

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." Galatians 5:1

NEWS LETTER

Issue #24

September 2014

Monthly Verse: *"For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."* ~ Matthew 7:2

"What is Primary?"

by Bro. Todd Bryant

"For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" – 1 Corinthians 2:2

This is to be our primary message today. If ever this ceases to be the foundation of our sermons and services, we have missed the mark. Plainly, Paul said, *"For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ"* (1 Corinthians 3:11). In all that we do, Christ is to be the foundation. Until a person knows Christ for Who He is...until they trust Him alone as Savior...nothing else really matters.

It can be so easy to go out into the world to share whatever our "pet doctrine" is. But, this is not our mission. Now certainly, I do not mean to say that the Bible doesn't contain many truths on various subjects. It certainly does. And therefore, these things are important and should be preached in church capacity so the children of God are built up. But even then, Christ must always remain the focus. It really matters little what doctrine we point to. If it takes the preeminence over Christ, we are looking at it wrong.

The Bible is a book about Jesus. Sure, there are other subjects in the Bible. But, He is the Theme from start to finish. He is the *"Seed of the woman"* (Genesis 3:15) and He is the everlasting King (Revelation 19-22). The Bible presents the shortcomings and rebellion of a sinful race. It clearly shows God as the Righteous Sovereign Who will soon judge the descendants of Adam. And clearly, Christ is the only Way of escape.

Baptism pictures His death, burial and resurrection. The Lord's Supper reminds us of His broken body and shed blood. The songs we sing should praise Him for dying for our sins. The prayers we pray are only possible because He alone is our Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5). Even in sermons preached on other subjects, Christ should always clearly be the underlying Theme.

Paul's primary meaning in the passage before us today concerns missionary work. As we go into the world, the Gospel is to be our primary message. Christ clearly commissioned the Gospel to be preached first (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15). Those that believe are then taught other things. But first, a person must know Christ. This is the example we see in the early churches. And, they had great success doing things as God instructed...as He worked through them, of course.

Children of God, let us ever seek to follow the Lord's instruction. There is a lost and dying world out there that needs Christ whether they ever know it or not. Let us carry forth that message as we've been instructed to...as the early churches did...as Jesus did.

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September 2014 News Blitz: Underlined texts are links to news stories from various sources. If reading this as a printout you can find the links to these stories on our home page. <http://baptistsforliberty.weebly.com> or <http://baptistsforliberty.weebly.com/news-blitz-archive>

<p style="text-align: center;">Life In The U.S. (Local & State news stories)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">U.S. Foreign Policy & Foreign Relations</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">U.S. Surveillance & Security</p>
<p>Sep. 1st <u>"California City Orders Police To Remove Armored Vehicle"</u> Sep. 2nd <u>"Student suspended after telling sneezing fellow student "Bless-you"?"</u> <u>"Florida Police Officers Blow Whistle On Their Chief"</u> Sep. 3rd <u>"MN Police Chief Decapitates Child's Pet Chicken with Shovel"</u> Sep. 4th <u>"Crime Rates in Chicago Plummet After IL Implements Concealed Carry"</u> Sep. 8th <u>"Former Virginia political candidate indicted on murder charges"</u> Sep. 9th <u>"Homeschoolers Outnumber Private-school Students in North Carolina"</u> <u>"The Racist Origin of America's Gun Control Laws"</u> Sep. 10th <u>"Truancy Laws Snag 13-year-old Piano Prodigy"</u> Sep. 11th <u>"Baltimore Detective, Intimidated For Testifying Against Police, Resigns"</u> <u>"FEMA Is Trying To Get Back \$5.8M in Hurricane Sandy Aid Money"</u> Sep. 15th <u>"Retrial for Officer Joseph Weekly to begin in Detroit"</u> Sep. 16th <u>"TX Cop Arrested for Allegedly Forcing Sex Offender to Pose for Nude Photos"</u> Sep. 17th <u>"Madison, WI Police Chief Endorses Legalization of Marijuana for Recreational Use"</u> <u>"Pennsylvania debates arming teachers with guns"</u> Sep. 19th <u>"San Francisco Taxi Trips Plunge Amid Rise of Rideshare Companies"</u> <u>"State Inspectors Get Run Of California Worksites—At Business Groups' Behest"</u> Sep. 23rd <u>"Saginaw Chippewa Tribe to Hold "Warrior Ceremony" to Declare War on Drugs"</u> Sep. 24th <u>"Abortionist Who Killed Four Women in Botched Abortions Denied New Medical License"</u> <u>"Big Business and the Right Oppose Higher Fish Consumption Rates"</u> <u>"Anger Grows Again in Ferguson Over Burned Memorial, Delayed Indictment"</u> <u>"Justice Department investigates Ferguson police"</u></p>	<p>Sep. 2nd <u>"Obama Informs Congress of Iraq Airstrikes Under War Powers Act"</u> Sep. 3rd <u>"Another U.S. Journalist Beheaded in New ISIS Video – Transcript Released"</u> Sep. 4th <u>"President and Vice President warn ISIS militants after beheading videos"</u> Sep. 5th <u>"Iran-US alliance possible to fight ISIS"</u> Sep. 9th <u>"US-Iran cooperation on IS makes Israel uneasy"</u> <u>"Benghazi SURVIVOR Speaking Out and Reveals Details"</u> (video/audio) Sep. 10th <u>"Justin Amash and Thomas Massie are so done with Dick Cheney"</u> <u>"Karen Kwiatkowski: The US Government Has Lost Credibility at Home and Abroad"</u> Sep. 11th <u>"Ghosts of Imperialist Wars Past: China's Tourist Hot Spots Today"</u> <u>"Why we never learn anything from 9/11 – especially about foreign policy"</u> <u>"Justin Amash's 10 questions for Barack Obama after his ISIS speech"</u> <u>"Iran Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Marzieh Afkham casts doubt on US coalition against IS"</u> <u>"Israel skeptical about US strategy on IS"</u> Sep. 12th <u>"Number of centrifuges should not prevent nuclear deal"</u> Josh Tolley show interview <u>"Reporter in Iraq Just Destroyed Obama's Strategy on ISIS!"</u> Says host (video/audio) Sep. 14th <u>"Former US Senator Bob Graham: US Failure to Look into Saudi Role in 9/11 Helped ISIL"</u> <u>"Iran has mixed feelings about cooperating with US against IS"</u> <u>"American Detainee Sentenced to 6 Years Hard Labor in North Korea"</u> Sep. 15th <u>"Obama needs peace in Syria to defeat IS"</u> <u>"The US and France Are Teaming Up to Fight A Sprawling War on Terror in Africa"</u> Sep. 16th <u>"Obama Issues "No Ground Troops" Flip-Flop"</u> <u>"Ground troops might be needed to combat ISIS according to Pentagon official"</u> <u>"US strikes in Syria won't turn locals against Islamic State"</u> Sep. 17th <u>"Why Christians Are Criticizing Cruz—and Israel!"</u> <u>"Here are the 71 Republicans who voted against arming and training the Syrian rebels"</u> <u>"Justin Amash: What have we learned from the last decade of war?"</u> <u>"Pentagon Officials Tell Senate: ISIS War Will Be Long and Difficult"</u> <u>"Did John McCain Misspeak Or Admit To Meeting With ISIS?"</u></p>	<p>Sep. 1st <u>"The NSA Created Its Own Secret Google?"</u> Sep. 3rd <u>"Why have so many Black Caucus members voted to militarize the police?"</u> <u>"The case against the NSA metadata collection began yesterday"</u> Sep. 4th <u>"Could the New Republic be any more wrong about libertarians and police militarization?"</u> <u>"Homeland Security Pours Billions into Militarizing Police with "Little Oversight"?"</u> Sep. 5th <u>"Guantanamo Bay: An Untold History of Occupation, Torture, Sham Trials & Resistance"</u> (Includes video) Sep. 6th <u>"Petition To Put 911 Probe On NYC Ballot Jumps Big Hurdle"</u> Sep. 8th <u>"Feds Donate Thousands of Bayonets to Local Police"</u> <u>"US State Dept. Fights Terrorist Recruitment Using Graphic Video"</u> Sep. 9th <u>"Release of U.S. Senate Report on CIA Torture Delayed"</u> <u>"CNN's Jake Tapper: "Why hasn't Obama kept promise to declassify 28 pages of a report about 9/11?""</u> Sep. 10th <u>"Ted Cruz warns that this bill could outlaw Saturday Night Live skits"</u> Sep. 11th <u>"Federal government grounds all UPS flights leading many to conspiracies on possible attack"</u> Sep. 12th <u>"San Diego's School District Now Has a Military-Grade Armored Truck"</u> <u>"US, Ukraine or Middle East? Ferguson Images Made It Hard to Tell"</u> Sep. 15th <u>"Dropbox Fights New NSA Data Grab"</u> <u>"The US Will Recruit Teachers and Community Leaders To Fight the Islamic State Right at Home"</u> Sep. 17th <u>"New York man being accused of aiding ISIS"</u> Sep. 18th <u>"No Gun on the Border"</u> <u>"New Apple Policy says They Won't Unlock Devices for Government Requests"</u> <u>"The government is trying to put a stop to whistleblowing"</u> Sep. 23rd <u>"Old Technopan in New iBottles"</u> Sep. 24th <u>"Company Behind Stingray Cell Phone Surveillance Tool Lied to the FCC"</u> <u>"Air Traffic Criticism"</u></p>

U.S. Economy

Sep. 8th ["Proof That \\$15 Minimum Wage Hurts Those It's Claimed to Help"](#)
["GOP Votes to End Tax Regime That Is Crushing Americans Abroad"](#)
Sep. 9th ["PayPal's Braintree to Begin Accepting Bitcoin"](#)
Sep. 10th ["Doubling Down on Inflation"](#)
Sep. 15th ["Federal Regulations Cost U.S. \\$2 Trillion Per Year, Study Shows"](#)
["U.S. Tax Code Puts America 32nd Out of 34 Countries"](#)
Sep. 16th ["The Disappointing Continuing Resolution"](#)
["Prof. Krugman Snared By 364 Trap"](#)
Sep. 17th ["A New Fed Playbook for the New Normal"](#)
["Cutting Business Property Taxes to Improve Competitiveness"](#)
Sep. 18th ["New Low-cost Robots Making Factory Workers More Efficient"](#)
["Ron Paul's Audit the Fed Bill Prevails in the House"](#)
["Bankers Advise Fed to Regulate Bitcoin"](#)
["Bitcoin Charts, Finally"](#)
["What the minimum wage is doing to young workers is much worse than you think"](#)
Sep. 19th ["Pros & Cons of Alibaba IPO"](#)
["Getting Government Out of the Mortgage Business, DOJ-Style"](#)
Sep. 23rd ["Do the Benefits of Mandatory Disclosures Outweigh the Costs?"](#)

Misc. U.S. Politics

Sep. 1st ["Obama Administration Punishes Oklahoma for Rejecting Common Core"](#)
Sep. 3rd ["Response to Uzi Accident Ignores Kids Who Use Guns Responsibly"](#)
Sep. 5th ["Compassionate Pro-lifers Contribute to Drop in Wisconsin Abortions"](#)
Sep. 9th ["Why Libertarians Despise Public Schools And conservatives love them"](#)
["US Senate Committee on Indian Affairs to Hold Hearing on Irrigation Products in Indian Country"](#)
Sep. 10th ["Land Buy-Back Program Tops \\$100 Million in Payments to American Indian Landowners with Fractionated Interests"](#)
Sep. 11th ["Advocates for Food Freedom Rally Their Forces in Virginia"](#)
["Affordable Care Act is Worth a Debate"](#)
Sep. 12th ["Missouri Legislature Overrides Governor's Veto of Pro-gun Bill"](#)
Sep. 15th ["Pot Advocates Seek to Expand Legalization in November"](#) Sep. 16th ["Report Details Close Relationship Between EPA and Green Groups"](#)
["Grenade Launchers: The Newest Must-Have School Supply"](#)
Sep. 17th ["CSPOA Live Event"](#)
["Happy Constitution Day! Joshua Cook Interviews Jesse Graston on nullifying unconstitutional laws"](#)

U.S. Foreign Policy & Foreign Relations

(Continued)

Sep. 18th ["House votes to arm Syrian rebels"](#)
["President Poroshenko asks the US for more aid against Russia"](#)
["Rand Paul takes Sec. John Kerry to task on ISIS"](#)
["Iran Says America Is 'Obsessed' with Sanctions as Nuclear Negotiations Begin"](#)
["Iran's Deputy FM: US Not Honest in Fight against ISIL"](#)
["President Obama, Syria, ISIS and more unlawful presidential killing"](#)
Sep. 19th ["The Conscience of a Benghazi Whistleblower"](#)
["President Poroshenko Goes to Washington"](#)
Sep. 21st ["US continues to curb its involvement in Middle East"](#)
Sep. 22nd ["Afghan Army Officers, Who Went AWOL on US Soil, Caught Sneaking into Canada"](#)
["The War on ISIS Has No Legal Basis"](#)
Sep. 24th ["Justin Amash blasted Congress for recessing instead of debating on war"](#)
["Former CIA contractor speaks out on Syria"](#)
["Why Cruz Represents The Worst of Both Worlds on Foreign Policy"](#)

