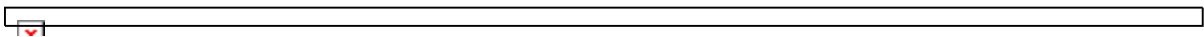


. . . fully after the LORD, . . . I Kings

11:6

by **Steve Flinchum**



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE God That Made the World and All
Things Therein

CHAPTER TWO
What Is It?

CHAPTER THREE
Word-Play

CHAPTER FOUR
. His Body

CHAPTER FIVE What a Mighty Web
We Weave

CHAPTER SIX A Square Peg In a
Round Hole

CHAPTER SEVEN
The Pattern

CHAPTER EIGHT
History 101

CHAPTER NINE
Our First Love

CHAPTER TENA Picture Is Worth a
Thousand Words

CHAPTER ELEVEN From Heaven
or of Men?

CHAPTER TWELVE Nothing Good About
Good Friday

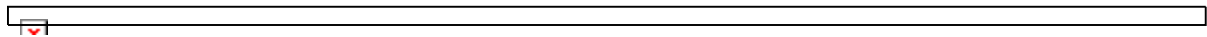
CHAPTER THIRTEEN
Throughout All Ages

CHAPTER FOURTEEN
. As He Is

CHAPTER FIFTEEN . . How Thou Oughtest to Behave Thyself In the
House of God

CHAPTER SIXTEEN
. What If ?

WORKS CITED OR CONSULTED



INTRODUCTION

Since the earliest times there have been those "who changed the truth of God into a lie" (Romans 1:25). In the third chapter of the Bible, Genesis 3, we read of the false prophet Satan changing the truth of God into a lie. In the next chapter we find that Cain changed the truth of God into a lie in typology with his perverted offering. All throughout the Bible we find record of people who changed the truth of God into a lie either in word or in typology. We can also read of the severe consequences that accompanied the changing of the truth of God into a lie. It is a serious crime. I Corinthians 10:11 says:

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

We who have been blessed with those ensamples that "are written for our admonition" are sure to be held more accountable than ever for changing the truth of God into a lie.

The changing of the truth of God into a lie has sometimes been orchestrated, as in recent years, with some of the modern so called "translations" or "versions" of God's Word, which are often more of an editorial than a translation. Even among those who still adhere to the highly accurate and dependable King James Translation, many have changed the truth of God into a lie by giving a new or different meaning to Bible words and phrases such as *church, baptize, born again, eternal life, everlasting life, redemption, propitiation, grace, Almighty, Lord, sin,* and many others. These words and associated subjects will be studied in the following pages with the aim of determining not what we can pretend the words to mean, but what God the author means by them.

Almost everyone will agree that the world today is in a mess. I believe most will agree that the breakdown of home and family is a strong contributor or a common factor in that mess. I believe the case is so manifest that we do not even need to quote statistics to prove the point. Most will agree that the sin of adultery is a strong and common factor in the failure of home and family and the disruption of natural order in society. Even those who "not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them" must admit that such is the case. The sin need not be full bloom to have its devastating effects on family and society. The lust for an unknown or never to be met person who would earn more, spend less, be more attractive, be more caring, etc., can result in wasted lives of discontent and rebellion. A family may remain physically intact, yet suffer the same devastating effects and disruption of order as if it were put asunder. It is truly a serious problem, but all this is only a reflection of the even more serious and more prevalent sin of *spiritual adultery*.

Romans 7:4 says:

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

In Matthew 12:39 Jesus said:

An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

In Mark 8:38 Jesus said:

Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

False teachers "who privily shall bring in damnable heresies" (II Peter 2:1) are described in II Peter 2:14 as "Having eyes full of adultery." James 4:4 says:

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

Jesus spoke of spiritual adultery in the letter to the congregation and pastor in Thyatira in Revelation 2:20-23:

Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

Most Bible readers are familiar with the record of David's sin of adultery with Bathsheba which led to the murder of her husband and a lifetime of consequences for David. That was unquestionably a great sin, but let

us see how it compares, in God's eyes, with the sin of spiritual adultery committed by Solomon. I Kings 11:4-6 says:

For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father.

Now read God's reaction in verses 9-11:

And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.

The case is not that Solomon declared that he no longer believed in God, but that he "went not *fully after the LORD*."

The following pages will treat the subject of spiritual adultery and show some of the ways in which God's people are guilty of it. Even of those who stand zealously against the sin of adultery, many fervently lead their family, class, or congregation in some of the most hideous forms of spiritual adultery against our Lord. The Bible, God's Word, will be considered the final and absolute authority in each matter.

When the Bible is used to describe God, certain Bible doctrines are manifest. It is often suggested that these doctrines should be laid aside and that we just believe in God. We may be using the same name, but we must be talking about a different God.

I realize that the contents of these pages are radically different from the modern and popular teachings of so called "Christianity" and as a result will probably not be read by many, but it is hoped that enough will be

read to provoke some serious Bible study and discussion and show that the "God" that many believe in is not the God of the Bible.

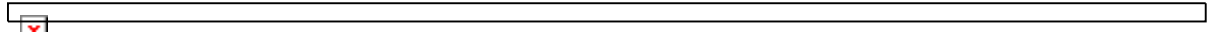
I Kings 18:21 says:

And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.

Joshua 24:14-15 says:

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.

[Return to CONTENTS](#)



CHAPTER ONE

GOD THAT MADE THE WORLD AND ALL THINGS THEREIN

(Acts 17:24-31)

The intended design and focus of this writing is upon the subject of following and having a right relationship with the one and only true and living God. From almost the beginning of time, people have alleged or imagined the existence of other, and multiple gods. Eve was deceived with the promise that she and Adam would become "as gods." Regardless of the power or existence of other gods, there can only be one best of anything. The God who is best is the only one worthy of our attention or affection. That God has commanded that:

. . . thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. (Exodus 34:14)

That God created all things, and His creation stands as proof of the existence and power of God. Notice the unique aspect of God's jealousy. All supposed, or false gods, willingly allow, and even encourage, the co-worship of other gods and goddesses. Can you imagine the creation of our universe being accomplished by a committee of gods and goddesses or by a board or coalition of gods? Equally absurd is any notion of evolution, that things just happened. Things do not just happen with positive results of such precision and upon such a scale as that of creation. The idea that such a balance as observed in nature could somehow develop from chance is contrary to all reasonable thinking. Just as ridiculous is the fantasy that God just kind of got the thing started with a spark, a bang, a germ, or whatever, and then let evolution kick in. That is only a doctrine borrowed from the ancient Babylonian sun worship. If God were able to cause such an unusual occurrence, was He not just as able to create the universe in the manner related in the Bible?

The World Book Encyclopedia (1985), under the heading "How the Earth Began" says, "There is no single, generally accepted scientific theory as to when or how the earth was formed." Of the nebular theory, proposed in 1755, the article says, "This theory assumes" Of another, proposed in 1905, the article says, "The planetismal theory assumes" Then there is the gaseous theory, proposed in 1919, of which the Encyclopedia says, "This theory assumes" It says that the English astronomer who proposed the double star theory, in the 1930's, "assumed . . . ," and of the condensation theories developed during the 1940's and 1950's, it says, "They assume" The article says, "Scientists do not know any more about the earth's earliest stages than they do about the birth of the solar system. They suppose" That is an awful lot of assuming and supposing. Doesn't sound very convincing, does it? All those theories assume and suppose the existence of certain conditions and circumstances with certain arrangements of heating and cooling of various concoctions of gas and dust, solid particles, gas and liquid, clouds of gas, explosions, etc. The Bible account of creation surely sounds far more reasonable, credible, authoritative, and sincere. The Bible account was apparently so believable and evident to the writer and readers that it was accepted as fact and in no need of proof.

The very size and shape of the earth, with its exact distance from the sun being the only position to allow it the right amount of heat and light, should be sufficient to testify to the existence of a very, very wise God.

If the world has evolved from such adverse and unnatural conditions as has been alleged, and life can adapt to any circumstance, why is pollution considered to be so great a threat?

