of Ephraim. How many congregations of God’s people today have experienced a cleaving because of envy? May God help us to lay aside all envies (1 Pet. 2:1)!

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Attempted Arguments for the Deaver Heresy of Present-Day Spirit Baptism

Daniel Denham

Marlin Kilpatrick has decided to weigh in on the side of the Mac Deaver doctrine of present-day Holy Spirit baptism by submitting three syllogisms, which he evidently believes establish in concert the truthfulness of Deaver's error. There is some question as to whether Mac himself has endorsed this material as successfully supporting his doctrine. It would be to his benefit not to do so, in that the material is so shot full of logical fallacies and errors that to endorse it would certainly call into even more question his actual command of logic upon which he has so often prided himself. His most recent writings and debate with Ben Vick have done already considerable damage to that image, and another blow of this sort would not only be further damaging, it would also continue the assault on both reason and the Scriptures begun when he determined to go off into this nonsense.

Does Mac Endorse Marlin?

There have been reports that Mac has praised and endorsed Marlin's arguments. If Mac endorses Marlin's syllogisms, perhaps he would be willing to test them in public debate

and thus return to the mutually agreed arrangement we had before he pulled the plug on it in his temper-fit a couple of years ago?

All he has to do is contact me or Michael Hatcher saying that he is ready to get back to that and pick up where he left the matter hanging. For the present, however, we shall concentrate on examining the Kilpatrick syllogisms that Marlin, at least, seems to think are so overwhelming in their logical force as to defy refutation.

The Arguments Stated

As noted there are three syllogisms. These are as follows (quoted from Kilpatrick):

No. 1

If it is the case that to enter the kingdom one must be "born of water and of the Spirit," and it is also the case that the apostles entered the kingdom, then the apostles were "born of water and of the Spirit."

Proof:

It is the case that to enter the kingdom one must be "born of water and of the Spirit" (Jno. 3:5) and it is the case that the apostles entered the kingdom. (Acts 2:1-4)
Then, the apostles were "born of wa-

ter and of the Spirit."

No. 2

If: It is the case that to enter the kingdom the apostles were "baptized in water and in the Spirit," and to enter the kingdom the apostles were "born of water and of the Spirit;" then to be "baptized in water and in the Spirit" and to be "born of water and of the Spirit" are equivalent terms.

Proof:

To enter the kingdom the apostles were "baptized in water and in the Spirit." (The apostles were converts of John the Baptist who baptized in water Jno. 3:23. [sic] And the apostles were baptized in Spirit by Christ (Lu. 3:16, Matt. 3:11; Acts 2:1-4). To enter the kingdom one must be "born of water and of the Spirit" (Jno. 3:5).

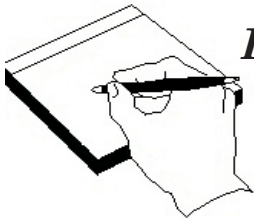
Then, to be "born of water and of the Spirit" and to be "baptized in water and in the Spirit" are equivalent terms.

No. 3

If:

- 1) There is only one way into the kingdom. And
- 2) To enter the kingdom one must be "born of water and of the Spirit," and
- 3) To be "born of water and of

Continued on Page 4



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

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Part of the New Testament?

There are some individuals who are troubling the Lord's church today by claiming that the accounts of the life of Christ—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—are not a part of the New Testament. The real reason behind this false doctrine is because of a hatred of Matthew 19:9 and Jesus' teaching regarding marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Dan Billingsly began presenting this novel view in the mid 1970s. He has railed against what he calls the page between the Malachi and Matthew as being the most misunderstood page in the Bible. Why would it be so "misunderstood"? Simply because it states, "The New Testament," and he denies those first four books as being in the New Testament. They hold that all the teachings of Jesus recorded in these four books are Old Testament doctrine and do not apply to the New Testament times. Should we consider all the teachings of Jesus as Old Testament teachings, or do they apply to New Testament times?

In the Sermon on the Mount as recorded by Matthew (5-7), there are six times Jesus makes a strong contrast: "It hath been said" (5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43) and "But I say unto you" (5:22, 28, 32, 34, 39, 44). Each of his statements regarding "it hath been said" is based upon what is written in the Old Testament, some direct

quotations from the Ten Commandments. Thus, when Jesus states, "but I say unto you," he is not correcting some people's erroneous beliefs as some have taught. Instead, Jesus is making a comparison from what the Old Law taught them as opposed to what He is teaching them. However, if what Jesus is teaching only applies to the Old Testament and has no application to the New Testament times, then why make any comparison such as this? When will what "I say unto you" apply? It will not apply to the time He is living because they were subject to the Old Testament law. Yet, it (if this doctrine is to be believed) does not apply to the New Testament times either. Thus, the statements of Jesus do not apply to anyone of any age, if this doctrine is true.

Jesus took Peter, James, and John up onto a mountain. While there He was transfigured before them (Mat. 17:2). Moses and Elijah appeared and were talking to Jesus about His death (Luke 9:31). Peter, awaking out of sleep states, "Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias" (9:33) and Luke adds, "not knowing what he said" (9:33). A cloud overshadowed them and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Mat. 17:5). This statement of the Father is that we are to hear Jesus. Yet, if Jesus' words do not apply to us today, then this statement is rather meaningless. However, notice what Jesus instructs Peter, James, and John on the way down from the mountain. "And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead" (17:9). Those who hold that the teachings of Jesus are not applicable to the

New Testament times have a problem here. Jesus instructed Peter, James, and John not to tell anyone till after His resurrection. Thus, they were not to tell anyone to hear Jesus till after the resurrection. Yet, according to this view, after Pentecost no one is subject to what Jesus said. Thus, if this view is correct, the only people who were to be told to "hear ye him" would be those individuals who lived between His resurrection and Pentecost of Acts 2. Who can believe such?

Jesus made the statement: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). The question that applies in considering this novel doctrine would be who are the ones who are to receive His Words and who are the ones who will be judged by His Word in the last day? Since Jesus said this during that Old Testament and what Jesus taught has nothing to do with New Testament doctrine, then to whom does this apply? It could not apply to those during the Old Testament times as what Jesus taught was different than what the Law of Moses stated (as is evidenced by the strong contrasts Jesus made in the Sermon on the Mount). Additionally, it does not apply to anyone living since the New Testament came into existence. Thus, if this doctrine is true, about the only ones who will be judged by the words of Jesus might be those who lived and died during that period between the

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Michael Hatcher, Editor

resurrection and Acts 2.

Connected closely with the previous point, Jesus promised that the Father would send the Holy Spirit to the apostles (John 14-16). He said to them, "But the Comforter, *which* is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you"

(14:26). He then added, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come"

(16:12-13). Notice the three things the Holy Spirit would do in relation to the apostles: (1) teach them all things or guide them into all truth, (2) bring to their remembrance everything that Jesus had said unto them, (3) show them things to come. If it is the case that the Holy Spirit was going to bring to the apostles memory everything Jesus said (and it is), and it is the case (and it is) that the Holy Spirit did not come to the apostles till Acts 2, then why have the Holy Spirit bring to the apostles' remembrance what Jesus said? According to Billingsly's doctrine, nothing that Jesus said

is applicable to those living in New Testament times, so the Holy Spirit bringing to the apostles remembrance what Jesus said is worthless. It applies to no one and helps no one.

One last thing we will notice is the Great Commission specifically as recorded by Matthew. Jesus says to the apostles, "Go ye therefore, and teach [make disciples—ASV, NKJV] all na-

both subordinate to "make disciples." In other words, by means of being baptized and being taught a person becomes a disciple, with the understanding, of course, that this individual is ready for baptism and is willing to appropriate the teaching (1000).

Thus, to make one a disciple, the apostles during the New Testament time were going to have to baptize

and teach. What were they going to have to teach? Jesus said they would have to teach "all things whatsoever I [Jesus] have commanded you." This shows that what Jesus taught and commanded would be applicable for those who would be disciples in the New Testament period. This is why the Holy Spirit would bring to the

Debate

Since brother Deaver is still longing for a debate, we are willing to resume negotiations for a debate with him. However there are certain requirements we will insist upon before resuming negotiations with Mac. These are **requirements**, not suggestions, not things to negotiate, but requirements for us to resume negotiations.

1. Mac must repent of sabotaging the original debate arrangements.
2. Mac must repent of lying about the debate in *Biblical Notes Quarterly*.
3. Mac must direct all correspondence to me, as he had agreed to do when negotiating previously.
4. Mac must agree to the propositions for the previous debate.
5. Mac must obtain a place in Denton, Texas, for the debate that would be agreeable to me by November 30.

If Mac is willing to do these things, then the debate can still be held and I will enter into negotiations with him again. If he is not willing to abide by these requirements, then everyone will still know that Mac (1) sabotaged the first debate, (2) he is the one who is not willing to do what is necessary to have the debate, (3) there will be no more negotiations with him for a debate, and (4) Mac does not really want to engage in a debate with brother Daniel Denham on Holy Spirit baptism after all.

tions, baptizing them in [into—ASV] 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. Amen" (28:19-20). The main verb of this commission is to teach or make disciples of all nations. He then uses two participles that explain how one makes a person a disciple; they serve as modal participles.

Hendriksen writes about this:

The concepts of "baptizing" and "teaching" are simply two activities, in co-ordination with each other, but

apostles' remembrance all that Jesus said (John 14:26). However, Dan Billingsly and his hobby-horse doctrine says that the teachings and commands of Jesus were Old Testament and had nothing to do with the New Testament. Obviously, we need to follow Jesus and the apostles as they taught the commands that Jesus gave instead of following Dan Billingsly and his ilk.

Work Cited:

Hendriksen, William. *Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1973.

MH

Continued from Page 1
the Spirit” and to be “baptized in water and in the Spirit” Are equivalent terms,
Then:

All who enter the kingdom must be baptized in water and in the Spirit.

Marlin's Boast and the Arguments' Form

At the close of the three syllogisms, Marlin asserts: “These 3 syllogisms show that to be ‘born of water and of the Spirit’ (Jno. 3:5) is to be Baptized in water and in Holy Spirit; they also show Holy Spirit baptism is not limited to the apostles, else no one other than the apostles can enter the kingdom.” Is such really the case? Are these grandiose claims actually born out by the weight of the argument asserted by brother Kilpatrick? Would Mac add his hearty, “Amen,” to them and ascribe such an accomplishment to their ostensible decisiveness?

The first syllogism really we do not dispute and would freely grant, though the structures of all the forms clearly are awkward and uneven in nature. However, looking beyond the aesthetics of the matter, the real issue is over whether the last two accomplish in concert with the first what Marlin so boldly proclaims. The basic force of the first syllogism is granted. Indeed, if it is necessary for everyone who enters into the kingdom of God (the church) to do so by being “born of water and of the Spirit,” and if the apostles of Christ did so (which they did), then it must most certainly be the case that the apostles were “born of water and of the Holy Spirit.”

