

Psm. 11:3

# Baptists For Liberty

Prov. 29:2

*"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,  
and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Gal. 5:1*

## NEWS LETTER

Issue #11

September 2013, I

Monthly Verse: *"Before the LORD; for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity."*

- Psalms 98:9

### **"Traditions"**

by Bro. Todd Bryant

*"Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, 'If You are willing, You can make me clean.' Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, 'I am willing; be cleansed'" - Mark 1:40-41*

I have often heard this passage referenced. Without doubt, this is a great miracle. This man, a leper, was a perfect picture of the sinfulness of the natural man. Leprosy was a horribly atrocious disease. The attitude of the people towards leprosy was much like our attitude towards AIDS 25 years ago – when people were afraid to go to the dentist or a public bathroom. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we felt the same way about sin today?

Jesus was the perfect remedy for this man! He knew of Christ's ability to heal him. He firmly believed if the Lord was willing, He could heal him of his leprosy. How wondrous that Jesus was both able and willing! Only through the work of Jesus Christ can sinners be healed today! In a nutshell, that is the way I've heard the passage explained. And, there's nothing wrong with that explanation. It's all true and worthy of meditation. But, there is much more here than that. Go back in your mind and think of how the people felt about leprosy. Jesus understood this. Surely, people had avoided this man for a long time. Most likely, few religious folk had any compassion for this man. All they knew is they didn't want to be considered unclean by accidentally coming into contact with him.

But, what did Jesus do? Knowing how the religious folks would view Him if he came into contact with this leper, our text says specifically that Jesus "stretched out His hand and touched him". At this moment, all of the religious people of the day declared Jesus to be unclean. The Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Scribes wrote Him off immediately! But, Jesus wasn't concerned about their religious tradition. He gave this man exactly what he needed – a healing touch.

Don't misunderstand here, the touch was not necessary. We often see Jesus healing by word alone. Jesus even healed some when He wasn't anywhere near them (Luke 7:1-10). The Lord could have saved Himself of a bit of persecution by doing the same in this situation. But, Christ didn't concern Himself with religious tradition, but with truth! Where are you? Are you merely following the religious tradition of your parents? Are you only doing what you've always seen done? Is your religious desire nothing more than a desire to please the brethren? None of this is pleasing to the Lord (Mark 7:9, 13). Tradition does not equal truth. The "old paths" are not necessarily what you've always seen done. The "old paths" are found in God's Holy Word!

Children of God, let us endeavor to please God alone. Let us not be concerned with only the motions of religion. Pray that God will give us a heart to approach Him in both worship and service!

### **"Equality"**

**It would seem everyone wants equality, so it has to be a good thing right? It's only fair that there's equality right? And if we don't have equality that's bad, and we should demand to have equality in all things; yes, no, maybe?**

**However there are things that just are not the same or equal, such as Traditions vs Jesus complete work on the cross for the saving of sins, so what do the scriptures say?**

**That's our thought for this issue and hope to answer some of your questions on this subject if you ever had any before, give you food for thought on some of those areas in life & politics that are effected by the concept of equality.**

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## Sermon: "Religious Equality"

by Bro. Melburn Cockrell



**I Samuel 30:24** "For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike."

Read verses 21-25 "And David came to the two hundred men, which were so faint that they could not follow David, whom they had made also to abide at the brook Besor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that were with him: and when David came near to the people, he saluted them. Then answered all the wicked men and men of Belial, of those that went with David, and said, Because they went not with us, we will not give them ought of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead them away, and depart. Then said David, Ye shall not do so, my brethren, with that which the LORD hath given us, who hath preserved us, and delivered the company that came against us into our hand. For who will hearken unto you in this matter? but as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike. And it was so from that day forward, that he made it a statute and an ordinance for Israel unto this day."

All the Lord's people do not have the same work to perform. They differ in office, talents, opportunities, exertions, and trials. Some need courage, others patience; some energy, others prudence. Some go down to battle, others tarry with the stuff. Some are called to act offensively, others defensively.

### **I. THE SIN OF SELFISHNESS (v. 22).**

1. These men of Belial were very covetous and greedy of gain.
2. All seek their own, and often more than their own.
3. They would give the 200 men their wives and children, but not their estates.
4. They would be fed to the full while their brethren could starve.
5. David reminds them God has given them the victory and the booty (v. 23).
  - (1) Men are only stewards (not absolute owners) of property, ability, time, and talents.
  - (2) See Matthew 10:8; Acts 10:35; I Tim. 6:18.
6. David enacted a law (v. 25; Ps. 68:12) in line with the law of Moses (Num. 31:27).

### **II. ALL BELIEVERS ARE EQUALLY GOD'S SERVANTS AND HAVE THEIR PROPER WORK.**

1. The equality of Christ's kingdom is that of oneness of spirit, aim, and relationship to Christ.
2. We are to be zealous of Christ's supremacy and eager to see Him triumph over the powers of evil.

3. We are all workers and warriors using our power and position for a common issue.
4. Our position and talents differ (I Cor. 12:4-27)
  - (1) Not all are apostles, prophets, missionaries, or pastors.
  - (2) This recognition of diversity should stimulate and encourage us all.
  - (3) All are to exert themselves according to their capacity and means (I Cor. 3:4-8; II Cor. 8:12).
5. God distributes positions, privileges, and abilities according to His sovereign will (I Cor. 12:11).
6. No person is sufficient of himself for all emergencies and independent of the help of others.

### **III. GOD EXPECTS MORE FROM SOME THAN OTHERS.**

1. In the ceremonial law God required more from the rich than the poor (Lev. 12:2, 6, 8; Luke 2:23-24).
2. Some have a greater responsibility (Luke 12:48) and a more severe judgment (Jas. 3:1).
3. God expects more fruit from the trees He bestows the most time and labor on. Those who don't produce are removed (Isa. 5:1-6).
4. We are to be faithful over what we have (Matt. 25:19-23).
5. A penalty is affixed to the non-use of abilities, both in nature and grace.
  - (1) The man who refuses to use his arm will lose it.
  - (2) Those who do not use their moral faculties in the service of God will lose them (Matt. 25:28-29).
  - (3) All things gain strength by exercise, and lose strength by non-use.

### **IV. WE MUST KEEP OUR PLACE AND POSITION (Jud. 7:21).**

1. We must not try to do what God has assigned others.
2. David wanted to build God a house.
3. Today many are out of place. Women want to be men, children want to be adults, men want to be women, and women want to be preachers.
4. Do what you can according to your ability.

### **V. WHERE THERE IS LOYAL SERVICE, WHATEVER ITS LOWLY FORM, THERE IS TO BE HONORABLE RECOGNITION.**

1. David did not overlook the feeble men in charge of the stuff (Josh. 22:8).
2. The widow's mite and the hosannas of the children will be remembered---people who let Paul down the wall in a basket---those who hid Moses.
3. Even a cup of cold water (Matt. 10:42).
4. What would ministers be without the support of their church? Missionaries? Consider the worth of godly mothers who train their children. Fathers who order their home well and live godly before the world. People who pray in private.

### **CONCLUSION**

1. Be respectful of those who have abilities which you do not possess. Let them do what God has assigned them.
2. Let us do our best for Christ (Mark 14:8)---serve our generation---have a testimony that we pleased God.
3. The excellency of the believer is not his station, or the splendor of his calling, but his faithfulness to the duties God has assigned him.

**Family Resources:** Update on the Family resource center in Irvine Kentucky that we first wrote about in our February issue as one of our Labor in love columns, Sis Karen Burford replied to our enquiry - "As with any new undertaking, there were many unanticipated delays. We are still waiting for our non-profit status to go through, and need to have our volunteer training. There are about a million other little things to do, but they'll get done."

For the blessings, we have a building donated rent-free by a local church! And we've been given plenty of baby clothes and toys to get our Baby Boutique started. A local bank remodeled their offices and donated some office furniture. Our first big fundraiser was the Bottles of Blessings campaign. We asked participating local churches to pass out empty bottles on Mother's Day to be filled with spare change, and returned on Father's Day. We had great participation and raised over \$12,000!!!!!! That was a huge boost, and allowed us to purchase much of the Earn While You Learn curriculum we will be using with our clients.

