

Psm. 11:3

Baptists For Liberty

Prov. 29:2

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

NEWS LETTER

Issue #12

September II 2013

Monthly Verse: *"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 12:2

"The "god" of this Generation"

by Bro. Arthur W. Pink

The "god" of this twentieth century no more resembles the Supreme Sovereign of Holy Writ than does the dim flickering of a candle the glory of the mid-day sun. The god who is now talked about in the average pulpit, spoken of in the ordinary Sunday School, mentioned in most of the religious literature of the day, and preached in most of the so-called Bible conferences is a figment of human imagination, an invention of over-emotional sentimentality.

The heathen outside the pale of Christendom form gods out of wood and stone, while the millions of heathen inside Christendom manufacture a god out of their own carnal minds. In reality, they are but atheists; FOR THERE IS NO OTHER POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE BETWEEN AN ABSOLUTE SUPREME GOD AND NO GOD AT ALL! A "god" whose will is resisted, whose designs are frustrated, and whose purpose is checkmated, possesses no title to Deity, and SO FAR FROM BEING A FIT OBJECT OF WORSHIP, MERITS NOUGHT BUT CONTEMPT!

"Is there not a cause?." (I Samuel 17:29)

by Bro. Todd Bryant

It would be beneficial for all of our readers to familiarize themselves with the passage prior to this verse. Israel was in battle with the Philistines. Things weren't exactly going their way. Goliath had propositioned the Israeli armies. He had offered to fight anyone that the Jews might send forth. If he won, the Israelites would serve the Philistines. If the Jews won, the Philistines would serve them. He offered this twice a day for 40 days in a row (I Samuel 17:16). Though this may sound like a reasonable proposal, we all know that Goliath was a giant. Therefore, no man from the Jewish army was willing to battle him.

Now, David's father had sent him to battle to take supplies to his brothers. David heard the offer of Goliath and spoke out against him. David's brother Eliab became angry with David for speaking up. At that point, David responded by saying, "Is there not a cause?" We all know that David ends up killing the giant that very day. It seems that David was the only one that believed God was still at work. Is it possible that many have this attitude today?

Jesus said, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few" (Matthew 9:37). What our Lord was saying is that there is a world of lost sinners in the world that need the Gospel – that need Him. Now, the laborer has no power within himself to give increase. That power belongs to God alone. But, the laborer can plant and water (I Corinthians

3:6). This is what God has called us to do. He has called us to labor in this world by sowing the seed of His Gospel. This is what the Great Commission is all about.

"So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11). How much more confidence do we need to share the Gospel? We don't have to worry about being successful – that's God's Work. We may even be in a time like the Jews were when we don't see a lot of results. But, let us speak positively like David. God is still doing the same work He has always done. He is drawing His elect to His Son through the Gospel. This is His work and we can be confident in that it is still going on today whether we see a lot of results or not.

Child of God, we have been called to share the good news of His Son with the world! This work is to be carried out through the Lord's churches (Acts 13:1-3). As churches, we need to understand that God still has a people that He is going to save as the Spirit empowers the Gospel (I Thessalonians 1:4-5). He has simply commissioned us to share this message. He is the one that will take it and give life. May this be an encouragement just as the Israelites were encouraged after David defeated Goliath.

In this Month's issue:

Sermon: "Free Will & Freedom Of Choice"

by Bro. Timothy Works, page 2

"Faith Or The Lack Thereof?"

by Bro. David M. Green, page 3

Historical Marker: "What Are the Clouds"

by Bro. C.H. Spurgeon, page 4

"Why Tornadoes"

by Bro. Curtis A. Pugh, page 7

"Is It Constitutional"

by Bro. David Green, page 9

"Genesis 12:13"

by Bro. Jeff Short, page 9

"Hell Isn't For Heroes!"

by Bro. Timothy Works, page 10

"The Praise Of Men"

by Bro. Stephen McCool Sr, page 11

"Cheesy Fingers"

by Bro. Jeff Short, page 12

"The Need For Belief"

by Bro. Todd Bryant, page 12

Sermon: "Free Will & Freedom Of Choice"
by Bro. Timothy Works



"Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods; For the Lord our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed: And the Lord drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorites which dwelt in the land: therefore will we also serve the Lord; for he is our God." Joshua 24:14-18

"Free will" is an important part of man's character, being created in the image and likeness of God.

"Freedom of choice" is the application of the will of man, and is recognized as an inalienable "right" by our founding fathers in the Declaration of Independence, as being endowed by God unto every individual "all men".

Freedom of choice, we hold to be a God given right, the exercise of our own will, and not to be forced to do the will of another.

However due to the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden, Man's will has been corrupted by sin, our depraved adamic sin nature.

- The results being that man will not worship God
"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." Romans 1:21
"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Romans 7:18-20
- That men of corrupt minds seek to impose their will over their fellow man resulting in tyranny
"When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but

when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn." Proverbs 29:2

- Man seeks to do his will to please himself rather than God
"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;" II Timothy 3:1-4

Christ has redeemed us from under the curse and bondage of sin.

- We belong to God and are no longer our own to do as we will but as God wills,
"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." I Corinthians 6:19-20
- The LORD has redeemed us from bondage (sin & sin nature) not to keep us in bondage but to set us free.
* to Love him, *"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."* & *"We love him, because he first loved us."* I John 4:9-10 & 19
* to do his will, to worship him as our creator and redeemer, to serve him.
* to this end God has given us free will that we might Choose to love and serve him.

Therefore the purpose of mans Free will is not to do the will of man, but rather to do the will of God!

"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." Acts 4:19

"Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5:29

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Philippians 2:5-8

Examples of Jesus when he prayed: Matt 26:39-42, Luke 22:42 "Not my will"

The appeal of God is to the individual to choose to love and serve him, to willingly do his will.

Example: Bond slave

Exodus 21:1-6 *"Now these are the judgments which thou shalt set before them. If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her*

master's, and he shall go out by himself. And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever."

Deuteronomy 15:12-17 "And if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee. And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: Thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing to day. And it shall be, if he say unto thee, I will not go away from thee; because he loveth thee and thine house, because he is well with thee; Then thou shalt take an aul, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant for ever. And also unto thy maidservant thou shalt do likewise."

John 6:68-69 "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

Paul a servant Romans 1:1, once set free we desire to serve our Master who set us free (bond slave)

Therefore Faith and Church Membership are voluntary not the result of birth, Nationality, nor government decree!

Conclusion: As stated the purpose of man's will and freedom of choice is that we should choose of our own will to serve and do the will of God. Unfortunately too many times we choose to do our own will.

Remember we must give an account of how we exercise our will and the choices we make.

II Corinthians 5:10 "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."