Kilpatrick's chain breaks at the second. In fact, its link is never really even *forged* by Marlin in the fires of logic but is *forged* by means of empty rhetoric. Pardon the pun,

but Marlin's chain is a fraud. It is a sham—having not really been conjoined together here—neither by logic nor by the Scriptures! It is a case of sophistry, pure and simple. Sophistry is the alchemy of words. It is an attempt to couch a weak case in a form that appears on the surface logical and hence reasonable, but it is a sham. What it proffers it does not deliver. What it claims it cannot sustain. What it professes it cannot establish. In the case of the second syllogism it fails.

First, there is some question as to the validity of the form of the argument. It will be observed that the hypothetical statement comprising the second argument is not fully given in syllogistic form. It is stated as a simple hypothetical with a compound antecedent. This is the form given by Marlin:

If: It is the case that to enter the kingdom the apostles were “baptized in water and in the Spirit,” and to enter the kingdom the apostles were “born of water and of the Spirit;” **then** to be “baptized in water and in the Spirit” and to be “born of water and of the Spirit” are equivalent terms.

Now, the fuller, proper form in that of a Modus Ponens structure would be as follows:

Major Premise: If it is the case that to enter the kingdom the apostles were “baptized in water and in the Spirit,” and if it is the case that to enter the kingdom the apostles were “born of water and of the Spirit,” then to be “baptized in water and in the Spirit” and to be “born of water and of the Spirit” are equivalent terms.

Minor Premise: It is the case that to enter the kingdom the apostles were “baptized in water and in the Spirit,” and it is the case that to enter the kingdom the apostles were

“born of water and of the Spirit.”

Conclusion: Then to be “baptized in water and in the Spirit” and to be “born of water and of the Spirit” are equivalent terms.

Surely Marlin would admit that repentance was just as necessary for the apostles to enter into the kingdom (Luke 13:3, 5). Does it follow from this that it, therefore, must be the case that being baptized in the Holy Spirit is the exact same act as repenting of one's sins? If not, then why not? What about confessing faith in the Deity of Christ? Again, as the argument seeks to equate all things essential for the apostles to enter into the kingdom, then what about these things? Is “confession” then an equivalent term to “being baptized in water and in the Spirit,” or is confessing Christ the exact same act as being “baptized in water and in the Spirit”? If not, then the form of the argument fails to assure justification for the conclusion, even if the premises are both true. Its formal validity can be challenged on that salient point. All that can be possibly determined from the stated premises, **if they are true**, would be that “being born of water and of the Spirit” and “being baptized in water and in the Spirit” were both essential for the apostles to enter into the kingdom of God.

Furthermore, the argument really says nothing at all concerning **how** one enters the kingdom today, which is what Kilpatrick is supposedly seeking to prove! The argument cannot then guarantee the conclusion, even if its premises were true (which, of course, they are most certainly not), which conclusion is at the heart of the argument's purpose. The premises fall far short of what Marlin claims they imply. The conclusion is not really entailed in

the premises. The argument has the valid form of Modus Ponens as concerns Classical logic, but in the area of entailment it is woefully lacking.

Those who hold to “material implication” alone for validity might find some minimal comfort in the Modus Ponens form, but the obvious failing of real, logical relevance between the antecedent and its consequent raises red flags to those more discerning. It is counterintuitive to any thinking person to conclude that all actions described as essential for anyone to enter into the kingdom always contemplates the same, singular act as Kilpatrick’s argument presupposes. Now, to be certain, Baptists have long argued that faith and repentance are one in the same act. I have even seen some argue that confession and baptism are one in the same. Does Marlin so contend? Is he willing to accept such a consequence of his own argument that equates these diverse actions? If not, then again why not? If repentance does not equal being baptized in the Spirit, then why does being born of the Spirit do so? That the argument does not genuinely address. It only makes a show of it by oblique reference to the word “Spirit.” Is it at all conceivable that “born of” and “baptized in” are not co-equal? Does Deaver really endorse the kind of shoddy reasoning on Marlin’s part that assumes what it must genuinely prove? The argument does not guarantee that outcome, even if one were to grant the premises. It is almost like arguing that if the grass is green, then the moon is made of green cheese. There is no real relevance between the antecedent and the consequent in the hypothetical form of Marlin. Neither is there any real relevance between the premises and the conclusion in the argument even

stated in Modus Ponens form. The conclusion is not reality entailed in the premises, despite the form.

The Second Argument’s Complete Failure

The biggest problem for Marlin’s attempt, however, is that the conclusion to the second argument is false. Therefore, the third argument’s conclusion, which is dependent upon it, is also false. Here is the second argument again:

No. 2

If: It is the case that to enter the kingdom the apostles were “baptized in water and in the Spirit,” and to enter the kingdom the apostles were “born of water and of the Spirit;” then to be “baptized in water and in the Spirit” and to be “born of water and of the Spirit” are equivalent terms.

Proof:

To enter the kingdom the apostles were “baptized in water and in the Spirit.” (The apostles were converts of John the Baptist who baptized in water Jno. 3:23 [sic]. And the apostles were baptized in Spirit by Christ (Lu. 3:16, Matt. 3:11; Acts 2:1-4).

To enter the kingdom one must be “born of water and of the Spirit” (Jno. 3:5).

Then, to be “born of water and of the Spirit” and to be “baptized in water and in the Spirit” are equivalent terms.

It is **not** the case that “to be ‘baptized in water and in the Spirit’ and to be ‘born of water and of the Spirit’ are equivalent terms” (emphasis added). In fact, the argument cannot prove it. The antecedent is false upon which the consequent depends. If Marlin is to establish the consequent, he must come up with a true antecedent that requires it. The statement that “the apostles were baptized in both water and the Holy Spirit in order to enter the kingdom” is not true. While they

were baptized *in water* to do so, they were **not** baptized *in the Holy Spirit* for that purpose. The supposed *proof* offered by Marlin does not touch top, bottom, or sides of the matter on this last point!

Here is the proof again:

Proof:

To enter the kingdom the apostles were “baptized in water and in the Spirit.” (The apostles were converts of John the Baptist who baptized in water Jno. 3:23 [sic]. And the apostles were baptized in Spirit by Christ (Lu. 3:16, Matt. 3:11; Acts 2:1-4).

While we grant the first sentence, the second is not true. The verses cited to support the statement say nothing at all about the apostles’ entrance into the kingdom being dependent upon their receiving of Spirit baptism. Simply proving they were baptized in the Spirit does not show that the **purpose** of that was **that they would enter the kingdom**. Where is their entrance into the kingdom even found in these texts? Marlin assumes as having already proven what he is obligated to prove for the argument to be a sound argument. He is begging the question. Let him come back and show that the apostles only entered the kingdom once they had been baptized both in water **and in the Holy Spirit**. He cannot do so! The argument is an abject failure!

Here is a dilemma for Marlin to ponder, as he seeks to prove the unproveable here. Mac Deaver has, rightly, affirmed that one must be baptized in water to receive cleansing or the forgiveness of sins. To this we would heartily agree. However, Mac also has wrongly affirmed that one must also be baptized in the Holy Spirit to finally enter into the kingdom or the church. Mac has admitted that the alien sinner cannot

receive the Holy Spirit. Mac wrote on page 14 of his special Spring 2011 issue of *Biblical Notes Quarterly* the following:

Note: If this person is forgiven, he is no longer a sinner. If he is not a sinner, he is either (1) already a saint because no longer a sinner or (2) a non-sinner who by regeneration is made a saint.

So, he has concocted this intermediate category between alien sinner and Christian that he calls a “saint.” In this supposed intermediate state one is a “saint,” having the forgiveness of sins and is no longer an alien sinner, but he is not yet in the kingdom and thus a Christian, a child of God who has thus experienced the New Birth in full. But there are only two realms: either one is in Christ, which is the same as being in the church or kingdom (Eph. 1:20-23; Col. 1:14), or he is in or of the world. The text that Mac cites to prove that the alien sinner cannot receive the Holy Spirit actually says of the Spirit, “Whom **the world** cannot receive” (John 14:17; emphasis added). Marlin needs to tell us whether the “saint” who has not yet received Spirit baptism is still in or of the world. If he says that he is still in or of the world, then he cannot receive the Spirit and so cannot receive Spirit baptism. The doctrine is then dead in the water at that point.

If Marlin says that this “saint”

is already in Christ, then he denies his own argument as he implies that the “saint” is already in the kingdom without being baptized in the Holy Spirit. But that is not all he is confronted with here. As the doctrine of Mac Deaver teaches that this “saint” already has the remission of sins, then it is implied that the “saint” is already in Christ, because Paul explicitly says that is where the remission of sins are possessed (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14). Will Marlin contradict Paul or Mac on the matter? Mac says that this “saint” is not yet in the kingdom, just as Marlin’s argument seeks to prove, but Paul says that the remission of sins can only be possessed by one who is “in Christ,” or in the kingdom! Will Marlin address this? We shall see. Mac Deaver has steadfastly chosen to ignore the point. Will Marlin show more conviction and courage on this than his mentor? I am not holding my breath. I hate blue face.

The Third Argument

That brings us to the third argument stated previously in Marlin’s arsenal for the Deaver doctrine. That argument is totally dependent on the truth of the second. The second provides the bulk of the antecedent to the third, and critical to that antecedent is the proposition that the apostles were baptized in the Spirit

to enter the kingdom.

The second argument being false, then Marlin’s third argument does not follow and is also false. It is **not** the case that “all who enter the kingdom must be baptized in water and in the Spirit.” Marlin’s final conclusion is a false proposition.

Conclusion

Brethren, Mac Deaver ought to be ashamed of himself for the division he has created through his false doctrine. Marlin Kilpatrick ought to be ashamed to lend support to such obvious error. Brethren ought to take a stand with elders stopping the mouths of the false teachers pushing this error in their congregations. Gospel preachers ought to buck up and summon the courage to say that this is indeed damnable heresy that Mac and Marlin are foisting upon the Brotherhood. Members ought to leave congregations where this false doctrine is tolerated and fellowshiped. To say that this is not a salvation issue is a monstrous lie that seeks vainly to deny the obvious. If the way in which one enters the kingdom (the church), which is the place where the Lord places all the saved under the New Testament, is not a salvation issue, then, pray tell, what is?

Parrish, FL

The Back Burner Revisited

Charles Pogue

A number of years ago when I was preaching for a congregation in Southeast Arkansas, a preacher from the east coast of our country came by for a visit. He was in the middle of a trip in which he was seeking help for an evangelistic effort, and since

he was an acquaintance, he came by to see us. While he was with us, he made the comment that he thought error should be placed on the back burner for a while, and that we just get on with the business of seeking the lost. I had heard that opinion

from those who were known for their extreme liberalism, but I had never heard such a proposal from a brother whom I knew to be sound in matters of the plan of salvation, and the church acting in worship and work only where there is Biblical authority

to act. With the passing of the ensuing years, it is plainly obvious that his mindset has spread to the great detriment of the Lord's church.