God has been blessing this mightily, and we are hoping to open the doors and start sharing the Gospel and hope with mothers in a crisis pregnancy by November. We pray God will use our efforts to save the lives of unborn babies.

Our most immediate needs are regular monthly support, approval of our non-profit status, and lots and lots of prayer. Without that, we can do nothing."

**Syria:** Likely the biggest story of the month of August and much of September is the "civil war" in Syria and what role the USA will have, and has had already. Bellow is an open letter to the president by several members of congress.

August 28, 2013  
The President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,  
We strongly urge you to consult and receive authorization from Congress before ordering the use of U.S. military force in Syria. Your responsibility to do so is prescribed in the Constitution and the War Powers Resolution of 1973.

While the Founders wisely gave the Office of the President the authority to act in emergencies, they foresaw the need to ensure public debate – and the active engagement of Congress – prior to committing U.S. military assets. Engaging our military in Syria when no direct threat to the United States exists and without prior congressional authorization would violate the separation of powers that is clearly delineated in the Constitution.

Mr. President, in the case of military operations in Libya you stated that authorization from Congress was not required because our military was not engaged in "hostilities." In addition, an April 1, 2011, memorandum to you from your Office of Legal Counsel concluded:

"...President Obama could rely on his constitutional power to safeguard the national interest by directing the anticipated military operations in Libya—which were limited in their nature, scope, and duration—without prior congressional authorization."

We view the precedent this opinion sets, where "national interest" is

enough to engage in hostilities without congressional authorization, as unconstitutional. If the use of 221 Tomahawk cruise missiles, 704 Joint Direct Attack Munitions, and 42 Predator Hellfire missiles expended in Libya does not constitute "hostilities," what does?

If you deem that military action in Syria is necessary, Congress can reconvene at your request. We stand ready to come back into session, consider the facts before us, and share the burden of decisions made regarding U.S. involvement in the quickly escalating Syrian conflict.

Sincerely,

Rep. Scott Rigell (VA-02), Rep. Matt Salmon (AZ-05), Rep. Mo Brooks (AL-05)  
Rep. Scott Garrett (NJ-05), Rep. Tom McClintock (CA-04)  
Rep. Tom Marino (PA-10), Rep. Dan Benishek (MI-01)  
Rep. Tom Rooney (FL-17) Rep. Steve Pearce (NM-02) Rep. Tim Griffin (AR-02)  
Rep. Justin Amash (MI-03) Rep. Raul Labrador (ID-01)  
Rep. Joseph Pitts (PA-16) Rep. Trent Franks (AZ-08)  
Rep. John Campbell (CA-45) Rep. Paul Gosar (AZ-04)  
Rep. Lynn Westmoreland (GA-03) Rep. Joe Wilson (SC-02)  
Rep. Charles Boustany (LA-03) Rep. Tom Cole (OK-04)  
Rep. Louie Gohmert (TX-01) Rep. Austin Scott (GA-08)  
Rep. Bill Posey (FL-08) Rep. Randy Forbes (VA-04)  
Rep. Phil Gingrey (GA-11) Rep. David Roe (TN-01)  
Rep. Mark Sanford (SC-01) Rep. John J. Duncan, Jr. (TN-02)  
Rep. Reid Ribble (WI-08) Rep. James Lankford (OK-05)  
Rep. Bill Cassidy (LA-06) Rep. Stephen Fincher (TN-08)  
Rep. Trey Radel (FL-19) Rep. Chris Stewart (UT-02)  
Rep. Lynn Jenkins (KS-02) Rep. Jeff Duncan (SC-03)  
Rep. David McKinley (WV-01) Rep. Gus Bilirakis (FL-12)  
Rep. Joseph Heck (NV-03) Rep. Dennis Ross (FL-15)  
Rep. Billy Long (MO-07) Rep. Randy Hultgren (IL-14)  
Rep. Steven Palazzo (MS-04) Rep. Kevin Yoder (KS-03)  
Rep. Doug Collins (GA-09) Rep. Michael Fitzpatrick (PA-08)  
*Rep. Beto O'Rourke (TX-16)* *Rep. Zoe Lofgren (CA-19)*  
*Rep. Peter DeFazio (OR-04)* *Rep. Kurt Schrader (OR-5)*  
*Rep. Rush Holt (NJ-12)* *Rep. William Enyart (IL-12)*  
*Rep. Timothy Walz (MN-01)* Rep. Christopher Gibson (NY-19)  
Rep. Trey Gowdy (SC-04) Rep. Frank Wolf (VA-10)  
*Rep. Michael Capuano (MA-07)* Rep. Michael Simpson (ID-02)  
Rep. Michael McCaul (TX-10) Rep. Thomas E. Petri (WI-06)  
Rep. Robert Pittenger (NC-09) Rep. Walter Jones (NC-03)  
Rep. Tom Latham (IA-03) *Rep. Richard Nolan (MN-08)*  
*Rep. Jim McDermott (WA-07)* Rep. Kerry Bentivolio (MI-11)  
Rep. Mike Coffman (CO-06) Rep. Sean Duffy (WI-07)  
*Rep. Bruce Braley (IA-01)* Rep. Morgan Griffith (VA-09)  
Rep. Brad Wenstrup (OH-02) Rep. Mark Amodei (NV-02)  
Rep. Roger Williams (TX-25) Rep. Doug LaMalfa (CA-01)  
Rep. Brett Guthrie (KY-02) *Rep. Sam Farr (CA-20)*  
Rep. Steve Daines (MT-At Large) Rep. Robert Hurt (VA-05)  
Rep. Steve Southerland, II (FL-2) Rep. Michele Bachmann (MN-06)  
Rep. Ralph Hall (TX-04) Rep. Randy Neugebauer (TX-19)  
Rep. Robert Wittman (VA-01) *Rep. Anna Eshoo (CA-18)*  
Rep. David Schweikert (AZ-06) Rep. Todd Rokita (IN-4)  
*Rep. David Loebsack (IA-02)* Rep. Scott Tipton (CO-03)  
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Rep. Alan Nunnelee (MS-01) Rep. Jason Smith (MO-08)  
Rep. Charles Fleischmann (TN-03) Rep. Tim Walberg (MI-07)  
Rep. Marsha Blackburn (TN-07) *Rep. Collin Peterson (MN-7)*

## *“Losing our burden in Jesus”*

by Bro. Todd Bryant

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” – Matthew 11:28-30

This world is full of burdens. In fact, oftentimes life itself becomes extremely burdensome simply by the monotony. “Eat – sleep – work” seems to be what life is about sometimes. Add sin to the equation, and problems arise. Anguish in the soul leads many to the edge of despair. Many seek out drugs, alcohol or other sinful acts to help alleviate some bit of stress – to escape the hustle and bustle of life. Some finally arrive at the point of believing suicide is the only way out. Yes, life is often full of problems because we are all sinners.

And yet, true rest is to be found in this life. Though the natural man has no interest in the things of God (1 Corinthians 2:14), the promise of rest is still clearly offered in the person of Jesus Christ. Man’s inability and lack of desire do not negate the blessed promise of rest in Jesus.

Children of God could line up and give testimony after testimony of the times the Lord has given help in times of need. When the world has often supplied the lemons, God has often made lemonade for His own. In this life, it is impossible to completely avoid trials and tribulations. Those that preach “health and wealth” must have never read that Jesus was “a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isaiah 53:3). They must never have studied the lives of the apostles and how 11 of them died as martyrs. None of the early churches enjoyed the “health and wealth” often promoted today. They were real people with real problems. And yet, they found refuge in Christ.

Children of God are not immune to problems. If Jesus had “sorrows” and “griefs”, certainly we can expect the same. Yet, the way we face these problems can certainly be varied. If we look to ourselves or to this world for help, we will be sorely disappointed. However, there is rest in Jesus and His work. Greater than rest from the problems of this world, in Christ alone can we find rest for a soul wearied by sin. Jesus is the only Way to God (John 14:6). Trying to seek God any other way will always end in despair and disappointment.