Romans 14:12 "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

Our choices have consequences, we are to be responsible and make the right choices. Let us be mindful of that responsibility, lest in our zeal to defend our right to choose we do not choose that which is right! "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." I Corinthians 6:9-12

"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not." I Corinthians 10:23

"-choose you this day whom ye will serve-"

"Faith Or Lack Thereof?"

by Bro. David M. Green



In my conversations with folks I have noticed that some people seem to think that if you own a firearm, that somehow you must not have faith in God like you should. Perhaps you (the reader) also think that is the case. This way of thinking must be considered in the light of the Scriptures and I'd like for us to consider some Biblical examples:

Abram

"And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan. And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus." (Genesis 14:14-15).

In this passage we read of Abram who armed himself and 318 of his servants to free his nephew who had been captured. Can you imagine the horror if a Christian man did that today? Did Abram get rebuked for such actions? Some might assume so, but that was not the case.

Israel

"Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, after their families, by the house of their fathers, with the number of their names, every male by their polls; From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel: thou and Aaron shall number them by their armies." (Numbers 1:2-3).

God commanded Israel to raise and train an army for national defense. Notice how God told them to do it – every man 20 years and older. In other words, every man was responsible for their defense.

David

"And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine." (1Sa 17:40)

When David went to meet Goliath, he did not go alone. He took his sling and five smooth stones (his weapon of choice).

"Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel. And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD'S, and he will give you into

our hands. And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David." (1Samuel 17:45-50)

It was have been foolish for David to face that giant warrior without a weapon. David knew the battle is the Lord's but he also knew of his responsibility.

The Apostles

"And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one." (Luke 22:35-36).

Note the importance our Lord placed in sword-ownership: If they did not have a sword, sell their garment to buy one! Now, three things about this –

He was talking to His apostles.
He gave them a command here.
Swords were the best weapons money could buy in that day.

"And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough." (Luke 22:38)

Two of the Apostles carried swords, and had them in their possession while with the Lord. When they produced two swords, He did not rebuke them for carrying their weapon with them, He simply said "It is enough."

No, it is not a lack of faith when we carry our weapons, but a sense of responsibility. I find it very hypocritical that those who would accuse us of little faith will often lock their doors at night, wear seat belts, and have insurance.

Consider this scenario:
ALL GUNS ARE BANNED. You are not allowed to carry one, or even own one. Anyone with a gun will be fined and imprisoned.

Now, ask yourself, how would that make you feel? Would you rejoice? Perhaps you would think, "A ha! Now they will have to trust the Lord!"

Ok, so how about this scenario, this time with a more common tool that most of my readers will have:

ALL LOCKS ON DOORS ARE BANNED. You are not allowed to lock your door and anyone with a locked door will be immediately sent to jail.

How would that make you feel? Any different? Why or why not?

Yes, I trust God, but I also believe that I have certain responsibilities to keep myself and my family safe. The reason I own a gun is very similar

to the reason I have a lock on my door.
Lord bless.

*Historical
Marker: "What
Are the Clouds?"*
by Bro. C. H. Spurgeon

Sermon delivered, August
19, 1855 at New Park
Street Chapel, Southwark.



"That clouds are the dust of his feet."—Nahum 1:3.

IT IS POSSIBLE for a man to read too many books. We will not despise learning, we will not undervalue erudition, such acquisitions are very desirable; and, when his talents are sanctified to God, the man of learning frequently becomes in the hands of the Spirit far more useful than the ignorant and the unlearned; but at the same time, if a man acquire his knowledge entirely from books, he will not find himself to be a very wise man. There is such a thing as heaping so many books on your brains that they cannot work—pouring such piles of type, and letters, and manuscripts, and papers, and prints, and pamphlets, and volumes, and tomes, and folios, upon your weary head, that your brains are absolutely buried and cannot move at all. I believe that many of us, whilst we have sought to learn by books, have neglected those great volumes which God has given us; we have neglected to study this great book, the Bible! moreover, perhaps, we have not been careful enough students of the great volume of nature, and we have forgotten that other great book, the human heart. For my own part, I desire to be somewhat a student of the heart; and I think I have learned far more from conversation with my fellow-men than I ever did from reading, and the examination of my own experience, and the workings of my own heart, have taught me far more of humanity than all the metaphysical books I have ever perused. I like to read the book of my fellow creatures; nothing delights me so much as when I see a multitude of them gathered together, or when I have the opportunity of having their hearts poured into mine, and mine into theirs. He will not be a wise man who does not study the human heart, and does not seek to know something of his fellows and of himself. But if there be one book I love to read above all others, next to the book of God, it is the volume of nature. I care not what letters they are that I read, whether they be the golden spellings of the name of God up yonder in the stars, or whether I read, in rougher lines, his name printed on the rolling floods, or see it hieroglyphed in the huge mountain, the dashing cataract, or the waving forest. Wherever I look abroad in nature I love to discern my Father's name spelled out in living characters; and if we had any fields a little greener than Moorfields, Smithfield, and Spafields, I would do as Isaac did, go into the fields at eventide and muse and meditate upon the God of nature. I thought in the cool of last evening, I would muse with my God, by his Holy Spirit, and see what message he would give me. There I sat and watched the clouds, and learned a lesson in the great hall of Nature's college. The first thought that struck me was this, as I saw the white clouds rolling in the sky—soon shall I see my Saviour mounted on a great white throne, riding on the clouds of heaven, to call men to judgment. My imagination could easily picture the scene, when the

quick and the dead should stand before his great white throne, and should hear his voice pronounce their changeless destiny. I remembered, moreover, that text in the Proverbs, "He that observeth the wind shall not sow and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap." I thought how many a time myself and my brother ministers have regarded the clouds. We have listened to the voice of prudence and of caution we have regarded the clouds, we have stops when we ought to have been sowing because we were afraid of the multitude, or we refused to reap and take in the people into our churches, because some good brother thought we were too hasty about the matter. I rose up and thought to myself, I will regard neither the clouds nor the winds, but when the wind blows a hurricane I will throw the seed with my hands, if peradventure the tempest may waft it further still; and when the clouds are thick, still I will reap, and rest assured that God will preserve his own wheat, whether I gather it under clouds or in the sunshine. And then, when I sat there musing upon God, thoughts struck me as the clouds careered along the skies thoughts which I must give to you this morning. I trust they were somewhat for my own instruction, and possibly they may be for yours. "The clouds are the dust of his feet."

I. Well, the first remark I make upon this shall be—the *way of God is generally a hidden one*. This we gather from the text, by regarding the connection, "the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet." When God works his wonders he always conceals himself. Even the motion of his feet causes clouds to arise; and if these; clouds are but the dust of his feet," how deep must be that dense darkness which veils the brow of the Eternal. If the small dust which he causes is of equal magnitude with our clouds—if we can find no other figure to image "the dust of his feet" than the clouds of heaven, then, how obscure must be the motions of the Eternal one, how hidden and how shrouded in darkness! This great truth suggested by the text, is well borne out by facts. The ways of God are hidden ones. Cowper did not say amiss when he sang,—

"He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm."