The Western World

(Canada, Europe, & Australia)

Sep. 1st ["Head of Canadian Medical Association Opens Door to Assisted Suicide"](#)
Sep. 2nd ["U.K. Withdraws Arrest Warrant for Parents of Boy With Brain Tumor"](#)
Sep. 3rd ["Protest Supports Pro-Life Doctor Fired for Refusing to Do Abortion on Disabled Baby"](#)
Sep. 6th ["How Britain Might Have Deliberately Concealed Evidence of Imperial Crimes"](#)
Sep. 9th ["White-slave Trade in the U.K."](#)
["Scottish Independence Vote Creates Market Uncertainty"](#)
Sep. 11th ["A Wee Problem for the UK"](#)
["Lest We Forget What Britain Has Done for Scotland"](#) an opinion piece and a little history lesson as well.
Sep. 13th ["Aboriginal Australians Are Still Dying in Police Custody"](#)
Sep. 14th ["Massive Blasts and Gunfire Rock Separatist Stronghold in Ukraine"](#)
Sep. 16th ["UKIP Held a Weird Press Conference to Stop the United Kingdom From Separating"](#) ["Extremists Fight in Calais: Britain's Border War"](#)
Sep. 17th ["Vandals Attack Pro-Life Canadian Pro-Life Student Group"](#)
["Londoners Turn Out to Ask Scotland to Stay"](#)
["Is It Worse to Be Run from Edinburgh or London?" — Scotland's Remote Communities Uncertain Over Benefits of Independence"](#)

U.N. News & Globalization

Sep. 1st ["Globalist Henry Kissinger Outlines 'New World Order'"](#)
Sep. 4th ["Shock Report Shows UN Committee Told Nations 275 Times to Legalize Abortion"](#)
Sep. 10th ["Calls Grow for Probes and Defunding of Terror-linked UN Agencies"](#)
Sep. 15th ["UN Predicts Climate Hell in Media Blitz for Global Warming Treaty"](#)
["Violence and Kidnappings Lead UN to Relocate Golan Heights Peacekeepers"](#)
Sep. 16th ["Billionaires and Communists Plan People's Climate March"](#)
Sep. 18th ["Citing Ebola, Obama Boosts UN and Sends Troops to Africa"](#)
["Hillary Clinton: It's Really Embarrassing! U.S. Hasn't Adopted Pro-Abortion Treaty"](#)
["Sanctions against Russia 'violate' core principles of WTO – Putin"](#) ["Rouhani faces tougher audience at UN this year"](#)
["Erdogan's war against New York"](#)
Sep. 22nd ["Beijing's Bear Hug on Russian Oil"](#)
Sep. 23rd ["Canada, Honduras Say Better Late than Never for Free-Trade Agreement"](#)
["Putin: Key Player in the 'New World Order'"](#)
["Crazy Tax Times for World Finance"](#)
Sep. 24th ["Putin's East vs. Globalist West: Merging Into a New World Order"](#)
["CFR Globalists Join Enviro-socialists Pushing UN Climate Summit"](#)
["UN Climate Change Summit Yields Major Announcements on Deforestation"](#)
["UN passes resolution to stop foreign fighters and terrorists"](#)
["No God Condone This Terror: Obama Calls on Global Leaders at UN to Help Defeat ISIS, Stop Danger of Religious Extremism"](#)



Misc. U.S. Politics

(Continued)

- Sep. 17th** ["Grantmaking in Indian Country" Report Highlights Large Unmet Funding Need for Native American Agriculture & Food Systems Projects](#)
["Customs and Border Protection's Extravagant Houses"](#)
- Sep. 18th** ["Pro-Lifers Demand Senate Vote to Stop Massive Abortion Funding in Obamacare"](#)
["Patriot Group Promises to Shut Down Ports of Entry Along US-Mexico Border"](#)
["Karuk Tribe Discovers Ich Infections in the mid-Klamath – Call for an End to Illegal Diversions & Water Use"](#)
- Sep. 22nd** ["How Common Are School Shootings?"](#)
["The People Are Revolting!"](#)
["The Constitutional Dimension of Your Morning Commute"](#)
- Sep. 23rd** ["Targeting the Constitution"](#)
["The Great Debate Over Hobby Lobby"](#)
- Sep. 24th** ["Regulating Our Property Rights out of Existence"](#) (Article & video)

U.S. Elections

- Sep. 2nd** ["Poll: Obama Struggling With Liberal Base in Biggest "Blue State""](#)
["Caleb Coulter Joins Libertarian Senate Campaign To Follow His Principles"](#)
- Sep. 4th** ["Rand Paul: Changing Feathers, Now Flying With the Hawks?"](#)
- Sep. 5th** ["Alaska Natives Win Landmark Voting Rights Lawsuit"](#)
- Sep. 6th** ["Will Republican Recycling Bring Back the Bushes?"](#)
["One Day You're in .. and the Next Day You're Out"](#)
["Andrew Hemingway Victorious In Last Debate Before NH Primary"](#)
- Sep. 8th** ["Fair say? Pffft. The Math Works to Make Native Votes Count More in 2014"](#)
["Meet the the teachers unions' public enemy No. 1"](#)
- Sep. 9th** ["Libertarian Gubernatorial Candidate To Take Part in S.C. Debates"](#)
- Sep. 10th** ["No, we don't need to bring Mitt Romney back"](#)
- Sep. 12th** ["Exclusive Interview: Alaska Constitution Party Candidate To Appear on Governor Ballot"](#)
(Audio & transcript)
- Sep. 17th** ["Democrats are trying to spend their way to victory in the Senate – and it might be working"](#)
["Congressional candidate Mark Wichern exclusive interview"](#)
- Sep. 20th** ["Bipartisan Agreement against the Taxpayers"](#)
- Sep. 24th** ["Native Vote Challenge is new spin on Social Media: It's time to make some great videos"](#)

The Western World

(Canada, Europe, & Australia)

(Continued)

- Sep. 18th** ["Flemish independence: better to become good friends than stay together in a bad marriage"](#)
["Australia's Foiling of an Alleged Islamic State Beheading Plot Raises Questions"](#)
["Irish Prime Minister Enda Kenny Pushing Abortion Expansion Friday"](#)
- Sep. 19th** ["Last-Minute Bribe Keeps Scotland in the United Kingdom"](#)
["Scotland's Independence Campaign So Isn't Over."](#)
["Buried Nazi gas chambers discovered by archaeologists in Poland"](#)
- Sep. 22nd** ["Fallout From Scottish Vote: European Separatist Movements Surge"](#)
- Sep. 24th** ["UK Parliament Expected to Debate Iraq Airstrikes As Cameron Warns 'You Can't Opt Out' of Fight"](#)
["Education under the New Swedish Order"](#)

Neighbors to the South

(Mexico & South America)

- Sep. 3rd** ["Belize's Island Paradise Is Caught Up in a Bloods Vs Crips Floating Drug War"](#)
- Sep. 8th** ["Mexico Is the New Detroit; Forbes Credits NAFTA"](#)
- Sep. 9th** ["Torture in Mexico is 'Out of Control' According to Amnesty International"](#)
["Ecuadorian Opposition Clamor for Referendum before Indefinite Reelection"](#)
["Argentina's First Bitcoin ATM Open for Business"](#)
- Sep. 11th** ["Chile's Terrorist Attacks Mount, Leave 15 Injured"](#)
["Classified US Documents Could Set the Record Straight on Chile's Military Coup"](#)
["Guatemalan Congress Says Adios to Controversial "Monsanto Law"™"](#)
- Sep. 13th** ["Cuba Pledges Healthcare Workers to Fight Ebola in West Africa"](#)
- Sep. 15th** ["The Discovery of Mexico's First Coca Plantation Could Upend the Cocaine Business"](#)
["The Inside Story of the Salvadoran Gang Truce"](#)
- Sep. 16th** ["Pro-Abortion Group Promotes Illegal Abortions in Mexico"](#)
- Sep. 22nd** ["Brazil's Supreme Court Strikes Down Censorship of Petrobras Corruption"](#)
- Sep. 23rd** ["Whatever Happened to Detained Student Protesters in Venezuela?"](#)
["Koreans Reveal Initial Infrastructure Needs for Honduran ZEDES"](#)
["Maduro Touts Special Economic Zones to Grease Wheels with China"](#)
- Sep. 24th** ["Mexico's Congress Drops Jail Time for Journalists from Child Protection Bill"](#)

The World At Large

(Africa & Asia, etc.)

- Sep. 1st** ["The Anniversary of KAL Flight 007 Prompts Another Look"](#)
- Sep. 3rd** ["Stolen Airplanes in Libya Raise Fear of 9/11-Style Attacks"](#)
["Iran's energy resources to pose challenges for Russia"](#)
- Sep. 5th** ["Women Kidnapped, Sold as Brides in India as Sex-Selection Abortion Kills So Many Girls"](#)
- Sep. 8th** ["Islamic Militants to Putin: We are Coming to Russia"](#)
- Sep. 9th** ["The Vietnam-India-Russia Military Ménage à Trois Leaves China in the Cold"](#)
- Sep. 10th** ["Philippine President Pushing to Create an Autonomous Muslim Region"](#)
- Sep. 11th** ["Russia fears eastward spread of 'jihadist cancer'"](#)
["Thailand's Military Rulers Are Reportedly Violating Human Rights"](#)
- Sep. 13th** ["Boko Haram Militants Have Surrounded a Major Nigerian City"](#)
["Human Rights Abuses Rampant in Myanmar While Fair Elections Remain Elusive"](#)
- Sep. 16th** ["South Sudan Risks Famine With Ban on Foreign Aid Workers"](#)
["We Are Laying Down Like Dogs': The Long Wait For Ebola Treatment in Liberia"](#)
- Sep. 18th** ["Asia-Pacific Adapting to Changes"](#)

The Middle East

- Sep. 1st** ["Bibi uses Gaza as wedge between Abbas, Hamas"](#)
["Shas Party spirals downward with Deri at helm"](#)
- Sep. 2nd** ["ISIS has released a second video, supposedly showing the beheading of another American journalist"](#)
["Why Abbas needs Hamas" "Fighting on Golan border puts Israel on the spot"](#)
- Sep. 3rd** ["Iraqi intellectuals start campaigns to end bloodshed"](#)
["Israeli Golan residents tell government to 'wake up'"](#)
- Sep. 4th** ["Cairo Blackout Causes Chaos Amid a Continued Energy Crisis"](#)
["Ignoring the Arab Peace Initiative could cost Bibi"](#)
- Sep. 5th** ["Threat of Islamic State quiets talk of Kirkuk's annexation"](#)
["Pushed aside by war, Israel's social justice agenda returns"](#)
- Sep. 8th** ["Iraqi clerics show support for minorities"](#)
["Time for Livni to leave Netanyahu's government"](#)
["Relief aid in Gaza failing to reach the most desperate"](#)
- Sep. 9th** ["Egypt Is Really Worried About Libyan Islamists"](#)
["Lebanese Central Bank pushes start-up investments"](#)
["New jihadist generation in Lebanon"](#)
- Sep. 10th** ["ISIS May Not be as Powerful as Feared, Says Canadian Journalist"](#)
["Egyptian tribes wary of new provincial boundaries"](#)

**Human Interest Stories,
Social Commentary, Culture, &
Arts**
(U.S. & International)

- Sep. 1st ["The Utah Polygamy Ruling and the Tale of the Slippery Slope"](#)
- Sep. 2nd ["PBS Airs Documentary Promoting Late-Term Abortion"](#)
["The Problem with Systemic Racism..."](#)
- Sep. 3rd ["Muslim anti-Israeli views are not European anti-Semitism"](#) ["Not playing the blame game on rape or nude photos—or foreign policy"](#)
- Sep. 9th ["Modern-day 'cultural Sinbad' spreads literature across Iraq"](#)
- Sep. 10th ["World Suicide Prevention Day: How Raising Awareness Helps One Tribal Member Heal"](#)
["Traditional elements shine in Iran's modern art"](#)
- Sep. 11th ["Islamophobia Makes a Comeback"](#)
["New York City Art Exhibit Exposes Horrors of Forced Abortions in China"](#)
["Jews suffer from Israeli policy, regardless of political affiliation"](#)
- Sep. 12th ["Forum to Document The Boarding School Experiences of American Indians"](#)
["Graffiti gets political in Yemen"](#)
- Sep. 15th ["Iraq's Artists Defy Extremists With Bows, Brushes And A Low Profile"](#)
- Sep. 17th ["Forbidden Education: The Dark Side of Traditional Schooling"](#)
["Here's why Americans don't think college is as important as they used to"](#)
["Ninth Annual Cherokee Art Market to Feature 150 Elite Artists"](#)
- Sep. 18th ["New Palestinian film shuns stereotypes"](#)
- Sep. 23rd ["Profiling Muslim Americans is Not Libertarian"](#)
- Sep. 24th ["Democracy is Not the Same as Freedom"](#)
["Cuba's Rise and Fall in Half an Hour"](#)