Child of God, rest in Jesus. Rest in His finished work on the cross. Serve Him with zeal because He completed the payment required for your sins. Seek refuge from Him when life throws you curves. Take a moment today to thank God for the rest He has freely given you in His Son.

## *“That’s Not Fair”*

by Bro. Timothy Works



Matthew 20:1-16 (Parable of the Laborers)

*“For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in*

*the marketplace, And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.”*

We were taught that word, fair, as children and in turn have taught it to our own children. We see “fairness” as a virtue! However, in child like simplicity we think everything should be “fair” or we cry “foul”!

Fair- frankness, honesty, impartiality, just.

Synonyms: Just, equitable, impartial, unbiased, dispassionate, objective.

Also in child like simplicity of understanding we tend to miss apply the concept of “equal” to fair.

As in our text – equal pay for equal work, however what is just or right? Just how does the term Fair or equal apply here?

One lesson from our text:

Does not each man have the right to do with his own that which pleases him? If each man has that right and is free to exercise that right is that not “fair”?

Ought not each man to be free to be generous with his own substance if he so chooses?

(Parable of the two brothers, Luke 15:11-32)

Did not the father have the right to rejoice and to be generous with his younger son? Was he unfair as his older son complained?

12 year old Bobby got a paper route, he got up early and delivered papers and earned \$5 on his way home he stopped at the store and bought a pop & candy bar. Was that fair? Was that fair?

Now Bobby has a younger brother 6 years old Johnny was it fair that Bobby got a pop & candy bar but Johnny did not? What’s different?

God is sovereign over his creation! It is the labor and work of his hands. All that he does is just right & good.

Psalm 25:8 "Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way."  
 Psalm 34:8 "O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."  
 Proverbs 1:3 "To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;"  
 Proverbs 2:9 "Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path."

This is a fact! An anchor point for our understanding and reasoning.  
 God has a purpose for each one of us and he has made us as it has pleased him.

We state as as foundational truth that all men are created "equal." However it is certain that all men are not the same! Equal does not mean the same!

Socialism wants every body to be the same (equally poor & miserable) except for the ruling elite.  
 Capitalism says that each one is free to pursue opportunity and do with his own as he chooses.(as the LORD wills)- under God.

Socialism seeks to replace God with man and regulate opportunity to make it fair- man does not have equal opportunity- redistribution of wealth is not fair though it pretends to be.

I would rather trust God to give opportunity & blessing to me than man. God gives in balanced measure:  
 Burden – Strength  
 Trial- Faith  
 Each has weaknesses & strengths together we compliment one another.

"Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is 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. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased

him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it."

I Corinthians 12:4-26

### Historical Marker

#### "Advanced Thinkers"

by C. H. Spurgeon  
 From the November 1871  
 Sword and Trowel



SOME animals make up for their natural weakness by their activity and audacity; they are typical of a certain order of men. Assumption goes a long way with many, and, when pretensions are vociferously made and incessantly intruded, they always secure a measure of belief. Men who affect to be of dignified rank, and superior family, and who, therefore, hold their heads high above the *canaille*, manage to secure a measure of homage from those who cannot see beneath the surface. There has by degrees risen up in this country a coterie, more than ordinarily pretentious, whose favorite cant is made up of such terms as these: "liberal views," "men of high culture," "persons of enlarged minds and cultivated intellects," "bonds of dogmatism and the slavery of creeds," "modern thought," and so on. That these gentlemen are not so thoroughly educated as they fancy themselves to be, is clear from their incessant boasts of their culture; that they are not free, is shrewdly guessed from their loud brags of liberty; and that they are not liberal, but intolerant to the last degree, is evident, from their superciliousness towards those poor simpletons who abide by the old faith. Jews in old times called Gentiles dogs, and Mahometans cursed unbelievers roundly; but we question whether any men, in any age, have manifested such contempt of others as is constantly evidenced towards the orthodox by the modern school of "cultured intellects." Let half a word of protest be uttered by a man who believes firmly in something, and holds by a defined doctrine, and the thunders of liberality bellow forth against the bigot. Steeped up to their very throats in that bigotry for liberality, which, of all others, is the most ferocious form of intolerance, they sneer with the contempt of affected learning at the idiots who contend for "a narrow Puritanism," and express a patronizing hope that the benighted adherents of "a half-enlightened creed" may learn more of "that charity which thinketh no evil." To contend earnestly for the faith once

delivered to the saints is to them an offense against the enlightenment of the nineteenth century; but, to vamp old, worn-out heresies, and pass them off for deep thinking, is to secure a high position among minds "emancipated from the fetters of traditional beliefs."

Manliness and moral courage are the attributes in which they consider themselves to excel, and they are constantly asserting that hundreds of ministers see with them, but dare not enunciate their views, and so continue to preach one thing and believe another. It may be so here and there, and the more is the cause for sorrow; but we are not sure of the statement, for the accusers themselves may, after all, fancy that they see in others what is really in themselves. The glass in their own houses should forbid their throwing stones. If they were straightforward themselves, they might call others to account; but, in too many cases, their own policy savors of the serpent in a very high degree. The charge could not be fairly brought against all, but it can be proven against many, that they have fought the battles of liberality, not with the broad sword of honest men, but with the cloak and dagger of assassins. They have occupied positions which could not be reconciled with their beliefs, and have clung to them with all the tenacity with which limpets adhere to rocks. Their testimony has, in some cases, been rendered evidently worthless, from the fact that with all their outcry against orthodoxy, they did their best to eat the bread of the orthodox, and would still have continued to profess, and yet to assail, orthodox opinions had they been permitted to do so. Whether this is honest is doubtful: that it is not manly is certain.

These gentlemen of culture have certainly adopted peculiar tactics. The misbelievers and unbelievers of former ages withdrew themselves from churches as soon as they found out they could not honestly endorse their fundamental articles; but these abide by the stuff, and great is their indignation at the creeds which render their position morally dubious. Churches have no right to believe anything; comprehensiveness is the only virtue of a denomination; precise definitions are a sin, and fundamental doctrines are a myth: this is the notion of "our foremost men." For earnest people to band themselves together to propagate what they hold to be the very truth of God, is in their eyes the miserable endeavor of bigots to stem the torrent of modern thought; for zealous Christians to contribute of their substance for the erection of a house, in which only the truths most surely believed among them shall be inculcated, is a treason against liberality; while the attempt to secure our pulpits against downright error, is a mischievous piece of persecution to be resented by all "intellectual" men. The proper course, according to their "broad views," would be to leave doctrines for the dunces who care for them. Truths there are none, but only opinions; and, therefore, cultivated ministers should be left free to trample on the most cherished beliefs, to insult convictions, no matter how long experience may have matured them, and to teach anything, everything, or nothing, as their own culture, or the current of enlightened thought may direct them. If certain old fogies object to this, let them turn out of the buildings they have erected, or subside into silence under a due sense of their inferiority.

It appears to be, now-a-days, a doubtful question whether Christian men have a right to be quite sure of anything. The Jesuit argument that some learned doctor or other has taught a certain doctrine, and that, therefore, it has some probability, is now practically prevalent. He who teaches an extravagant error is a fine, generous spirit: and, therefore, to condemn his teaching is perilous, and will certainly produce an outcry against your bigotry. Where the atonement is virtually denied, it is said that a preacher is a very clever man, and exceedingly good; and, therefore, even to whisper that he is unsound is libelous: we are assured that it would be far better to honor him for his courage in scorning to be hampered by conventional expressions. Besides, it is only his way of putting it, and the radical idea is discoverable by cultured minds. As to

other doctrines, they are regarded as too trivial to be worthy of controversy, the most of them being superseded by the advancement of science and other forms of progressive enlightenment.