His footsteps cannot be seen, for, planted on the sea, the next wave washes them out; and placed in the storm, rioting as the air then is, every impression of his chariot wheels is soon erased. Look at God, and at whatever he has deigned to do, and you will always see him to have been a hidden God. He has concealed himself, and all his ways have been veiled in the strictest mystery. Consider his works of salvation. How did he hide himself when he determined to save mankind? He did not manifestly reveal himself to our forefathers. He gave them simply one dim lamp of prophecy which shone in words like these "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head;" and for four thousand years God concealed his Son in mystery, and no one understood what the Son of God was to be. The smoking incense beclouded their eyes, and while it showed something of Jesus, it did hide far more. The burning victim sent its smoke up towards the sky, and it was only through the dim mists of the sacrifice that the pious Jew could see the Saviour. Angels themselves, we are told, desired to look into the mysteries of redemption, yet though they stood with their eyes intently fixed upon it, until the hour when redemption developed itself on Cavalry, not a single angel could understand it. The profoundest sage might have sought to find out how God could be just and yet the justifier of the ungodly; but he would have failed in his investigations. The most intensely pious man might meditate, with the help of that portion of God's Spirit which was then given to the prophets, on this mighty subject, and he could not have discovered what the mystery of godliness was—"God manifest in the flesh." God marched in clouds, "He walked in the whirlwinds;" he did not deign to tell the world what he was about to do; for it is his plan to gird himself in darkness, and "the clouds are the dust of his feet." Ah! and so it always has been in Providence as well as grace. God never condescends to make things very plain to his creatures. He always does

rightly; and therefore, he wants his people always to believe that he does rightly. But if he showed them that he did so, there would be no room for their faith.

Turn your eye along the page of history, and see how mysterious God's dealings have been. Who would conceive that a Joseph sold into Egypt would be the means of redeeming a whole people from famine? Who would suppose that when an enemy should come upon the land, it should be after all but the means of bringing glory to God? Who could imagine that a harlot's blood should mingle with the genealogy from which came the great Messiah, the Shiloh of Israel? Who could have guessed much less could have compassed, the mighty scheme of God? Providence has always been a hidden thing.

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sov'reign will."

And yet, beloved, you and I are always wanting to know what God is about. There is a war in the Crimea. We have had some great disasters at Sebastopol, and we are turning over the papers, and saying, "Whatever is God doing here?" What did he do in the last war? What was the benefit of it? We see that even Napoleon was the means of doing good, for he broke down the aristocracy and made all monarchs respect for the future, the power, and the rights of the people. We see what was the result even of that dread hurricane, that it swept away a pestilence which would have devoured full many more. But we ask, "What is God doing with this world?" We want to know what will be the consequences. Suppose we should humble Russia, where would it end? Can Turkey be maintained as a separate kingdom? And ten thousand other questions arise. Beloved, I always think, "let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth," and—as a good old friend of mine says—let them crack themselves, too, if they like. We will not interfere. If the potsherds will go smashing one another, why, then they must. We pray that old England may come off the safest of them all. But we are not much concerned to know the result. We believe that this war, as well as everything else, will have a beneficial tendency. We cannot see in history that this world ever went a step backwards. God is ever moving it in its orbit; and it has always progressed even when it seemed retrograding.

Or, perhaps, ye are not agitated about Providence in a nation, you believe that there God does hide himself; but then there are matters concerning yourself, which you long to see explained. When I was in Glasgow. I went over an immense foundry, one of the largest in Scotland, and there I saw a very powerful steam engine which worked all the machinery in the entire building. I saw in that foundry such numberless wheels running round, some one way and some another, I could not make out what on earth they were all about. But, I daresay, if my head had been a little wiser, and I had been taught a little more of mechanics, I might have understood what every wheel was doing, though really they seemed only a mass of wheels very busy running round and doing nothing. They were all, however, working at something; and if I had stopped and asked "What is that wheel doing?" A mechanic may have said, "It turns another wheel." "Well, and what is that wheel doing?" "There is another wheel dependent upon that, and that again is dependent on another." Then, at last, he would have taken me and said, "This is what the whole machinery is doing." Some ponderous bar of iron, perhaps, being grooved and cut, shaped and polished—"this is what all the wheels are effecting: but I cannot tell separately what each wheel is doing." All things are working together for good; but what the things separately are doing, it would be impossible to explain. Yet, thou child of Adam, with thy finite intellect, art continually stopping to ask, "Why is this?" The child lies dead in the cradle. Wherefore, was infancy snatched away? Oh, ruthless death,

couldst thou not reap ripe corn; why snatch the rosebud? Would not a chaplet of withered leaves become thee better than these tender blossoms? Or, you are demanding of Providence, why hast thou taken away my property? Was I not left, by a parent, well-to-do, and some ravenous leech has swept all my substance away! It is all gone; why this, O God? Why not punish the unjust? why should the innocent be allowed thus to suffer? Why am I to be bereft of my all? Says another, "I launched into a business that was fair and honorable; I intended, if God had prospered me, to devote my wealth to him. I am poor, my business never prospers. Lord, why is this?" And another says, "Hero I am toiling from morning till night; and all I do I cannot extricate myself from my business, which takes me off so much from religion. I would fain live on less if I had more time to serve my God." Ah! finite one! dost thou ask God to explain these things to thee? I tell thee, God will not do it, and God cannot do it—for this reason: thou art not capable of understanding it. Should the emmet ask the eagle wherefore it dasheth aloft in the skies? Shall leviathan be questioned by a minnow? These creatures might explain their motions to creatures; but the Omnipotent Creator, the uncreated Eternal, cannot well explain himself to mortals whom he hath created. We cannot understand him. It is enough for us to know that his way always must be in darkness, and that we must never expect to see much in this world.