The consequence of putting error in the church on the back burner is that men's thinking evolves from deciding to ignore error to tolerating it, if not completely embracing it. Minds of the once faithful become dull under such circumstances, and it becomes popular for one's position on controversial issues to be not to take any position at all; a kind of Pontius Pilate approach with the same devastating results for the church as Pilate's had for the life of the Lord. It is not surprising, either, that ignoring issues does nothing to enhance serious and regular Bible study.

It is increasingly common for brethren, when asked where they stand on a certain issue among us, for them to say, "I try to stay out of that fight." Unfortunately, that attitude leads to exactly what we are seeing today, many existing in an ever enlarging circle of fellowship, attempting to justify communion with brethren in error, by claiming that one may with God's approval, disagree with them on their particular falsehoods, but stand with them otherwise. Do they rebuke such for the error they hold? You know the answer to that as well as I do. It is not important enough for them to say anything! That is precisely the reason, for instance, that while some claim to oppose the myriad errors on the Holy Spirit, they nevertheless invite brethren who fellowship false teachers on the subject to participate in their lectureships or hold Gospel meetings for them. Such are not opposing anything, they are taking the Pilate position of taking no position. All they are doing is making it

uncomfortably impossible for them to say anything. What a tangled web we weave, as the old saying is.

Make no mistake about it, when it became apparent years ago that the direct aid of the Spirit doctrine was going to become a serious problem, some brethren made the decision to stay out of the controversy and let other brethren attempt to deal with it. In the case of some, if they had spoken out on that particular error it might not have achieved the increasingly widespread acceptance that it has today.

One can have respect for those who stand up and make their voices heard, and even have some for those who go to the Word of God and make the point that based on the teaching of Scripture that an issue should not be a divisive one. However, there is no basis for respecting one who just chooses to dodge an issue thinking it will go away on its own, others will deal with it, or that they just do not want to involve themselves in controversy. Anyone who does the latter cannot successfully appeal to Jesus Christ as their example, for if there was anyone who never baulked at controversy it was the only begotten Son of God! Jesus was constantly engaged with issue after issue with the Pharisees, Sadducees, chief priests, scribes, and anyone else who taught for doctrine the commandments of men (Mat. 15:1-9).

The negative impact of an individual refusing to take a stand is not limited to a congregation or the church universal, it also weakens the individual. It seems that many live their lives believing that if they put the kingdom of God and His righteousness first (Mat. 6:33), they can do whatever else they want to whether the principles of the New

Testament condemn such action or not. Our people have been told for so many years that God comes first and everything else is secondary, that they began to focus in on the *everything* and decided everything meant anything. They put error on the back burner, refused to engage in any controversial issue (even with themselves), and, as we pointed out at the beginning of this article, ended up embracing many false doctrines and a great number of moral sins.

If anyone doubts the negative effects of avoiding controversy, just remember back in the 1950s when the various "anti" positions were developing and spreading. If brethren had not seen the pharisaic legalism involved, it might possibly be that today no congregation would follow the Scriptural directive to do good unto all men (2 Cor. 9:13; Gal. 6:10). Not only so, but a drinking fountain in any church building would be deemed error if the doctrine had been followed out to its full implication. We are riding on the shoulders of valiant soldiers who went before us. If we fail to be valiant soldiers today, it is frightening to think what condition the church will be in when our children and grandchildren are grown. Come to think of it, because of the refusal of some over the past couple of decades to take a stand on certain matters, such as elder reevaluation, and those who have taught and/or practiced it, and how their refusal has produced a willingness to fellowship others in error, such as those who fellowship Sunset, Lake Tahoe Encampment, or the small group pattern, the placing of the pot on the back burner and ignoring it has already lead to more boiling over than is good for the precious bride of Christ.

Granby, MO

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"They Wouldn't Bend, They Wouldn't Bow, They Wouldn't Burn" (Daniel 3)

David P. Brown

The title of this article comes from an old song. It manifests the results of the unwavering faith of three young Jewish men during the Babylonian captivity. Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were companions of Daniel. They were better known by their Babylonian names: Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, set up a great golden image and commanded all "people, nations and languages" (Dan. 3:4) at a given signal of music to "fall down and worship the golden image" (3:5). Lack of obedience to this imperial decree was: "And whoso falleth not down and worshippeth shall the same hour be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace" (3:6).

When the signal was given, the **majority** of the people fell down before the image to worship it. But it was not so with the faithful three—Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

They Would Not Bend!

When brought before the king, they were questioned as to their understanding of the king's decree and given a second opportunity to comply with it. They were also re-

minded of the terrible consequences of disobedience. In the king's mind, nothing in heaven or earth could save them from the furnace if they did not worship the golden image. He asked, "who *is* that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" (3:15).

O Nebuchadnezzar, we *are* not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be *so*, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver *us* out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up (3:16-18).

They Would Not Bow!

The fury and indignation of the King was upon these faithful and stalwart servants of Jehovah. An imperial dictum caused the furnace to be heated "seven times" (3:19) more than was normal. Bound by the "most mighty men" in the Babylonian army, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego" were thrown "into the burning fiery furnace" (3:20). The furnace was such a terrible inferno that the men who threw

the three Jews in were killed by the flames.

Then came a scene that astonished that terrible oriental ruler. He saw, not three, but "four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God" (3:25).

They Would Not Burn!

The king himself called them forth from the flaming holocaust. To the amazement of all, they saw that the fire had not even left the smell of smoke on their clothing.

Now Nebuchadnezzar decreed that no citizen in Babylon should "speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego" (3:29) under penalty of total destruction; "because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort" (3:29). With this decree the king elevated the courageous and faithful three to great positions of service in his kingdom. Such uncompromising men of faith and courage should ever be held up as examples to elders, deacons,

Continued on Page 3



Notes From The Editor

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Hatcher

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Do Something

One of the problems in our nation at this time is the give-me mentality. That is, give me something or provide for me. Through the years this nation has taught many of its citizens to be a do something for me citizenry. The idea presented in President Kennedy's Inaugural Address in 1961, "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country" has long been forgotten by many, if not most. Our nation has become a welfare society where so many are receiving hand-outs from the government and thus dependent upon the government for their livelihood. Many have warned our nation that it cannot sustain this give-me status. Those making the money tire of having their money taken from them and given to those who refuse to work and make their own money. Additionally, it reaches a point when there are so many takers that the givers cannot sustain them and the government collapses.

This attitude has also come into the church. Years ago when children began getting older and were leaving the church, parents started demanding that we do something about it. We heard, "Do something for our young people." So, congregations began trying to do something for the youth. They developed youth programs along with youth directors. The youth directors began setting up programs to entertain the

youth and to keep them busy. Few seemed to care about Bible authority for the things taking place. Likewise, few seemed to care that it was the parents' responsibility to raise children. The thoughts of Paul when he wrote: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4), were ignored. Parents demanded that the church do something, do anything. The parents did not want their children leaving the church as they grew up, so it became the church's responsibility to keep the children.

With this thinking entrenched in brethren, now when someone moves into a town with several congregations, they begin to call and often the only question (asked in various ways) they ask is: "What programs do you have for my children?" Unless they get a response that lists multiple activities and entertainment for their children, they call someplace else. They continue to call till they receive the type of answer they desire. If they should hear a Biblical response such as, "We will teach them the Gospel of Jesus Christ and provide service opportunities for them to serve others, just like everyone else," those parents would be aghast because they have been conditioned to think that the church must do something for the children. They refuse to consider the example that Jesus gave, when He said, "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mat. 20:28). They have learned wrongly that the church is designed to do something for them instead of them serving others.

Preachers have lost jobs over this erroneous type of thinking. A

congregation is not growing numerically like some carnal-minded brethren think it should. Thus, they start clamoring that the preacher needs to do something. To them, it is obvious that if the congregation does not grow numerically (spiritual growth does not matter to these carnal-minded brethren), then it is the preacher's fault. They start demanding that something needs to be done, programs need to be started (it doesn't matter if they will work or if anyone else will be involved in it, just start them). Then when those programs do not work, modify them or start other ones. Just make sure the programs that your preacher starts are better than the programs at other congregations so you can draw members from those congregations and thus have a *growing church*. It does not matter if the *growth* is simply members moving from one congregation to another, the numbers are increasing and that is all these carnal-minded brethren are concerned with. What if the preacher does not come up with these fantastic programs and entertainment to draw members from other congregations? Then it is time to get rid of that *worthless* preacher. They must get a preacher in that will draw members from other congregations (and/or the denominations) and *grow their church*. With these brethren the truth of God's Word is secondary to the numerical growth. We need to remember the words of

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Michael Hatcher, Editor

Paul when he wrote by inspiration of God: "Who then is Paul, and who *is* Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the

increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward ac-

cording to his own labour" (1 Cor. 3:5-8). We need to get back to simply preaching the pure and simple Gospel of Christ and not worry about numerical growth.

MH

Continued from Page 1
preachers, and Christians in general as godly patterns for us to follow.

In the parable of the marriage feast the man who did not wear the proper attire was condemned. He was unprepared! He had not entered "the strait gate"! He had not walked the narrow way, "which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Mat. 7:13-14)! Rather, he had taken the path of ease, compromise, and least resistance; "for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat" (7:13).

Like the Hebrew children, he too was bound "hand and foot." **But**

here the parallel ends! This man was cast "into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. **For many are called, but few are chosen**" (22:11-14). The unprepared guest did **bend, bow, and burn!** He lacked **love** for God, **faith** in His Word, and the **courage** of his **convictions** to stand while the tempest raged and the majority bowed and scraped to the god of this world. He, along with others who are "fearful, and unbelieving...shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8). "And the smoke of their torment," unlike those three faithful Jews, "ascendeth

up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night" (14:11).

Conversely, the fearless dedication of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abendnego is aptly described by the apostle whom Jesus loved.

Here is the patience of the saints: here *are* they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.... And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away (14:12; 21:4).

"They would not bend—they would not bow—they would not burn!"

Spring, TX

Editor's note: Brother Pogue sent this as an email to several brethren on July 11, 2012. Please give careful consideration to what he has written. It is being used with his permission.