The right to doubt is claimed clamorously, but the right to believe is not conceded. The modern gospel runs thus: "He that believes nothing and doubts everything shall be saved." Room must be provided for every form of skepticism; but, for old-fashioned faith, a manger in a stable is too commodious. Magnified greatly is the so-called "honest doubter," but the man who holds tenaciously by ancient forms of faith is among "men of culture" voted by acclamation a fool. Hence, it becomes a sacred duty of the advanced thinker to sneer at the man of the creed, a duty which is in most cases fully discharged; and, moreover, it is equally imperative upon him to enter the synagogue of bigots, as though he were of their way of thinking, and in their very midst inveigh against their superstition, their ignorant contentedness with worm-eaten dogmas, and generally to disturb and overturn their order of things. What if they have confessions of faith? They have no right to accept them, and, therefore, let them be held up to ridicule. Men, now-a-days, occupy pulpits with the tacit understanding that they will uphold certain doctrines, and from those very pulpits they assail the faith they are pledged to defend. The plan is not to secede, but to operate from within, to worry, to insinuate, to infect. Within the walls of Troy, one Greek is worth half Agamemnon's host; let, then, the wooden horse of liberality be introduced by force or art, as best may serve the occasion. Talking evermore right boastfully of their candor and hatred of the hollowness of creeds, etc., they will remain members of churches long after they have renounced the basis of union upon which these churches are constituted. Yes, and worse; the moment they are reminded of their inconsistency they whine about being persecuted, and imagine themselves to be martyrs. If a person, holding radical sentiments, insisted upon being a member of a Conservative club, he would meet with small sympathy if the members would not allow him to remain among them, and use their organization as a means for overthrowing their cherished principles. It is a flagrant violation of liberty of conscience when a man intrudes himself into a church with which he does not agree, and demands to be allowed to remain there, and undermine its principles. Conscience he evidently has none himself; or he would not ignore his own principles by becoming an integral part of a body holding tenets which he despises; but he ought to have some honor in him as a man, and act honestly, even to the bigots whom he so greatly pities, by warring with them in fair and open battle. If a Calvinist should join a community like the Wesleyans, and should claim a right to teach Calvinism from their platforms, his expulsion would be a vindication, and not a violation, of liberty. If it be demanded that in such matters we respect the man's independence of thought, we reply that we respect it so much that we would not allow him to fetter it by a false profession, but we do not respect it, to such a degree that we would permit him to ride rough shod over all others, and render the very existence of organized Christianity impossible. We would not limit the rights of the lowest ruffian, but if he claims to enter our bed-chamber the case is altered; by his summary expulsion we may injure his highly-cultured feelings and damage his broad views, but we claim in his ejection to be advocating, rather than abridging, the rights of man. Conscience, indeed! What means it in the mouth of a man who attacks the creed of a church and yet persists in continuing in it? He would blush to use the term conscience if he had any, for he is insulting the conscience of all the true members by his impertinent intrusion. Our pity is reserved for the honest people who have the pain and trouble of ejecting the disturber with the ejected one, we have no sympathy; he had no business there, and, had he been a true man, he would not have desired to remain, nor would he even have submitted to do so had he been solicited.

This is most illiberal talk in the judgment of our liberal friends, and they will rail at it in their usual liberal manner; it is, however, plain common

sense, as all can see but those who are willfully blind. While we are upon the point, it may be well to inquire into the character of the liberality which is, now-a-days, so much vaunted. What is it that these men would have us handle so liberally? Is it something which is our own, and left at our disposal? If so, let generosity be the rule. But no, it is God's truth which we are thus to deal with, the gospel which he has put us in trust with, and for which we shall have to render account. The steward who defrauded his lord was liberal; so was the thief who shared the plunder with his accomplice; and so were those in the Proverbs, who said, "let us all have one purse." If truth were ours, absolutely; if we created it, and had no responsibilities in reference to it, we might consider broad-church proposals; but, the gospel is the Lord's own, and we are only stewards of the manifold grace of God, and of stewards it is not so much required that they be liberal, but that they be found faithful. Moreover, this form of charity is both useless and dangerous. *Useless*, evidently, because all the agreements and unions and compromises beneath the moon can never make an error a truth, nor shift the boundary-line of God's gospel a single inch. If we basely merge one part of Scriptural teaching for the sake of charity, it is not, therefore, really merged, it will bide its time, and demand its due with terrible reprisals for our injustice towards it; for half the sorrows of the church arise from smothered truths. False doctrine is not rendered innocuous by its being winked at. God hates it whatever glosses we may put upon it; no lie is of the truth, and no charity can make it so. Either a dogma is right or wrong, it cannot be indifferent. Conferences have been held of late between Baptists and Paedobaptists, in which there has been most oily talk of mutual concessions, one is to give up this and the other that. The fit description of such transactions is mutual, or rather united, treason to God. Will the word of God shift as these conspirators give and take? Are we, after all, our own law-makers; and is there no rule of Christ extant? Is every man to do as seemeth good in his own eyes? If we, on the one side, set up immersion on our own authority, and they, on the other side, bring forward the infant on their own account, we may both very wisely drop our peculiarities, for they are of man only, and, therefore, of superstition. But, if either side can find support in God's word, woe to it if it plays false to the will of the Great Head. We quote this merely as an illustration; and, as it concerns minor matters, it the more clearly sets forth the emphatic stress which we would lay upon loyalty to truth in the weightier matters of our great Master's law. The rule of Christians is not the flickering glimmer of opinion, but the fixed law of the statute book; it is rebellion, black as the sin of witchcraft, for a man to know the law, and talk of conceding the point. In the name of the Eternal King, who is this liberal conceiver, or, rather, this profane defrauder of the Lord, that he should even imagine such a thing in his heart?

Nor is it less important to remember that trifling with truth is to the last degree *dangerous*. No error can be imbibed without injury, nor propagated without sin. The utmost charity cannot convert another gospel into the gospel of Jesus Christ, nor deprive it of its deluding and destroying influence. There is no ground for imagining that an untruth, honestly believed, is in the least changed in its character by the sincerity of the receiver; nor may we dream that the highest culture renders a departure from revealed truth less evil in the sight of God. If you give the sick man a deadly poison instead of a healing medicine, neither your broad views of chemistry, nor his enlightened judgment upon anatomy, will prevent the drug from acting after its own nature. It may be said that the parallel does not hold, and that error is not deadly, but here we yield not, no, not for an hour. Paul pronounced a curse upon any man or angel who should preach another gospel, and he would not have done so, if other gospels were harmless. It is not so long ago that men need forget it, that the blight of Unitarian and other lax opinions withered the very soul of the Dissenting Churches; and that spirit has only to be again rampant, to repeat its mischief. Instances, grievous to our inmost heart, rise up before our memory at the moment of men seduced from their first love, and drawn aside from their fathers' gospel, who only meant to

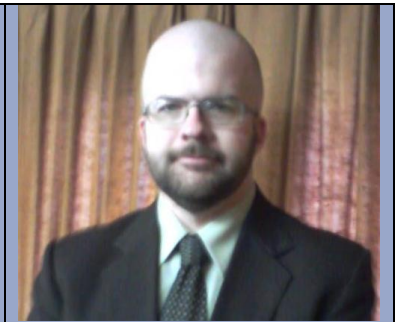
gather one tempting flower upon the brink of the precipice of error, but fell, never to be restored. No fiction do we write, as we bear record of those we have known, who first forsook the good old paths of doctrine, then the ways of evangelic usefulness, and then the enclosures of morality. In all cases, the poison has not so openly developed itself, but we fear the inner ruin has been quite as complete. In the case of public teachers, cases are not hard to find where little by little men have advanced beyond their "*honest* doubt," into utter blasphemy. One notorious instance will occur to all of a man, who, having ignored the creed of his church, and, indeed, all lines of fixed belief, has become the very beacon of Christendom, from the astounding nature of the blasphemy which he pours forth. In him, as a caricature of advanced thought, it is probable that we have a more telling likeness of the real evil, than we could by any other means have obtained. It may be that Providence has allowed him to proceed to the utmost lengths, that the church might see whereunto the much-vaunted intellectual school would carry us.