II. This second thought is—**GREAT THINGS WITH US ARE LITTLE THINGS WITH GOD.** What great things clouds are to us! There we see them sweeping along the skies! Then they rapidly increase till the whole firmament gathereth blackness and a dark shadow is cast upon the world; we foresee the coming storm, and we tremble at the mountains of cloud, for they are great. Great things are they? Nay, they are only the dust of God's feet. The greatest cloud that ever swept the face of the firmament, was but one single particle of dust starting from the feet of the Almighty Jehovah. When clouds roll over clouds and the storm is very terrible, it is but the chariot of God, as it speeds along the heavens, raising a little dust around him! "The clouds are the dust of his feet." Oh! could ye grasp this idea my friends, or had I words in which to put it into your souls, I am sure you would sit down in solemn awe of that great God who is our Father, or who will be our Judge. Consider, that the greatest things with man are little things with God. We call the mountains great, but what are they? They are but "the small dust of the balance." We call the nations great, and we speak of mighty empires, but the nations before him are but as "a drop in the bucket." We call the islands great and talk of ours boastingly—"He taketh up the isles as a very little thing." We speak of great men and of mighty—"The inhabitants of the earth in his sight are but as grasshoppers." We talk of ponderous orbs moving millions of miles from us—in God's sight they are but little atoms dancing up and down in the sunbeam of existence. Compared with God there is nothing great. True, there are some things which are little with man that are great with God. Such are our sins which we call little, but which are great with him; and his mercies, which we sometimes think are little, he knows are very great mercies towards such great sinners as we are. Things which we reckon great are very little with God. If ye knew what God thought of our talk sometimes, you would be surprised at yourselves. We have some great trouble—we go burdened with it, saying, "O Lord God! what a great trouble I am burdened with." Why, methinks, God might smile at us, as we do sometimes at a little child who takes up a load too heavy for it (but which ye could hold between your fingers), and staggereth, and saith, "Father, what a weight I am carrying." So there are people who stagger under the great trouble which they think they are bearing. *Great, beloved!* There are no great troubles at all: "the clouds are the dust of his feet." If you would but so consider them, the greatest things with you are but little things with God. Suppose, now, that ye had all the troubles of all the people in the world, that they all came pouring on your devoted head: what are cataracts of trouble to God?—"Drops in the bucket." What are whole mountains of grief to him? Why, "he taketh up the

mountains as the dust of the balance." And he can easily remove your trials. Sit not down then thou son of weariness and want, and say, "My troubles are too great." Hear the voice of mercy: "Cast thy burden on the Lord and he will sustain thee, he will never suffer the righteous to be moved." You shall hear two Christians talk. One of them will say, "O my troubles, and trials, and sorrows, they are so great I can hardly sustain them; I do not know how to support my afflictions from day to day." The other says, "Ah! my troubles and trials are not less severe, but, nevertheless, they have been less than nothing. I could laugh at impossibilities, and say they shall be done." What is the reason of the difference between these men? The secret is, that one of them carried his troubles, and the other did not. It does not matter to a porter how heavy a load may be, if he can find another to carry it all for him. But if he is to carry it all himself, of course he does not like a heavy load. So one man bears his troubles himself and gets his back nearly broken; but the other cast his troubles on the Lord. Ah! it does not matter how heavy troubles are if you can cast them on the Lord. The heavier they are so much the better, for the more you have got rid of, and the more there is laid upon the Rock. Never be afraid of troubles. However heavy they are, God's eternal shoulders can bear them. He, whose omnipotence is testified by revolving planets, and systems of enormous worlds, can well sustain you. Is his arm shortened, that he cannot save, or is he weary, that he cannot hold you fast? Your troubles are nothing to God, for the very "clouds are the dust of his feet."

And this cheers me, I assure you, in the work of the ministry; for any man who has his eyes open to the world at large, will acknowledge that there are many clouds brooding over England, and over the world. I received lately a letter from a gentleman at Hull, in which he tells me that he sympathizes with my views concerning the condition of the church at large. I do not know whether Christendom was ever worse off than it is now. At any rate, I pray God it never may be. Read the account of the condition of the Suffolk churches where the gospel is somewhat flourishing, and you will be surprised to find that they have had scarcely any increase at all in the year. So you may go from church to church, and find scarcely any that are growing. Here and there a chapel is filled with people; here and there you find an earnest minister; here and there an increasing church; here and there a good prayer-meeting; but these are only like green spots. Wherever I have gone through England, I have been always grieved to see how the glory of Zion is under a cloud; how the precious saints of Zion, comparable to fine gold have become like earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter. It is not for me to set myself up as universal censor of the church, but I must be honest and say, that spiritual life, and fire, and zeal, and piety, seemed to be absent in ten thousand instances. We have abundance of agencies, we have good mechanism but the church, now-a-days is very much like a large steam engine, without any fire, without any hot water in the boiler, without any steam. There is everything but steam, everything but life. England is veiled in clouds. Not clouds of infidelity. I care not one fig for all the infidels in England, and I do not think it worth Mr. Grant's trouble to go after them. Nor am I afraid of popery for old England. I do not think she will go back to that—I am sure she never will. But, I *am* afraid of this deadness, this sloth, this indifference, that has come over our churches. The church wants shaking, like the man on the mountain-top does when the cold benumbs him into a deadly slumber. The churches are gone to sleep for want of zeal, for want of fire. Even those who hold sound doctrine are beginning to slumber. Oh may God stir the church up! One great black cloud, only broken here and there by a few rays of sunlight, seems to be hanging over the entire of this our happy island. But, beloved, there is comfort, "for the clouds are the dust of his feet." He can scatter them in a moment. He can raise up his chosen servants, who have only to put their mouth to the trumpet, and one blast shall awaken the sleeping sentinels, and startle the sleeping camp. God has only to send out again some evangelist, some flying angel, and the churches shall start up once more, and she who has been clothed in

sackcloth, shall doff her garments of mourning and put on a garment of praise, instead of the spirit of heaviness. The day is coming, I hope, when Zion shall sit, not without her diadem, crownless; but with her crown on her head, she shall grasp her banner, take her shield, and, like that heroic maiden of old who roused a whole nation, shall go forth conquering and to conquer. We hope thus much, because "the clouds are the dust of his feet."

Aye, and what clouds rest on the world at large! What black clouds of Catholic superstition, Mahommedanism, and idolatry. But what are all these things? We do not care about them at all, brethren. Some say that I am getting very enthusiastic about the latter-day glory, and the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Well, I don't know. I get all the happier the more enthusiastic I am, so I hope I shall keep on at it, for I believe there is nothing so comforts a servant of God as to believe that his Master is coming. I hope to see him. I should not be surprised to see Jesus Christ to-morrow morning. He *may* come then. "In such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." He who learns to watch for Christ, will never be surprised when he cometh. Blessed shall that servant be, whom, when his Lord cometh, he shall find busy about his duty. But some say he cannot come yet; there are so many clouds, and so much darkness in the sky, it cannot be expected that the sun will rise yet. Is that a fair reason? Do the clouds ever impede the sun? The sun moves on despite all the mists; and Jesus Christ can come clouds or no clouds. We do not want light before he appears; he will come and give us light, afterwards, scattering the darkness with the glory of his own eyes. But you say, "How are these idolatrous systems to be cast down?" God could do it in an hour if he pleased. Religion never moves by years and weeks. Even false religions grow like mushrooms; much more true ones. False religions attained colossal proportion in a very few years. Take the case of Mahommedanism—the new-born faith of Islam became the religion of millions in an incredible short period and if a false religion could spread so quickly, shall not a true one run along like fire amidst the stubble, when God shall speak the word? Clouds are but "dust of his feet." A little while ago some of us were fretting about this Mormonism, and we said, "It will never be broken up." Some stupid fellows in America began to kill the poor Mormonites, and so carve them into saints, which was the very way to establish them. Christians trembled, and said, "What can this be? We shall have Sodom over again." But did you read the *Times* newspaper of Thursday last? You will there see a wonderful instance of how God can scatter the clouds and make them dust of his feet. He has caused to come out of the ground, near Salt Lake, at Utah, thousands of crickets, and all kinds of noxious insects, that devour the crops; creatures that have not been seen in Utah before, with swarms of locusts, have made their appearance; and the people, being so far from civilized nations, cannot of course carry much corn across the desert, so that they will be condemned to starve or else separate and break up. It seems to all appearance that the whole settlement of the Mormonites must entirely be broken up, and *that* by an army of caterpillars, crickets, and locusts.