If all (or any) living creatures have evolved from some one original lower form of life, which somehow came into being in some jungle, swamp, river, or mud-hole, why have men not been able to re-enact or produce a similar occurrence with laboratories, controlled conditions, and billions of dollars? If we can land men on the moon and bring them back, surely we could simulate something that happened by accident millions of years ago in a jungle! For the sake of argument, suppose that it could have happened. What are the chances that it would have happened twice, so that there would have been a mate? What are the chances that those two creatures could have been formed geographically close enough and within each others life span to have found one another? Or, if conveniently, reproduction at that time didn't require a mate, when, how, and why did the rules change? The theories of evolution depend not only upon the assumption that there was a very unusual occurrence at some point, which defies all laws of nature as we now know them, but requires the assumption of a chain of repeated occurrences of unusual and rule-changing circumstances and events of great magnitude. The supposed process of any thing evolving is totally opposite to the way things really are. Every thing runs down, cools off, gets old, wears out, falls apart, etc. Time gets used up, fire goes out, and sound dies. It is much easier for me to believe that about six thousand years ago, God simply created whatever forms of life He chose to create, and began immediately to propagate each species just as he does now.

Even though creation stands as proof and proclamation of much about the Creator, so much so that all are "without excuse" (Romans 1:20), God has communicated to us even greater knowledge and detail about Himself in His written Word, the Bible. I see many things written and said, supposedly about the same God, that are contradictory to the Bible. If we are to learn truth about God, it is essential that our learning

come from a reliable source. If the Bible is really the words of God, then any notion contradictory to it must be rejected. The Bible teaches that God is an unchanging God. Many teach doctrines that either assume or imply that God continuously changes to keep up with man. Any change, for better or worse, would imply that there either was or now is imperfection. We have no need of an imperfect God.

Many writings and teachings that contradict the Bible can be seen to be in some, if not many, ways less condemning of man than the Bible. The Bible presents man as totally depraved since the sin of Adam, and God as totally sovereign. If the Bible were merely written by "good men," or even partly by man, it would have his fingerprints all over it--man would not be so condemning of himself. As Henry M. Morris says on page 16 of *Many Infallible Proofs*:

Only God would ever prescribe a standard which could be attained only by God Himself. The uniqueness of salvation by grace through faith alone clearly stamps the Christian Gospel as divine in origin.

God didn't just give men ideas and let them put them into their own words, God gave them specific words and made sure they wrote them. In the Bible, God always tells the rest of the story, the good and the bad. If men were the authors, they would have left out many of their sins and mistakes. Think of the things that Moses, David, Solomon, Jonah, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and others wrote about themselves and their families. What man would not have cleaned up the story a little, were it not God's work? The writers of the Bible repeatedly declare it to be the inspired Word of God. If it is not, they were either deceived or were themselves malicious deceivers and should be avoided. The number and accuracy of prophecies made and fulfilled that are recorded in the Bible by different writers separated geographically, culturally, and by hundreds of years, leaves no doubt about the credibility of it. And, think of all the prophecies that have been fulfilled since the writing of the Bible. Notice the harmony in every aspect of the books of the Bible with each other, even though there is such diversity of background and distance of time among the writers. Notice the scientific and historical accuracy of the Bible that has stood the test of time.

In the "Introduction" to *The Divine Inspiration of the Bible*, A. W. Pink wrote:

Surrender the dogma of verbal inspiration and you are left like a rudderless ship on a stormy sea--at the mercy of every wind that blows. Deny that the Bible is, without any qualification, the very Word of God, and you are left without any ultimate standard of measurement and without any supreme authority. It is useless to discuss any doctrine taught by the Bible until you are prepared to acknowledge, unreservedly, that the Bible is the final court of appeal. Grant that the Bible is a Divine revelation and communication of God's own mind and will to men, and you have a fixed starting point from which advance can be made into the domain of truth. Grant that the Bible *is* (in its original manuscripts) inerrant and infallible, and you reach the place where study of its contents is both practicable and profitable.

It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of the doctrine of the Divine inspiration of Scripture. This is the strategic center of Christian theology, and must be defended at all costs. It is the point at which our satanic enemy is constantly hurling his hellish battalions. Here it was he made his first attack. In Eden he asked, "*Yea*, hath God said?" and today he is pursuing the same tactics.

In the chapters to follow, all Bible quotations will be made from the King James Version, unless noted otherwise. I believe that it is the most accurate, commonly available English translation we have, contained in one volume. It will be noticed that at times I will be critical of the King James translation, but that is not meant to imply that it is not reliable. Even though a poor choice of word is used occasionally, the truth can be seen when studied within the context and in agreement with the rest of the Bible. No *translation* can be considered as inspired in the same sense as the inspiration of the original manuscripts. Those criticisms are not made carelessly. I am well aware of the danger of adding to or taking from the words of the Bible (Revelation 22:18-19). That, in fact, is a big reason for putting forth the effort to compare with the original texts. We are instructed to rightly divide "the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15). "Rightly dividing the word of truth" does not allow for trying to see what a verse can be made to say, but instead demands seeking the meaning intended by God who inspired it. An honest, open mind and sound reason dictates, first of all, that the proper definition of a word

must fit within the context in which it is found, and that it not contradict any other statement or teaching elsewhere in the inspired Word of God. Each criticism that will be made of the King James Version of the New Testament, I have made with the King James Version and the Textus Receptus (original Greek) side by side, diligently consulting Strong's Concordance, at least three commonly accepted Greek-English Lexicons, an interlinear Greek-English New Testament, other translations, and two Greek grammar textbooks, detailing the pertinent findings for the discretion of the reader. Caution is definitely in order, and no unsupported claim of definition should be blindly accepted, yet those who blindly and rashly choose to worship a *translation* made less than 400 years ago to meet the approval of a king who demanded that certain words could not be used in the translation, rather than seek the truth, will do so to their own disadvantage.

With any amount of Bible study, one is soon confronted with someone named Jesus. It is accepted as historical fact that Jesus lived in the area and time as claimed by the Bible. Some claim that He was only a great prophet, a very good man, or a very wise teacher. Jesus and His teachings was then, and has always been, very controversial. Jesus boldly proclaimed Himself to be "the Son of God" (John 10:36). Jesus said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). In John 10:30, He said, "I and my Father are one." Jesus either was, or was not, everything He claimed to be. If He is not every thing He claimed to be, He was either badly deceived, or was the greatest deceiver that ever lived. If He was that badly deceived, He could in no way be considered as a wise or good teacher. If He were intentionally deceptive, He could in no way be considered a good man, and all His teachings should be rejected as dangerous and damnable. Since the whole Bible confirms and agrees with Jesus' claims, it to, would have to be disregarded, if Jesus were a deceiver. If Jesus is who He claimed to be, we must accept His teachings in their entirety. To reject or dispute any part is to indict the whole. An awful lot of religion and doctrine that is being sold as Christianity does not pass the test when examined by the unchanging Word of God. In following God, all religion and doctrine that is contrary to the Bible must be rejected.

The pages that follow are by no means intended to be exhaustive upon any of the subjects addressed, but it is hoped that enough will be written to provoke the study, consideration, and discussion of some

important truths that have for too long been neglected and have now been almost abandoned.

[Return to CONTENTS](#)

CHAPTER TWO

WHAT IS IT ?

Although the subject of this chapter has been addressed well by a few other writers, it seems that the facts of the matter are not widely known. Furthermore, those facts have been neglected by some and, with increasing frequency, they are being blatantly ignored, apparently with the attitude that man has come up with a better plan than God's plan. In I Timothy 3:14-15, Paul said:

These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

If it is our desire to know the truth, it should be beyond dispute that we should want to know where to find it. The purpose of a "pillar and ground" is to hold something up. If one thing is holding up another thing, we should expect both of those things to be found together. With "the church of the living God" being "the pillar and ground of the truth," it must be admitted that it is important that we know the true definition of "church." It must also follow, that when a "church" quits holding up the truth, it is no longer the same kind of "church" spoken of in these verses (a "church of the living God"). In pursuit of truth, we have no choice but to use God's definition of the word and reject men's definitions, amendments, and appendages.