We are not believers in stereotyped phraseology, nor do we desire to see the reign of a stagnant uniformity; but, at this present, the perils of the church lie in another direction. The stringency of little Bethel, whatever may have been its faults, has no power to work the mischief which is now engendered by the confusion of the latitudinarian Babel. To us, at any rate, the signs of the times portend no danger greater than that which can arise from landmarks removed, ramparts thrown down, foundations shaken, and doctrinal chaos paramount.

We have written this much, because silence is reckoned as consent, and pride unrebuked lifts up its horn on high, and becomes more insolent still. Let our opponents cease, if they can, to sneer at Puritans whose learning and piety were incomparably superior to their own; and, let them remember that the names, which have adorned the school of orthodoxy, are illustrious enough to render scorn of their opinions, rather a mark of imbecility than of intellect. To differ is one thing, but to despise is another. If they will not be right, at least, let them be civil, if they prefer to be neither, let them not imagine that the whole world is gone after them. Their forces are not so potent as they dream, the old faith is rooted deep in the minds of tens of thousands, and it will renew its youth, when the present phase of error shall be only a memory, and barely that.

### *"Is Racism Biblical?"*

by Bro. David M. Green



*"But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but*

*by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”*  
Galatians 2:11

The Apostle Paul had a disagreement with the Apostle Peter about racism. You see, the Jews always had a tendency to look down on everyone else. During this time period, the early church, which was primarily Jewish, was going through some “growing pains.” All of their lives, they had known salvation to be a part of mostly Jews. In fact, many Jews had never seen a Gentile saved. Now, the gospel message was being preached to others, and other people were being saved. This caused Christians a lot of persecution from the religionists of the day. Before we go further, we must define the word racism. According to Mr. Webster, it is “the belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race.” Race is defined as “(1) a family, tribe, people, or nation belonging to the same stock (2) a class or kind of people unified by community of interests, habits, or characteristics <the English race> (3) an actually or potentially interbreeding group within a species; also : a taxonomic category (as a subspecies) representing such a group (4) a division of mankind possessing traits that are transmissible by descent and sufficient to characterize it as a distinct human type .”

Racism has affected different peoples at different times. As we look into our own time, we realize that we can find racism in many forms. We must ask ourselves, what does the Bible say about it?

*“And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. ..Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.”* (Acts 10:28, 34-35).

The Lord had appeared to Peter to show him that God is no respecter of persons...that He will save people of other nations. He taught him that no man is common or unclean.

#### WHERE DID THE DIFFERENT RACES COME FROM?

*“ And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.”* (Genesis 3:20)

If we truly believe in creation, then we need to realize that all groups of men came from Adam and Eve. That means that black, red, brown, and all colors of men came from Adam. There are simply variations of men that came as a result of genetics.

Of course, God destroyed the earth with a flood. But even after the flood, there was only one family left. Noah is everyone's common ancestor today. Again, black, white, brown and red men all come from that one person. As hard as it is for some people to admit, we are all cousins!

*“And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick*

*for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.”* (Genesis 11:1-9).

From this place, the people of the earth scattered to the four corners of the earth. Thus, we have oriental people, European people, African people, etc.

*“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;”* (Acts 17:26)

Paul, when preaching on Mars Hill, teaches that we are all one blood. There is only one race ... the human race! We all bleed red blood! We are all the same, we just have different characteristics. To deny this fact is to deny everything that we have already looked at in this article.

#### WE ARE ONE IN JESUS

*“When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. And he must needs go through Samaria. Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”* (John 4:1-14).

Jesus gave this example while He was in the world. Jewish custom was to avoid the Samaritans. He went to this woman to give her a message of life. Far too often, racism gets in the way of our personal evangelism. We need to realize that all humans have a soul. We also need to realize that Christ died for many different people.

*“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”* (Galatians 3:28-29)

Not only is everyone related through the blood of Adam, God's people are all related through the blood of Christ. Jew and Gentile alike have become one family.

#### WHAT ABOUT INTERRACIAL MARRIAGES?



*“And he said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the LORD: for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee. Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee: But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves: For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God: Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice; And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.” (Exodus 34:10-16)*

*“And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods: and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself unto Baalpeor: and the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel. And the LORD said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel. And Moses said unto the judges of Israel, Slay ye every one his men that were joined unto Baalpeor.” (Numbers 25:1-5)*  
*“When the LORD thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou; And when the LORD thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them: Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son. For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of the LORD be kindled against you, and destroy thee suddenly.” (Deuteronomy 7:1-4)*

*“Now when these things were done, the princes came to me, saying, The people of Israel, and the priests, and the Levites, have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, doing according to their abominations, even of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Jebusites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, the Egyptians, and the Amorites. For they have taken of their daughters for themselves, and for their sons: so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands: yea, the hand of the princes and rulers hath been chief in this trespass. And when I heard this thing, I rent my garment and my mantle, and plucked off the hair of my head and of my beard, and sat down astonished.” (Ezra 9:1-3)*

Many people run to these passages to say that the Bible commands against “interracial marriages.” Yet, as we have already seen, there are no races in the world...just the human race. What then are these verses about? Well, Israel, being God's people, had to be careful about marrying other people. Why? Because they would teach them about other gods. Notice the words that I underlined. It had absolutely nothing to do with their color of skin, but the god they served! Thus, God forbids inter-religious marriages, but not interracial ones!

*“Ye shall keep my statutes. Thou shalt not let thy cattle gender with a diverse kind: thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed: neither shall a garment mingled of linen and woollen come upon thee.” (Leviticus 19:19)*

This is another passage that people use to speak against interracial marriages...yet nothing in this passage speaks of such a thing. In fact, it is speaking of livestock. Are we degrading ourselves to the level of a cow? Do we believe that Adam is our ancestor, or do we believe we are a higher mammal?

#### INTERRACIAL MARRIAGES IN THE BIBLE

*“And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it. (Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.) And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed. And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.” (Numbers 12:1-10)*

Miriam and Aaron spoke out against God's servant Moses because he had married someone from another country. Yet, God punished Miriam, but not Moses!

*“Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehemjudah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons. And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehemjudah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there. And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons. And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years... And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me.” (Ruth 1:1-4,16-17)*

Here we read of Ruth who was a Moabite! Remember Numbers 25 and Ezra 9? They both specifically spoke against Jews marrying Moabites! Does the Bible contradict itself? Certainly not! You see, even though she was of another country,” there was nothing wrong with the marriage because she was saved! Her religion was the same as God's people. It is interesting to note that in Matthew 1, as the word of God traces the lineage of Jesus' earthly family, Ruth is there! If God put such an emphasis onto the interracial marriages like some people do, He would have made sure that He was in a family of “pure Jewish blood.” But he didn't.

#### INTERRELIGIOUS MARRIAGES

*“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in*

them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." (II Corinthians 6:14-18).

God still forbids marriage of pagan peoples with Christians. Let's look at two scenarios:

1. A white man and a white female get married, but one of them is saved and the other is lost. This is not acceptable to God.
  2. A white man and a Hispanic woman get married. Both of them are saved. This is acceptable to God.
- Nothing has changed with God! However, we need to change our ideas if we disagree with Him and His Word.

#### WHERE DOES RACISM COME FROM?

Racism is all around us, but it is not Biblical. The sad fact is, it has crept into our homes and churches. I have heard of churches who would not allow a black man into their services, even in recent years. When we think of Christ, we think of Him as being Caucasian. We know that He wasn't. When we think of Adam and Eve, we think they were white, but it is doubtful that they were. The same goes for all the other people of the Bible.

Racism as we know it today is evolutionary in origin. Darwinism teaches that some cultures are not as evolved as we are in our society. So, in evolutionary thinking, the European is superior from the African, etc. Yet, as we have seen this is not the truth. We are all from the same man, Adam!

#### CONCLUSION

*"And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them."* (Acts 11:1-3)

This was the reaction of the people in the early church when Peter had fellowship with Gentiles. May God help us to not be like them.