Polishing the Pulpit

Charles Pogue

I do not know how many of you have seen the schedule of speakers and topics for the Polishing the Pulpit event coming up next month, but having looked at it fairly closely, among other things, my reaction is stated well by the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel. "Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their

eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them" (Eze. 22:26). Like so many other annual events hosted by, or participated in, by once at least thought to be faithful brethren, this gathering is getting to be more and more shameful with each passing year. It is increasingly apparent that the Bible, and doing things in Bible ways, is just not thought to be sufficient for so many modernized brethren. They have to have the clever claptrap and innovations of men or they just do not seem to

think the Gospel can flourish and the church thrive. The Gospel of Christ is being corrupted by trappings of the social Gospel, and in some cases such as one congregation for which one of this year's speakers preaches, has what in my mind amounts to no more than a church creed in rompers. In contradiction to the recent proclamation of those who have decided to switch rather than continue the fight, I kindly suggest that liberalism has only just begun to be a threat to the Lord's church.

At first the devil enjoyed a bountiful harvest among the hangers-on, and now he is reaping a not so sparing crop among those who of recent years have exposed themselves as previously covert, but now candid, circle enlargers.

More than ever we need to remember what the apostle Peter wrote in 2 Peter 1:3. "According as

his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue." Let others look beyond the divine Scriptures to the secular works of men for what they believe to be vital instruction for how to do the work of the Lord, I will cast my lot in with the apostle who spoke by

inspiration instead of my intellectual brethren who apparently believe they have better ideas than the God who made them. It is a difficult day in the Kingdom of the Father and His Christ when men who ought to know better have difficulty distinguishing between *polishing* and *polluting*.

Granby, MO

The Cleaving of a Congregation

David B. Watson

The first twenty-four verses of First Kings chapter twelve record for us the cleaving of a congregation of God's people. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). This section of Scripture can be outlined as follows:

The Coronation

"And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king" (1 Kin. 12:1). Two things occasioned the coronation of Rehoboam to be king of the united kingdom of Israel. First, was the death of Solomon, the previous king and Rehoboam's father. Second, was the fact that Rehoboam was a part of the dynasty of David and thus in line to inherit the throne. "And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead" (11:43).

The Calling

Some, if not all, of Israel accomplished the calling of Jeroboam out of Egypt. "And it came to pass, when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it, (for he was fled from the presence of

king Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt;) That they sent and called him" (12:2-3). Previously Jeroboam had been given a revelation from God by a prophet named Ahijah.

And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda, Solomon's servant, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow woman, even he lifted up *his* hand against the king. And this *was* the cause that he lifted up *his* hand against the king: Solomon built Millo, *and* repaired the breaches of the city of David his father. And the man Jeroboam *was* a mighty man of valour: and Solomon seeing the young man that he was industrious, he made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph. And it came to pass at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; and he had clad himself with a new garment; and they two *were* alone in the field: And Ahijah caught the new garment that *was* on him, and rent it *in* twelve pieces: And he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces: for thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee: (But he shall have one tribe for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of

all the tribes of Israel:) Because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon, and have not walked in my ways, to do *that which* is right in mine eyes, and *to keep* my statutes and my judgments, as *did* David his father. Howbeit I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, because he kept my commandments and my statutes: But I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand, and will give it unto thee, *even* ten tribes. And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light alway before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there. And I will take thee, and thou shalt reign according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt be king over Israel. And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and do *that is* right in my sight, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be with thee, and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee. And I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not for ever (11:26-39).

Because of this prophecy King

Solomon plotted to kill Jeroboam and thus Jeroboam's plight was to escape to Egypt and remain there until the death of Solomon. "Solomon sought therefore to kill Jeroboam. And Jeroboam arose, and fled into Egypt, unto Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt until the death of Solomon" (11:40).

The Complaining

At this point in time a deputation is dispatched to complain to Rehoboam and seek a solution to their complaint. "And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying" (12:3). The details of the complaint are as follows: "Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee" (12:4). Solomon had indeed made their yoke grievous.

And this *is* the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for to build the house of the Lord, and his own house, and Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer. *For* Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up, and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it *for* a present unto his daughter, Solomon's wife. And Solomon built Gezer, and Beth-horon the nether, And Baalath, and Tadmor in the wilderness, in the land, And all the cities of store that Solomon had, and cities for his chariots, and cities for his horsemen, and that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion. *And* all the people *that were* left of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, which *were* not of the children of Israel, Their children that were left after them in the land, whom the children of Israel also were not able utterly to destroy,

upon those did Solomon levy a tribute of bondservice unto this day. But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondmen: but they *were* men of war, and his servants, and his princes, and his captains, and rulers of his chariots, and his horsemen. These *were* the chief of the officers that *were* over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule over the people that wrought in the work (9:15-23).

The deputation is then told to depart for three days and return. "And he said unto them, Depart yet *for* three days, then come again to me. And the people departed" (12:5).

The Consultations

Rehoboam then held consultations with his advisors. First, he consulted with the old men.

And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men, that stood before Solomon his father while he yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people? And they spake unto him, saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants for ever (12:6-7).

Second, Rehoboam rejected the advice of the old men and consulted with the young men.

But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, *and* which stood before him: And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter? And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou *it* lighter unto us; thus shalt thou say unto them, My little *finger* shall be thicker than my fa-

ther's loins. And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions (12:8-11).

The Conduct

The foolish conduct of Rehoboam is now seen. First, he assembles the people. "So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam the third day, as the king had appointed, saying, Come to me again the third day" (12:12). Next, Rehoboam gives his foolish answer to the people.

And the king answered the people roughly, and forsook the old men's counsel that they gave him; And spake to them after the counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father *also* chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions (12:13-14).

The Cause

"Wherefore the king hearkened not unto the people; for the cause was from the Lord, that he might perform his saying, which the Lord spake by Ahijah the Shilonite unto Jeroboam the son of Nebat" (12:15).

The Cleaving

Because of Rehoboam's foolishness the congregation of Israel experiences a cleaving. Ten tribes become known as the Kingdom of Israel.

So when all Israel saw that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? Neither *have we* inheritance in the son of Jesse: To your tents, O Israel: Now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents (12:16).

Two tribes become known as the Kingdom of Judah. "But *as for* the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them" (12:17). This included the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin.

And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon (12:21).

The Casualty

Rehoboam continues to act foolishly by sending a man named Adoram to collect tribute from the ten northern tribes. "Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who *was* over the tribute" (12:18). But the people of Israel stoned him to death: "and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died" (12:18). Rehoboam then separated himself from the people with all speed. "Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to flee to Jerusalem" (12:18).

The Conclusion

The inspired writer then records the conclusion of the whole matter: rebellion! "So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day" (12:19).

The Crowning

The inspired writer next records the crowning of Jeroboam by the ten northern tribes of Israel to be their new king. "And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only" (12:20).

The Crisis

This sad situation ends with a crisis of civil war averted by God. Rehoboam assembled an army of warriors from Judah and Benjamin.

And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah, with the tribe of Benjamin, an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon. But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying, Speak unto Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the remnant of the

people, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is from me (12:21-24).

Thus, the army of Rehoboam withdrew. "They hearkened therefore to the word of the Lord, and returned to depart, according to the word of the Lord" (12:24).

The Commentary

How many congregations of God's people today have experienced a cleaving because of brethren who want to be king, because of brethren who plot and complain, because of brethren who seek counsel from foolish young people and shun the advice of wise elders, because of brethren who conduct themselves sinfully in word and deed, because of brethren who rebel against the Word of God and make war with those they should not and refuse to make war with those they should? May God deliver us from those who would unscripturally cause the cleaving of the congregations of God's people!

Middleburg, FL

Jesus is The Christ

N. B. Hardeman

The divine origin of the Christian religion depends for its proof upon the evidence that Jesus of Nazareth is "the Christ, the Son of the living God." This is the central thought of the entire Bible and upon its truthfulness all else depends.

It has ever been the object of all infidels to discredit this statement and thereby rob Christ of His divinity and the Christian of his hope, which must forever rest upon it. There have been written many books and many lectures have been given upon "Jesus, the Perfect

Man," "Jesus, the Great Teacher," "Jesus, the Great Philosopher," etc. Let me say to those who may read this article that I am not so much concerned about Jesus as a man, teacher, or philosopher, but that I am tremendously concerned about Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the living God. Those who lived with Him and who heard Him talk and saw Him perform the miracles, wonders, and signs which He did, unite in the belief that He was a super-man. The evidence of His friends is conclusive. His enemies are forced to join in

saying: "Truly, He was the Christ, the Son of God." Some years ago, Mr. H. G. Wells, the noted writer, was asked to contribute an article for the *American Magazine* on six of the greatest men that had ever lived. This request came in recognition of his scholarship, integrity, and ability to measure men by the historian's standard. Though not a Christian himself and even skeptical regarding the Christ, Mr. Wells caused to be penned the following article:

Jesus of Nazareth is easily the dominant figure in history. I am speak-

ing of him, of course, as a man, for I conceive that the historian must treat him as a man, just as the painter must paint him as a man. We do not know as much about him as we would like to know...To assume that he never lived, that the accounts of his life are inventions, is more difficult and raises more problems in the path of the historian than to accept the essential elements of the Gospel stories as fact.

Of course you and I live in countries where, to millions of men and women, Jesus is more than a man. But the historian must disregard that fact, he must adhere to the evidence which would pass unchallenged if his book were to be read in every nation under the sun. Now, it is interesting and significant—isn't it?—that a historian, setting forth in that spirit, without any theological bias whatever, should find that he simply cannot portray the progress of humanity honestly without giving a foremost place to a penniless teacher from Nazareth. The old Roman historians ignored Jesus entirely; they ignored the growth and spread of his teaching, regarding it as something apart from life, something, as it were, that happened only on Sundays. He left no impress on the historical records of his time. Yet, more than nineteen hundred years later, a historian like myself, who does not even call himself a Christian, finds the picture centering irresistibly around the life and character of this simple, lovable man. All sorts of dogma and tradition have been imposed upon his personality, of course; it is the fate of all great religious leaders to be misinterpreted by their followers. But from underneath this mass of the miraculous and incredible, the man himself keeps breaking through. We sense the magnetism that induced men who had seen him only once to leave their business and follow him. He filled them with love and courage. Weak and ailing people were

heartened by his presence. He spoke with a knowledge and authority that baffled the wise and subtle. But other teachers have done all this. These talents alone would not have given him the permanent place of power which he occupies; that place is by virtue of the new and simple and profound doctrine which he brought—the universal, loving Fatherhood of God and the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven.

It is one of the most revolutionary doctrines that have ever stirred and changed human thought. His followers failed to grasp it; no age has even partially understood its tremendous challenge to the established institutions of mankind. But the world began to be a different world from the day that doctrine was preached; and every step toward wider understanding and tolerance and good will is a step in the direction of universal brotherhood, which he proclaimed. So the historian, disregarding the theological significance of his life, writes the name of Jesus of Nazareth at the top of the list of the world's greatest characters. For the historian's test of greatness is not, "What did he accumulate for himself?" or "What did he build up, to tumble down at his death?" Not that at all, but this: "Was the world different because he lived? Did he start, men to thinking along fresh lines with a vigor and vitality that persisted after him?" By this test Jesus stands first.