Some attention to definition is necessary for, and basic to, effectively communicating the intent of the pages to follow. Much of the false doctrine preached today has been perpetrated and advanced by falsely defining the word translated in The King James Version of the Bible as "church." For these reasons, and those listed above, I will attempt a

brief overview of the subject. To borrow some words from Buell H. Kazez in *The Church and the Ordinances*:

In any study of the subject here undertaken, it seems necessary, even though we must repeat what is found in so many works of this nature, to indicate the various uses of the word "church" or the Greek ekklesia from which our word "church" is translated.

Webster's Dictionary (1978) gives the following definition:

church (church) n. building for Christian worship; collective body of Christians; a denomination or sect of the Christian religion; the clergy; the church service [O.E. circe, belonging to the Lord].

Encyclopedia Britannica (1957) gives the following :

CHURCH. The word church refers both to the Christian religious community and to the building used for Christian worship. This article, after discussing the etymology of the word itself, will deal with these two subjects.

Etymology of the Word Church.--According to most authorities, the word is derived from the Gr. *kurlakon* (*owua*), "the Lord's (house)," and is common to many Teutonic, Slavonic and other languages, under various forms--e.g., Scottish *kirk*, Ger. *kirche*, Swed. *kirka*, Dan. *kirke*, Russ. *tserkov*, Bulg. *cerkova*, Czech. *cirkev*, Finn. *kirkko*, etc. The word was originally applied to the building used for Christian worship, and subsequently extended to the Christian community (*ecclesia*) itself. Conversely, the Greek word *ecclesia* (*ekkhnoia*) was transferred from the community to the building, and is used in both senses, especially in the modern Romance and Celtic languages (*e.g.*, Fr. *eglise*, Welsh *eglwys*, etc.).

The World Book Encyclopedia (1985) has this entry:

CHURCH comes from a Greek word meaning *the Lord's house*. The word has many meanings. It may mean the world community of Christians. *Church* may refer to any denomination or group professing the same Christian creed, as the Methodist Church. It may also signify a

national religious body, such as the Church of England. It may refer to the formal institutions of a religion or to the ecclesiastical organization, power, and authority of a religious body.

Church is also a building used for public Christian worship. Early Christians met secretly outdoors, in catacombs, or in private houses. The earliest-known Christian sanctuary, a private house in Dura, eastern Syria, dates from about A.D. 200. After the Roman Emperor Constantine stopped the persecution of Christians in the A.D. 300's, Christians began building churches.

It is seen from these sources that the word "church" has accumulated quite a few different meanings and uses. If it is our aim to know the meaning of Jesus' teachings and of the inspired Word of God, we must look beyond the accumulation of man-made definitions. It is certain that some of these meanings were not used in the Bible because those meanings were not developed or used until a much later date.

The Greek word for church is *kurlakon*, as noted in the above quotation from *Encyclopedia Britannica*, transliterated *kuriakos*. Reference to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* reveals that that word occurs only two times in the Greek New Testament. The first occurrence is in I Corinthians 11:20, and is translated "Lord's," referring to "the Lord's supper." The second occurrence is in Revelation 1:10, and is again translated correctly as "Lord's," there referring to "the Lord's day." Strong's "Dictionary of the Greek Testament" (*Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*) gives this definition to *kuriakos* (Strong's word number 2960):

from 2962; *belonging to the Lord* (Jehovah or Jesus):--Lord's.

The word "church," or "churches," however, is used numerous (114) times in the King James Version. In I Peter 5:13 the word was added by the translators, as is indicated by its appearing in italics. In Acts 19:37, "robbers of churches" is used to translate *hierosulos*, which Strong's "Dictionary of the Greek Testament" defines as "a *temple-despoiler*." A quick look in *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* shows that in each of the other one hundred-twelve cases (as well as in the subscriptions to the books of Romans, II Timothy, and Titus), "church"

or "churches" is used to translate the Greek word *ekklesia* in the singular or plural.

In order to properly understand the intended meaning of a word, it is necessary to know the meaning or uses of the word at the time and place the user of the word spoke or wrote the word. In *The Meaning Of Ecclesia In The New Testament*, Edward H. Overbey listed the following, in his chapter titled "ECCLESIA IN THE CLASSICAL GREEK":

Liddell and Scott define *ekklesia* as "an assembly of citizens summoned by the crier, the legislative assembly." [R. Scott, and H.G. Liddell, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, p. 206.] Thayer's lexicon says, "an assembly of the people convened at the public place of council for the purpose of deliberating" [J. H. Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, p. 196]. Trench gives the meaning as "the lawful assembly in a free Greek city of all those possessed of the rights of citizenship, for the transaction of public affairs" [R.C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, 7th ed., pp. 1-2]. Seyffert's dictionary states, "The assembly of the people, which in Greek cities had the power of final decision in public affairs" [Oskar Seyffert, *A Dictionary of Classical Antiquities*, pp. 202-203].

It is clear from those sources that an *ekklesia* was an assembly of persons called together for a purpose, autonomous, independent, and a democracy. Notice, also, that an *ekklesia* was a definitely municipal body. I know of no source that would indicate a different use of the word prior to or during the writing of the New Testament.

The Holy Spirit has blessed us with the inspiring of the record and description of a Greek *ekklesia* in Acts 19. There, the word *ekklesia* was properly translated by the translators of the King James Version as "assembly" (in verses 32, 39, and 41). Notice, also, from Acts 19, that an *ekklesia* can be either a lawful one or an unlawful one.

Acts 7:38 speaks of "the church in the wilderness." That *ekklesia* in the wilderness is not to be confused with the one Jesus said He would build. We have no more justification for equating that *ekklesia* in the wilderness with the one Jesus built than we do to equate the *ekklesia* in Acts 19 with the one Jesus built.

King James' translators, however, substituted "church" for *ekklesia* in Matthew 16:18, and in all one-hundred-eleven other occurrences of the word in the New Testament. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus said, "I will build my *ekklesia*." He may have spoken in Aramaic, but the New Testament was written in Greek, which as *World Book Encyclopedia* says, "was widely spoken during the time of Jesus." Jesus did not indicate or give any reason to believe, there or any where else, that He was giving a new or different meaning to the word. He used the adjective "my" to distinguish it from any other, and used the word *ekklesia* in the generic sense, like God did with the word "man," in Genesis 1:26, when He said, "Let us make man." Jesus did not make any modification to, or give any new meaning to the word *ekklesia* in Matthew 16:18, or any place else. If He had, He would have told us. The Holy Spirit did not give a new or different meaning to the word as He inspired the rest of the New Testament. If He had, He would have told us. That there is confusion about this matter is undeniable, but we can be certain that the confusion is the work of man and the Devil because God is not the author of confusion (I Corinthians 14:33).

[Return to CONTENTS](#)

CHAPTER THREE

WORD-PLAY

In *The Christian Ecclesia*, F.J.A. Hort wrote:

"Congregation" was the only rendering of *ekklesia* in the English New Testament as it stood throughout Henry VIII's reign, the substitution of "church" being due to the Genevan revisers; and it held its ground in the Bishop's Bible in no less primary a passage than Matt. XVI:18 till the Jacobean revision of 1611, which we call the Authorized Version.

In 1526 William Tyndale was the first to translate the New Testament from the Greek into English. Tyndale translated *ekklesia* with "congregation."

Myles Coverdale translated the entire Bible from the original languages, and it was printed in 1535. Coverdale translated *ekklesia* with "congregation."

The Great Bible, first printed in 1538 and last in 1569, was known also as the Cromwell Bible, the Cranmer Bible, the Whitechurch Bible, and the Chained Bible. (*A Brief History of English Bible Translations* by Laurence M. Vance) That Bible also translated *ekklesia* with "congregation."