Religious News
(U.S. & International)

- Sep. 2nd ["Victoria Osteen and Her Joy-Robbing Brand of Cheap Christianity"](#)
["Mayor Ejects Man from Meeting over Pledge of Allegiance Refusal"](#)
- Sep. 4th ["Cult or slavery? Israel watches the strange case of Goel Ratzon"](#)
- Sep. 8th ["Pope and Ex-Israeli President Discuss 'UN of Religions'"](#)
["Qatar foreign minister believes abducted bishops still alive"](#)
- Sep. 9th ["Christians in Homs province fear jihadist advance"](#)
- Sep. 11th ["Religion: Crutch for the Crazy or Panacea for Peon and Prince?"](#)
["Ted Cruz Crashes Defense of Christians Summit"](#)
- Sep. 12th ["South Carolina pastor going to jail for too loud church services"](#)
- Sep. 15th ["Missionary Couple Heartbroken After Losing Baby in Stillbirth Learn to Trust God"](#) ["Jewish extremists try to change status quo at Al-Aqsa"](#) Political intrigue in Jerusalem.
- Sep. 16th ["Headscarf protests resume in Turkey"](#) [The headscarf has been a sore, highly politicized subject in Turkish politics for the last two decades. Hijabis — the women who prefer to wear the headscarf — suffered years of discrimination in higher education and government employment.]
- Sep. 18th ["Doubting Thomas: UK Archbishop unsure of God's existence"](#)
["Wary of Salafists, Egypt expands control over mosques"](#) ["European court warns Turkey to respect parents' convictions"](#)
- Sep. 19th ["Steve Springer, Evangelism and the Divine Conspiracy"](#)
- Sep. 22nd ["Faithful Rally Against Black Mass in Oklahoma City"](#)
["Putin: Defender of Christian Faith and Morality?"](#)
- Sep. 24th ["New York Cardinal Criticized for Participation in Parade With Homosexual Group"](#)



The Middle East
(Continued)

- Sep. 10th ["Iran ministry accused of targeting conservative news sites"](#)
["Fatah source: no chance of reconciliation with Hamas"](#)
["Israeli left looks to restore its image"](#)
["Hezbollah parliamentarian: We will defend Lebanon from IS"](#)
["The return of Lebanese 'self-security'"](#)
["Syrian rebels break uneasy peace in Golan Heights"](#)
- Sep. 11th ["Israeli academics to Netanyahu: Accept Arab Initiative"](#)
- Sep. 12th ["How much money goes to Israel's settlements each year?"](#)
["Bennett lays groundwork for premiership"](#) Israeli politics
- Sep. 15th ["With Temple Mount as flashpoint, violence rises in Jerusalem"](#)
- Sep. 16th ["Iraqi Kurds unhappy partners in Abadi's government"](#)
["Israel must prepare for third Lebanon war"](#)
["Netanyahu, Lapid both winners in defense budget quarrel"](#) Israeli politics
["Hamas debates direct talks with Israel"](#)
["Clashes escalate around Damascus"](#)
["Fight against IS helps PKK gain global legitimacy"](#)
- Sep. 17th ["Political rifts threaten Iraq's anti-IS coalition"](#)
["Number of Iraqi orphans, widows rising with conflict"](#)
["Rawabi still controversial among Palestinians"](#)
["With \\$550M in agricultural losses, Gazans going hungry"](#)
["Exiled Brotherhood officials may find home in Turkey"](#)
["Turkey's economic growth fizzles"](#)
- Sep. 18th ["The gentrification of Tel Aviv"](#)
["Bibi exhausts another political rival"](#) Israeli politics
["Hamas denies Qatar is pushing it to leave"](#)
["Party payments squeeze out Egypt's youth candidates"](#)
["Iranians Behind the 'Happy In Tehran' Video Sentenced to 91 Lashes"](#)
["Smugglers threw asylum seekers into Mediterranean"](#)
["PKK leader accuses Turkey of supporting IS, Jabhat al-Nusra"](#)
- Sep. 19th ["Syrian rebels deny truce deal with Islamic State"](#)
- Sep. 22nd ["Jewish New Year pilgrimage to Uman, an Israeli trend?"](#)
- Sep. 23rd ["The new politics of Israel's Minister of Facebook Affairs"](#)
- Sep. 24th ["Four reasons Hezbollah is concerned by Syrian militants"](#)

Science & Technology (U.S. & International)

Sep. 2nd ["Fake Cell Phone Towers Intercepting Android and iOS Devices"](#)
Sep. 6th ["Is this the future of weapons?"](#)
Sep. 8th ["Satellite data shows there hasn't been global warming for 215 months"](#)
Sep. 13th ["Dr. Willie Soon Tackles Global Warming Fallacies"](#) (Video included)
Sep. 15th ["With Ice Growing at Both Poles, Global Warming Theories Implode"](#)
Sep. 16th ["More Good News From the Oil Patch: Less Drilling, More Production"](#)
Sep. 17th ["Family's First App Makes Apple's List of Best New Apps for Kids"](#)
["NYT Reverses Course on German Renewables"](#)
Sep. 22nd ["Amid No Warming in 18 Years, 'People's Climate March' Ridiculed"](#)
Sep. 23rd ["NASA's Own Data Show August Was Not 'Warmest on Record'"](#)

Health & Medicine (U.S. & International)

Sep. 2nd ["CDC Whistleblower Admits Suppressing Information Regarding Vaccines and Autism"](#) Sep. 5th ["Billy Mills in Race with Kickapoo Tribe to Stem the Tide of Diabetes"](#)
Sep. 7th ["Leading Anti-Marijuana Academics Are Paid By Painkiller Drug Companies"](#)
Sep. 14th ["Grow4Vets free marijuana: Put a dent in number of veterans dying of suicide and overdoses"](#) (Audio & Transcript) A story about how marijuana can help veterans manage their PTSD.
Sep. 16th ["Decrying "Wishful Science" on NPR\(!\)"](#)
["Feds Say Cannabis Is Not Medicine While Holding The Patent on Cannabis as Medicine"](#) (Video & transcript)
Sep. 17th ["Congressional Bill to Fight Diabetes in Indian Country Introduced"](#)
Sep. 18th ["The "Certificate of Need" Con" "Former Drone Intelligence Analyst Speaks In Favor of Cannabis, Yoga, Meditation for PTSD Treatment"](#)

Media & Entertainment (U.S. & International)

Sep. 2nd ["CNN Anchors Unsure About Identity Of 4chan"](#)
Sep. 7th ["Peter Schiff: How the Media Deceived Me"](#)
Sep. 9th ["Tinseltown Goes to War"](#)
Sep. 10th ["Token liberal Michael Moore makes a harsh prediction about Obama's legacy"](#)
Sep. 11th ["Jay Carney Joins CNN...Is Anyone Surprised?"](#)
Sep. 12th ["MTV "16 and Pregnant" Couple Stands Strong Against Abortion"](#)
Sep. 16th ["The Glorification of Sports Thuggery"](#)
["Iraq's new YouTube satirist"](#)
Sep. 18th ["Miss America Organization Defends Kira Kazantsev Working at Planned Parenthood Abortion Biz"](#)
Sep. 24th ["Leaked Video Shows Reporters Taking Cash from Mexican Drug Lord"](#)
Sep. 25th ["Dinesh D'Souza Avoids Jail Time, Sentenced to 5 Years Probation for Campaign Finance Law Violation"](#)

"The After Math of Ice Water"

by Sis. Joanna Works,

**Thank you for
the outpouring
of support.**



(Image from ALSA's Ice Bucket webpage.)

Throughout the month of August the ALS awareness & fundraiser "Ice Bucket Challenge" went viral. You may read an introduction to this subject in our last newsletter [here](#).

The money raised: "The ALS Association received over \$100 million within 30 days and has been busy convening key stakeholder groups to gain input as to how this money will be invested in the organization's mission to find treatments and a cure for the disease." Says ALSA on one of their last blog posts about the challenge, you can read that post [here](#).

Tragedies: In our previous article we shared information regarding ALSA's problematic ethics and organizations that four known research groups & trials that do ethical stem cell research, these researchers are looking for cures for ALS and other diseases. We didn't have any information on how much these researches had benefited from the Ice bucket challenge, the answer to this query is still unknown at this time.

Due to limited time and space we were only briefly able to cover some of the stunts & injuries associated with the Ice Bucket challenge, only mentioning a boy in Scotland but failed to include a link to that story,

you may read about that in this Mirror article ["Teenager drowns in disused quarry 'after taking Ice Bucket Challenge'"](#)

There were a few death stories & videos being floated around the internet that are fake, however there has been some very serious stories, the Washington Post published an article on this subject on August 18th, ["Ice bucket challenge participants keep getting hurt"](#)

"A Belgium man was seriously injured after having nearly 400 gallons of water dumped on him by a fire-fighting plane – as part of a catastrophically unsuccessful ice bucket challenge." Reported Independent on August 28th Read it [here](#).

Furthermore Main Stream Media reported when four firefighters were injured in an Ice Bucket Challenge gone wrong on August 22nd, tragically one of those firefighters injured died on September 20th. ["Firefighter electrocuted in Kentucky ice bucket challenge accident has died"](#)

The Back Lash: As with any thing that receives much attention on the internet there will be back lash, just as with many other charities some of the back lash comes in the form of how the organization chooses to spend the money donated to them. ["Is The ALS Ice Bucket Challenge Just Funding Millionaires To Become Even Richer?"](#) Others bock at the challenge because of drought conditions in California, and others because of ALSA using animal testing in their research. You can read an article on that [here](#). And ["10 ALS ice bucket challenge haters"](#) in case you wanted a more complete list.

Also there's this gem, which tears into the online charity movement ["The ice-bucket challenge is as much vanity as charity"](#)
Now while the few friends and acquaintances I know who took part in the Ice Bucket Challenge are actually some of the most humble people I'm blessed to know, the concept of these kind of video charity does make me wonder what ever happened to not letting the left hand know what the right hand is doing? ("But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." Matthew 6:3)

Fizzing Out: All things come to an end, wither you think it's good or not. As cooler weather sweeps away the last days of Summer dumping ice water on your head is not a very compelling idea. Just as inevitable as the ending of a fad is the mocking to clue people in that it is indeed going out of style. [“Seven Things That Happen When Something Goes Viral”](#) To be fare this video by BlimyCow is mocking the mass responses to viral material and nature of the internet more than the Ice Bucket Challenge, but it certainly presented itself as an easy target for parody having been so massively popular and receiving both positive & negative reports.

ALS Marchs On: While the majority of the people who took part in the challenge are able to move forward with the next big thing, or just the roller coaster they call life, for some people ALS IS part of their roller coaster ride. Has life changed for them? What do they have to look forward to as the Ice Bucket Challenge fades out of view? They have to keep keeping on, hoping and praying that some form of treatment will come down the pike before it is too late for them or their loved one. One of the links I gave in our last article was from a wife of a man with ALS on what an encouragement the Ice Bucket Challenge had been for her and her family. ALS is a rare disease in the numbers game with few people aware of it or those suffering from it, or working on research specifically for ALS so having the spot light even for a little while seemed have lifted some of the emotional burden. So I would like to share one of her more resent posts (Sep. 4th) [“Backstory: My Dance with Steve”](#) Just having a moment with her husband out of his wheel chair is a miracle.

About That Research: There are quite a few things that could be said about medical research, drug companies, and politics, that however is a book for another time for a more studied up writer then myself. I do however feel that I need to clear up some statements from the last article. Very frequently when Christian or other pro-life articles take on a subject related to stem cell research it may come off as if all stem cell research involves the remains of aborted babies and therefore all stem cell research is bad. This problem was brought to my attention by a reader of last month's article. I'd like to clarify that not all stem cell research is unethical. In fact the four alternatives to ALSA that was listed in our last article were for Adult stem cell research. What's the difference, you may ask. Well;

“Unlike embryonic stem cells, the use of adult stem cells in research and therapy is not controversial because the production of adult stem cells does not require the destruction of an embryo. Adult stem cells can be isolated from a tissue sample obtained from an adult.