Is it not rather strange that a man of the type of Mr. Wells would by all evidences available be forced to place Jesus, the penniless peasant of Nazareth, at the head of the list of the world's great men? As a rule, men do not reach their zenith as early as thirty or thirty-five years. What the world considers its great men have lived to practically double the age of Jesus the Christ. Greatness is determined in general by ancestry, wealth, social, or political prominence. Mea-

sure the Christ by either standard and you will find Him weighed and found wanting. He was born in a stable and cradled in a manger and at the end of the days for such, His mother offered a substitute for the sacrifice of the more wealthy. His father was a carpenter and for thirty years He lived in practical obscurity. He came from a despised town, out of which the world thought no good thing could come. There is no record of His ever having a dollar. He made His home among the poor of this earth and the common people heard Him gladly. He was never galvanized into prominence by the social set nor did He attain political prestige at the hands of His friends. With all these elements lacking, we are made to wonder how Mr. Wells accounts for His superiority.

The only logical conclusion is that He was not merely man but was divine. Let not the world therefore rob Him of His divinity and reduce Him to a common level of other men.

Deceased

Classes Online

There are two different classes that have been uploaded to my youtube account for those who would like to access them.

The first class is from a Bible class I taught at Bellview on Hebrews. It contains 32 videos (the introduction and first few verses were missed and goes through chapter 10).

The second class was for TBI on The New Testament Church of which there are 10 videos.

You can access them by doing a search on youtube for 52michaelh. This should lead you to my Youtube page where you will gain access to the classes along with some sermons.

We are working to get these to the congregation's webpage also.

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The Bible: God's Divine Revelation

Foy E. Wallace, Jr.

The present trend toward modernism is discernible in the emphasis that our school men are putting on philosophy. But philosophy is the product of human reasoning and therefore is no more infallible than the minds of men. Yet, philosophy is being accepted as final and regarded more authoritative than revelation. When men will not accept the record of divine revelation unless it can be confirmed by philosophy, they are not men of faith—they are modernists.

Proof that the Bible is divine revelation and therefore infallible is not meager and scant—it is manifold and sufficient, both intrinsic and extrinsic in genius. The first exists in the character of the content of the Bible, and the second in the demands of man's nature.

The Need of Revelation

The very nature of man requires it. First, as a dying creature, unlike the animal, he possesses a love of life and dread of death. He is dissatisfied with the thought of being born to die—with being brought into the world to begin to die the moment that he begins to live. In his nature, there is a longing for a destiny beyond the limits of life here, a yearning

for the revelation of his origin and destiny. His nature demands a destiny. The Bible is the only book that answers his longing and reveals his destiny. It is therefore the only book that meets the demands of man's nature.

Second, as a worshipping being, his desire to worship demands an object of worship, which of necessity must be a superhuman object. But the inability of man to create renders it impossible for him to make or imagine such an ideal. The true object of his worship must therefore be revealed. The Bible is the only book that reveals the object of man's worship.

Third, as a rational being, all but destitute of instinct, he is unable to supply his own wants. His reason, affection, and conscience, lifting him above the creature of automatic instinct, demand a revealed religion in acquired language. Being a universal creature, to obviate prejudice, this revealed religion must be non-sectional and international, overcoming sectional distinctions, and such is the revealed religion of the Bible.

The Character of the Bible

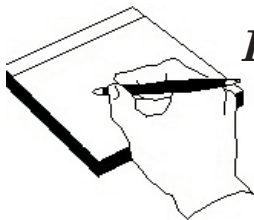
Further proof that the Bible is

direct divine revelation is discoverable in the character of its contents. First, in unique composition its pronouncements are profound, yet in the whole of its presentation its style is simple, and its lessons and duties are understandable. It is the longest line of thought woven in the loom of time, yet expressed in clear and easy words which translation does not weaken, proving it to be unlike other books, and certifying that it is superhuman, and demonstrating it to be the Book from above.

Second, in its divine impartiality, unlike human books, it exposes the weaknesses in the lives of its characters and records the mistakes and misdeeds of its heroes. Adam sinned and was expelled from his primeval home. Noah's intoxication is related with all of its repulsion. David's transgression was revealed as an orgy of lust, and Peter's denial is mentioned as a trait of cowardice. Where is there a book of man like it? Let infidels account for the truthful impartiality of the Bible on mere human grounds of authorship.

Third, in its proffered rewards and threatened punishments revelation is written in every line, for

Continued on Page 3



Notes From The Editor

**Michael
Hatcher**

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Elders

"And hath put all *things* under his [Christ's] feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23). "And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18). Paul confidently affirms in these two passages that Christ is the head of the church. This figure shows that Jesus exercises control over the body or the church. Peter describes Jesus as the chief Shepherd when he writes, "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 5:4). Jesus is the one who makes the laws relative to the church. Thus we are under law to Christ as Paul points out in 1 Corinthians 9:21.

When Christ establishes His laws, there must be an expediting of those laws. Thus, God instituted within the local congregation that there would be *under* Shepherds under the chief Shepherd. These men must meet the qualifications God established as recorded in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The main concern of their work is spiritual. They are to watch for the souls under their care. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that

must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17). Sadly, so many elderships today view their work as primarily taking care of the contribution and tending to how the money is spent than anything else. These brethren have a sad misconstruction of the high office (work) God has given them to do. Elders do have the oversight of the congregation: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). Since they have the oversight of the congregation, the way the money is spent falls under their oversight, but this is not the primary aspect of their work. Their work is making sure those in the congregation make it to heaven.

Through the years, brethren have lost sight of the work of the elders and often passed that work to the preacher. However, the Scriptures clearly show that the elders are responsible for the teaching that goes on in the congregation. While it has been correctly pointed out that they do not have to do all the teaching, they are the ones responsible for all the teaching that is done in the congregation. To this end, one of the qualifications is "apt to teach" (1 Tim. 2:2). *Apt* means to have the ability to teach or skilled in teaching. This qualification is understood when we realize that they are responsible for the teaching that emanates from the pulpit and classrooms. Thus, Peter exhorts elders to "Feed the flock of God which is among you" (1 Pet. 5:2). They have that responsibility of making sure that the "flock of God" (the congregation they oversee) is taught

properly. Additionally, when we see Paul's statements to Titus regarding their teaching we have even better understanding.

Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. One of themselves, *even* a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians *are* always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith (Tit. 1:9-13).

Elders must be ready to teach and to correct any error that is being taught. The problem today is that by far the majority of elders simply do not have a good knowledge of God's Word and what God has authorized today. Thus, they cannot properly feed the flock because they do not have the capacity of discerning good food from evil food.

In the church today, we have a general lack of knowledge of God's Word. We need to remember the words of God to Israel through the prophet Hosea: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (4:6). These

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Michael Hatcher, Editor

brethren with a lack of knowledge of God's Word are being placed within the eldership. The result is a continued eroding of knowledge of the flock.

Elders no longer know if someone teaches error or not, and eventually end up supporting error. They allow the flock to be carried away with the winds of doctrinal error. Paul speaks of the completeness of the revelation of God's Will to man so man will not be carried away: "That we *henceforth* be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, *and* cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, *even* Christ" (Eph. 4:14-15). However,

these man-made elders do not know if one is actually speaking the truth or not. They have not matured enough in the Scriptures to realize that when one promotes changing the times of worship for the Super Bowl, or that it is acceptable to sing a song that addresses and prays to the Holy Spirit and for His direct impact upon Christians, that the version (perversion) that a preacher and teacher uses in the pulpit and classroom does not indicate liberalism, that we can breakup Sunday evening services for small groups in members home, that one may forsake the assembly of worship to participate in various sporting events, or that brethren should enlarge our fellowship *circle*, along with other tendencies, the ones advocating such are wrong. They do not have the

knowledge they need to stop the mouths of these wolves in sheep's clothing. So many 'isms are being taught today such as Calvinism, Premillennialism, Pentecostalism, etc. Instead of stopping the mouths of those who teach such, they aid and abet the error because of the "good words and fair speeches" of those who "deceive the hearts of the simple" (Rom. 16:18).

While preachers are the purveyors of much of the liberalism, false doctrine, and error that are seen in the church today, elders are ultimately to blame for allowing it to be taught and practiced. Elders must get a knowledge of God's Word and then get a backbone to stop the mouths of those who would bring in damnable error that draw away disciples from the truth of God's Word.

MH

Continued from Page 1
man could not propose blessings or punishments higher than his imagination, nor write of the future longer than he himself could see enforced. The duration of rewards and punishments being eternal, man could not have conceived such. The teaching of the Bible concerning eternity projects man farther and deeper into the future than his imagination could invent or his mind could conceive.

Fourth, in the vast quantity of its varied contents there are no conflicts. With no apparent effort on the part of its authors to avoid contradictions, there are none: but it does not propose to harmonize those which man fancies to discover: there being none in it. The discrepancies vanish in the light of all the facts. The fact that its authors were separated by time, clime, and language, with no knowledge of each other, yet were

agreed in all that is written proves that the Bible is not the work of men.

Fifth, in its demands on the individual, the Bible claims the hearts, lives, and reverence of all men of all generations, with no apology for the demand. The most inspiring of all human philosophers could never have dreamed of such a thing. Man did not write the Bible. It is the book of a universal and an eternal God.

The Value of Testimony

The character of witnesses, in evidence on questions involving integrity and veracity, determines the value of testimony. Of first consideration on this point is the life of Jesus. He lived in toil and sacrifice and taught His disciples to do the same. Note the passages. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth," "Labour not for the meat which perisheth," and, "If any man will come after me, let him deny

himself" (Mat. 6:19; John 6:27; Mat. 16:24). Could a mere man hope for such from his followers? Could any human teacher expect ready recruits from such appeals, offering only affliction and reproach? The history of the world does not record such. But the honesty of such demands was absolute and cannot be discredited.

As a second consideration, there is the test of purity. The purity of life required of the followers of Jesus is a basic evidence. **Miracles** attest the fact of Christianity, but **morals** are the profession of it. Mohammed cared nothing for the appraisal of his subjects as to his moral character and made no demands as to their own. That alone marks him as a pretender. Christ demands purity to the point that there can be no fellowship with Him without it. The like of it cannot be found in history.

A third consideration is yet found

in the test of veracity. Some, who acknowledge the purity of Jesus, deny His claims of divinity and Deity. They are inconsistent. If He was not divine, He was an imposter. There is no such thing as Jesus being a good man if His claims were false. But His life and teaching are the credentials of His divinity. Take His teaching on eternity—the promise of happiness after a life of toil, and glory after suffering—where is there a sane man who would spend his life, all of his days, in toil and privation for the vain hope of glory after he died?