In 1604 King James appointed fifty-four men to translate the Bible. Although it was resolved:

That a translation be made of the whole Bible, as consonant as can be to the original Hebrew and Greek . . . ,

two of the fifteen rules given the translators by King James stated:

1. The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the *Bishops Bible*, to be followed, and as little altered as the Truth of the original will permit.
3. The Old Ecclesiastical Words to be kept, *viz.* the Word *Church* not to be translated *Congregation* &c. (*A Brief History of English Bible Translations* by Laurence M. Vance)

When we use *ekklesia*, "assembly," or "congregation" in studying the New Testament, it removes a lot of the "hocus-pocus" and mysticism that man has concocted. I prefer the word "congregation," and have chosen to use it in the pages to follow. It is only when using the proper definition of *ekklesia*, as here given, that we can interpret the New Testament with true consistency. I realize that that will be considered by many as an unreasonably strong and bigoted statement, but I propose to support it shortly.

Before continuing, it should also be noted that although *ekklesia* is properly translated "assembly" in Acts 19, it is not to be assumed that all occurrences of the word assembly in the King James Version of the New Testament is from *ekklesia*. There are two other occurrences of "assembly" in the King James Version of the New Testament. In

Hebrews 12:23, "general assembly" is used to translate *paneguris*, which Strong's "Dictionary of the Greek Testament" defines as:

3831. *paneguris*; from 3956 and a der. of 58; *a mass-meeting*, i.e. (fig.) *universal companionship* . . .

Word number 3956 is defined:

3956. *pas*; including all the forms of declension; apparently a primary word; *all, any, every*, the *whole* . . .

It is often taught that "the general assembly" and the "church of the firstborn," in Hebrews 12:23, are one and the same, but it looks to me like that there are two different words used there to speak of two different things.

In its context, what is being said is, "ye are come unto . . . the general assembly and church of the firstborn." Let me make an illustration. I live in Annville, Kentucky, which is very rural. Suppose I have a new neighbor who is accustomed to the conveniences of a big city, and becomes discouraged in adapting to a strange environment. I might say to the person, "you have come to the commonwealth of Kentucky and the city of Annville, which are the best part of the world. By that statement, I do not mean that the commonwealth of Kentucky and the city of Annville are the same thing. You can be in Kentucky and not be in Annville, but you cannot be in the Annville that I am talking about and not be in Kentucky. A person can be saved by God's grace and not be a member of one of the Lord's congregations. The people being addressed in Hebrews 12, were being told in verse 23, that they were both. That "the firstborn," spoken of in this verse is Jesus, is seen by reference to Matthew 1:25, Luke 2:7, Romans :29, and Colosians 1:15 and 18.

The other occurrence of "assembly" in the King James Version of the New Testament is in James 2:2. The Greek word translated there is *sunagoge*, which Strong's "Dictionary of the Greek Testament" defines as:

an *assemblage* of persons; spec. a Jewish "*synagogue*" (the meeting or the place) . . .

A careful study of each of the occurrences of the word "church" in the King James Version of the New Testament, other than those already considered here, will reveal that there is no indication of a new or different meaning being given to *ekklesia*. In each of these cases, the word *ekklesia* was used to refer to a certain congregation (or congregations, using the plural form), or was used in a generic sense, and sometimes both.

The last eighteen times *ekklesia* is used in the New Testament, it was spoken by Jesus. In Revelation 2:1 He was speaking of "the church of Ephesus," in verse 8 of "the church in Smyrna," in verse 12 of "the church in Pergamos," in verse 18 of "the church in Thyatira," in Revelation 3:1 of "the church in Sardis," in verse 7 of "the church in Philadelphia," and in verse 14 of "the church of the Laodiceans." In Revelation 1:11, He used the plural form in saying, "the seven churches which are in Asia," and then listed each of the names again.

Jesus used *ekklesia* in its plural form in Revelation 1:20, 2:7, 11, 17, 23, 29, 3:6, 13, 22, and 22:16. It is important to notice that in the last half of the final chapter of the Bible (Revelation 22:16), Jesus used the plural form of *ekklesia*. If He had built a "universal church" He would not have used the plural form, and I believe He would have used some other word like *paneguris*.

[Return to CONTENTS](#)

CHAPTER FOUR

HIS BODY

It is often mistakenly assumed or alleged that since "the church" of Christ is "the body" of Christ (Colossians 1:18), that the Bible teaches some sort of "universal church." I believe that not only does the Bible not support it, but in fact says much to contradict it. Both terms, "the church," and "the body," are used generically there (Colossians 1:18) as well as in Ephesians 5. In Ephesians 5:23 "the church" and "the body" are used in the generic sense, just as "the husband" and "the wife" are used, in the same verse.

Going back to the Greek, we find that the word translated "body" is *soma*. Strong's "Dictionary of the Greek Testament" defines *soma* as, "the *body* (as a *sound* whole), used in a very wide application, lit. or fig." The word "body" is translated from *soma* in all but two occurrences, in the New Testament. One has nothing to do with this subject, but to show the precision of the Greek language, and the precision with which it was used in the writing of the Bible, let us briefly consider it, also. In Acts 19:11-12 the King James version says:

And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.

The word from which "body" was translated, in verse 12, is *chros* which means "the *body* (properly its *surface* or *skin*)" [Strong's "Dictionary of the Greek Testament"].

The other occurrence of the word "body" in the King James Version of the New Testament is in Ephesians 3:6. The word used in that verse is *sussomos* instead of *soma*. Strong defines *sussomos* as "of a *joint body*." The "Greek-English New Testament Lexicon" in the *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* by George R. Berry defines *sussomos* as:

belonging to the same body; fig., of Jews and Gentiles, in one church, Ep.iii.6.

What was being taught in Ephesians 3:6, I believe, was that it is proper for Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians, having the same salvation, to be members of the same congregation.

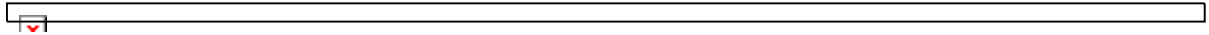
In I Corinthians 12:14-17, "the body," or "the whole body," is spoken of six times, indisputably in reference to a human body. Those verses do not imply that every foot, hand, ear, or eye in the world are all part of one mystical body, and such an interpretation would be foolish. It is just as unreasonable to interpret the use of the term "the body" in the rest of the chapter to imply that every saved person (or even every saved and baptized person) in the world make up some mystical body. To make such an interpretation it is necessary to change the meaning of *ekklesia*, which we have no authorization to do. Such an erroneous interpretation necessitates even giving a new definition to the word

body. We would not speak of two rivers as being one body of water, even though each may have fresh water, run down-hill, and eventually flow into the same ocean. The same is true in each case in which an *ekklesia* is spoken of as a body. Commenting on I Corinthians 12, in *The Meaning of Ecclesia in the New Testament*, Edward H. Overbey says:

In verse 27 this lesson is applied directly to the Corinthian church. The definite article before body is not in the Greek and so it would be better to translate this, "Now ye are a body of Christ and members in particular."

Each congregation is a body, and, if it is one of the Lord's congregations, it is one of His bodies. Each of His congregations or bodies is to be a fully functioning, self contained, independent, and complete unit or body, with Him as its head. Each body is to be just as complete as if it were the only one in existence.

[Return to CONTENTS](#)



CHAPTER FIVE

WHAT A MIGHTY WEB WE WEAVE

In trying to prop up a "universal church" theory it has often been taught that "the kingdom of heaven" and "the kingdom of God" are synonymous with "church." There is no need for such confusion because not only are the words different, the Bible also says some very different things about each.

When one false doctrine is invented, another one must eventually be invented to support it. This is a demonstration of what I have often heard, that, "if you tell a lie, you'll have to tell another to prop it up."

In III John 9 we have record of "Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence." It was probably people like Diotrephes who later on developed a hierarchical system within some of the apostate congregations. As is always the case with such a system, those at the top, like "the angels which kept not their first estate" (Jude 6),

expanded their territory by developing a hierarchy among many apostate congregations. The invention of a "universal church" concept was needed in order to justify the hierarchical system.