III. Now, one more remark. "The clouds are the dust of his feet." Then we learn from that, that **THE MOST TERRIBLE THINGS IN NATURE HAVE NO TERROR TO A CHILD OF GOD.** Sometimes clouds are very fearful things to mariners; they expect a storm when they see the clouds and darkness gathering. A cloud to many of us, when it forebodes a tempest is a very unpleasant thing. But let me read my text, and you will see what I mean by my remark that the most terrible things in nature are not terrible to the saints. The clouds are the dust of **HIS** feet,"—of God's feet. Do you not see what I mean? There is nothing terrible now, because it is only the dust of my Father's feet. Did you ever know a child who was afraid of the dust of his father's feet? Nay; if the child sees the dust of his father's feet in the distance, what does he do? He rejoices because it is his father, and runs to meet him. So the most awful things in nature, even the clouds, have lost all their terror to a child of God,

because he knows they are but the dust of his Father's feet. If we stand in the midst of the lightning storm, a flash rives yon cedar, or splits the oak of the forest; another flash succeeds, and then another, till the whole firmament becomes a sea of flame. We fear not, for they are only the flashes of our Father's sword as he waves it in the sky. Hark to the thunder as it shakes the earth, causes the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests; we shake not at the sound.

"The God that rules on high,
And thunders when he please,
That rides upon the stormy sky,
And manages the seas.
"This awful God is ours,
Our Father and our love."

We are not afraid, for we hear our Father's voice. And what favored child ever quaked at his Father's speech. We love to hear that voice; although it is deep, bass, sonorous, yet we love its matchless melody, for it issues from the depths of affection. Put me to sea, and let the ship be driven along, that wind is my Father's breath let the clouds gather, they are the dust of my Father's feet; let the waterspout appear from heaven, it is my Father dipping his hand in the laver of his earthly temple. The child of God feareth nothing. All things are his Father's; and divested now of everything that is terrible, he can look upon them with complacency, for he says, "The clouds are the dust of his feet."

"He drives his chariot through the sky,
Beneath his feet his thunders roar;
He shakes the earth, he veils the sky,
My soul, my soul, this God adore—
He is thy Father, and thy love."

Fall down before his feet and worship him, for he hath loved thee by his grace. You know there are many fearful events which may befall us; but we are never afraid of them, if we are saints, because they are the dust of *his* feet. Pestilence may ravage this fair city once again; the thousands may fall, and the funeral march be constantly seen in our streets. Do we fear it? Nay; the pestilence is but one of our Father's servants, and we are not afraid of it, although it walketh in darkness. There may be no wheat, the flocks may be cut off from the herd and the stall; nevertheless, famine and distress are our Father's doings, and what our Father does we will not view with alarm. There is a man there with a sword in his hand—he is an enemy, and I fear him My father has a sword, and I fear him not; I rather love to see him have a sword, because I know he will only use it for my protection.

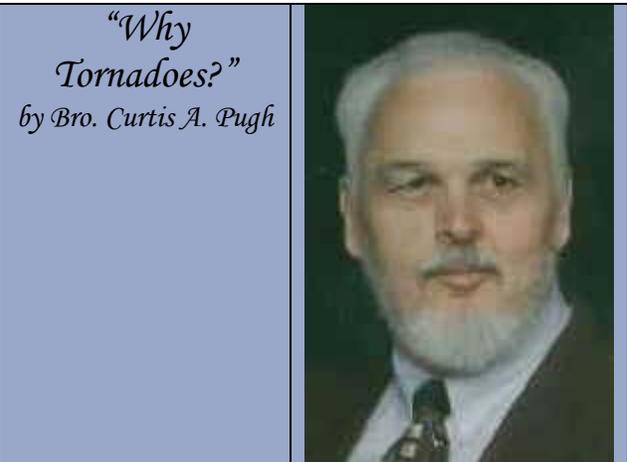
But there is to come a sight more grand, more terrific, more sublime, and more disastrous than anything earth hath yet witnessed; there is to come a fire before which Sodom's fire shall pale to nothingness; and the conflagration of continents shall sink into less than nothing and vanity. In a few more years, my friends, Scripture assures us, this earth and all that is therein, is to be burned up. That deep molten mass which now lies in the bosom of our mother earth is to burst up—the solid matter is be melted down into one vast globe of fire; the wicked—shrieking, wailing, and cursing, shall become a prey to these flames that shall blaze upward from the breast of earth; comets shall shoot their fires from heaven; all the lightnings shall launch their bolts upon this poor earth, and it shall become a mass of fire. But does the Christian fear it? No. Scripture tell us we shall be caught up together with the Lord in the air, and shall be for ever with the Lord.

IV. To conclude. The fourth observation is, **ALL THINGS IN NATURE ARE CALCULATED TO TERRIFY THE UNGODLY MAN.** Ungodly men and women now present in this place of worship, it is a very solemn fact that you are at enmity with God; that having sinned against God, God is angry with you—not angry with you today, but angry with you every day, angry with you every hour and every moment. It is,