A fourth and final test in the sincerity of His witnesses is their inflexible zeal, coupled with their virtues, and their willingness to die. This could not have been founded on fraud and deception. They could have renounced it all and lived. What they taught was true, affirmed by life and confirmed by death. Imposter Joe Smith and his brother Hiram fought to live when the mob came and died fighting with pistols to escape assassination. Compare

theirs with the death of Jesus and the martyrdom of Christians. Man did not write the Bible, and its religion is of God.

The Bible Is Not a Fable

Christianity is a myth, Jesus a fake, and the Bible a fable? Its first writer, Moses himself, begins the Bible, not with the story of his own life, but of creation; and instead of taking the glory for his own age of time, he ascribed it to 2,500 years before, and passes over the 1,500 years of his own generations to the future and everlasting age to come. That is not a human spirit.

As for Jesus, the influences of His life and teaching have increased with the passing of the centuries. The birth of Jesus reversed the calendar of the world, and the time of it is imprinted on every letter that men write, on every deed and abstract and legal document that men record in every government on earth, and is inscribed on the monument that marks the head of every man's grave.

Why all this if there's nothing to it, if Christ is a fraud and the Bible

is a fable? If the Bible is a mere fable, why do infidels single it out and seek its destruction? There are thousands of fables in the land, and they let them pass. Why not let the Bible pass, if it is just another fable? Why do they oppose it? Ah, the Book will not let them alone! It condemns them at every turn. Their spirits cannot rest. It follows them by day and haunts them by night. It is before them when they rise up, and it is there when they lie down. They rant and they rave, they scoff and they scowl, but they **feel afraid**.

The system of religion revealed in the Bible is the only reliable religion. No other will answer the demand for the knowledge of the origin and the history and the destiny of man.

It is not reasonable that God—even if He were called **Nature**—could overlook the revelation of things of such stupendous importance, but expose matters of far less moment. There is but one conclusion: The Bible is the revelation of the Eternal God of the universe.

Deceased

Lest We Forget

Tim Smith

There are many things to remember in life, everyday things about which we give little or no thought. I have not forgotten to eat in years, and I never forget to get dressed before leaving the house. I cannot remember ever “forgetting about” worship services or Bible Class either. There are other things, however, which have escaped my memory, and perhaps there are things that have escaped yours also. With respect to the Scriptures, it is good to remind ourselves of God's Word often, for if

we forget it the consequences extend beyond the grave and into eternity. Let us take a few minutes to consider the importance of properly understanding and applying the Gospel plan of salvation.

The world is lost. It is sad, but true. Paul wrote, “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.... For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.... the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 3:10, 23; 6:23). The simple truth is that as all have sinned all stand ready to

die—the second death that is (Rev. 21:8). Without Jesus none will be saved (Acts 4:12). Apart from the “obedience” to “the faith” (Rom. 16:26), which is the “power of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16), no one will make it to heaven. When, therefore, we approach the matter of teaching those “in the world” (as opposed to those in Christ) we must remember that we are preaching to lost people. When Peter preached on Pentecost, he indicted the people of their sins and charged them with

their guilt (Acts 2:14-36). They knew of their guilt, and that there was something they needed to do that the guilt might be removed, and even inquired as to just what they needed to do to effect forgiveness (2:37). They were told, "Repent and be baptized every one of you" (2:38). Peter never once tried to cater to them, he did not seek to leave them with the impression that they were saved apart from complete obedience to the Gospel, he did not try to "soothe" them—he merely gave them the "whole counsel of God" that they might come to obedience.

Some have suggested that if we would be "less strict" on the "plan of salvation," less dogmatic, less "legalistic" in our preaching, perhaps we could *convert* more people. As we examine the sermon of Peter on Pentecost (and for that matter we could also take up Paul at Athens, Acts 17; Jesus to the Pharisees, Mat. 23; and many more) we do not see men catering to the world in an effort to *convert* them. In fact, such catering does not convert! To convert is to change, and when our message to the world is "You are fine in your present condition, we just want you to join our church," we are not calling them to change. This kind of preaching is a call to remain the same! The only thing that gets changed under such preaching is the congregation that allows it to happen. Peter knew that those people were lost, and he clearly charged them with their sin: "let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). Of what did he hold them guilty? Of killing God's Son. That is no small matter. He clearly indicated their guilt, and when they pressed him as to the

means of forgiveness he was equally clear in indicating to them that they must comply with the terms of God that forgiveness might follow. We need to learn from this example today. There are men, some having preached for many years, who seemingly have forgotten just what it is that a person must do to be saved. Let us examine the plan of salvation with this in view.

Can a person be saved who has not heard the truth? There are many religious messages being taught today, as there were many in the days of Jesus and the apostles. Not all of them are the Truth (which is the Word of God—John 17:17). Can we "know about" the Lord properly if we never hear His Word properly taught? Paul taught, "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" (Rom. 10:14). What was it that the prospective convert had to "hear"? Just any old message? Would a message filled with error be just as good as the truth? Do you know of a secular denomination that teaches the truth on the work, worship of the church, the plan of salvation, and etc.? Think about it.

Can a person be saved who has never believed the truth? Is it the case that a person can hear and believe "just any old message" and be pleasing to God in so doing? The Hebrews writer said: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6). Faith, then, is essential; but, faith in what? Can we have faith in a false gospel and still be saved? Perhaps the question of the origin of faith would be well asked

at this point: Whence cometh the faith which pleases God? Hear Paul: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Now, lest someone say—Well, every church preaches the Word of God, just not alike—let us note: the Word of God requires of us that we "handle aright" (2 Tim. 2:15—ASV) the Word of truth, prove (test) everything, hold to the good and fully reject the evil (1 The. 5:21-22). Is it not the truth that must be believed? Do you know of a secular denomination that teaches such truth? Think about it.

Can a person be saved who has not repented of sins? Jesus said, "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). Is that true? Must we repent of sins before we are saved? Seemingly so, for even Paul—preaching to non-Christians, mind you—said the same: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30). Who needs to repent? "All men every where"! Of what must we repent? Sin, of course. Is it a sin to preach error (Rom. 16:17-18; 2 Tim. 4:2; 2 John 9-11; etc.)? Of course. Is it a sin to help a "plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted" (Mat. 15:13) in its quest for souls? Of course. Is it a sin to worship with the mechanical instrument of music (2 John 9-11; 1 The. 5:21-22; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16-17; etc.)? Of course. A person engaging in such activities (and many more of like nature), upon requesting baptism, is not truly a candidate for scriptural baptism, is he? How could he be? Did not Peter place repentance before immersion in Acts 2:38? A person holding to all these erroneous positions is a person who has never repented! Having

never repented, he is not a candidate for baptism. Think about it.

Can a person be saved who has never confessed Christ? The “good confession” of the world is, in most cases, different from the Biblical “good confession.” The Eunuch said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:37). Often the world confesses: “I believe that God for Christ’ sake has forgiven my sins.” This is a confession that is not only not in the Bible; it is contrary to Bible teaching. It has an un-immersed person claiming that salvation has already been granted them. Has it? Read on.

Can a person who has not been properly baptized be saved already? Jesus commanded baptism in charging His apostles with the duty of teaching it (Mat. 28:19; Mark 16:16). The apostles obeyed that command (Acts 2:38; etc.) Saul was told that in baptism his sins would be washed away (Acts 22:16). Peter said that baptism saves (1 Pet. 3:21). Now this baptism is not administered “because our sins are already washed away,” but quite the contrary. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Which comes first, baptism or salvation? Think about it. “Why tarriest thou, arise and be baptized and wash away

thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” Which comes first, the washing away of sins or baptism? Think about it. Men say that baptism has nothing to do with salvation—that it only concerns church membership, or that it is merely (?) an outward sign of an inward (?) experience. Peter says, “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us.” Which one will you believe? Note also that “baptism” in most denominations is for the purpose of gaining membership in their denomination, not for the washing away of sins. The baptism of the New Testament is for the remission of sins. We are not at liberty to substitute one for the other. Think about it.

Drawing an important conclusion: The error of the denominational world prevents those who would come to Christ therein from actually doing so. A man who has not heard the truth (but only denominational error) cannot believe the truth; and, if he does not believe the truth, he cannot truly repent of his sins—for therein he learns of his sins; not having repented of his sins, he is not a candidate for baptism. Even if a person is immersed in a denominational church, if he has not heard and believed the truth and repented of sins (and he has not, or he would

not be a member of a denominational church), his immersion does him no good. Each step in the process is equally important; none may be omitted with the approval of God. If you would come to salvation: hear and believe the truth, repent, confess, and be immersed properly. Do not seek to gain entrance to the kingdom of God based on having complied with the terms of entry into a body that is diametrically opposed to that kingdom and is in competition with it for the souls of men. Salvation is the Lords; He has promised to give it to such as obey Him (Heb. 5:8-9). He adds to the church such as gladly receive and obey His Word (the Truth) (Acts 2:41, 47). With all love in my heart I appeal to any who may be seeking membership in the body of Christ based on their obedience to the doctrines of a secular denomination: Lay down the past and take up the Scriptures; hear them, believe them, repent of everything in your life which is contrary to them, confess Christ as they require, be immersed in water for (unto) the remission of sins, and let the Lord thus add you to His body, the church (Col. 1:18). Think about it.

Dothan, AL

The Absent-Minded Professor

Geoff Litke

A typical day in the life of a freshman college student—He came in and took his seat in a Literature class. The professor walks in, beautifully quotes several passages from the King James Version of the Bible, then takes his copy and throws it against the wall. He goes on to claim it is of the highest literary value, but

not the Word of God, and goes on to explain the syllabus and conduct class as normal.

The student, who grew up in a small town and regularly attended a faithful church, then went to philosophy class where the professor began his seminar, by asking “how do you know”? This doctor of phi-

losophy proceeded to raise questions about everything from the flavor of ice cream to his own existence. However, among the trivial and absurd things he buried the existence of God. The humble student was surprised and sickened, knowing that this was an attack against God.

Finally this young college student

went to a basic science class where the professor boldly began explaining that “billions of years ago” out of absolutely nothing, the universe just happened by **pure chance** and amazingly out of that, life formed without any **real purpose**. Truly a frustrating day for the young man who just wants to get through school and get a good job so he can take care of his family and other duties.

The above scenario is neither extreme nor uncommon. While there are still many conservative schools where this kind of thing does not happen, it is nonetheless becoming more frequent. For ages educators taught literature with no reference to the Bible and did a fair job. Why would a teacher feel compelled to begin class with something he himself claims is trivial? Why berate the Scriptures in the beginning of a literature class? Why this? How does the doctor of philosophy boldly conclude that no one should believe in God because he cannot know? In contrast, these science teachers can insist that they know exactly what happened in the creation and that God was **most certainly** absent. Perhaps one needs to sit in the other’s class. In reality, all three need to listen intently to the Word of God. It is therein that one finds truth (John 8:31-32).