*"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."* (Revelation 7:9-10)

Someday, representatives of the entire human race will be gathered together to worship our Lord in heaven! These are all cousins in Adam, made to be brethren through Christ. Will you be in that number? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, and you will be!

### *"The Haves And The Have Nots"*

*by Bro. Jeff Short*

*"Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."* James 4:3

#### *Failure in Prayer*

James describes us as lusting, killing, desiring, fighting, and warring to get what we want and yet we cannot obtain it (James 4:2). We will go to great lengths to obtain the things we desire. We will strive, work, sacrifice, and pursue with all that is in us and still the possession eludes us.

#### We Do Not Ask

James generalizes two failures in this case. The first is almost unthinkable. In verse 2, he describes people with a strong desire to

obtain. Despite all their striving, they have not because they "ask not." Think about how hard we work and to what lengths we go sometimes to get something and all the while we have never humbled ourselves before God and simply asked for it.

As unthinkable as it is, I find myself there far too often. I will work, scratch, and save. I will talk to people for their advice. I will read several books about it and yet I have neglected to simply and plainly ask God for it. How could this happen? How could I invest so much time and energy into something and never have asked God for it?

If we are being honest, we have to admit that none of us excel at prayer the way we should. James' point makes it clear that something in our flesh does not relish prayer. There is something in us that would rather exhaust us completely and then turn to prayer as a last resort.

Have you ever had to do a job that you didn't want to do? Have you ever done more work to get out of that job than if you would have just done it to begin with? We all have. Why? Because we did not like that task. We did not want to do it. It is the same with prayer. We have not because we ask not. We ask not because we don't like to ask. We don't like to pray. There is something in us that would rather do everything else first, and if that doesn't work, then pray.

#### We Do Not Ask For The Right Things

The second failure is much easier to own. We ask and do not receive because we have asked for the wrong thing or for the wrong reason. When we are not concerned about God's will, we just ask for that foolish and momentary desire to be given. Usually, in hindsight, we are very glad we weren't given that request.

This failure is born of self-centeredness. We are not concerned about anyone or anything else but our own wants in the moment. In that moment, we are more concerned about our will being done than God's. Consequently, we are not heard.

John wrote: *"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us; And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."* 1 John 5:14-15

#### A Third Failure

Latent in this text is a third failure, and one we have more often than we think. Consider the verses near the close of chapter four.

*"Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that."* James 4:13-15

If we think about this warning in context with the beginning of the chapter, we see the subtle point. We do not fail in prayer only when we have not, but also when we have.

Those addressed in the above verses have. They have the means to go into a city to abide, buy, sell, and get gain. They are chided for boasting that they will go without any consideration to God's will, but this also suggests they are prayerless.

How often do we fail precisely the same way? We need a new appliance or article of clothing. We need a repair to our house or car. We have the money, so, Why would we pray about it? How many times do we check our bank account before, or without, checking with God.

If we are to "pray without ceasing" and to pray "always with all prayer and supplication," Shouldn't we pray when we have just as much as when we have not? Jesus prayed in John 11:41-42 to thank the Father for hearing Him, even though He knew that the Father always heard Him. This was not a waste of time nor a formality. Let us likewise pray and seek God when we have not and also when we have.

## A GREAT DECEPTION

by Bro. Arthur W. Pink

One of the most popular beliefs of the day is that God loves everybody, and the very fact that it is so popular with all classes ought to be enough to arouse the suspicions of those who are subject to the Word of Truth. God's love towards all His creatures is the favorite tenet of Universalists, Unitarians, Theosophists, Christian Scientists, Spiritualists, Russellites, etc. . . . So widely has this dogma been proclaimed, and so comforting it is to the heart which is at enmity with God, we have little hope of convincing many of there error.

To tell the Christ-rejecter that God loves him is to cauterize his conscience as well as to afford him a sense of security in his sins. The fact is, the love of God is a truth for the saints only, and to present it to the enemies of God is to take the children's bread and to cast it to the dogs.

## "The Chosen"

by Bro. Stephen McCool  
sr.



Ephesians 1:3-6

*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."*

What beautiful words! What a glorious thought! To think that the God of all loved us enough to choose us. After Adam sinned in the garden He could have destroyed man and started over, but He chose to love us. Even before He formed the world and before Adam sinned He chose us. He knew Adam's sin before He created everything and yet He still chose us. He could have saved the whole world but He chose us. Even though He knew how wicked and evil we would be He still chose us. God sent His son Jesus to die for us. He sacrificed His own son on the alter of the cross so that through Jesus we could live eternally with Him. Through the blood of Jesus we are made holy and blameless giving us the right to go before the Father at anytime. He loved us enough He adopted us into His family as children and heirs to all that is His. His choosing us before the foundation of the world, His sacrificing His son, His adopting us, His gift of His grace, all "according to the good pleasure of His will. Not our will, not of anything we did or would do, not of our family tree, but because He loved us. Why is it so hard for us to understand why God is so good to us? Why can we not comprehend the fact that He chose us because He wanted too? Why can we not take His word as fact?

Even with all our faults and shortcomings we are still God's chosen.

## "God Will Judge His Own"

by Bro. Todd Bryant



*"Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand"*—Romans 14:4

One of the easiest ways to make ourselves feel better about our service to God is to point fingers at another believer. Perhaps our lifestyle isn't what it should be so we point out a doctrinal deviation in the next guy. Or, perhaps we don't have the love that we ought to have for our neighbor so we point out the lifestyle of the fellow next to us in the pew. It's an easy thing to do. And, it may make us feel better. However, it does not make us better.

Americanism breeds humanism. Perhaps we hate to admit that as patriotic southerners. But, it's true, nonetheless. The American dream is about self. The right to pursue happiness is generally taught as the right to work hard and build bigger barns. But, this has nothing to do with real happiness. Contentment in this life is only to be found in the finished work of Jesus Christ. A beggar will be happier than a king here on Earth if he knows Jesus as Savior.

So, what does this have to do with the subject before us today? It's simple. Selfishness and humanism breed a society that is unwilling to accept wrong. Psychiatrists have convinced most criminals that it's not their fault, but somebody else's. Drug addicts and drunks are convinced everybody else is to blame for their sins. Adulterers blame their spouses for their own wicked ways. By and large, we are a society who believes we are always right. So, anytime there's a chance we may be wrong, the natural thing to do is point out faults in our fellow Christians. But, this is God's job.

How long would you visit an eye doctor who couldn't see? Yet, this is exactly what the Lord says we are doing spiritually when we try to "fix" our brother's problems when we have just as many problems (maybe more) than he does. Jesus said, "And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not perceive the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me remove the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the plank that is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck that is in your brother's eye"(Luke 6:41-42). Helping your brother grow is a good thing.

Correcting him so you can ignore your own faults is another altogether. How much better would church life be if we all sought out the truth of God's Word and how we should apply it in our lives? How much more profitable would pulpits be if they just preached the Bible? How much happier would we all be at the Judgment Seat of Christ if we cultivated our own Christianity rather than trying to tear down our brother's crops? Children of God, let's all pray that the Lord would lead us to love one another, strive to serve Him, and then gently lead one another into the truth. Certainly, that's what He's done for us!!

## August's Book Review: "The Song of Ruth" by Sis. Regina Duncan

**Author:** Frank G. Slaughter

**Genre:** Fiction, Theological/ Political/ Historical

**Overview:** This book was generally a good book based on a true story from the Bible, the book of Ruth. However, it is somewhat loosely based on the Bible. I realize that it would be hard to follow the Bible perfectly while writing a book or a movie because when the Bible doesn't say exactly what happened, an author has to make up what could have happened. However, at least one part of this book tells something that is told in the Bible as happening a different way (Revelation 22:18-19). That was highly disappointing because the book said a sin was committed, but it was okay!

**Positives:** This was a good Bible story to read. Most of what the author said was true, or could have possibly been true. However, this book would not have been good for someone to read who does not know the Bible.