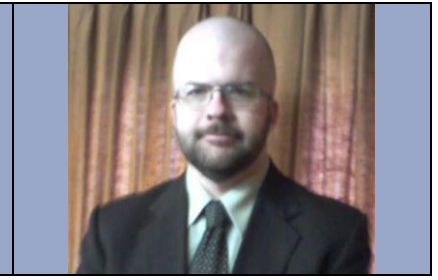
They have mainly been studied in humans and model organisms such as mice and rats.”

http://www.sciencedaily.com/articles/a/adult_stem_cell.htm

For more information on how these stem cells are harvested I suggest this link <http://stemcell.childrenshospital.org/about-stem-cells/adult-somatic-stem-cells-101/where-do-we-get-adult-stem-cells/>

I would have also liked to take a look at “alternative” medicine & research processes, politics & findings, those however will have to wait for another time. Perhaps in next month's issue.

**Sermon: “Two
or Three
Witnesses”
by Bro. David Green**



“One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established. If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him that which is wrong; Then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days; And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you.” (Deuteronomy 19:15-19)

I love the law of God! How we could learn so much from it, not only as individuals but as a church and even as a country! We find here a law that nobody will be accused by one witness. It had to be at the mouth of two or three witnesses that the matter would be established. In this law, there was also a part dealing with false witnesses. If someone gave a false witness, in other words, told some big tale that was not true (also known as a lie), then that witness would get the punishment that the other person would have gotten if the tale were true. Example: If I accused someone of murder, and it was false, then I would be punished for my lies, and given the penalty that a murderer should get.

This would have been the case, whether the lie discovered before or after the penalty was carried out on the accused. And, it would have been the case whether there were one false witness or many. *“Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any person to cause him to die.”* (Numbers 35:30) It was absolutely forbidden that any case would be tried with only one witness. And that is to protect the innocent. If there were only one person who witnessed the crime, that would not be enough to grant the death penalty.

“If there be found among you, within any of thy gates which the LORD thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the LORD thy God, in transgressing his covenant, And hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded; And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and enquired diligently, and, behold, it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel: Then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones, till they die. At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So thou shalt put the evil away from among you.” (Deuteronomy 17:2-7)

Again, here are matters involving the death penalty. Notice here we still find the rule involving two or three witnesses, but also note that *“The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death and afterward the hands of all the people....”* This seems to me that it was another deterrent to keep false witnesses away.

The accusers had to be the first to carry out the punishment for the crime.

“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” (Matthew 18:15-18)

When it comes to cases involving personal matters in the church, the process is the same. Nobody can bring such a personal accusation before the church until it is established by two or three witnesses. Far too often, things get escalated to the church before the time is proper and it may have just been some misunderstanding. We need to take proper care to follow the requirements found here. Before you make an accusation against some brother or sister public, make sure it is not just you. Maybe you heard that person wrong, or misunderstood. Whatever the case, if it must be brought before the church, let it be by two or three witnesses!

“Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.” (1 Timothy 5:17-19)
Here is the proper method given by Holy Scripture for dealing with accusations against elders. Read it again: “Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.” Notice, the accusation must be supported by two or three credible witnesses and the accusers must face the accused. After all, it is a very serious thing to bring an accusation against the Lord’s man....the reputation of a minister is a serious thing.

I am amazed at how people will take any little bit of gossip as the gospel truth when it comes to some pastors or missionaries. This business of listening and telling some false thing without following this method is absolutely horrible!

Remember, God’s people ought to be treated innocent unless proven guilty and that only after the prescribed method here. It carries a lot of scandal for the man of God to be charged with some sin even if he is later cleared of that accusation. We are told here to not even receive the accusation but before two or three witnesses. Don’t even listen to it! And if you hear of it in such a matter other than the prescribed method, don’t repeat it. Even then, great care should be taken when speaking of the matter.

“Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,” (Matthew 26:59-60)

The accusers of our Lord were many (more than one), yet they were false. I bring this passage up to say we need to be very careful of what sort the “two or three” witnesses are against the Lord’s people. I am amazed how some people will take the word of a couple of men they do not know very well (if at all) against a man they have known for years. Most usually this happens with missionaries, but really it could happen to any of God’s men. Be careful who you believe.

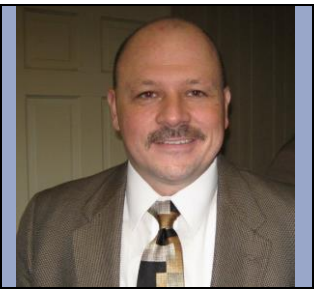
“Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.” (Jeremiah 18:18)

Satan was able to come up with false witnesses against Jeremiah and against our Lord. He will do the same to God’s men today. Anyone who is working for the Lord is a target for Satan’s false accusations.

CONCLUSION *“Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the LORD.”* (Leviticus 19:16)

Let us be very careful what we do with stories we hear about God’s people, lest we become guilty of gossip and spreading lies. Being a talebearer among the people of God is a horrible sin! Don’t listen to gossip, and certainly do not spread it!

Ecclesiastes 9:18
“...Destroyeth Much Good”
by Bro. Jeff Short



“Wisdom is better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good.” ~ Ecclesiastes 9:18

Solomon has highly esteemed wisdom in the book of Proverbs as well as in the book of Ecclesiastes. He has deemed it the choicest of treasures, more worthy to be diligently sought after than gold and silver hidden in a field. Solomon states, *“Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding”* (Proverbs 4:7). Of all pursuits to consume our time, wisdom is by far the greatest. We should strive to acquire wisdom above all else.

Wisdom can accomplish much good. It is “an ornament of grace” to them that possess it. The preacher says in our text, *“Wisdom is better than weapons of war.”* The greatness and safety of a city does not lie only in their machinery of defense. *“There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength”* (Psalm 33:16-17). He tells us that the race is not always won by the fastest, nor is it always the strongest that prevail in battle. Wisdom far excels all these carnal things. However, in our text, Solomon contrasts the good of wisdom with the destruction of sin for *“one sinner destroyeth much good.”* Let us consider briefly some of the destructions of sin.

Firstly, a sinner destroys himself. Countless millions live lives of sin, “Whose end is destruction.” They have never repented. They have never believed in Jesus Christ. Jesus said, *“If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins,”* and *“he that believeth not is condemned already.”* In some cases, they have gained the whole world and lost their own souls.

A life of sin is a wasted life that ultimately destroys itself. Do you realize the ruinous power of sin? Whatever good may be done is destroyed by the sin in your life. Outside of Christ, you cannot do any good works, no matter what your intentions might be. The Bible says, *“So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God”* (Romans 8:8). The Word tells us *“without faith it is impossible to please him”* and *“whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”* You may be kind to your family and neighbors. You may be benevolent toward the downcast. You may volunteer your time to help the sick and needy. You may attend church and even give offerings. With all your good works, you may think that you are building up a good account, but you are going to find that *“But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God: Who will render to every man according to his deeds”* (Romans 2:5-6). All your works that seemed good are destroyed.

Secondly, a sinner destroys others. There may be much good intended and attempted by many of the righteous, *“but one sinner destroyeth*

much good." "A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends. A violent man enticeth his neighbour, and leadeth him into the way that is not good" (Proverbs 16:28-29). A sinner in the congregation destroys and hinders the good efforts of all. A sinner in the church will sew discord, tale-bear, and lead many astray. They are an ungodly example with their fleshly lives. They are always causing divisions and thwart the good desires of God's people. They bring reproach on the body and her head, Christ. They are much like Achan of old who brought wrath on all Israel. "Did not Achan the son of Zerah commit a trespass in the accursed thing, and wrath fell on all the congregation of Israel? and that man perished not alone in his iniquity" (Joshua 22:20).

The church is required to cleanse itself of iniquity by purging out the old leaven. "But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (I Corinthians 5:13). The Lord's church must practice discipline and exclusion if necessary. The carnal Christians that are only interested in "nickels and noses" will shy away from such doctrine. Carnal reasoning says, "This one puts much money into the church. This one has the largest family. This one has a lot of influence in the community. Can we not just tolerate them and not rock the boat?" The answer is, "No!"

The truth is, the church cannot afford to keep such a one in the body for "one sinner destroyeth much good." Do not suffer Jezebel to teach others to sin. Put her out. One sinner in the body will destroy the good name of the Church and erode your good influence by their bad example. The church cannot be just like the world. How much sin is in the world? "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness" (I John 5:19). We cannot run with the world and hope to influence them for good for "one sinner destroyeth much good." We must follow the Word, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate" (II Corinthians 6:17). The world needs to see a holy church with holy Christians that are dedicated to give Christ glory with their lives. "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen" (Ephesians 3:21).



"A Two-edged Sword In Their Hand"

by Bro. Timothy Works



Text: Psalm 149- 1 Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints.
 2 Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.
 3 Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.
 4 For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.
 5 Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds.
 6 Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand;
 7 To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;
 8 To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;
 9 To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the Lord.

Here we see what the Psalmist calls the "honor" of God's saints (1926 ornament or sp, excellency)

"this honour have all his saints." (Vs. 9 of text)

First of all let us notice the two-edged sword:

Romans 13:4 "For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he (power, ruler, one in authority) beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister (one who administers) of God, a revenger to execute (carry out) wrath upon him that doeth evil."

So the sword is seen not only as the instrument of power but the symbol of that power/authority.

Now let us see what the New Testament says about our sword.

Ephesians 6:17 "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:"

Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

"To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;" (Vs. 7 of text)

We are given authority in this life not to literally punish with the sword (as Catholicism sought to do) but by the Word of God to warn the unbelievers of the error and consequences of their sin and unbelief and to exhort them to faith. ("Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." - II Corinthians 5:17-20)

"To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;" (Vs. 8 of text)

In Matthew 18:18 Jesus gave to His Church the power/authority to bind & loose. The Assembly of Saints, The House of God, the Church of the living God (I Tim 3:15) is called the pillar and ground of the truth. ("They word is truth" John 17:17)

The Authority of the LORD's New Testament church, when it comes to the handling of, and carrying out (executing- executive authority) the commands of The Scripture exceeds that of any man made government or power on earth. Greater than that of Kings and nobles. "7 *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.* 8 *And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.* 9 *And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.* 10 *And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.* 11 *And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."*

Remember, when you, as a believer and as a member of one of Christ's churches, speak to any one the Scriptures, the Word of God, you are wielding the two-edged sword of power, to save or to destroy- judge. The Power of God backs everything you say!

I John 2:20-21 & 27 "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.... But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

I John 4:4-6 "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."

John 8:47 "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God."

John 15:20 "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also."

Acts 4:18-20 "And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

Acts 5:28-29 "Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." We have an unction or anointing from God (The Holy Spirit) which teaches, empowers, and leads us.

Not only do we have power/authority to bind people, even kings and nobles, to the word but verse 9 continues the thought: "To execute (carry out) upon them the judgment written" That is, to warn them what the consequences will be should they choose not to obey. God will not be mocked, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Galatians 6:7 That is our "honor" in this life and in the judgment to come we shall be present and exercise some role in that judgment.

Hebrews 9:27 "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:"

I Corinthians 6:1-5 "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we

shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?" Those that we warned in this life we will judge in the judgment in the next! God will back what you said and those that mocked you and made fun of you and persecuted you for the "words" sake will face you and be judged by you and the Word of God which you spoke to them.

"This honor have all the saints" (Vs. 9 of text)

"Praise ye the LORD!"

Proverbs 18:17 "...Seemeth Just..."

by Bro. Jeff Short

"He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him" ~ Proverbs 18:17

Though it should not be surprising, sometimes I am struck by how simple and profound Scripture is. Though Solomon refers to the "dark sayings" (Proverbs 1:6) of the wise, Scripture often speaks in very practical common man sort of terms. Consider many of the parables of Jesus; how He spoke of sowing seed, wheat in the field, trees, bread, etc. These plain words transcend culture and time. In modern day America, we have no problem understanding sowing seed even though it was spoken about in the first century by a Jew in Israel.

I am not saying that everyone understands all the spiritual import of such words, but the pictures used are very accessible because they speak to the common human experience. So, the Bible is not some dark, enigmatic ancient writing, though it is not without deep passages (2 Peter 3:16). It is ever fresh and relevant and sufficiently clear. Perhaps some other time it would be good to consider the perspicuity of Scripture, however let us now return to the text before us.


Our text is likewise plain and relevant. It obviously applies to proper forms of due process, e.g. governmental and legal proceedings, judicious proceedings within a church (Matthew 18; 1 Corinthians 6), etc. The verse refers to being careful to hear both sides of an argument. When a man first states his own case and that is all that is on the table, he seems to be right. This is generally true for a number of reasons. A couple of reasons for this are that one side of the story is not usually the whole story and additional information can throw new light on the situation, also a person will typically plead their own case with much pathos and paint themselves in a good light (this is not necessarily with a deliberate intention to deceive).