moreover, a most sad and solemn fact that there is a day coming, I, ungodly men, when this anger of God will burst out, and when God will utterly destroy and devour you. Now listen to me for a moment, while I try to make all nature preach to you a solemn warning, and the wide world itself a great high priest, holding up its finger and calling you to flee for mercy to Jesus Christ, the King of kings. Sinner, hast thou ever seen the clouds as they roll along the sky? Those clouds are the dust of the feet of Jehovah. If these clouds are but the dust, what is he himself? And then, I ask thee, O man, art thou not foolish in the extreme to be at war with such a God as this? If "the clouds are the dust of his feet, now foolish art thou to be his enemy. Dost thou think to stand before his majesty? I tell thee, he will snap thy spear as if it were but a reed. Wilt thou hide thyself in the mountains? They shall be melted at his presence; and though thou cry to the rocks to hide thee, they would fail to give thee aught of concealment before his burning eyes. O do but consider, my dear fellow creatures, you who are at enmity with God, would it not be folly if you were to oppose yourself to an angel? Would it not be the utmost stupidity if you were to commence a war even with her majesty the Queen? I know it would, because ye have no power to stand against them; but consider how much more mighty is the Eternal God. Why, man, he could put his finger upon you at this moment and crush you as I could an insect. Yet this God is your enemy; you are hating him, you are at war with him! Consider, moreover, O man, that thou hast grievously rebelled against him; that thou hast incensed his soul, and he is angry, and jealous, and furious against every sinner. Consider what you will do in that great day, when God shall fall upon you. Some of you believe in a god that has no anger, and no hatred towards the wicked. Such a god is not the God of Scripture? He is a god who punishes the ungodly. Let me ask the question of inspiration: Canst thou stand before his indignation? Canst thou abide the fierceness of his anger? When his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him, bethink thee, sinner, will it be a good thing to be in the hands of the Almighty, who will rend thee in sunder? Wilt thou think it easy to lie down in hell with the breath of the Eternal fanning the flames? Wilt thou delight thyself to think that God will invent torments for thee, sinner, to make thy doom most cursed if thou dost not repent and turn to him? What, man! are the terrors of Jehovah nothing to thee? Dost thou not tremble and shake before the fierceness of his fury? Ah! thou mayest laugh now; thou mayest go away, my hearer, and smile at what I have said; but the day shall declare it: the hour is coming—and it may be soon—when the iron hand of the Almighty shall be upon thee; when all thy senses shall be the gates of misery, thy body the house of lamentation, and thy soul the epitome of woe. Then thou wilt not laugh and despise him.

But now to finish up, let me just give you one word more; for, beloved, wherefore do we use these threats; wherefore do we speak of them? It is but the word of the angel, who, pressing Lot upon the shoulder, said, "Look not behind thee stay not in all the plain," and then pointing to the fire behind, said, "On! on! lest the fiery sleet overtake thee, and the hail of the Eternal shall overwhelm thee!" We only mentioned that fire behind, that the Spirit might make you flee to the mountain lest ye should be consumed. Do you ask where that mountain is? We tell you there is a cleft in the Rock of Ages where the chief of sinners may yet hide himself—"Jesus Christ for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven;" and whoever here this morning is a sinner, we now invite to come to Christ. Ye Pharisees who do not own the title, I preach no gospel to you; ye self-righteous, self-sufficient ones, I have nought whatever to say to you, except what I have said—the voice of threatening. But, whoever will confess himself a sinner, has the warrant this morning to come to Jesus Christ. Sinnership is the only title to salvation. If you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners, Christ died for you. And if you put your trust in him, and believed that he died for you, you may rely upon him, and say, "Lord, I will be saved by thy grace." Your merits are good for nothing; you can get no benefit by them. Your own work is useless; you err like the man in the prison working the

treadmill—you never get anything by it—grinding oyster shells without any benefit to yourself. Come to Jesus Christ. Believe in him; and after you have believed in him, he will set you working—working a new work. He will give you works, if you will have but faith—even faith is his gift. O may he give it to you now, my hearers, for; he giveth liberally and upbraideth not." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be baptized, and thou shalt be saved."



We have had so much one-sided preaching about God that many people think God is a kindly old man upstairs who would not swat a fly. It is true, of course, that God is a God of love, but He is not a God of love to the exclusion of His other attributes. The Bible says, "...Our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29). God is also "...a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he" (Deuteronomy 32:4). His justice requires that sin be punished – every sin! God says, "...Vengeance is mine; I will repay..." (Romans 12:19). Peter wrote: "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (1 Peter 4:17). God is a God of justice and judgment who no longer lets sin pass unnoticed. Peter wrote that judgment has already begun!

Paul wrote of ancient times of ignorance saying, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30, 31). When Christ came the first time He came in love and dealt with sin. When He comes to earth again He comes as judge, "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Revelation 19:15). We must, therefore conclude that God is not exclusively a God of love! He is also a God of justice. He will punish sin!

Specifically, with regard to natural disasters, the Bible says "...the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet" (Nahum 1:3). The Psalmist, in an imprecatory prayer against the enemies of God wrote, "So persecute them with thy tempest, and make them afraid with thy storm" (Psalm 83:15). For those who believe the Bible, the matter is clearly settled: God controls storms as He does all things. He owns all things, even the storms. All things come from His hand. Ancient Job understood this. After his great losses he spoke to his wife, saying: "...What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?..." (Job 2:10). God is not responsible for moral evil, but He does make use of and

controls natural evils. If you want to “blame” anyone for natural disasters, then you must blame God – if you dare such a presumptuous sin! This is clear also from Amos 3:6 which says, “...shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?” Whatever natural evils befall a place, whether tornado, earthquake, pestilence, famine, etc., it is God that scheduled it from eternity and it comes in order to accomplish His plan. God has a plan and is working out every detail of it! He is in control of all things. He is sovereign!

God spoke to King Solomon making it clear that the terrible natural events that we fear come from God. He said, “If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people” (2 Chronicles 7:13). Drought, with the hunger, famine, high prices and all the sufferings that accompany it all come from the hand of God as do epidemics.

The reason for this is that “...God is angry with the wicked every day” (Psalm 7:11). If you ask the question, “Why do bad things happen to good people?” you pose a false inquiry. You should ask the question this way, “Why do bad things happen to wicked people?” Perhaps an even better question would be this: “Why has not God already destroyed all humanity in the lake of fire?” I say that would be a better question because, “...There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes” (Romans 3:10-18). This is what God says about man.

The reason people have difficulty in believing that God would be fair in punishing sin is twofold: First, they have been taught a false and one-sided view of God that ignores God’s righteous justice and holiness: And secondly, people do not believe that all men are totally depraved sinners whose “carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God” (Romans 8:7, 8). The plain fact of the matter is that men think that they are good. Despite man’s consistent history of war crimes, atrocities, genocides, and all the rest of man’s painful history, people foolishly think that man is basically good. Not only do they deny the clear evidence of history, they reject the clear teaching of the Bible as to man’s total hereditary depravity. People’s notion of God is not the God of the Bible and their notion of man’s spiritual condition is not that revealed in the Bible. These are the roots of mankind’s failure to understand why natural evils come upon humanity.

So the Bible explains that it is God who sends physical evils upon morally evil men. And Jesus said, “...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3, 5).

<p><i>“Is It Constitutional”</i> by Bro. David Green</p>	
--	---

One of the biggest problems we have in our country is that the nation is divided, and for the past several years we have judged laws and the actions of our federal government based solely on the idea of whether or not we trust their intentions. And so it goes like this: The President of the United States has sent our troops to a foreign country. War was never declared by Congress, but he says it is necessary to do this action.

If the President is Republican, then the Republicans support him and the Democrats oppose him.

If the President is Democrat, then the Democrats support him and the Republicans oppose him.

Of course, there are exceptions to this, but it is usually how things go in the country. The democrats will usually trust the intentions of their man, and the republicans will usually trust the intentions of their man. Many people look upon the intentions of the man in the White House who is of a different political party with great suspicion.