**Negatives:** There is some sensuality in this book during the time the family lives in the wicked city of Moab. (The author dedicates living in Moab to over half of the book.) Another negative is that Ruth and Naomi seemed to have odd beliefs for Christian people. They believed the spirits of their loved ones were still with them even after death.

At one point, Ruth and Naomi said they didn't know where their loved ones had gone after death. A final negative was that adultery was justified for a particular reason as being in the Laws of God. I thought it was sad that so much negativity was cast on such a great woman (& people) of the Bible.

**Final Words:** My pastor posted the following on facebook today which I thought was relevant to the review of this book:

We hear so much about "racism" today. Racism stems from the minds of evolutionists. The so called educators in the public school arena have been successful in perpetuating this falsehood.

God created one race, the human race.

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." Genesis 1:26,27

In the Old Testament, God divided humanity into two groups: Jews and Gentiles. God's intent was for the Jews to be a kingdom of priests, ministering to the Gentile nations.

Instead, for the most part, the Jews became proud of their status and despised the Gentiles. Jesus Christ put an end to this, destroying the dividing wall of hostility as stated in Ephesians 2:14.

Today, some people believe our God is not for foreigners, or people who are different from us. They believe we should keep Him for ourselves and these other people don't deserve salvation like we do. However, I reminded of what Paul said in the New Testament. Galatians 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Romans 3:9-12 "What then? are we better [than they]? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

**To read the full review go to:**

<http://baptistsforliberty.weebly.com/2/post/2013/08/august-23rd-2013.html>

### "Them & Us"

by Bro. Curtis A. Pugh



What is the essential, rock-bottom difference between "them" and "us?" By "them" I refer to that whole class of persons who, in one way or another, believe that each human being has a free-will so disconnected from man's sinful nature that he or she can decide either for or against Christ apart from outside influence. By "us" I refer to those who believe that the whole human race and every part of each man, including the will, has been so evilly affected by the fall of Adam as to be incapable of coming in a saving way to Christ apart from Divine intervention. I recently stumbled upon a Baptist church website that had the following statement in her confession of faith: "We believe in total depravity, but we do not believe in total inability." I thought several things about this statement. One of my thoughts was that such a statement was just about the most ignorant thing I had read in a long time. In both error and ridiculousness it ranks right up there with the article that claimed the old Welsh Tract Church was organized without the vote or action of a "mother Church."

Now I think I know what the author of this confession of faith meant. He meant that while they believed every human being was constituted a sinner by Adam's sin, they did not believe Adam's sin had affected their wills. Another thought that sprang into my mind was that I have never read a standard theology book that suggested such a belief. Nor have I read a standard Bible commentary that approached unto such a position. (I am aware that there may be some Johnny-come-lately books on the market that would try to maintain such a position, but these are not regarded by candid people as "standard.")

Most "evangelical Christians" – even most Baptists – agree with the view that every man is master of his own destiny. That is, they think that every person has a will completely separate from his sinful nature and can come to Christ if he or she wills to do so. I am aware of the popularity of their view, but I am fully convinced that the Bible teaches just the opposite. The Bible teaches that the whole human race was plunged into total ruin at the Fall of Adam. That ruin was so devastatingly complete as to render all the seed of Adam spiritually dead. (See Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13) It is a slander on the nature and character of Jehovah to suggest that He, when referring to the race as being "dead," meant that mankind was capable of doing something spiritually good and profitable. That which is dead is incapable of "doing" anything! That is so obvious that only a prejudiced mind (or a spiritually dead one) will not admit the truth of the statement.

I should insert here that the same view regarding the will being free is held by the lost world as well as by most of the religious world. Both the world's ungodly philosophers and the Arminian religionists are in agreement here! That speaks volumes to this writer and I think it should to all thoughtful people. Think of it! Most of the Baptist folk alive in the world today are in agreement with unbelievers as to the condition of mankind. Most Baptists believe about man's sinful condition exactly what the pagans believe! That has not been the case in much of Baptist history, but it is a sad commentary upon the majority of present day Baptists.

Quite a number of years ago I was scheduled to preach in a certain Baptist Church in the United States. This Church had a reputation of being a sovereign grace landmark missionary Baptist Church. It was listed as such in one of the directories put out at the time. In

conversation with the pastor, I was startled and saddened to hear him say something like this: "I just cannot believe that God elected some people to salvation apart from anything that is within them." Now stay with me. I have not wandered off the track. I am not chasing rabbits here. This pastor held a view quite in agreement with the view of election held by those who believe in free will. Those who support the free will view generally say that God looked down through time and saw that so-and-so would believe and based on that "foreseen faith" God elected that person to salvation. Since the words "election" and "elect" and "chosen" are in the Bible, free-willers have to come up with some kind of explanation for them and so they say that God's election is based on something good He foresees in those whom He chooses.

I maintain that the person who believes in election based on foreseen faith (or any other imagined goodness in an individual) has not only a problem with what the Bible teaches about election, but he has a far more basic problem in that he does not believe in total depravity. You see, the doctrine of total depravity includes the doctrine of total inability. Paul makes this abundantly clear when he says, "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:8). But more on that subject later! It seems to me that whenever we are involved in a discussion with our "free will" relatives and neighbors on the several facets of sovereign grace, we ought to steer the discussion to foundational matters. We ought to steer the conversation to the subject of total depravity / total inability. We can talk about election, effectual calling, etc., "until we are blue in the face" and not make much headway because we have a far more basic difference.

This whole "free will" system among modern "evangelical Christians" which we call Arminianism, is based upon a false view. Their whole system rests upon man's ability to come to Christ in a saving way of his own volition, completely apart from Divine intervention. To admit that God must act first in the salvation of an individual requires from the Arminian an admission he cannot give. It requires him to admit that God does not act alike toward all men. It suggests that God might have as His purpose the salvation of only a select number of human beings. Such a thought is repugnant to the free will mind that has been taught that God must act in a way which seems right to men.

The free-will view held by most Baptists today can be summed up in the last verse of the poem INVICTUS by British poet William Ernest Henley. He wrote: It matters not how strait the gate, How charged with punishments the scroll . I am the master of my fate: I am the captain of my soul.

People who cannot add an inch to their stature nor make one hair white or black think they can do what God says they cannot do. They think they are masters of their destiny. They think they can come to Christ and be saved anytime they want to do so – and the popular preachers of our day tell them that this is so – that their own salvation is all up to them. They tell them that if they will take one step toward Christ He will save them!

Many evangelical Christians (to use a politically correct term) have a picture in their minds of poor, lost men and women who, if they only knew that they were lost and understood that God loves them – why these folk would come a running to Christ. They think that there are unregenerate persons who because of something in them are earnestly searching and seeking Christ. In answer to this view I call attention briefly to the story Jesus told of the lost sheep. "How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray" (Matt . 18:12, 13). That lost sheep was not seeking the shepherd! It was the shepherd who sought his lost sheep! And it is the true Shepherd, Christ, who seeks His own sheep! If we will keep in our

minds this simple story from the lips of our Savior we will begin to be several steps down the road to understanding how God saves sinners.

Not only does the Bible teach us that lost sheep do not seek the shepherd, the Word of God says: "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God" (Rom. 3:11). Now either lost men seek after God or they do not. The Bible says they do not! So get rid of the mental picture of poor, lost humanity seeking after God! Poor, lost humanity may seek after the perceived benefits and blessing that God bestows on His true children, but they do not seek after God. Whatever other motives men may have for claiming to be Christians, no one is ever born again (regenerated) because they have been seeking Christ.