When Paul dealt with the

intellectuals of his day on Mars Hill (Acts 17:22ff), he showed the foolishness of their gods. He directly portrayed their ignorance in their efforts at approaching the very subject of religion (Acts 17:23). One of the greatest impediments to their thought was their tendency to think of God like themselves (Acts 17:24-25). These are exactly the same points to press with the *intellectuals* of this age who are ignorant concerning God and feel compelled to oppose Him.

Mass media is marketing evolution and due to the caliber of its supporters the masses (including some Christians) are buying into these concepts to one degree or another. Faith must rest entirely upon the Scriptures (Rom. 10:17). One cannot claim the ways of the world and the ways of God (Jam. 4:4). Agnosticism (the belief that we cannot know) has **no** place in Christianity. God does not grant eternal life based upon the merits of the postmodern concept of “open mindedness.” Allowing for many *gods* while giving a devotion to him is never acceptable. Yet, this is what Christians attempt when they believe in “theistic evolution,” or approach doctrinal problems with the knee-jerk “we cannot know” mentality. God told man how the earth was formed and how long it took (Gen 1:1; Exo. 20:11). A person cannot

claim to be religious based merely upon an appreciation for the beauty of the Psalms.

The bottom line is that these men worship gods like unto themselves, absent-minded. These believe that some force devoid of personality, purpose, and mind invented all things. Their creator is absent-minded, and they have not a shred of evidence on which to base their conclusion. Belief in organic evolution is not according to science. The field of science is limited to that which is observable and can be reproduced. Organic evolution has never been observed and its fundamentals can never be reproduced. This is “science falsely so-called.”

While the absent-minded professor may cry that they can empirically test the product of chance evolution, they are still left with a mindless god who does not exist and whom they cannot prove. The product of a loving God who created man in His image (Gen. 1:26-27) may likewise be tested. Man does exist, some people like ice cream and some do not, but the **only** explanation for man and ice cream is the one given in Hebrews 11:3: “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”

Spring, TX

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The Bible is Powerful

Thomas B. Warren

Because it is God's Word, the Bible is able to accomplish wonderful things among men. It is able to do many things, among these are the following:

1. The Bible is God's Word and thus reveals God's will to man (2 Pet. 1:20-21). There is no one who knows anything of God's plan of salvation except what he has learned from the Bible.

2. The Bible is God's limitation for man. The apostle John said, "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God" (2 John 9). Whoever dares to believe and practice that which is not authorized by the Bible does not have God in the doing of it. The Bible has the power to limit man, to set out the boundary lines inside of which he must walk in the daily activities of his life. Consider carefully Leviticus 10:1-2.

3. The Bible is God's mirror for man. As such it enables man to see his weaknesses, to see his needs. The Bible is God's mirror: "For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth

what manner of man he was" (Jam. 1:23-24).

4. The Bible is God's seed. Thus it is able to produce children of God. Jesus said, "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). Paul said, "For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ" (Gal. 3:26-27). Men become sons of God when, through the influence of God's seed (the Word), they are baptized into Christ.

5. The Bible is God's "dynamite" (power). To the Romans, Paul said, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16). As one commentator has well said:

The gospel is God's power for saving men. God's power has been, and is, manifested in many ways for many purposes. In creating the world, he used his creative power; in saving men he uses his saving power. The power by which God saves men is his gospel. If men are saved, they will be saved by God's power. Paul was not ashamed of the gospel, for it is God's power for salvation.

6. The Bible is God's fire. The prophet Jeremiah said, "Is not my word like fire?" (Jer. 23:29). Of this

statement A. W. Streane says, "The true word of God consumes all that cannot abide the test, and breaks down the most stony resistance" (*The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*). In the same passage the prophet also indicates that the Word of God is like a **hammer** that breaks in pieces. This shows the **power** of God's Word to break the evil hearts and change the lives of men.

7. The Bible is God's sword. Paul said, "take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). The writer of Hebrews said, "For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12—KJV). The Word of God is able to slash to the depths of men's souls, to convict them of their past sins, to make clear their need for change for salvation, and to point them to the things involved in that change.

8. The Bible is food (supplied by God) for the souls of men. The apostle Peter said, "As newborn

Continued on Page 5



Notes From The Editor

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Hatcher**

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Question About the One Body

I was asked to write on the question, “Is the ‘One Body’ the ‘Church Universal,’ Which Emcompasses All of the Denominations (Eph. 4:4)? The following is my response.

The Scriptures clearly teach that there is one body. Ephesians 4:4 is one of several passages which so teaches: “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling.” In the Ephesian letter Paul uses the term body nine times. One other time he uses one body. “And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby” (Eph. 2:16). He uses the same body to connect the Gentiles with the Jews: “That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel” (Eph. 3:6). He refers to the one body by writing about the body of Christ. “The church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all... For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ... For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones” (Eph. 1:23; 4:12; 5:30). This one body—same body—the body of Christ is the church. “And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which

is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (Eph. 1:22-23; cf. Col. 1:18).

When one has a body, he also has a head. Headship denotes leadership and authority. Jesus is the head of the body, the church (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). A body does not have many heads: it has one. Thus, Jesus does not share His headship with anyone else, which goes to the heart of the question under consideration. Jesus came to this earth and built His church. “And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Mat. 16:18). As head, leader, the One with authority, He has the right to command and expect obedience.

What is a denomination? The word itself means “name, or a naming, or to designate.” Three other words which need to be considered in a discussion of the concept of a denomination are *heresy*, *sect*, and *schism*. “Heresy” and “sect” are both used to translate the Greek word *hairesis* and connote a choosing or choice. Notice what Vine says: “Denotes a choosing, choice; then that which is chosen, and hence an opinion, especially a self-willed opinion, which is substituted for submission to the power of truth and leads to division and the formation of sects” (303).

Additionally, Thayer writes:

3. that which is chosen, a chosen course of thought and action; hence one’s chosen opinion, tenet; according to the context, as opinion varying from the true exposition of the Christian faith. 4. a body of men separating themselves from others and following their own tenets. 5. dissensions arising from diversity of opinions and aims (16).

“Schism” (1 Cor. 12:25) is from the Greek *schisma* and refers to a division or rent. Vine writes, “metaphorically of the contrary condition to that which God has designed for a local church in ‘tempering the body together’ (1 Cor. 12:24)” (550). A denomination results from the combined action involved in *heresy*, *sect*, and *schism*. First, a group chooses some false belief or tenet which constitutes a heresy. Second, from this heresy a separation (a schism or division) from the truth occurs, resulting in a sect. Finally, there is a naming of the sect to designate them according to that particular tenet. We now have a denomination. When one grasps the full import of what a denomination really is and what the one body really is, he immediately understands that the one body cannot be composed of all of the denominations. Additionally, he realizes that the one body, the church, does not (yea, cannot) include any denomination.

Now let us tie these ideas together. Jesus has the right to command and expect our obedience as the head of the body, the church. A denomination has rejected the headship of Jesus by choosing its own doctrine(s) rather than submitting itself to the will of Christ. By rejecting the authority of Christ, the denominations are not a part of Christ’s body, but are bodies submitting and belonging to other *heads*. We will do well to consider some of

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Michael Hatcher, Editor

the doctrines that denominations have chosen over the doctrine of Christ. As we do so, bear in mind Jesus' statement to the Pharisees concerning the grievous error of exalting the doctrines of men over the doctrine of Christ. "Ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition... ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition... But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mat. 15:3, 6, 9).

Jesus has authorized five acts of worship to God. They are congregational singing (1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12), partaking of the Lord's Supper on each first day of the week (Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:17-34), prayer (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 14:15; 1 The. 5:17), giving or the contribution of our money (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8-9), and preaching God's Word (Acts 2:42; Acts 20:7; 2 Tim. 4:2). The denominations have changed every one of these. To the congregational singing they have added choirs, soloists, and such like so that some sing in place of others. They also added mechanical instrumental music to the worship of the church, for which there is no Scriptural authority.

In the Lord's Supper, Jesus authorized unleavened bread and fruit of the vine. However, some have gone so far as to change these elements to such things as Coke and hamburgers to please human taste. They have also changed the frequency of the Supper. The New Testament appoints the observance of the Supper on the first day of the week, which occurs every week. However, denominations will partake of their versions of the Supper at any time. First, they decided every week was too often and they changed

it to yearly, quarterly, or monthly (depending on the denomination). Instead of partaking of the Supper on the first day of the week (the only day authorized by Jesus), they have no scruples about which day of the week they observe it.

They have likewise changed the Person of the Godhead to Whom we pray. Jesus taught us to pray to the Father through His mediatorship (John 14:13; 15:16; 16:23-24,26). However, the denominations variously teach that we can pray to Mary, to Jesus, to the apostles, to departed "saints," or to a loved one.

Christ commanded the church to generate the funds it needed to do its work by the freewill offering of its members. However, the denominations have gone into various money-making enterprises (e.g., the stock market, ownership of hotels and wineries, etc.) which compete with secular businesses. Others will have cake sales, or garage/yard sales, car washes, and such like to raise money for their programs.

Regarding the preaching of the Word that Jesus commands and authorizes, man has substituted such activities as drama presentations and puppet shows. The denominations have not only changed the method, but the message, from preaching the Word to preaching a "social gospel" which emphasizes (1) man's social here-and-now needs to the neglect of his spiritual needs and (2) the ever-inadequate humanistic pop psychology tenets of egotistic self-esteemism and unrealistic positivism. However, if the denominations began to preach and follow the gospel in its purity, they would cease to exist. Denominationalism feeds on the ignorance of the people. Relative to this Robert Taylor wrote:

New Testament worship has been

corrupted by the carnal desires to have mechanical music to please the ears, the burning of incense to please the nose, the counting of beads to please the feeling process, lewd dancing to please the lustful hearts of those spiritually destitute, strip tease acts to please the sensual appetites of those who cannot even have a semblance of worship without a demonstration of feminine flesh in abundance and the substitution of Coke, hamburgers and Girl Scout Cookies to please the palates of those who have grown tired of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine (50).

Denominations who have changed the worship of God in such ways are not and cannot be a part of the one body, the church.

While we could observe many aspects of distinction between the one body and the denominations, one other area is vital in this study—the plan of salvation. How does one become a member of this body, the church? For a person to be in the body, he must first believe. Listen to what Jesus said: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). The belief required here is in the gospel, "that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:1-4). This involves belief in God (Heb. 11:6) and in Christ (John 14:1). This faith comes by hearing the Word proclaimed: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Upon his belief one is required to repent of his sins: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). One must also confess his faith in Jesus as being the Son of God: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before

my Father which is in heaven” (Mat. 10:32). Finally, he must be immersed in water for the purpose God designed—the remission/ forgiveness of sins: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16). Upon submitting to God’s plan of salvation, the Lord adds him to His church, the one body (Acts 2:36-47).