Most of the leaders of professing Christianity today find it necessary to defend a "universal church" concept in order to justify the existence of their congregations, associations, and/or hierarchies because they are so different to the New Testament definition of Jesus' kind of congregation.

It is also noticed that not only do many try to make "the kingdom of heaven" and "the kingdom of God" synonymous with each other, and with Christ's *ekklesia* or congregation, but try to equate what we may call "the family of God" or all who are saved with them as well. That being the case let us first consider some of the differences in "the family of God" and Jesus' kind of congregation.

In Psalm 3:8, David said, "Salvation belongeth unto the LORD." In Jonah 2:9, Jonah said, "Salvation is of the LORD." Paul, teaching of the sovereignty of God, said in Romans 9:16:

So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

It is by faith in Christ that we are saved, and not only did God have to provide the Saviour, if we were to be saved, we are not even able to believe by faith unless God also gives us that faith. Ephesians 2:8-9 explains:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Romans 11:6 says:

And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

Anything that man can provide is to be considered works. Baptism, for example, being a work, does not obtain or help obtain salvation. As I Peter 3:21 explains, baptism is:

not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God."

How could anyone have a good conscience toward God, knowing that he had not yet completed an act thought to be necessary to the obtaining of his salvation?

If the above scriptures mean anything, we must conclude that entrance into the family of God is not dependent upon baptism. The New Testament does, however, clearly teach the requirement of profession of salvation by grace and a baptism declaring the same in a figure, for entrance into the Lord's kind of congregation.

In Matthew 18:15-20, Jesus gave instruction concerning what to do "if thy brother shall trespass against thee."

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:

If "the church" includes all who are saved, or, as some would insist, all who are saved and baptized, how could we tell anything to "the church?" Most of us could not afford the postage or the phone bill incurred in telling anything to such a "church," even if we could locate and identify all its members. The instructions continue in verse 17:

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.

Those instructions, as well as many others in the New Testament, teach that the Lord's congregations are to exclude members who cannot be reconciled or who walk disorderly. In I Corinthians 5, Paul wrote concerning a member who was guilty of fornication. In verse 7, Paul instructed the congregation to "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened." In verse 9 he wrote:

I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators.

In verse 11 he said:

But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.

In verse 13 he plainly said:

Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.

II Thessalonians 3 teaches the same thing. It is very clear that the Lord's congregations have not only the authority, but also the responsibility, to exclude members from His congregations. It is a part of the command of "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Neither the Lord's congregations nor anyone else has ever been given the power or the instruction to exclude anyone from the family of God. Romans 8:33 says:

Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

In John 14:2 Jesus gave a promise to His first congregation, as representative of all His congregations. He said:

In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you.

Notice that He said that there *are* (already) many mansions, but added:

I go to prepare a place for you.

There were already many mansions in His Father's house for all who are saved, but Jesus has gone to prepare a special place for His bride, the faithful and obedient from among His congregations.

These differences should be enough to show that the "family of God" is not the same thing as the Lord's *ekklesia*. Similar differences are also readily apparent of the "kingdom of heaven" and the "kingdom of God," when compared to the Lord's *ekklesia*.

CHAPTER SIX

A SQUARE PEG IN A ROUND HOLE

Just as there are clear and definite differences in the family of God and Jesus' kind of *ekklesia*, His congregations or bodies, it is also to be noticed that there are many and similar differences between the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of God, and Jesus' congregations which are His *ekklesias*.

It seems that the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God are most often thought to be synonymous, but it is to be admitted that two different words were used by Jesus. Out of love and respect for truth, we must not take it upon ourselves to equate the two. While both will be spoken of here, it is not with the intention to use the two terms interchangeably.

First it is to be noted that a kingdom of any description is by definition a monarchy, the domain of a ruler or king (king-domain). That being the case, any kingdom must be something other than the kind of congregation Jesus said that He would build, because, as pointed out earlier, it is a democracy. Also, as already noted, the Lord's congregations have the authority and the obligation to exclude disorderly members, but such authorization has not been given concerning the kingdom of heaven nor the kingdom of God. In fact the Lord's congregations have no authority over those who "followeth not us" (Mark 9:38-39 and Luke 9:49-50). The Lord's congregations are not to "forbid" or to exercise rule or control over any other group, organization, or government, nor are His congregations to be controlled by others or to unionize with them. Many apostate and spurious congregations and organizations of professing Christendom have tried to advance their doctrines by force and persecution, but the Lord's congregations do not. Members of the Lord's kind of congregations have in fact been the true champions and defenders of religious freedom in every century. Ecclesiastical separation is a must for the Lord's congregations. In Matthew 15:13-14, Jesus said:

Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

One need only read the first two-thirds of the first book of the New Testament to see that there are problems presented by trying to equate the kingdom of heaven with the Lord's kind of *ekklesia*. To make the two synonymous is to have Matthew 18:15-17, which clearly teaches the responsibility of discipline in the Lord's congregations, contradicting the teaching of the parable of the tares in Matthew 13:24-30. The Lord's congregations are not given the responsibility of gathering the tares out of the kingdom of heaven, but to keep themselves, as a body of Christ, pure. These differences demonstrate why, as I stated earlier, that we cannot interpret the New Testament with true consistency while using the definitions given these terms under a "universal church" theory.

It was previously shown that the Lord's congregations are likened to and spoken of as a body, but such reference is never made of a kingdom in the New Testament, nor would it be sensible to speak of any kingdom as a body. It was also shown the absurdity of obeying Jesus' instruction in Matthew 18:17 to "tell it to the church," if "the church" includes all the saved, or all who are saved and baptized, or even all of a certain denomination. The costs of postage, phone calls, travel, time, etc., would make it a physical impossibility to obey such an instruction. I John 5:3 says:

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

The same applies here as well. Neither the kingdom of heaven, nor the kingdom of God, can be synonymous with *ekklesia*.

When one gives new and different meanings to God's words, additional false doctrine and lies are required to support it, and must ultimately lead to the rejection of the entire Bible.

It was shown earlier that all who are saved, the family of God, being saved solely by God's grace, are eternally saved. That being so, no one can be cast out of the family of God. The same cannot be said about

the kingdom of heaven, because in Matthew 13:42, and again in verse 50, as well as in other places, we read of some being cast out of the kingdom of heaven and "into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." The family of God and the kingdom of heaven cannot be the same. To make them so is to invent a false doctrine which contradicts every aspect of the doctrines of grace. The God of the Bible is completely sovereign. To teach of or believe in a God that is only a little bit sovereign is to teach of or believe in a different god. The salvation of the Bible is by grace and through faith in Christ. To teach or believe that that salvation must be in some way supplemented is to teach of or believe in another "Christ" and another gospel. Think about it.

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. (Galatians 1:6-9)

Although there are several statements in the Bible about the kingdom of heaven that are very similar to statements made concerning the kingdom of God, there are also some very clear and definite differences. If there is even one difference, then we must say that they are different. Jesus used some very similar parables in teaching about each, but a closer look will show some differences. We may use some very similar terms, examples, and illustrations to explain or describe our state government and our federal government, but the two are definitely not the same. For example, a lot could be said about the executive branch, legislative branch, and judicial branch of government that could apply to both our state and the United States, but that does not make them the same thing. A presidential candidate may win an election by a landslide in our state, yet lose his bid for the presidency of the United States.

Concerning the kingdom of heaven in the parable of the tares and the parable of the net, in Matthew 13, we read of people being gathered out or cast out, but we do not read of anyone being cast out of the

kingdom of God. First, lest there be any misunderstanding, the kingdom of heaven is not a kingdom *in* heaven, but the kingdom *of* heaven. Of the parable of the tares, Jesus said:

The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 13:41-42)

Of the parable of the net, Jesus said:

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. (Matthew 13:47-50)

In Matthew 8:11-12, Jesus said:

And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Luke 13:28-29 sounds very similar, in speaking of the kingdom of God, but a careful comparison shows them to be different.