The soul that seeks after Christ does so because of a sovereign work of God in him and not vice versa. By vice versa I mean that the sovereign work of the new birth (regeneration) is not brought about by anything that man does. To believe otherwise is to get the cart before the horse. This truth is further made clear by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. He said: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day" ( John 6:44). There are two words sometimes used mistakenly by Americans. The two words are "may" and "can." "May" as in "May I go?" means "Do I have permission to go?" "Can" as in "Can I go?" means "Do I have the ability to go?" The verse last quoted says "can" – "No man CAN come to me..." (Emph. C. P.). The meaning of the Lord Jesus is that no man has the ability to come to Him unless and until the Father draws him. He cannot do it! Let us do a little word study: The Greek word translated "draw" in John 6:44 is the same word used of the disciples dragging a net full of fishes to the shore. See John 21:6 and 11. It is the same Greek word used of Peter pulling his sword out of its sheath. See John 18:10. It is also used of the Jews forcibly removing Paul from the temple in Jerusalem. See Acts 21:30.

Now the testimony of the original language is clear: the word translated "draw" in our verse ( John 6:44) means to drag – to move something by use of superior strength. Some use of force or power is indicated. And so Jesus is properly understood as saying that no one has the ability to come to Him in a saving way unless and until the Father uses superior power to cause that man to come to Christ. You may not like my theology on this point and you may argue with me, but you cannot argue with the meaning of the word Jesus used – and I think He knew what word to use in describing what was necessary for a man to be saved.

Jesus said that it is impossible for a lost person to come to Him unless the Father uses His strength to cause and enable that man to come. In addition, Jesus said that all those whom the Father brings to the Son will be resurrected by the Son. So it just does not work to try to evade the truth of this verse by saying that God only attempts to draw all men to Christ. If you say that, you must be willing to say that all men will experience a blessed resurrection at the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ because God tried to draw all men. But that is not true. Only some will be resurrected and these are those whom the Father chose to draw savingly to Christ. Therefore coming to Christ is according to the will of God and not according to the will of man which always acts in accordance with the sin nature, except God be pleased to give a new nature in regeneration.

Jesus restates His teaching in John 6:65 where He says, "...Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." Evangelical Christians and many Baptists raise objections to the teaching of these verses because they see in them this truth: God does not draw all men to Christ. They see that the Father does not give all men the ability to come to Christ. They see that if these verses are true, God is selective in whom He saves – and to "them" this is terrible. But those of "us" who know that "The LORD hath made all

things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil” (Pro 16:4) have no problem with God doing what He wills with His own! We rejoice at the grace of God best owed upon us unworthy sinners. We understand that being dead in trespasses and sins, if God had not drawn us to Christ we would never have come. We have seen ourselves and know something of our desperately wicked hearts ( Jer. 17:9). We know we would not have come unless it had been given to us by the Father. And we rejoice to know that if it be wise in the eyes of our Heavenly Father to save our kindred and loved one, He is well able to do it. Their salvation does not depend upon us nor the persuasiveness of our arguments or those gimmicks often resorted to by many modern churches. “. . . Salvation is of the LORD” ( Jonah 2:9).

Generally, those who believe that lost men are the masters of their fate – that their free-will can act apart from their sinful nature – believe that if men can be made to understand their need to come to Christ they will do so. So they resort to such things as emotionally-charged preaching or miracle services or gospel-rock or southern-gospel or such things as the “Jesus Film.” Sometimes they equate saving faith with mere intellectual assent. The Campbellites do this, teaching that faith precedes repentance while the Bible always puts repentance ahead of faith. In doing this they equate faith with mental agreement with Bible facts. (This is not the gravest of Campbellite errors, for they do not believe that naked faith justifies a man at all. They put regeneration in the waters of baptism.) But while they believe these things, we believe that the unsaved man cannot receive or understand the Word of God. Therefore we do not depend on emotionally charged meetings or theatricals or musicals to save. Why do we believe that lost men cannot receive or understand the Bible? Because the Bible says: “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (I Cor. 2:14). This verse clearly says that not only do men reject the Word of God because it is foolishness to them, but that they “can-not” (there’s that lack-of-ability word, again) – they cannot know or understand the Bible in a spiritually profitable way. It takes more than just the Word of God to regenerate a man. Regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit (See John 3:6).

The world’s different Christian religions, including most of the Baptists, believe that there is something that a lost person can do to acquire God’s favor. Thus they call on unregenerate men to pray, to open their heart’s door, to receive Christ, to believe, to call on the name of the Lord, to be baptized, and perhaps other things. They tell their hearers that God commands one or more of these things and that in this way they will please God. I remind you of a verse quoted earlier: the Bible says of the unregenerate man that, “. . . they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Rom. 8:8). There’s that lack-of-ability word “can-not” again! So, what will you do, unregenerate person, that will please God and cause His grace and favor to be extended to you in salvation? Will you exercise your free will? That will not please Him. Will you pray? That will not please Him. The Bible says that “. . . the plowing of the wicked, is sin” (Prov. 21:4). If an activity as wholesome and innocent as plowing a field is sin for a wicked person, what can you do to please God? The answer is nothing.

Now we have not presented all the Scriptures that bear on the subject of man’s total depravity / total inability, but these we believe are sufficient for this present article for there is another aspect of this subject that we think needs to be explored. The “them” of this article (freewillers) think they are more evangelistic than those of “us” who are convinced of man’s inability to freely exercise his will and come to Christ on his own. They think they have a better gospel message than we have. But I submit that in reality, their doctrine breeds complacency and calms the hearts of lost sinners who ought to be properly grieved and agitated upon hearing the real teaching of the Word of God.

Let me illustrate what I am saying this way. Picture in your mind’s eye a room with six men seated around a poker table. It is their regular, Friday night (illegal) high-stakes poker game. They have all they need in that room, having enjoyed a large supper earlier. The door is locked and they are secure from outside interference. The local authorities have been bribed and will not raid the place. All is going along well until someone says, “I smell smoke.” Nobody is upset at the statement. Each man knows that he has a key to the door in his pocket. He can escape, if necessary, whenever he chooses. After a few minutes, someone else says, “Hey, I smell smoke too.” Each man reaches into his pocket and feels his key. There is no need to panic. He is secure in knowing that he can exercise his will and leave when he sees a need to do so. The ability to escape IF there really is a fire is within his reach. Although he feels a little nudge of concern, he does nothing until, suddenly, he finds that he cannot make it to the door because of the heat, flames and smoke. It is too late and the men perish.

So it is with the “free-will” view. The natural man thinks he is able to come to Christ anytime and in any way that he wants to come. His ideas are reinforced by free-will preachers who tell him he can come to Christ all on his own. All he needs do is make a decision for Christ. The popular doctrine is decisional regeneration. What is taught by “them” (free-willers) is that when they believe, the Holy Spirit will regenerate them. The cause of their new birth is seen to be their own will. In opposition to their view, those of “us” who believe free-will is a myth, tell people that the new birth (regeneration) is a work of the Spirit and has nothing to do with the will of the unsaved man. For proof, among other verses, we cite John 1:13 which tells us the reason some people received (welcomed) Christ when He was on earth by saying, “Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” The reason they received Christ was not their wills but God’s will. It is difficult to imagine how God could have shown that salvation is according to His will in any clearer fashion than this verse. So we conclude this piece by asking, “What is the fundamental difference between “them” and “us?” While we differ on the doctrine of election, particular redemption, effectual calling and perseverance of saints, our basic, fundamental, essential difference is the doctrine of total depravity which includes the doctrine of total inability. They deny this doctrine. We affirm it.

Perhaps I should also say that all of “us” – contrary to “them” once believed and perhaps even taught the free-will view. Spurgeon is credited as having said, “All men are by nature born Ariminians” (free-willers). Such persons as advocate man’s having a will capable of acting contrary to his sinful nature maintain the same view of the human will as the world and its pagan religions hold. But then there is “us.” We see in the Word of God another and contrary doctrine than that held by “them.” We see a sovereign God who, in spite of man’s total inability to come to Christ, has chosen some to be His own. These He brings to Christ not with brute physical force, but by working in them, regenerating them so that they are enabled to willingly come to Christ trusting Him and His finished work on behalf of His sheep. “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep” ( John 10:11). We did not make ourselves “sheep,” but rather were chosen by the Father in Christ for Paul wrote, “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. . .” (Eph. 1:4). May God grant that many of “them” may come to be among “us” – for the glory of Jesus Christ!

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