Whatever you consider your political affiliation, I would like for you to consider the above statements, and then ask yourself how you have judged this administration and the previous administration.... On some issues, there are some major differences but on other issues there are some similarities.

Now, I am going to propose to all my readers that all actions of EVERY leader of this country be judged by this question alone:

Is he upholding the constitution? (or) Is this action constitutional?

If we ever hope to get our country back, we need to stop thinking along political party lines and start thinking constitutionally! Frankly both parties have grown the federal government much larger than what is constitutionally acceptable. They need to know we will not support them blindly any longer....they need to gain our trust....and the only way they can do that is by following the Constitution of the United States of America. That’s what they have sworn before God to do. And we should expect nothing less.

I have copies of the Constitution available at the church I pastor in Mansfield OH. You may also read it online at this website: http://www.nccs.net/freedom_defined/index.htm?const.html&2 May God help us to stand for the truth!

“Genesis 12:13”
by Bro. Jeff Short

“Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.” Genesis 13:12

Lot is a peculiar figure in scripture. The Bible is full of godly men with wonderful testimonies of faith. These men are not perfect, but they attained to a high degree of grace and holiness. We think of men like Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Samuel, Daniel, The Baptist, and Paul, to name only a few. Lot does not seem to fit in very well with these names. If it were not for God’s testimony that Lot was “**just**” and “**righteous**,” we could hardly believe he was even saved.

However, Lot fits in very well with the many of Christians today. Lots’ was not a victorious life. He did not die a triumphant death. I do not believe he had the rich abundant entrance into Heaven that Peter wrote about, “*Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*” (2 Peter 1:10-11).

What happened to Lot? Our text marks an epoch in the life of Lot. From this point there is nothing good reported about Lot, except that he was

scarcely saved. In the time of our text, Lot made a choice. This choice set the tone for the rest of his and his family's life. This choice contributed to such a lowly state of grace that God's Word tells us that when God was about to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, "he lingered" (Genesis 19:16). Let us think upon the life and choice of Lot. Let us treat this account as a solemn warning and trustworthy guide for us to avoid this danger.

Lot made a choice about where he and his family were going to live. We all have to make this decision and sometimes we will have to choose our place of residence several different times. Lot had been with his righteous uncle prior to this, but both of them had accumulated a great estate so that it was not possible for them to abide together. Abraham gave Lot first choice of where he wanted to live and told him that he would go the other way. Lot must make a decision that will have long-term implications on his life and the life of his family.

We cannot be certain about how much that Lot considered the spiritual implications, but we see from the account that he certainly considered the physical and temporal implications. "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other" (Genesis 13:10-11). Lot recognized that the plain of Jordan was a place where he could thrive. His flocks and herds would flourish in such a fertile environment and, after all, this was his livelihood, this was how he provided for his family, so it was very important that he choose a profitable environment for his business.

Moreover, Lot "pitched his tent toward Sodom" despite the fact that "the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly" (Genesis 13:13). He probably thought he could live close enough to reap the benefits and yet avoid defiling contact with the people of cities.

I am amazed that many Christians follow Lot's course repeatedly today. People choose where they are going to live based on the economy of the place, laws that they like or dislike, taxes, the government school systems in the area, business associations, sports programs for the youth, property values, land, and other such factors. They give little or no consideration about whether there is a sound church in the location. They are more concerned about the raise or promotion that they will receive. They give little consideration to the wickedness of the place. They will expose themselves, and their families to all manner of ungodliness, rub elbows with the wicked and separate themselves from righteous company, all in order to earn more money.

I am even more amazed at the rationalizations and justifications made. People say, "We don't approve of the wickedness in our area. In fact, we are a witness and a testimony in this place. We have family devotions, we pray, and we listen to preaching tapes. We are just as good as anybody else." Consider Lot and do not be deceived. Lot did not approve of the wickedness of Sodom. He "vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds" (2 Peter 2:8). The ungodly city had more effect on Lot than he ever had on them.

Our text tells us that he "pitched his tent toward Sodom" and the next time we find him, in the nineteenth chapter, he is dwelling in a house in the city. He was such a good witness and testimony that there was not found even one righteous person outside of his house. He had lost all good influence over his family and he was so weak spiritually that "he

lingered" in the city, not able to let go, and had to be carried out by the angels.

Do not trade your birthright for a mess of worldly pottage. Do not let the physical things dictate the spiritual. Do not think that you can make a constant association with the wicked not be affected by them. Do not throw your wife and children into the company of the wicked. God says, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Corinthians 6:17).

Move to a place where there is a sound and godly church, even if you have to suffer and sacrifice. Be like Moses, "Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward" (Hebrews 11:25-26).

J. C. Ryle called Lot a beacon for Christians of all ages. Let us heed the lesson in Lot's life. May we sacrifice the physical in order to serve God and avoid the danger of the attraction of the world.

"Hell Isn't For Heroes!"

by Bro. Timothy Works

ANSWERUNG THE CALL

Do your ears prick up when you hear **sirens**? Can you tell what kind of fire is burning just by the smell of the **smoke**? Do you always wonder what kind of call is going on down the street and wonder if there is a way you can **help**? Do you drive around in a strange place and look for emergency equipment just so you can feel at home? Then you, like me, have responded to the call to be a **public servant** through firefighting and/or EMS.

We train, we study, we perform drills, practice scenarios and review previous calls to improve. We strive for perfection. We LOVE this vocation.

On duty we wait, for the next call and when it comes, **we go**. This is the story of our lives. We do not wish for bad things to happen, but if they do, we want to be there. We work to make a difference in others' lives. We come from many and varied backgrounds, yet work side by side to serve our country, communities and fellow citizens. Our family life is interrupted by shift work, emergency call-outs and the inevitable danger. New challenges face us daily. Some days it's the boredom and tension of waiting. Other days, it is dealing with the death of a child.

Some people call us "**Heroes**", but we realize that risking our lives for others is what we do. It is our **job**.

WE RUN IN WHEN ALL OTHERS ARE RUNNING OUT.

Jesus said; "No man hath greater love than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."

In a sense, Jesus is the ultimate "Firefighter". He too **answered the call** and laid down his life that others not perish but through faith in him might have everlasting life (John 3:16), thus manifesting his love for you and me by dying on the cross for our sins.

Without Christ, you are not ready to face God in the judgment.

You may think that because you serve your fellow man and do heroic deeds that you are not a sinner and do not need God's forgiveness. Nothing could be further from the truth. Since Adam's fall, no man has lived up to the potential that God created man for. That failure is **sin**.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" - Romans 3:23

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:" - Romans 5:12

Sin brings about not just physical death but spiritual death, the separation from God for all eternity in the Lake of Fire.