We must remember that this text is not just good advice from a smart and experienced fellow—this is the inspired Word of God. Scripture is to be applied neither arbitrarily nor unilaterally. Particularly for a Christian in some position of authority, we are to seek justice whether in a civil deliberation on a small or large scale, or within a church body, or within a corporation, or wherever else, and part of seeking such justice means taking all steps to ensure that as much as possible the whole matter is disclosed. To do otherwise is to be a shameful fool: "**He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him**" (Proverbs 18:13). This was the folly and shame of Potiphar when Joseph was accused before him. "And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled" (Genesis 39:19). He acted on the words of his wife without any other input and did a terrible injustice to Joseph.

The second part of the verse takes the concept further—“*but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.*” The neighbor here could be one named in the suit, but that does not have to be the case. He may just be an objective participant or peer. The neighbor’s role is that he “*searcheth*” the first man’s claims. This word comes from the Hebrew *chaquar*, which primarily signifies to penetrate, to search, to search out, to examine. This word is used to speak of mining in the earth (Job 28:1-3), searching and exploring a land (Judges 18:2), tasting and trying drink (Proverbs 23:20). William Wilson said of this word, “The general import seems to be, to examine with pains, care, and accuracy, in order to make a full and clear discovery, or a complete, exact calculation” (Old Testament Word Studies, p. 373). The usage of the word here seems clear, when a man states his case, the matter is to be examined thoroughly and discovered, and the claimant is to be subject to cross-examination. If we go back to the example of Joseph, this is exactly what did not take place—the matter was not fully discovered and the accuser was not cross-examined.

A consistent application of this verse would likely curtail many frivolous charges that are put forth today. If a person knew their claim would be judiciously examined and they themselves would be subject to a serious cross-examination, they would be much less likely to make false charges or ones they cannot substantiate. In biblical language, such an accuser is called a false witness. The Lord gave this process for uncovering and dealing with a false witness (Deuteronomy 19:16-19). Despite the problems of our country’s legal system, this principle is still effective when followed. Additionally, being faithful to this principle in the church would curb many of the problems that are so scandalous before the world and bring a reproach upon the gospel. Unfortunately, in this matter it is often true that “*the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light*” (Luke 16:8).

There are many applications of this passage but space and time will not now permit delving further into its riches. At least one application would be how we should respond when someone does not “take our word for it.” In other words, we should not be offended when someone wants to hear all sides and not just take action based on our report. In this circumstance, they are being more biblical than we if we are offended that the other side is inquired of.

<p><i>“The USA Needs Missionaries”</i> by Bro. Stephen McCool Sr.</p>	
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“Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures. And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”

We see here what is commonly called The Great Commission. It is in fact the orders our Lord gave to His Apostles, the first members/leaders of the first church, for them to do and to pass down to the churches that were to come. It is this Great Commission that we send missionaries into other nations to reap what the Lord has sown and that is now ready for the harvest. Yet for many of us we have forgotten our own “backyard”. The United States of America has been used of God for almost 200 years to be the nation to send more gospel missionaries around the world than any nation in history. But in the last 100 years there has been a gradual decline of missionary work in our own land.

Our Lord instructed us to “Preach in His name among all nations,

beginning at Jerusalem.” Our Jerusalem is the town in which we live in, it is our county, our state, and our nation. And for far too long we Baptist have taken it for granted that our nation was not in need of “home” missionaries. But look at us now! Here we stand as one of the most, if not the most, morally corrupt nations since the days before the flood. Here we stand in a nation that has and is clearly and purposely turning their backs on God. God and His commandments that our once great nation was founded on.

We, as Bible believing Baptist have become so concerned with the souls of those in other nations have, in most cases, totally forgotten about our own family, friends, and neighbors. For the sake of believing in an all Sovereign God we have forsaken His commandment to spread His Gospel to our Jerusalem.

Now all that being said. We also have to realize that we are living in the last days. Paul told us in II Thessalonians 2:3 “*Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.*” There will be a “falling away” from the truth before our Lord returns. Can we not see it now!

Now I believe Paul is referring to a falling away from the truth by the saints. Not those non-believers, but those who are truly the children of God. Notice who Paul is writing this letter to. In verse one he addresses this chapter to the “brethren”. So he is writing to his brothers in Christ. So what has happened here in our nation? I believe we are seeing a falling away from the truth by the saints of God. Look at our churches? I know in the church I grew up there were about 18-20 in our youth group. The Lord saved a dozen or so children from 9, 10, 11, 12 years old back then. Yet I am the only one of that group that is still a part of a church that teaches the Doctrine of Grace. I see other churches around this country that have seen the same thing. The young people are taught the truth through out their childhood and as soon as they get away from the church and the truth they fall away into the doctrines of the worldly churches out there or they fall out of church all together. What or is there a fix for this falling away? All we can do is to follow the commandment our Lord gave to Peter in John 21:15-17 “*Feed my sheep*” and then in John 21:19, 22 “*Follow me*”. Remember it is God who adds the increase to His church not us or anyone else but God. If He has planned to grow a certain church that is His business. If His plans are for a certain church to remain small and pastor-less until our Lord’s return that is His business as well. It is our job to follow His commandment of preaching the Gospel and teaching the sheep.

Praise ye the Lord!!!

The Forum: “Culture & Discernment”

Question 1: *What are some of the differences between Christian culture in general (the collective ideas, view of history, arts, books, media, politics etc of people claiming to be Christian) and Baptist culture in your country? Are there certain areas that Baptist Christian culture lean more towards general rather THEN Biblical Principle & truth?*

Bro. Curtis A. Pugh (Missionary to Poteau, Oklahoma): Our small town of about 8,500 people has 3 Southern Baptist churches, 2 Freewill Baptist churches, 1 Baptist Bible Fellowship-type church, one Primitive Baptist church and our mission work which is of course independent landmark sovereign grace missionary Baptist. Besides the Baptists there are 2 Assemblies of God, and a half-dozen or more independent Pentecostal and Charismatic groups as well as two Pentecostal Holiness (oneness) churches. In addition to these there is a Roman Catholic church, an Episcopal church, a Presbyterian church, a Nazarene church, a Methodist church, and three Campbellite groups (First Christian and two Church of Christ groups). Besides these our town has a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses and a Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day

Saints (Mormon). In addition to these, if you drive no more than three miles north south and east there are more churches to be found – most of them Baptist churches (to the west of our town is “the world's highest hill” - no churches up there).

If we define Christian culture as the beliefs and practices of those who identify as Christians, other than differences in church government, mode of baptism, purpose of baptism, and a few other things, if you put all the church members in this town in a bag, shook them up, and after being blindfolded reached in and drew one out, you couldn't tell much difference. Talking to a sampling of these church members reveals that in their thinking just about everybody is saved and going to heaven. Well, perhaps except the few atheists, pagans, and various practitioners occult religions. But even then, God gives everybody a chance to be saved, I have been told.

Around here drugs, drunkenness and debauchery are also commonplace. Since our Sunday meetings begin at 1:00 PM and I leave home at 11:30 AM for our meeting place I have noticed as I drive by that the Walmart parking lot is about as full during the 11:00 hour (church time for most folk) as it is any other day of the week. The lakes, rivers and old strip pits are popular with fishermen and boaters. The mountain trails are busy with ATV traffic and the National Forrest equestrian trails are frequented on Sundays by folk on horseback.

Most all these are “God-fearing-folk” in their own minds. Out of Oklahoma's 77 counties ours is the 17th from the top in gang-related activities. Because of opposition from national atheist groups, our county commissioners decided not to allow the ten commandments to be placed on our courthouse lawn. So one of the town's 4 banks “donated” a corner of their lot and two tombstone-like monuments inscribed with the ten commandments are there – complete with lights at night. Almost every church building has signs with “God's Ten Commandments” displayed out front as well as many businesses and even a significant number of cars and pickup trucks. I fear some people – perhaps many of them – think that because they have not overtly broken at least most of the ten, they are good enough to go to heaven when they die. At least they hope so. The high school's cheerleaders who appear at pep rallies and ball games clad in seductive costumes are nearly all “Christians” and often Baptists.

In such a church-going town, we must conclude that the culture of most “Christians” is not much different than that of everybody else. The same books, TV, movies, music, sports, recreational activities and computer activities are “enjoyed” by just about everybody. Our town also has three indoor theaters and a drive in theater as well. A small Tribal owned casino is here and less than 20 miles away a Tribal owned hotel-casino-resort is located. These two places are frequented by locals as well as out-of-town folk. And many of these people are identified as Baptists.

Biblical Baptist culture is quite different. The Scriptures teach us to abstain from evil every time it makes an appearance (1 Thessalonians 5:22). Biblical Baptists understand that they are to dress modestly. This understanding should keep them from wearing immodest clothing and even from participating in certain activities such as mixed swimming and indecent sports attire. In my opinion the local culture does not reflect that this understanding is practiced by those professing to be Christians. The Bible teaches that true Christians will live differently, that churches are to be pure and exercise discipline over their members. Even the Baptists hereabouts, as far as I can learn, have not practiced church discipline in many years.

Compromise and lack of separation has just about done away with true Christian culture if it ever existed here. Racially, there is a predominance of Europeans (White folks) with smaller numbers of American Indians, African Americans and Latinos. For the most part the Latinos who want to attend churches want to attend ones that hold services in Spanish. Many of the Choctaw Indians hereabouts want to attend segregated

Indian churches that cling to some old traditions such as Choctaw foods, singing in Choctaw, etc. even though most do not speak or understand the Choctaw language. Since the nearest “Indian church” is 25 or so miles away, few attend anywhere. (Since I believe that segregated churches are contrary to the New Testament pattern and refuse to work toward an Indian-only church, our mission work is not appreciated by many of my fellow Tribal members. And White Baptists both SBC and independent are all too willing to support preachers and “missionaries” whose work is the establishment of Indian-only camps, churches, VBS session, gospel singings, etc.) There is not an African American church in our town either, the nearest being about 20 miles away and so not many of that ethnic group attend church.

I want to believe that in this slumgullian stew of religion/culture there are some who really know the Lord. I have met a few who seem to understand and appreciate the truth. Every now and then the radio broadcast we sponsor is complimented in my hearing. More frequently those who read the Berea Baptist Banner (mostly Choctaw Tribal members and their spouses) express agreement and appreciation for the paper and certain articles in particular. But will these people take a stand and come out from the false churches? So far the mishmash of culture, tradition, family ties and secret lodge ties as well as peer pressure have kept any that I know about from obeying the Bible's call to separation. So it would seem to me that what God's children in this area need is a good dose of biblical separation and I think that will only come about if God is pleased to grant it and bring it to pass through the faithful preaching and teaching of His Word – all of it – not just the popular free-will, man-pleasing parts and mistaken interpretations of it. Pray for our town and county and our efforts here, please!

Answered jointly by Bro. Raul Envedi & Bro. Aurel Miclea jr. (Pastor & Missionary Bosca, Romania): Christian culture in general can be found in the particular cultures of all European countries. In some countries the Catholic culture prevails, in others the Protestant, and in countries like Romania, Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, Ukraine or Russia the Eastern Orthodox church influenced the culture. I do not think we could talk about a Baptist culture in Romania, or the rest of Europe for that matter. The Baptists were persecuted for the most part of their history, and in Romania we have been enjoying religious freedom only since 1989, when the Communist regime led by Ceausescu was overthrown. Beside the persecutions, Baptists were always a minority in Romania. If we take into account all those that call themselves Baptists, they amount to less than 1% of the population, which is insufficient to influence the culture of a country. So, we should rather talk about Baptist positions or principles influencing the society, rather than a Baptist culture. Sadly, the Union Baptists, being actively involved at the present in the ecumenical movement, do their best to resemble the other denominations, to the point that they hold little in common with their predecessors of a few generations ago. However, if we look at the historical positions of Baptists in Romania (with whom we, as a church identify), several principles stand out:

1- Baptists believe the 'Sola Scriptura' principle and are serious about putting it into practice. The 'Church Tradition' has no authority for them, and they always question and test all traditions and innovations with the Bible. The Scriptures are the final authority in matters of church organization and government as well as in the life of each believer. Baptists, for everything they believe and practice, they must have chapter and verse. The church has only two ordinances, both founded by Jesus Christ: Baptism and the Lord's Supper; Both ordinances are just symbols.

2- Priesthood of all believers - No need for a mediator (priest) or priestly class to mediate the relationship between God and the believer. Scripture shows only one mediator, Jesus Christ.

3- Baptists believe in freedom of conscience and religion. It is not morally and ethically, in front of God or in front of the people for

someone to impose a religion or a belief upon others. Each individual is responsible before God for what he believes (or does not believe) and for the way he lives his life. Baptists believe in and advocate for religious freedom, not only for themselves, but for all people / religions / religious groups, as long as they do not act antisocially. According to Lord Christ, those who persecute others do not know Him, nor the Father.