There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. (Luke 13:28-29)

The previous verses from Matthew 8 and Matthew 13, leave no doubt but that people will be cast out of the kingdom of heaven. Although Luke 13:28 could be interpreted as saying the same thing about the kingdom of God, I believe that those spoken of as "thrust out" in this verse are those to be "gathered out" and "cast out" of the kingdom of

heaven, having thought that they were part of the kingdom of God, yet, in truth, will have never actually been in the kingdom of God. I believe this interpretation is supported and clarified by a comparison of the following verses. In the parable of the talents, in Matthew 25:29-30, Jesus said:

For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

In the parable of the pounds, in Luke 19:26-27, Jesus said:

For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.

Jesus also made similar statements in Matthew 13:12 and Mark 4:25. In Luke 8:17-18, Jesus explained the taking from those who hath not, with these words:

For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad. Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

It is clear that what is to be taken away is what the people only think they have.

The desired objective here is not to see if a verse can be made to say something different, but to know the true interpretation. Any interpretation must be consistent with every verse of the rest of the Bible if it is to be accepted as truth. If Luke 13:28 was the only mention made in the Bible of the kingdom of God, we might be hard pressed for solid ground to distinguish between the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God, but much is said about each, and it is important that we not make one verse contradict any other.

Consider the following survey. Matthew 3:1-2 says:

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Immediately after Jesus' baptism and His forty days of temptation in the wilderness, according to Matthew 4:17:

From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

In Matthew 10, we find Jesus sending out the twelve, and in verse 7 he said:

And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Then in Matthew 11, John was in prison, and Jesus said in verse 12:

And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

Now look at what Mark said about the change at that point in Mark 1:14-15:

Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

From that time, the kingdom of heaven is spoken of differently.

Notice that in Matthew 11:12, Jesus spoke of the kingdom of heaven being taken by force. The kingdom of God cannot be, has not been, and will never be taken by force or any other way, by the violent or anyone else.

Careful comparison and consideration of the various parables and statements concerning the kingdom of heaven reveals that the kingdom of heaven refers to all who profess Christianity. It includes not only those trusting in Christ alone, but also those who profess to trust in Christ in the various dilutions and mixtures of the denominations. It includes he that hath, and he that only thinketh he hath. That is why there are bad fish and tares to be gathered out and burned. It includes

those who are in the kingdom of God, and those who only claim to be, or only think they are in the kingdom of God. The kingdom of heaven is presently visible in that we can observe the many professions of Christianity, the "many wonderful works" done in Christ's name, and the prophesying in His name, but we cannot always tell the tares from the wheat.

The kingdom of God is not presently visible to the natural man. In Luke 17: 20, Jesus said, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation." In John 3:3, Jesus said:

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

In Luke 9:27, Jesus said:

But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.

In Mark 9:1, Jesus said:

Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

In John 17:1-2, as that promise was about to be fulfilled, Jesus prayed:

Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

In Matthew 28:18, Jesus had risen, demonstrated His power over death:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

In Romans 1:16, Paul said:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

In I Corinthians 4:19-20, Paul said:

But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.

In Philippians 3:8-11, Paul again speaks of the power of Christ's resurrection:

Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.

I Peter 1:3-5 speaks of God's ability to keep us by that same power:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Hebrews 2:14-15 says:

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Now read about the end, when Jesus "shall have delivered up the kingdom to God" in I Corinthians 15:20-28.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

Jesus "must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." When the tares and bad fish have been gathered out of the kingdom of heaven, and death has not only been conquered, but destroyed, the "wheat" that will have been gathered out of the kingdom of heaven will be "delivered up" as the kingdom of God (verse 24). Then the kingdom of God will be fully visible, as described in Revelation 12:10-11.

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

It is of extreme importance that we not give new and different meanings to God's words. When that is done, it leads to a "domino effect" of twisting and changing the rest of the Bible, and the labeling of many verses and chapters as "difficult passages" because they just don't fit in to the man-made doctrines. It is difficult to poke a square doctrine into a round hole. As a result, there are more truths that have been abandoned than have been preserved among most of the professors of Christianity.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE PATTERN

Just as surely as the Bible supports the definitions and distinctions presented in the preceding pages, the Bible refutes the definitions man has invented in his efforts to prop up and justify a counterfeit "Christianity."

Common sense and sound reason, I believe, argue strongly and exclusively for the views presented here. Understanding the truth of the Bible being a matter of eternal life or death, it is a serious crime to editorialize it and ignore the rules of truthful interpretation. If God used real words that already had real meanings, and those words make sense with those meanings, we have no right to give them some new, mystical meaning. Mark Twain wrote:

The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between lightning and the lightning bug.

Widespread acceptance of a belief does not make it true. False doctrine and false religion is dependent upon the principle which says, "If you tell a lie for a long enough time, people will start believing it." That principle has been proven to work well in religion, politics, and morality, but it does not change truth. God does not change the truth to keep up with the changing times. I copied the following good admonition from a calendar:

If fifty million people say a foolish thing, it is still a foolish thing. (B. Russell)

Most of what is taught today as Christian doctrine is radically inconsistent with the scriptures we have so far considered here. To be promoting a system of belief that is contradictory to that which Jesus taught is to be at war with God. Jesus said:

He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth. (Luke 11:23)

Jesus built His first congregation so as to be a pattern for all others that were to follow by procreation. For nearly two-thousand years now, men have thought that they can improve upon Jesus' pattern. How far can a congregation vary from the pattern and still be Jesus' kind of congregation?

An examination of the congregations written about in the New Testament shows that some were more like the pattern than were others. Compare the congregation at Ephesus with the one at Galatia. Certainly, the more alike a congregation is to the pattern, the better. It is tragic, but true, that an irregularity that is tolerated and left unchecked in one generation often is accepted as proper and normal in the next. When one congregation compares itself with another, which compared itself with another, which compared itself with another, etc., degeneration results in a congregation or religious system that is nothing at all like the pattern. In II Corinthians 10:12, Paul said:

. . . they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

I am not saying that a congregation must be perfect in order to be one of the Lord's, but perfection should be its goal. There are a few doctrinal distinctives that must be considered the absolute minimum requirements for being or continuing as one of the Lord's congregations.

First of all, a congregation must believe and teach that the Bible is the final authority for all faith and practice. Without the unchanging words of an unchanging God, there can be no worthwhile standard to go by. Any organization whose faith and practice is dictated by the changing whims of its members, a presbytery, a board, a council, a pope, or changing times and customs, is following a different God than the one of the Bible, regardless of what name is over the door.

It must be believed and taught that salvation is only by grace through faith in Christ, with even the faith being a gift of God by the Holy Spirit.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. (Romans 11:6)

That rules out baptism, "praying through," or any other work of man, in the obtaining of salvation. To believe and teach otherwise is to believe in and teach of another salvation, which is no salvation.

Baptism plays no part in the obtaining of our salvation, but is instead, a figure or picture, to be administered after salvation.

The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. (I Peter 2:21)

Baptism is a means of preaching the gospel in a figure and was ordained by Jesus exclusively to His kind of congregation. Baptism is therefore an important part of the teaching and preaching of the Lord's congregations, and it is essential that it be done scripturally. The Bible, being the final authority for all faith and practice, demands that:

-- Only those who have repented and profess salvation by grace through faith in Christ are fit subjects for baptism. (This precludes the baptism of infants, who are neither able to repent nor profess.)

-- The only acceptable mode for baptism is immersion in water.

-- Only the Lord's congregations have any authority to administer baptism.

-- The purpose of baptism is not to obtain salvation, but to teach figuratively by picturing Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection (the gospel), and declaring our dying to sin and rising to walk in newness of life.

To pervert the preaching figure of baptism by disobeying any of these scriptural demands is to preach another gospel.

Jesus' order to His congregations to "teach all nations" to "observe all things" that He has commanded (Matthew 28:19-20), necessarily demands involvement in doctrinally sound mission work.