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

"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 20:12-15

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." - Romans 6:23

JESUS IS CALLING YOU

Jesus is calling you to give your life to him by repenting of your sins and believing in him that he died for you. Also he is calling you to become a disciple. Do not think that becoming a Christian is for wimps or sissies. It is a calling to Duty, Honor, Courage, Devotion, Sacrifice and Service. Jesus calls us to step up and to become a different kind of Hero, a Spiritual Hero. Not just to deliver from mortal death or to bind up physical wounds, but to deliver from eternal fires and to heal broken spirits and emotional hurts of all kinds. To bring men, women, boys and girls to Christ who is the Great physician and healer of souls. Hell isn't for heroes but Heaven is for God's Heroes.

WILL YOU ANSWER THE CALL?

This article was originally written as a track by Bro. Timothy Works, pastor of Liberty Missionary Baptist Church in Burton Michigan. He served for 12 years as a volunteer Chaplain with Graham Fire & Rescue in Graham Washington. If you have any questions you can e-mail Bro. Works at tworke@juno.com

"The Praise Of Men" by Bro. Stephen McCool sr.

John 12:42-43; "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

In chapter 12 of John we read where Jesus has made his Triumphant Entry in to Jerusalem just before He was to go to the cross. After this prophetic event is full filled Jesus goes to the temple and we read where he taught the ones gathered there. In verse 42 we read where some of the chief rulers believed on Him but would not confess Him because they were afraid of being kicked out of the temple by the Pharisees. Is this not what we see today in many churches? There are pastors and teachers out there that are afraid to preach the truths of God's grace. They fear being removed from their positions by the "Pharisees" in their church. I have known men that believed and to a point would teach Predestination and Election but would not admit that was what they were teaching for fear that the people would run them off. They would rather seek the "praise of men" rather than speak the truth of God. Some will admit that if they were to preach the grace of God they would lose most of their congregation. Others worry that it would hinder their building project plans.

So while these men skip around the issue of God's grace their congregations are being fed a lie of the devil. They are more concerned with building up the number of members than preaching the true Gospel. As ministers we are commanded to "preach the truth, the whole truth". It is not our job to worry about whether or not the people will accept what we teach but rather to always teach the truth. God will open the spiritual ears of those He wants to hear and will close the spiritual ears of those who He wants. We see this in chapter 12 of John. The Pharisees did not hear but some of the chief rulers and some of the others in the temple that day did hear Jesus' words and those that heard believed. The problem with the chief rulers was that they feared the Pharisees more than they feared God. "They loved the praise of men more than the praise of God".

"Cheesy Fingers" by Bro. Jeff Short

"And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Timothy 4:4

You have probably heard the humorous observation of how Christians sometimes pray to ask God to make up for our bad choices. We'll grab a bag of cheese puffs and a high-sugar, high-caffeine soda and then pray to ask God to bless it to the nourishment of our bodies. If we truly want our bodies to be nourished, apart from a transformative miracle from God, then we must dramatically increase the quality of food we are feeding our bodies.

While that is humorous and hits closer to home than we would like, I wonder how often this is true of our spiritual lives. How often are we snacking on spiritually equivalent cheese coated puffs of air while praying and hoping that our souls will be nourished somehow? One place this is very apparent is our approach to church.

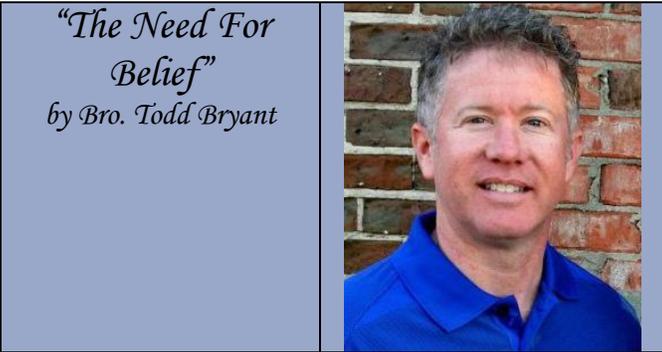
God has designed the church to facilitate the spiritual growth and maturation of its members. This is not the only purpose of the church, but it is a very important purpose. Paul taught this in his letter to the church at Ephesus: *"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh*

increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” Ephesians 4:11-16

One of the consequences of “the edifying of the body” is “*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.*” The apostle has spiritual maturity in mind. He wants to see the Christians grow up and become men and women of the Word.

So the church is one of the means of sanctification in our lives, yet so few people think of it this way. Many want a church just like they want their snacks—sweet and light and causing a momentary good feeling. A person cannot live on snack food, at least not very long or well. Paul put this craving this way: “*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.*” 2 Timothy 4:3-4

Paul warned Timothy that people would not endure sound teaching, but would seek out snacks for their cravings. He described these people as having “itching ears.” You would think he was talking about America, because we certainly have itching ears. Apparently, we are scratching those ears with cheesy fingers.



“*He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God*” – John 3:18

The Bible is full of deep, theological truths. The verse before us is not one of those. Sometimes, it’s beneficial to return to a fundamental teaching of the Scripture. Whatever truth we encounter in Theology, it must always harmonize with this elementary passage of Scripture. Simply, the believer is not condemned and the unbeliever is. Certainly, God is the author of salvation (Jonah 2:9; Hebrews 12:2). Yet, “... *it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe*” (1 Corinthians 1:21). These verses are not in opposition. God saves. But, He is pleased to do that through the message of the Gospel when He grants the gift of faith (Ephesians 2:8). From our viewpoint, those that believe the Gospel are saved. Those that reject it are lost. Other Scriptures certainly teach us that it is God Who opens the heart to the Gospel (Acts 16:14). However, until that one’s heart is opened to believe “in the name of the only begotten Son of God”, he is condemned.

It’s no wonder that Jesus went about preaching to “Repent, and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15). It’s no wonder that Paul declared to the Philippian jailor, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household” (Acts 16:31). Certainly, this is what the Spirit inspired Paul to say in Romans 10:8-10 which reads, “*But what does it say? ‘The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart’ (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes*

unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation”. The entire Bible harmonizes with the fact that the believer is saved and the unbeliever is lost.

A regenerated individual has the Holy Spirit of God dwelling inside of him. Paul informs us that our bodies are a “*temple of the Holy Spirit*” after we are saved (1 Corinthians 6:19). In writing to the Ephesian saints, he says, “*In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory*” (Ephesians 1:13). Chronologically, we are sealed with Holy Spirit after the Lord opens our heart to believe the Gospel. Do not misunderstand; there is no gap in time. These events happen simultaneously. Yet, the chronological order must be important or the Lord would have never had Paul to pen these words.

Reader, in light of the passage before us today, you must ask yourself if you believe (trust) in Christ alone. Do you believe that He is the only Way into fellowship with the Father? Our prayer is that you are saved and not condemned.

Baptist For Liberty can be found online at
[Http://baptistsforliberty.weebly.com](http://baptistsforliberty.weebly.com)
You can also look us up on Facebook

We encourage any printing of this or other issues for distribution, so long it is copied in its entirety without editing. Thank you.