4- Baptists believe in the total separation between the church and the state. They pay what they owe authorities as citizens of the state where they live, and obey the laws. They do not claim salaries for their ministers from the public budget, do not want the state's money, and other such benefits. Baptists believe, unlike the churches that are financed by the state, that the expenditures of each church must be met by their membership, not by public money.

5- Our kind of Baptists do not accept the abstract concept of the universal Church, because it destroys the autonomy and independence of local church and opens wide the door to the Ecumenical global project. Ecumenism leads to loss of identity, chaos of doctrine, and the perversion of the two ordinances which are left by the Lord to his congregation - baptism and the Lord's Supper. The baptism is perverted when alien immersions are accepted and the Lord's Supper is perverted by the practice of open communion.

Question 2: *What are the greatest challenges facing God's little ones in your county? Are there legal & biblical avenues believers should be taking in your country to combat these challenges?*

Bro. Raul Envedi & Bro. Aurel Miclea jr.: Right now we're enjoying the greatest religious freedom and freedom of speech that Romania has ever known in its history. We don't know how much this will last, but we face no persecutions from the State. The greatest peril in times of freedom is compromise. Compromise with a 'generous' State, that wants to pay your ministers, help you build church buildings, etc. Compromise with the ecumenical movement that will bring all churches together and guarantees a kind of success and promises to be the future of Christianity. Freedom brings comfort, to the point where very few will be willing to give it up and stand for freedom and truth. The perils now come more from within than from those outside.

"Pure Hearts"

by Bro. Dr. M. J. Seymour, Sr.

It is written: "purify your hearts, ye double minded." (James 4:8) The Greek word translated "purify" in this passage means to purge of all uncleanness by means of sacrifice. Believers are encouraged by the Apostle James to draw nigh unto God in absolute submission. This drawing near in submission requires one to purge his heart of all uncleanness even to the point of self-sacrifice. One cannot draw nigh into the presence of a Holy God if the intents of his heart are not honorable and submissive. A pure heart requires holiness, and holiness requires a singleness of mind to be obedient unto God at all costs.

Too often churchgoers treat God as a can of snuff. It is as if they keep Him in a little can in their back pocket until the urge hits them; then they put a little pinch of God in their lips for a sweet taste of holiness. When their pleasures are filled and they have had enough of that for now, they spit Him out until they feel the urge again. But, they will be sure not to dip around those folks it may offend, out of a show of respect. They only want to use God when it suits their convenience and desires; but they flaunt a proud ring imprinted upon the back pocket that all might see what MANLY dippers they are.

All of the Scriptures from Genesis through Revelation cry out against this masquerading hypocrisy. It is a stench in the nostrils of God, and it

is an abomination against His holy nature. The Judge of all heaven and earth will not hold guiltless those who attempt to deceive themselves and others with their dipping sanctimonious pretenses. One may pretend if he dares but know that he will be put on trial by the Chief Cross-Examiner. If the eternal Judge does not see the holiness of the red blood of the Lamb slain on the Cross of Calvary, the hypocrite shall clearly be found guilty of impurity of heart.

True believers cannot be double-minded. That is, the spiritual heart of the new creature within the child of God cannot by nature be happy set upon the things of the world and the things of heaven at the same time. The believer must die to self and be filled with Jesus Christ to find his heart's rightful place. He must become inwardly in the likeness of the Master. He must submit to God, resist the devil, draw nigh to God, cleanse the hands, and sacrificially purify the heart. A clean, purified heart will be opposed to all that is unclean.

"Hasty Word"

by Bro. Todd Bryant

"Do you see a man hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him" – Proverbs 29:20

We all know the type – the man who constantly shoots off at the mouth without thinking. And certainly, we've all been guilty of just such actions. However, a child of God should be growing in maturity. And, one of the marks of maturity is to handle our words with wisdom. Even in troublesome situations, there is a proper way to handle ourselves. What we may call "standing up for God", God may judge to be arrogant or self-serving. What we may call "contending for the faith", God may judge to be a gross misrepresentation of His character, as our Father. Don't misunderstand; we certainly must always be willing to stand up for the truth. However, there is a right and proper way to do this. We must stand in a way that is in accordance with God's holy character.

Paul was clearly a man that stood up for God and His Word. Yet, Paul's instruction to the church at Colosse was, *"Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one"* (Colossians 4:6). He lived this. A casual reading of the history of Paul's ministry in the Book of Acts will show forth speech full of grace. As he instructed the Ephesian saints, so Paul sought to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). We should do the same.

One of the marks of maturity in the faith is the ability to hold one's tongue. James said, *"If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body"* (James 3:2). In a society where being outspoken seems to be commended, this can certainly be difficult. Does that outspoken obnoxious person sometimes get their way? Sadly, the answer is yes. But, this doesn't give a child of God the right to violate God's Word and misrepresent His character.

In a generation of outspoken religionists, Jesus said, *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God"* (Matthew 5:9). This is not a suggestion for the people of God. This is a description of the people of God. And, if we look back through history since Jesus first established His church, we see a meek, quiet people that sought to share the love of Jesus through the Gospel. We do not find a loud, arrogant group. These people were "called sons of God". Let us seek to be recognized in such a way.

One of the hardest things to do as a child of God is to fight the temptation to conform to society's standards. While our society may promote and even glorify outspokenness, let us do our best to properly represent our Heavenly Father by conforming to His character and His Word.

Labor In Love

"My name is Barbara Robinson, I am a member of the Davenport Baptist Church in Davenport, WA. and a music teacher."

What drew you towards teaching music?

"I was blessed with godly music teachers who were wonderful encouragers and who helped me get through some very tough times in my young life. They found the gift of singing that God gave me and encouraged me to use it. This inspired me to do the same...teach music so that I might be a blessing in young people's lives."

How long have you been a Music teacher?

"Officially, I have been a teacher for 18 years. BUT! I taught others how to play guitar when I was a teenager (35+ years ago)."

Where do you teach at, do you teach any other subjects?

"I had previously been a contracted music teacher (98-09) in different District, but now I am a substitute music teacher for Spokane Public School District, and for Davenport School District. SPS has 35 elementary schools, and DSD has 1 elementary, 1 middle and 1 high school. For DSD I substitute for all subjects and grades. Currently I teach only music for SPS."

What kind of schooling/certification process did you have to go through?

"To get my teaching degree/license I had to get a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education. This took 6 years. I also have a Master's Degree for K-6 Music Education, which took 2 more years. I have to get 150 clock hours or 15 college credits every 5 years to keep my credentials."

What have been your greatest challenges as a teacher?

"The biggest hurdle for me is acquiring the clock hours. When ever a good workshop is available I am the one working for the teacher who is able to attend it."

What are some of the political hurtles or government regulations you've dealt with if any?

"My greatest challenges as a teacher are keeping my mouth shut about how politically influenced education has become and about the illogical current teaching (Common Core) curriculum! I also have to be silent about my faith...unless a student asks me about it. The latest government regulations, which substitutes do not have to worry about, is the new evaluation system. This makes it feel like teachers are teaching towards nothing but state tests and evaluations. The freedom in teaching is almost obsolete!"

What do you most look forward to in the new school year?

"What I look forward to most is keeping busy and getting requested by my favorite schools. There are about 5 schools that are a pure pleasure to substitute for. Those days are treasured! Don't get me wrong...I enjoy subbing!! But, the schools with the well behaved students are the easiest to work for."

How have you been blessed through your work?

"I have been blessed by teachers who really appreciate my abilities; students who come up and give me hugs when they see me because they love having me as a substitute teacher; principals who are willing to write recommendations for me; the friends I have made in the music personnel; bountiful work schedule. To list a few."

How do you think God has used you to bless others?

"Because I was an at risk student I am able to relate to students who fall into this category. There have been students whose home lives were so pathetic and I was able to be a consistent source of encouragement and strength for them, some of these trusted me to help them turn their lives around....and they did. The music teachers I sub for tell me frequently that I am a treasure, thus I know I'm blessing them, too. God has given me moments to point to His precious Son and I did that with passion! I have also met students who came to me for private lessons, and through these they became efficient and confident on their instrument. Through passion for music, humor, enthusiasm and kindness I am given occasion to reflect God's love for me to others. This can only be a blessing."

Any advice for students?

"My advice to students is to take music classes seriously and do all you can to do your best at every task. Music proficiency makes your brain work better and faster, thus enabling you to be smarter. It also makes you a problem solver! These are traits that employers look for."

Advice for others considering going into education?

"In all honesty I do not believe that education is a wise avenue to walk. Why? Politics has too much influence and it takes an incredibly well grounded person to deal with all of the nonsense involved in teaching. Political correctness is ruining the classroom. It is even ruining the colleges! If a person truly has a passion to teach.....pray long and hard about this."

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Being an educator requires undying passion and love for the subject! Also a deep desire and thick skin to be a positive influence on students in this age.

I Timothy 5:24 "Some Men's Sins Are Open Beforehand" by Bro. Jeff Short

"Some men's sins are open beforehand," or, they are clearly seen and known. We witness the acts of some men and there is no question that they are sins. It follows then that by their open wickedness, we know the perpetrators to be wicked. Christ said, "*Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them*" (Matthew 7:20). I could name men such as Adolph Hitler or Charles Manson and immediately we know these to be profligate men. Their sins have been open beforehand.

It is also true that "some men they follow after," referring to their sins. Some men are open and known sinners while others sin more secretly. Their sins "follow after," or are not clearly seen and known, at least for now. They "*devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds*" (Micah 2:1). They appear to the world to be upright and possess a good heart. Sometimes these ravenous wolves in sheep's clothing are exposed in this life, usually to the surprise of not a few that knew them. Sometimes, however, they are not exposed in this life, but, either way, they will not escape the judgment of God.

The central thought in this verse is that both classes are headed to judgment and neither shall escape punishment. It will not matter that mother and father were fooled, nor even husband, wife, pastor, congregation, or the grocer at the corner market. "*Every man's work shall be made manifest*" (1 Corinthians 3:13) when they stand before the Righteous Judge of all the earth.

However, let us now leave the broad strokes and train our eyes to trace the fine lines of this passage. Let us set aside all prejudice and appropriate this verse to ourselves, having the courage to hide it in our heart that we might not sin against God.

Firstly, just as we may classify men as open sinners or deceptive hypocrites, we may assess our own sins the same way. Some sins and sinful tendencies are “open beforehand” and easily identified. In these things, it is not difficult to be very pious. It is a small matter to be faithful to the assembly, to tithe on the first day of the week, to dress modestly, to maintain clean speech, etc. It is usually not a hard thing to avoid the abuse of alcohol and social drinking, gambling, cussing, the company of openly profane persons, etc.

All of the above items are minimal and you may be very strict in them and have a good report of many. However, know this: The Faithful and True Witness says, “I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works” (Revelation 2:23). “And the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is” (1 Corinthians 3:13). If these works are merely a facade of piety with you, they will not be able to stand the trial of fire. You ask, “Should I not then be zealous in good works?” You should! You must! It is expected that the branch will bring forth fruit (John 15:8). However, our works must flow from a pure and humble heart with the glory of God as their designed end in order to be truly good works.

Secondly, there are personal sins that “follow after.” They are not clearly seen by others. They will escape our own eyes if our eyes are dim and drowsy. These are the sins we harbor in our hearts. They are awful, dreadful evils that we feed in secret. These are the sins that we must labor to root out of our heart and guard against their reentry. However, far too many who excel in outward piety are content to let them “follow after.”

It is high time for us to “awake to righteousness, and sin not” (1 Corinthians 15:34). We must be done with the easy generalities and begin to get precise and deal honestly, abruptly, and decidedly with sin. This is serious business. We are not just playing games here. Paul urged the Corinthians, “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith” (2 Corinthians 13:5).

Though you look well outwardly, do you have “eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin” (2 Peter 2:14)? Do you indulge in the graphic images of television and then seek after more explicit sights on the internet or elsewhere? Do you expect your wife and daughters to dress modestly and then crane your neck to look at every loose woman that comes by dressed provocatively?

Are you greedy of gain and stingy to give? Does it pain you to give to the church or a brother in need? Do you entertain thoughts of an adulterous rendezvous? Do you harbor a secret rebellion in your heart against your husband? Are you zealous in service in order to feed your pride? Do you wish to be noticed by men when you perform some work? There are untold evils that lurk in our hearts, but do not be deceived: “For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad” (Luke 8:17). It is no mystery why David exclaimed, “Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults” (Psalm 19:12).

These verses should move every child of God to a serious self-

examination. We must lay our sinful selves bare before the thrice Holy God and plead with the Psalmist: “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Psalm 139:23-24). The Psalmist besought God to search and try his heart. He wanted God to define the wickedness found there. This is where we have failed. We have not sought righteous judgment; we have applied the wrong measurement. We are content to let our sins “follow after” because we are just as good as everyone else is. In this we are not wise (2 Corinthians 10:12).