These doctrinal distinctives logically insist upon the believing and teaching of religious liberty and the universal priesthood of all saved believers.

The day that any congregation consciously and willfully abandons one of these distinctives is the day that that congregation can be pronounced spiritually dead. It is no longer one of the Lord's kind of congregations because it has quit its job. Jesus gave His congregations a commission, a job, not a pension. Many are deceived in this because the congregation usually continues to exist physically, and often, in man's eyes, may appear very prosperous. When Adam and Eve rebelled against God, it was instant death, spiritually ("in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" Genesis 2:17), although, as we know, they continued to live physically for many years and even have and raise children.

There are some unhealthy lifestyles that cause spiritual disease and lead to the eventual spiritual death of a congregation. When a congregation is careless or compromising about the discipline and purity of its membership, the purity of the gospel it preaches, or its ecclesiastical separation, it will be a spiritually unhealthy congregation. When it continues in that condition without repentance and renewal, whether in ignorance or rebellion, that congregation also will soon be spiritually dead. It may still have some saved people in it, but they will have relinquished their Christ given power and authority as one of His congregations.

There can be no excuse for the degeneration of Jesus' congregations, especially today, when both the Old and the New Testaments are so commonly available, the ability to read is so attainable, and more historical information is accessible than ever before. You can bet that all that will stand in judgment against all who so carelessly handle and disregard truth.

This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. (Matthew 15:8-9)

We have the instruction of the New Testament as a pattern and mirror to examine and compare ourselves by. If a congregation is found to have more differences than likenesses, when compared with the New Testament pattern for Jesus' congregations, then we can confidently, with the authority of God's Word, say that it is different and not alike.

We have the record of the failures, and the ups and downs of Israel and Judah in the Old Testament, which "were our examples" (I Corinthians 10:6).

Now these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. (I Corinthians 10:11-12)

There can be no excuse for ignorance nor disregard for ecclesiastical history. We can be richly inspired and encouraged by the history of the Lord's congregations who have remained true down through the centuries. We can be strongly and sternly warned by the history of the many congregations who have fallen in death to paganism and compromise. It is extremely important that the Lord's congregations be aware of and have an appreciation for the rich heritage with which they have been entrusted. When the value and worth of something is not realized and appreciated, there is a strong and dangerous likelihood that the possessor will part with that thing far too easily.

No doubt, many a precious family heirloom has been carelessly discarded or sold for a pitifully insignificant amount, because the heritor was ignorant of its value, origin, and the cost and sacrifice of its preservation. The most prominent and important lesson from the study of history is the continuous repetition of the sad stories of people being dispossessed of their most valuable assets. In history are the records of the loss of lands, of freedoms, of cultures, of natural resources, and religious heritage by people who failed to properly appreciate what they had until it was gone.

If the people had been aware of the true value, they would have been more zealous in defending and preserving those things. History would not have to repeat itself if we would listen the first time.

The same observations are true concerning the history of the Lord's congregations and demonstrates the extreme importance and need that all members, both young and old, of every one of His congregations be taught and constantly reminded of their heritage. We can be greatly inspired and edified by the record of those who have earnestly contended for "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. (Hebrews 11:4)

Historical knowledge may not be required for becoming or being one of Jesus' congregations, but it is definitely important for the continuing as one.

Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set.
(Proverbs 22:28)

* * * * *

I know no way of judging the future but by the past. (Patrick Henry)

* * * * *

When I want to understand what is happening today or try to decide what will happen tomorrow, I look back. (Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.)

* * * * *

Good education is the essential foundation of a strong democracy.
(Barbara Bush)

* * * * *

It is easy to take liberty for granted when you have never had it taken from you. (Dick Cheney)

* * * * *

A people not conscious of its own past is adrift without purpose.
(Unknown)

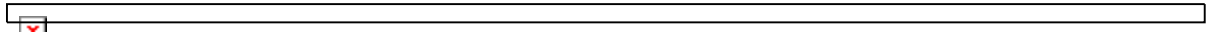
* * * * *

A nation which does not remember what it was yesterday, does not know what it is today, nor what it is trying to do. We are trying to do a futile thing if we do not know where we came from or what we have been about. (Woodrow Wilson)

* * * * *

As a nation of free men we will live forever, or die by suicide. (Abraham Lincoln, 1837)

[Return to CONTENTS](#)



CHAPTER EIGHT

HISTORY 101

The most important part of the history of the Lord's congregations is that which God has inspired in the New Testament. It is written without any bias, error, or short-sightedness that may be introduced by human writers. It is the very words of God Himself. As discussed earlier, it contains the pattern for Jesus' congregation's, with full and complete instructions and examples regarding their faith, practice, and procreation.

In the previous chapter, I have shown the need and importance of the knowledge and study of the history of Jesus' congregations beyond that which is contained in the New Testament. There are, however, a few caveats to note. While the inspired New Testament must be accepted as absolutely infallible, the writings of man must not. We are all subject to error.

Many of the writings and records of the Lord's congregations have been burned, and often the writers have been burned with them. Much of their history has been written by their enemies, and some by those with no affiliation with, or affection for, either. That is both good and bad. It is good in that the fact that the enemies wrote of people whom we consider the Lord's congregations proves that they existed (and we do have such writings from nearly every decade since Jesus built His first congregation). It is good in that we have proof of their doctrine by the accusations and persecutions against them. It is good in that those writings, being written by enemies, have been preserved. It is bad that their doctrines, being recorded as accusations or by the spiritually ignorant, have often been misinterpreted and misrepresented. Much historical research is available concerning the Lord's congregations, in the writings of apostates and protestants trying to "claim kin" or to justify some false doctrine. While such writings can be very useful, it is important to beware of the bias of the writer.

For example, the *Ecclesiastical History* written by Eusebius records some important history, but as Berlin Hisel pointed out in his *Baptist History Notebook* (p.32):

It is my opinion that Mosheim and others relate certain charges against the Montanists because they follow the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius. Eusebius was born about 275 A.D. and died about 339 A.D. He was bishop of Caesarea in Palestine and is revered, by most, as the father of church history. He was a close friend to Constantine, the ruler of the Roman Empire who united false churches to the state power. It is believed by many that Constantine commissioned him to write this history and financed his travel and investigations. Knowing what Constantine did to our Baptist ancestors should make us leery of him. Knowing he was a friend of Eusebius should make us careful of Eusebius too.

In the study of the history of the Lord's congregations, they are found to have been known by many different names at various times and places. Those names have usually been assigned them by their enemies and in derision. It can be found that apostate and false congregations sometimes bore the same names as did those of Christ's. Such is clearly the case at the present time, and probably more prevalent than in any other period.

Some writers have picked out those apostate and false congregations of the past, and cite their irregular faith and practice as representative of all who were known by the same name. That seems usually to be done in effort to find credibility for their own heresy, or to try to discredit those congregations that have remained true to Christ.

The same tactics are being used today by many to advance their agenda of unionism, and sad to say, many true congregations, being ignorant of their own heritage, are falling for it. It is no more sensible nor honest to make false allegations or charges by sweeping generalization against the faithful congregations than it would be to say that all American wives are unfaithful to their husbands, just because some have been found so to be.

From the time of Cain and Abel, those who have taught and stood for the truth of the true Christ have found themselves caught in a fierce, bitter, and often bloody, ongoing battle that started when Lucifer said in his heart, "I will be like the most High" (Isaiah 14:13).

With his offering to God, Abel was teaching, with typology, salvation by grace through faith in Christ. Cain changed the message with the typology of his offering (Genesis 4:1-8). Rather than repent and accept the truth, Cain killed the true messenger, Abel. Read in Luke 11:49-52, what Jesus said to some religious leaders about the subject:

Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute: That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation. Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

In Matthew 23:33-35, Jesus said:

Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell? Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of

them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

John the Baptist was beheaded for declaring the truth.