The denominations have rejected the headship of Christ by rejecting this simple plan which the Son of God appointed and empowered for man’s salvation. By rejecting this plan they never enter into the body of Christ. “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:13). Baptism, the act which places one into the body, is the one act of the five documented above which the denominations have all but universally rejected.

The denominations have rejected the headship of Jesus, choosing their own doctrines instead of submitting themselves to the doctrine of Christ. As such they do not have God. “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son” (2 John 9). Choosing their own doctrines and names, they have constituted themselves denominations and, as such, they are in opposition to the one body, the church, that Jesus established.

Before leaving this point we need to briefly consider some of the passages the denominations misuse to support their claim that all of the denominations make up the one body. The three principal passages

are John 15:1-6; Rom. 12:4-5; and 1 Cor. 12:12-27. In John 15 Jesus uses a vine and its branches to illustrate the intimate and vital relationship between Himself and certain others. Denominationalism correctly identifies Jesus as the vine (John 15:1, 5), but then erroneously avers that the branches are the differing denominations. However, Jesus states that “ye are the branches” (John 15:5). Not even the church (much less the denominations that were to arise centuries later) had been established when He uttered these words! “Ye” (i.e., the branches), rather than referring to differing religious groups, refers to individuals (to the apostles in particular) in this context. John 15:5-6 further demonstrate that Jesus is applying these words to individuals and not to denominations when He says, “He that abideth in me” and “if a man abideth not in me.”

In Romans 12:4-5 Paul writes, “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.” Here the denominations claim that the “many members” are denominations. However, the context clearly shows that Paul is (as is Jesus in John 15) discussing individuals, not distinctive religious groups. His address is to “brethren” who, as individuals, are to offer their physical bodies with renewed, transformed minds unto God (John 15:1-2). The instruction is to “every man that is among you” (John 15:3). Then in John 15:6-8 he discusses the differing gifts that had been given to various men, not to conflicting denominations.

Paul is discussing the proper and improper uses of miraculous gifts in 1 Corinthians 12-14. Again, even a

cursory study of the context shows that this material deals with individuals within a local congregation, not with various denominations claiming to belong to the one church. Paul teaches that the membership at Corinth constituted the body (1 Cor. 12:27). The body of Christ in Corinth was made up of all of the members of the one church, not all of the denominations of the city! Each member fits together with the others to make up the body. In 1 Cor. 12:25 Paul writes, “That there should be no schism in the body.” Yet the denominations, by their very nature, are divided in numerous ways and thus could not be the “members” of this passage. The nearest thing to denominationalism that one can find in the New Testament is in Corinth. Brethren were lining up behind various preachers (i.e., Paul, Apollos, and Peter) and were apparently on the verge of division (1 Cor. 1:12-13). Paul pleads with all of his might that they will repent of such folly and “all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Cor. 1:10). He later labeled such behavior as carnal and childish (1 Cor. 3:1-4).

The defining point in all of these passages (as mentioned above) is that no denominations existed in the first century! Denominationalism did not come into existence until centuries later. Jesus came to build His church (Mat. 16:18), not the denominations. Thus, there is no way that Jesus or Paul (in writing by the Spirit) could have had denominations in mind in what they spoke and/or wrote.

Additionally, the seed/harvest principle is contrary to the idea that denominational churches are being included in these passages.

A universal, axiomatic law is that seed produces after (and only after) its kind (Gal. 6:7). Christ is the vine, therefore the branches must be Christians only. Christ is the head, so His body (the one church) must be composed only of Christians. Christ, through His Word (the seed of the kingdom, Luke 8:11), does

not produce Baptists, Methodists, Catholics, Mormons, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Nazarenes, or any other denomination. Christ built/produced the church of Christ (Mat. 16:18; Rom. 16:16).

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Continued from Page 1
babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Pet. 2:2—KJV). Just as God has provided **physical** food for our **physical bodies** so He has provided **spiritual** food for our **souls**. That food is the Word of God—the Bible.

9. The Bible is God's light for man. The Psalmist said, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, And light unto my path" (Psa. 119:105). Without the light of God's Word, man would be in darkness. He would neither understand his lost and undone condition nor know what to do about it. Christians are to "shine as lights in the world" by "holding forth the word of life" (Phi. 2:15-16).

10. The Bible is God's warner. To Timothy, Paul said, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2—KJV). It is God's will that men should use the Bible in order to warn themselves and others of the fate of the rebellious wicked (Acts 2:36-41; Rev. 20:10-15; 2 The. 1:7-9).

11. The Bible is God's exhorter. God intends that men should be persuaded by the Bible to walk in pathways of righteousness (2 Pet. 1:5-11; Psa. 119:11) in order that they may gain "a hundredfold now in this time... and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark 10:29-30).

12. The Bible is God's basis of judgment. Jesus said, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day" (John 12:48). To the Athenians the apostle Paul said:

The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead (Acts 17:30-31).

As surely as God has raised our Lord from the dead, so He will call each of us unto judgment to give an account of how we have used our lives here on this earth. The basis of that judgment will be His Word. He will judge us by His Son, and to judge us by His Son is to judge us by the Word of the Son, which is the Gospel.

To say that the Bible is inspired is to say that the words of the Bible are the words of **God** (1 Cor. 2:9-13; 2 Pet. 1:20-21). To say that the words of the Bible are the words of God is to say that everything the Bible teaches is true and can be trusted completely. This is the case because God cannot lie (Tit. 1:2; Heb. 6:13-20). God's Word cannot

be broken (Mat. 5:18; 24:35; Luke 16:17; John 10:35)—the Word of **God** abides forever (1 Pet. 1:22-25). Because God cannot tell that which is not true, **the Bible** cannot tell that which is not true. To say that God can be trusted completely is to say that **the Bible** can be trusted completely! Since this is the case, then it is also the case that whatever the Bible teaches to be true actually is true.

The apostles laid hands on other men, that they might receive miraculous power from the Holy Spirit, thus becoming prophets, with the power to reveal the Word of God by inspiration (Eph. 3:5; 1 Cor. 2:12-14; Acts 8). For a time the Word of God was in inspired men, who were able to infallibly preach the Gospel of Christ. With the passing of time, these men (the apostles and prophets) wrote the various books of the New Testament. The Word of God was then in the inspired book (Eph. 3:5; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Today, there are no inspired men: there is no one who has any **miraculous** gift of the Holy Spirit—today, we have the inspired **Book**, the Bible, and no religious act is pleasing to God which is not authorized by that book (2 John 9-11; Rev. 22:18-19).

This truth was recognized as authoritative by the early church. They obeyed this truth in **becoming**

Christians (Acts 2:14-41). They then **lived** their daily lives in harmony with that truth (Acts 2:42-47). They recognized that any action not authorized by that truth was sinful (Gal. 1:6-9; 2 John 9-11; Rev. 22:18-19).

Not only is the Bible authoritative; it is also **sufficient** (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Jam. 1:25; 1 Cor. 13:10). There is thus no need for any further revelation (Jude 3; Rev. 22:18-19). Men must learn not to go beyond the things which are written (1 Cor. 4:6). Among other things, the Bible is sufficient to teach man (1) what to do to **become** a Christian, and (2) how to **live** the Christian life, including all Christian work and

worship. Since no man can be pleasing to God unless he does what **the Bible authorizes** (whether it be a matter which is **obligatory** or is merely **optional**) another important question is **how** does the Bible authorize?

Due to the author's desire to be as brief as possible on this matter in this book the technical details as to **how** the Bible authorizes will not be discussed here.

The crucial thing to note here is: (1) to reject Biblical authority is to reject Christianity, (2) to reject Christianity is to reject Jesus Christ, and (3) to reject Jesus Christ is to reject the only way of salvation from sin which exists (Acts 4:12; John

3:3-5; 2 The. 1:7-9; Rev. 20:10-15; 22:18-19, 2 John 9-11). No man who rejects the inspiration, the inerrancy, the all-sufficiency, and the authority of the Bible can be regarded rightly as a faithful child of God, no matter how sincere and religious he may be (Mat. 7:13-23).

The Bible **is** the Word of God, and Christianity is **the** religion of Biblical authority.

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Attitude Toward False Teachers

William S. Cline

God has always had to deal with the false teacher. From the early morning of time there has been the **false** doctrine to counteract the **true** doctrine of God. God told Adam and Eve **not** to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but the devil said they should **eat** and become as God. The next few thousands of years of man's history reads like a broken record. God has given **truth** by which man was to be governed but the devil and his angels have sought to allure men away from God with **false doctrine**.

When Peter wrote his second epistle he was concerned with false teachers in the church. In chapter two he gave a scathing rebuke of those false teachers and told what their end would be—eternal destruction. We wonder if we cannot learn from Peter or Paul or James or Jude or many in the Old Testa-

ment who set the **trumpet** to their **mouth** or the **pen** to their **hand** and denounced the sins of the false teachers.

A tendency of men is to be tolerant of those who advocate new ideas and doctrines until they have been tested by the masses. In the religious world, which is woefully divided, we see such tolerance in the existence of more than 300 separate religious organizations. Within the Lord's church we have not done much better! False teachers have reared their ugly heads and we have been **slow** in denouncing them. An advocate of "**love and understanding**" cries that we must give them time. But we would ask, "Time for what?" Time to subvert whole houses? Time to divide churches? Time to lead multitudes away from the Lord?

While the Christian is to mani-

fest love and understanding, he is also to manifest **diligence**, **vigilance**, and **militance** against the false teachers and their doctrines. Did not Paul tell Titus that the mouths of the false teachers **must** be stopped?

God hates the false teacher and every false way. "The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity" (Psa. 5:5). If the child of God is to be like God in his attitude toward false doctrine then he must hate that doctrine. "Therefore I esteem all *thy* precepts *concerning* all *things* to be right; *and* I hate every false way" (Psa. 119:128). The great apostle Paul, the one who manifested such love, concern and compassion toward all men, especially his own brethren, denounced the Judaizing teachers in Galatia with his arresting statement, "I wish those who unsettle you would mutilate them-

selves! (Gal. 5:12—RSV). Thus we can see why Paul said that anyone who taught false doctrine was to be accursed (Gal. 1:6-9). Men of God were **never slow** to denounce error and neither should we. It is a mark of ungodliness to allow error to have free course. J. Sidlow Baxter, a denominational Bible scholar, writes, “When easy-going kindness

lounges in the place of righteous indignation, and allows Christ dishonouring false doctrine to play havoc inside the Church, kindness has ceased to be Christian, it has become disguised disloyalty, camouflaged cowardice, and a moral wasting disease.”

We should always seek to convert the false teacher from the error

of his way so that his soul can be saved in the day of the Lord, but at the same time, if conversion is not possible, we should manifest the attitude of the Lord and set our face against them that do evil, for the Lord hates every false way. It is time for the church to **LOVE the truth** and **HATE the error**.

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