Finally, our sins, open and secret, are just like the sinners in our text. They are both going to the judgment. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Corinthians 5:10). All things will be laid open and receive “a just recompence of reward” on that day (Hebrews 2:2). There will be no second chances only bitter regrets. May God give us grace to “lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us” (Hebrews 12:1). Amen.

“Modern Day Pharisees”

by Bro. Todd Bryant

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence” – Matthew 23:23-25

Are we modern day Pharisees? Seriously, we ought to consider that question. How do we judge one another? And should we? How do we judge those outside? Do we ever look at a person and believe (in our heart whether we admit it or not) that they are beyond help? Do we sometimes try to convert people’s way of life before we point them to Christ? If we answer “yes” to any of these questions, we have at least a bit of Phariseeism looming inside all of us.

The Pharisees saw religion as the way to God. They believed if you conformed to all of the external religious instructions, then you were assured eternal life. Yet, Jesus clearly said that they had “neglected the weightier matters of the law: Justice and mercy and faith”. They were doing little more than teaching a salvation by works. And if we are not careful, we will do the same.

Firstly, why do you believe you are going to Heaven? This is not a small question and there are not varied acceptable answers. The only correct answer here is, “I believe that Jesus died for my sins and that He rose again for my justification and that He is alive today”. Obviously, the wording can vary. But, the foundation of that answer stands sure and is supported by a plethora of Scripture.

But what is the common answer these days? We may well hear somebody say, “I prayed the sinner’s prayer”. What sinner’s prayer? Surprisingly, we see no example of that in the Bible. Or, “I joined the church”. And yet the Scripture is clear that Judas was part of Christ’s inner group for some 3 ½ years and certainly was a devil from the beginning (John 6:70). And again, one may say, “I was baptized”. But clearly, the house of Cornelius was saved prior to baptism (Acts 10:44-48). Many varied answers could be given, but only one will suffice – “In Christ Alone I am saved”.

But, do we often give the lost the wrong idea both by our own words and by our actions? What of this “everybody close their eyes and bow their heads” propaganda today? If the Spirit is at work, do we honestly believe we will stop His movement if eyes are open? And what are we truly teaching Spirit led seekers – that it’s OK to be ashamed of Christ? Jesus warned against such a thing numerous times. What of this “repeat this prayer” normality today? Would we not be better to stick with Scriptural practices? Shouldn’t we just point folks to “repent and believe” which is the common theme from both Jesus and the early churches?

Help us get back to the Bible. Help us point people to Jesus and leave the external religion out of it. Help us point people to trust in Christ alone (Ephesians 1:13)...not external religion.

“The Grace of Forgiving”

(parts 1-5)

by Bro. Dr. M. J. Seymour, Sr.

The Apostle John writes unto us: *“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our’s only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”* (1 Jn. 1:8 – 2:2)

According to Holy Scripture, “sin” is the breaking of the revealed laws or commands of God. Sins are a deliberate rebellion against God by the committing of that which He has said not to do and/or by a failure or a refusal to do that which He has commanded to do. In either case “sin” is an open rebellion against God. In the strictest or purest sense all sin is against the eternal God of Heaven. David wrote in Psalm 51:4, “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight ...” Man may commit offenses against other men and break the laws of men but SIN is against God. When one breaks the laws of men he is referred to as a “criminal;” when he breaks the laws of God he is referred to as a “sinner.”

If one commits a “crime” against the laws of men, he must answer in a court of men’s law. However, if he “sins” against the laws and/or commands of God, he is held accountable before the eternal judicial throne of God. One stands in judgment before the one whose law he has broken. If I am in Canada and do something that is not against their laws but is against the laws in America, America could not bring me before their courts in judgment. Canada and only Canada would have jurisdiction in the matter. Acts against a sovereign are under the authority of that sovereign and are of no rightful concern of any other. God is sovereign over all of His creation. Rebellion against His sovereignty is “sin,” and any act of sin is within His sovereign jurisdiction. Someone guilty of sin is not within my jurisdiction to judge; only God has that rightful authority. When we judge others out of personal opinion, we illegally take upon ourselves God’s sovereignty. By His revealed Word God legally judges sin.

(Part II)

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (1 Jn. 1:8-10)
“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;” (Rom. 3:23)
 In all honesty I say that we have too many folks strutting around like peacocks under the umbrella of Christianity as if they are the very

embodiment of sinless perfection. It is time for all of us to return to the mirror of God’s Holy Word and see ourselves as God sees us! If we are truthful of what we see, we would cry out with Job: “I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor *myself*, and repent in dust and ashes.” (Job 42:5-6) Job beheld what we all desperately need to see – the grotesqueness of this sinful flesh through the eyes of a holy God. When Apostle Paul took stock of it, he wrote: *“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”* (Rom. 7:24)

This revelation comes by the graciousness and mercy of God. It is good to be acquainted with the facts of the true nature of the flesh. Too little attention is given to the two natures of every believer. Few teachers teach it, and few preachers preach it. As a result, many cower down under the condemnation of the flesh, while others strut in their pompous perfection. Both natures have their balance in the teachings of the Scriptures. Paul acknowledges the two natures and the pursuing battle every believer must fight. Yes, the flesh is sin, but the spirit is righteousness in the blood of Christ.

Paul wrote: *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”* (Rom 8:1) In Christ Jesus there is no condemnation; that is, all of our sins are forgiven. God through Jesus has forgiven us; even when we sin after being saved we have the privilege of going to the heavenly Father, and “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” When God forgives, there is no condemnation! If God forgives us, is it not reasonable that we should forgive ourselves by His grace? Failure to forgive self is open rebellion against God’s forgiveness!

“The Wonder of Jacob & Esau, or God’s Love and God’s Hatred”

by Bro. Curtis A. Pugh



All of us, having been humanists prior to our conversion, still tend toward thinking in humanistic terms. While humanism in politics manifests itself as left-wing socialism and one-world government-ism and in education and morals as permissiveness: it manifests itself in theology as Arminianism or neo-Arminianism. Because of this inherent humanism or Arminianism within us, when we first hear the Bible teaching that God hates some while He loves others, we often stumble in our understanding or at least in our acceptance of such truths.

Nevertheless, the Bible says, **“As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated”** (Rom. 9:13). This is a quote from the Old Testament book of Malachi 1:2-3 and of undeniable authenticity. If the Word of God be true---and it is---then God hated Esau and loved Jacob! Romans chapters 9, 10, and 11 which present the sovereignty of God are, I suppose, the most ignored and least loved portion of the Bible among both the false religionists of our day and spiritual babes. Despite the fact that the Bible teaches in clear words that God hates some persons, most preachers today loudly proclaim God’s love to all mankind. Despite the fact that we have no record of any apostle saying, “God loves you and wants to save you” or even “God loves you” countless pastors, revivalists, conference speakers, and writers of books dare to preach what no man under divine inspiration ever did preach. It may surprise you to learn that the word “love” does not appear even once in the Book of Acts! Old Baptists maintained and their spiritual

children yet affirm that the knowledge that God loves you is not a part of the Gospel, but is a matter of assurance of salvation!

While I do not profess to have perfect understanding of these things, nor do I profess to have any new light from God on the subject, let me suggest the following five things.

1. THE DIFFICULTY OF THE PROBLEM:

The thing that should trouble us is not that God hated Esau, but rather that He loved Jacob! However, because of the popular lie told by the religionists of our day, most people believe that God loves everyone equally. This lie has been repeated so loudly and so persistently by the false prophets of modern Protestant evangelicalism and accepted as true by organized "Baptists" that the thinking of almost all peoples of the world falls in line with it. The Roman Catholic Harlot is the mother of this lie for freewillism is the basis of her perverted doctrines and so great is the influence of this doctrine that most "Baptists" speak well of Romanism by saying something like, "Well, we're all trying to get to the same place." I repeat, the wonder of Romans 9:13 is not that God hated Esau, but that He loved Jacob! If you understand the Bible teaching regarding the holiness of God and the total depravity of humankind, you will have no trouble understanding how a holy and just God would hate a sinful, un-repentant, uncaring, unbelieving Esau with a perfect and holy hatred.

2. THE DEFINITION OF LOVE AND HATE:

We should not understand either the love or the hatred of God in mere human terms. God's hatred is a holy hatred in perfect harmony with His holy justice. That means that God would never hate any person in an unholy or unjust manner. Rest on that! God is absolutely holy and absolutely fair. Never into all the eternities shall even one creature ever be able to truthfully accuse our God of being unfair! **"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"** (Gen. 18:25).

Similarly, God's love is a holy and just love. To say else is to accuse God of wickedness. Consider this: human love, the love we know naturally, is based on selfish, prejudiced feelings. We love those who agree with us, who please us, or who somehow minister to our selfish feelings and desires. In short, human love is a matter of the emotions. It is sentiment. It is at best the Greek word *phileo* or "brotherly affection" toward those of our own kind. Our human love does not even follow what we know to be right. All of us are capable of loving things which are wrong and harmful.

God's love, *agape*, can be contrasted with human love as being primarily a love of the intellect rather than mere sentiment or emotion. God's love is a love which determines to do good to the object of love regardless of the cost involved to the one doing the loving. Using this definition of love, we see how that only a regenerate person can exercise this kind of love and also how that God's love is not static. By not being static I mean this: while we may have tender feelings toward our brethren in distress (emotions); often we cannot think how to properly help them (intellect); and if we could think of such a help, we could not put it into effect (will). Thus though we may have tender feelings toward someone, we can do nothing in and of ourselves to remedy their situation. However, since God is not limited as we are, He has loved with an everlasting love (emotions); has known exactly what was required to remedy the situation (intellect); and has undertaken to carry out the salvation of those whom He loves (will). God's love always results in beneficial action toward those whom He loves.

For instance in Jeremiah 31:3 God says, ". . . **Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.**" God, being eternal, never, if I may be allowed to use the popular terminology, "falls in or out of love" for His love is everlasting AND, because of this love He draws those whom He loves with lovingkindness. God's love, then, involves His whole person (intellect, will, and emotions): determines good to the object of His love regardless of the cost to Himself: and since "none can stay His hand" God is able

to bring to pass exactly what is required to save those whom He loves.

Similarly we know that God's hatred is both holy and just. Never think that God is unfair by hating both sin and the sinner! By the way, the popular little ditty, "God hates the sin, but loves the sinner" cannot be true of Esau! Neither is it true of **"all workers of iniquity"** (Ps. 5:5); **"the bloody and deceitful man"** (Ps. 5:6); **"the covetous"** (Ps. 10:3); or **"he that soweth discord among brethren"** (Prov. 6:19): all of whom the Bible clearly says that God hates!

It seems clear to me that the word "hate," when used of God, has nothing to do with malicious spitefulness or any of the base and petty emotions of sinful men.

God is not a sinful man that He should feel or act as we do! All thoughtful people will realize that God in revealing Himself to us makes use of anthropomorphisms or anthropomorphic terms: that is, He uses human characteristics to describe something nonhuman. For instance God is said to have a finger, a hand, an arm, eyes, an ear, etc. although we know that **"God is a spirit"** (John 4:24). In similar fashion when God has threatened to do a certain thing (thus by such threats and warnings bringing about a change in man's behavior) and then mercifully not carried out that threat, He is said to have repented or changed His mind though we know that **"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent. . ."** (Num. 23:19). So, it seems to me, in like manner God is said to hate a person when He does not love them---that is, when He does not determine to do them good in spite of their sinfulness regardless of the cost to Himself. Consider Luke 14:26 where Christ said, **"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother. . . and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple"** (Luke 14:26). While some have tried to make such statements as this mean only that we must love ourselves less than we love Christ, the usage of the word **"hate"** surely requires more than that. Christ certainly does not mean that we must give up all emotional attachment to our parents and families or that we should cease caring for our own selves for that matter, for Paul writes, **"For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church"** (Eph. 5:29). In this context Paul commands that a man love his wife and we can be sure that the Holy Ghost writing through Paul does not contradict Christ! Does not Christ mean that when coming to Him and in living for Him there must be such a value and importance given to Him that those who come must be willing to abandon, if necessary, all else for Him?

3. THE DANGERS OF MISUNDERSTANDING:

A. The Danger of Making God Responsible For Men Going To Hell: I believe that this matter of "hatred" ought to be understood as the act of God abandoning those who are not the objects of His love. I think this harmonizes with the whole of Scripture. Above in Jeremiah 31:3 we saw that God, because of His love, drew those whom He loved to Himself. Hatred, being the opposite of love, would necessitate in this case that God does not draw to Himself those whom He hates. He merely leaves them alone. He abandons them to themselves and their own course of action. He does not supernaturally interfere to give them seeing eyes or hearing ears. He does not do anything to hinder them from coming to Him if they would, but they will not of their "own free will" because their "own free will" is in accord with their sinful nature which causes them to think contrary to the Word and will of God. Men are not lost because God hates (abandons) them, but rather because of their own rebellious sinful selves. God does not put roadblocks in the way of sinners coming savingly to Him! Men and women who go to Hell go there because they are sinners and simply receive the due reward of their deeds!

B. The Danger Of Making The Cause Of God's Love To Be In The Sinner:

Some would have us think that while God hates (abandons) some sinners because they are sinners and will not come to Him, conversely,

He loves some because they are not sinners or, perhaps, not sinners to the degree that others are.

This is simply not true! To maintain that the cause of God's love to some is within man is to deny the Spiritual teaching that all men are sinners and totally depraved.

Romans 3:10-18 and 5:12 & 18-19 clearly teach the sinfulness of all mankind and further teach that this depravity or bent toward sinning came from our father Adam. If the cause of God loving Jacob was in Jacob, then Jacob must have been a perfect or sinless man and we know Jacob to be a liar and a scoundrel---a supplanter or trickster. In our modern terminology, Jacob was a crook! He was every bit as proud as his brother Esau and less honorable in some ways. Jacob was a sinner and no better than Esau! I submit to you that if God had left Jacob alone, Jacob would be in Hell now! If that is the case, then the cause of God loving Jacob could not have been in Jacob! Let us ever hold fast to the principle that the cause of God's love toward some sinners is rooted in God and not in those sinners whom He loves!

The election by God of some sinners to salvation is based on God's love to those sinners. The Holy Ghost makes it crystal clear in I Corinthians 1:26-28 that God has not chosen those who possess that which is desirable or commendable or humanly good. Rather, **"God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise. . . And base things. . . and things which are despised. . ."**--- such statements are made as illustrative of the calling of the saints for Paul writes, **"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."** If a man takes an expensive imported piece of high quality wood and makes a charming statue, or a beautiful item of furniture, or a fine gun stock out of it, his intelligence, skill, and ability are manifested to all who behold his workmanship. On the other hand, if a man takes a piece of worthless, damaged, cheap trash from the garbage dump and makes a beautiful item far superior to the workmanship of any and all others, his intelligence, skill and ability are manifestly superior to all contenders. So the Sovereign of the universe has chosen to allow His creatures to fall into the ruin of sin and from the garbage dump of humanity selects not the best of the ruined lot, but rather most often the worst, and eventually will display them to all creation as His glorified sons made like unto His only begotten Son in Whom He is well pleased!

4. THE DESIRABILITY OF PREACHING THESE TRUTHS:

God's love toward sinners being rooted in Himself and not bestowed on those who somehow by their own goodness "qualify" for such love is of great encouragement to come to Christ to even the worst of sinners who may think themselves beyond the love of God and the salvation such love provides. Such preaching can by the Holy Ghost reach the lowliest for whom Christ died and give them courage to come to Christ. To the proud and self-righteous unbeliever such preaching is disruptive for it humbles the sinful pride of man. Such as these require the mortar and pestle of the Word if they shall ever be broken over their sins so as to come savingly to Christ. Such preaching will anger some, but as the Holy Ghost will regenerate all the elect, even some proud self righteous sinners will be saved. Such preaching of God's sovereign hatred and love puts man in his proper place before God. In our day when men boast they are masters of their own destiny and many take pride in being self-made men such preaching is needed lest men think they shall achieve such great goodness as to demand entrance into eternal bliss. If we would preach like Jesus who preached sovereign grace, election, and the particular love of God toward some when He cited the Gentile widow and her son whom the prophet fed while widows in Israel suffered genuine want during the famine, and when He mentioned that many lepers were in Israel but only one was healed, namely Naaman, another Gentile, (Luke 4:25-28) we must preach that God loves some while He sovereignly passes others by. Such preaching will cause prideful self-righteous folk to be filled with wrath toward the preacher just as it did that Arminian crowd in Nazareth's synagogue, but it is necessary to alert the careless who think they will turn to God and be saved at their own whim and in their own time for through such

preaching men can be enabled by the Holy Ghost to see their helplessness.

May God raise up among us preachers who will boldly preach the sovereignty of God in all things regardless of the cost to themselves in dollars, popularity, pulpits, annuity programs, and denominational positions! I urge every member of scripturally baptized Churches of Christ called Baptists to fervently pray that God will raise up men to proclaim His greatness, holiness, and particular love to His sheep. Let no man say that such preaching is dangerous and ought to be withheld from the common saints or from newborn saints or from the lost. Peter, in his first sermon after Pentecost said, **"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain"** (Acts 2:23). If we would follow the example of Spirit-filled Peter we will preach a sovereign God who controls all things and who loves whom He pleases.

Such preaching of the sovereignty of God in all things---including His love toward sinners---brings praise and glory to Him. In Acts 4:24-30 the **"company"** or church in Jerusalem which was made up not only of well taught longer term members who had personally walked with and been taught by Christ Himself, but also of newborn saints saved only a short time previously is seen to praise God saying, **"For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, FOR TO DO WHATSOEVER THY HAND AND THY COUNSEL DETERMINED BEFORE TO BE DONE"** (Acts 4:27,28) (Emph. CP). What a comfort and peaceable thing it is to saints to know that God is sovereign, not only in the affairs of men and governments, but also in His love to them for they, better than others, know of their own sins and feel within themselves that awful bent toward sinning that we call the sin nature. I repeat, the wonder of Jacob and Esau is not that God hated Esau, but that He loved Jacob who was every bit as much a sinner as was his brother.

The wonder, saint of God, is that God loves you and me, but He does and He does not love us because of our faith or because of any goodness within us, but rather His love is sovereign (independent of outside influence and control) and eternal! Let us glory in Him!

5. THE DAMNATION WROUGHT BY NOT PREACHING THESE TRUTHS:

In conclusion may I submit that I believe great harm and eternal damage has been done by failing to preach the sovereign love of God for His particular people. The preaching that God loves everybody alike is a comfort to those who continue in sin for if God really loves them, surely He will not send them to Hell. Thus men are made careless by the very preachers who ought to be warning them of judgment to come! Men hold God in low esteem who think that God loves everyone and consequently wants to save everyone for then God is reduced to a rather pitiful Being unable to accomplish what He wants to do. How sad must God be for most of those whom He loves (according to this view) will perish in everlasting destruction in Hell. Do preachers really expect men and women to worship and confidently trust in such a false god as they preach---a god who cannot bring to pass even the salvation of one whom he loves?

The God of the Bible, the God preached by John the Baptist, Christ, and His apostles is the Almighty Sovereign proclaimed throughout the Old Testament. Let His saints in His churches rejoice and confidently praise Him and wait, as does our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, **". . . expecting till his enemies be made his footstool"** (Heb.10:13) for God who has promised is able to bring to pass His Words in Revelation 3:9, **"Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not"** (false professors) **"but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, AND TO KNOW THAT I HAVE LOVED THEE"** (Emph. CP). Faithful beloved sheep of the Lord who serve in the Lord's churches, mocked and persecuted though you may now be, do not despair! Surely one day, according to the Word

of God, you shall be honored and held forth as the objects of God's particular, peculiar love before the false religionists who now are in the ascendancy. Then they, who have held themselves in high esteem and in prideful arrogance have denounced the truth as fanatical heresy held by awful, ignorant, and narrow Baptists, shall know that God has loved you! Then they shall bow the knee and acknowledge that Jesus Christ is LORD to the glory of God the Father! Amen.

"Letting Things Slip"

by Bro. David Green

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." (Hebrews 2:1)

This is an article that has been adapted from a sermon preached in late summer 2005. I believe to be a very important message on the subject of "Letting Things Slip." We live in a day when men have failed to be men. I am talking about men who should be leaders of churches not standing for the truth. I am speaking of husbands and fathers who fail to lead their families in the ways of God. We have allowed too many things to slip!

Before we go any further, let us look to see what the Word of God means when it says this. In the original language, the word is the Greek word *pararrhēō*, which means "to flow by....to carelessly pass by." In our day and age, there are many things that we let slip or to carelessly pass by us.

STANDARDS

"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." (I Peter 1:15-16).

We have let our standards slip in our day and age. By standard, I mean "That which is established as a rule or model..." Instead of measuring ourselves up to what God thinks, we measure ourselves to the world. Think about it. Instead of saying, "I want to be holy like God is holy" we have lowered ourselves down to say "Thank the Lord I am not as bad as so-and-so!"

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (II Corinthians 7:1)

Notice that last phrase. "...perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Our standards are so low that I am afraid we have no fear of God anymore!

"Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke 18:10-14)

The Pharisee had lowered standards. He didn't set them high. By comparing himself to extortioners, unjust, adulterers, etc. he was

supposing that he was OK. However, the standard is not other people it must be God. And, according to God's standard that Pharisee was headed to eternal damnation just the same as what he figured were worse sinners.

"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire." (I Corinthians 3:9-15)

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Revelation 20:11-15).

In both judgements, the standard is God and His word. It won't be a matter of how you stacked up compared to someone else. It isn't going to be a matter of your good works vs bad works.

"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways." (Haggai 1:7).

The Lord says "consider your ways!" We need to set our standards high and consider our ways.

MORALS

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:1-2).

To be not conformed to this world means to not fashion yourself after the ways of the world. Herein is our problem: We let the world decide how we ought to walk, talk, and dress. We have let our morals slip in our day and age!

"And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power. Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." (I Corinthians 6:14-18).

We have become slack in our morals. The Lord DEMANDS a life of separation. It doesn't matter if you are reading about Israel in the Old Testament or the Lord's Church in the New Testament, He has always demanded separation.

"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!" (Isaiah 5:20).

We live in a world that believes it good to be immoral and bad to be moral. And, there are even those who claim to be servants of the Lord, but their actions and articles speak otherwise.

DOCTRINE

"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." (II Timothy 4:1-5).

We live in a time when men will let doctrine slip. We are almost afraid of certain doctrines. We ignore the gospel because we don't want to be called Arminian. We steer clear of the doctrines of grace because we don't want anyone to think we're hardshell. We don't preach about the Holy Ghost because of other movements. And on and on. I've even heard of some who say we ought not to preach doctrine simply because doctrine offends!

In the passage we just read, we find exactly how it is today. People do not enjoy sound doctrine!

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (I Timothy 4:16).

We are told to take heed (or to pay close attention) to ourselves and to our doctrine. Why?? We are saving ourselves and those that hear us. We are being saved from the pollutions of the world, heresies, and punishment from Almighty God!

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." (Ephesians 4:14).

We need to hold to the true doctrine and not be tossed about with every wind of doctrine!

CONCLUSION

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip." (Hebrews 2:1).

To give the "more earnest heed" to the things we have heard means that we be more cautious with it. We commit it to memory and we hold to it. We not only believe it, but we live it everyday of our lives. May God help us all to do that "lest at any time we should let them slip."

"God Knows About It"

by Bro. Todd Bryant

"The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good" – Proverbs 15:3

There isn't a person alive on the face of the earth that wouldn't do well to memorize this verse and quote it several times a day. The omniscience and omnipresence of God are fundamental doctrines in the Lord's churches. Yet, practically, we often forget these truths the moment we walk out the doors of church. It's not as though we do not believe them. The problem is that we forget to apply these things. Certainly, every child of God should consider this verse in light of our coming judgment. At the Judgment Seat of Christ, *"each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is"* (1 Corinthians 3:13). We may, perhaps, fool our fellow believer here on Earth. We may have the entire congregation convinced we are working for the Lord as hard as anybody. However, God knows all our ways. We cannot do anything outside of the knowledge of the Lord. We cannot get outside the presence and knowledge of God. Without doubt, we would be good to remember this...and apply it! Even more, God knows our motives! 1 Kings 8:39 says, *"...then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and act, and give to everyone according to all his ways, whose heart You know (for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men)"*. Only God knows the heart. Perhaps the church sees you as one who gives to the church bountifully while God knows you do it for control. Perhaps the church sees you as one who shares in song mightily for God but God knows you do it for the praise of men. Perhaps the church believes you preach God's Word out of conviction but God knows you do it out of contempt and vainglory. Folks, our motives will be taken into account by God as well as our works! Let us all examine ourselves!

Certainly, the lost should know that God sees their actions. Job was a saved man, for sure. However, his words in Job 31:4-5 can be applied to us all – *"Does He not see my ways, and count all my steps? If I have walked with falsehood, or if my foot has hastened to deceit"*. Whether a man is a Christian or not, God is acquainted with his ways and will certainly judge them one day. In fact, even the atheist will be judged by the very God he denies exists. Whether we, as man, believe God is real or not does not change the fact that He is both Creator and Judge. Child of God, commit the verse before us to memory today. Meditate on it. Apply it in your life daily!

Truths are not made just for our knowledge. Certainly, we must ever desire to know the truth. But, we learn truths so that we may apply them in our lives. May we know the truths of both God's omniscience and omnipresence and apply them day by day as we sojourn here on Earth!

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