Following their Savior in rapid succession fell many other martyred heroes: Stephen was stoned, Matthew was slain in Ethiopia, Mark dragged through the streets until dead, Luke hanged, Peter and Simeon were crucified, Andrew tied to a cross, James beheaded, Philip crucified and stoned, Bartholomew flayed alive, Thomas pierced with lances, James, the less, thrown from the temple and beaten to death, Jude shot to death with arrows, Matthias stoned to death and Paul beheaded. (*The Trail of Blood* by J.M. Carroll)

The same bloody battle has continued in every period of time since, in varying intensity.

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Ephesians 6:12)

In the introduction of his book, *Martyrs Mirror*, Thieleman J. van Braght wrote:

Those who suffered among the pagans were, for the most part, examined concerning the first article of the Christian faith, wherein we confess: "I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty Creator of heaven and earth," etc.; and if the apprehended Christians confessed only this, viz., that they believed in one God, they were condemned to death: for the pagans recognized many gods.

Those who suffered among the Jews or Mohammedans were examined concerning the second article, wherein we confess: I believe "in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, our Lord, who was conceived of the holy Ghost," etc. When they had confessed this, they had also forfeited their lives; for the Jews and the Mohammedans do not acknowledge Christ as the Son of God, much less as His only-begotten (or own) Son, and that He was conceived of the Holy Ghost.

On account of this article many believers were killed among the Arians.

Those who suffered among the false Christians, especially among the Romanists, were examined concerning nearly all the articles of faith, in regard to which difference of opinion existed between us and them, viz., the incarnation of Christ, the office of the secular authorities, the swearing of oaths, etc., but above all others, the article of holy baptism, namely, whether they were denied infant baptism? or, whether they were rebaptized? which latter principally caused their death; as sentence of death was immediately passed upon them, and their life taken.

Martyrs Mirror, written in 1660, is a large 8x10 book of almost 1200 pages of small print, listing and documenting thousands of the names and dates of martyrdom of, as the title page declares, "The Defenseless Christians Who Baptized Only Upon Confession of Faith, and Who Suffered and Died for the Testimony of Jesus, Their Saviour, From the Time of Christ to the Year A.D. 1660."

Of the persecutions of the first three hundred years after Christ's death, Augustus Neander wrote:

The Christians were often victims of the popular rage. The populace saw in them the enemies of their gods; and this was the same thing as to have no religion at all. The deniers of the gods, the atheists, was the common name by which the Christians were designated among the people; and of such men the vilest and most improbable stories could easily gain belief: - that in their conclaves they were accustomed to abandon themselves to unnatural lust; that they killed and devoured children; - accusations which we find circulated, in the most diverse periods, against religious sects that have at once become objects of the fanatic hatred of the populace. The reports of disaffected slaves, or of those from whom torture had wrung the confession desired, were next employed to support these absurd charges, and to justify the rage of the populace. If in hot climates the long absence of rain brought on a drought; if in Egypt the Nile failed to irrigate the fields; if in Rome the Tiber overflowed its banks; if a contagious disease was raging; if an earthquake, a famine, or any other public calamity occurred, the populace rage was easily turned against the Christians. "We may ascribe this," was the cry, "to the anger of the gods on account of the

spread of Christianity." Thus it had become a proverb in North Africa, according to Augustine, "If there is no rain, tax it on the Christians." (Volume 1, p.92 of 5 volume 9th edition *History of the Christian Religion and Church*, published by Crocker & Brewster, Boston).

On page 79 of *Martyrs Mirror*, van Braght says:

The innocent Christians were accused not only of the burning of Rome, but also of every wickedness imaginable; that they might be tortured and put to death in the most awful manner. To this the Roman Tacitus (according to the translation of J. Gysius, and not that of Fenacolius)* refers, saying: "Then, Nero, in order to avert this report from himself, caused those called Christians by the common people, to be accused and exceedingly tormented.

Later, on page 79, van Braght wrote:

Touching the manner in which the Christians were tortured and killed at the time of Nero, A. Mellinus gives the following account from Tacitus and other Roman writers: namely, that four extremely cruel and unnatural kinds of torture were employed against the Christians:

Firstly, that they dressed them in the skins of tame and wild beasts, that they might be torn to pieces by dogs or other wild animals.

Secondly, that they, according to the example of their Saviour, were fastened alive on crosses, and that in many different ways.

Thirdly, that the innocent Christians were burned and smoked by the Romans, with torches and lamps, under the shoulders and on other tender parts of their naked bodies, after these had been cruelly lacerated with scourges or rods. This burning was done also with shavings and fagots, they (the Christians) being tied to stakes worth half a stiver. [about one cent] Therefore they called the Christians sarmenticii, that is, fagot people, and semissii, that is, half stiver people; because they stood fastened to half stiver stakes, and were thus burned with the slow fire of fagots.

Fourthly, that these miserable, accused Christian martyrs were used as candles, torches, or lanterns, to see by them at night.

Van Braght then describes how the candles were constructed of those Christians, and set on fire, and used for light in the theatre for the circuses.

Those martyrs could easily have escaped their persecution by compromising their religious beliefs, and participating in paganism. They chose, instead, to follow "fully after the LORD."

Polycarp was given a choice, before he was set on fire and burned to death during a pagan festival at Smyrna in A.D. 155. *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1957) gives this account:

The proconsul Statius Quadratus was present on the occasion, and the asiarch Philip of Tralles was presiding over the games. Eleven Christians had been brought, mostly from Philadelphia, to be put to death. The appetite of the populace was inflamed by the spectacle of their martyrdom. A cry was raised, "Away with the atheists. Let search be made for Polycarp." Polycarp took refuge in a country farm. His hiding-place, however, was betrayed and he was arrested and brought back into the city. Attempts were made by the officials to induce him to recant, but without effect. When he came into the theatre, the proconsul urged him to "revile Christ," and promised, if he would consent to abjure his faith, that he would set him at liberty. To this appeal Polycarp made the memorable answer, "Eighty and six years have I served Him and He hath done me no wrong. How then can I speak evil of my King who saved me?"

Shame on those today who will compromise their faith and practice just to be more popular, or in order to gain or retain some "influential" person or family in their membership.

The persecution and martyrdom of Christians continued almost daily, varying in intensity and location, and is documented by many historians. *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1957) says:

Decius was the first Roman emperor to institute an organized persecution of the Christians throughout the empire. Previous persecutions had been sporadic and local in character.

Eusebius says, in his *Ecclesiastical History*:

Philip, after a reign of seven years, was succeeded by Decius, who, in consequence of his hatred to Philip, raised a persecution against the church, in which Fabianus suffered martyrdom, and was succeeded as bishop of Rome by Cornelius.

In *A Manual of Church History* (p.164) Alfred H. Newman wrote:

The fact that Christians had been especially favored by the predecessor probably led Decius to suspect them of disloyalty to himself. It may be assumed from what we know of this ruler that his exterminating measures against Christianity did not proceed from sheer wantonness, but were from his point of view a political necessity.

Of this imperial edict which was issued in the year 250 to suppress Christianity, Newman says:

In each official district all Christians were required within a definite time to offer sacrifices to the gods. The flight of Christians before the expiration of time allowed was not hindered, but the property of fugitives was confiscated and death was the penalty of returning. Those who were not in a position to prove that they had fulfilled the requirement were brought before a commission composed of officials and citizens. First they were threatened with the direst punishments in case of obstinacy. Threats were followed by torture. This failing, imprisonment and repeated tortures, including hunger and thirst, were resorted to as means of breaking down the wills of the victims. All the influence and machinery of the imperial government were employed to prevent laxity on the part of the officials. The magistrates were enjoined to use special severity toward bishops and other influential leaders.

Immunity from persecution had brought into the churches multitudes of people who had no proper idea of the obligations of the Christian life and many who cannot be regarded as possessing a saving knowledge of the truth. Lamentable worldliness characterized many of the clergy, who were spending their energies in secular pursuits rather than in the ministry of the word. The imperial edict struck terror to the hearts of all whose faith was weak. "Before the battle," writes Cyprian, "many were conquered, and without having met the enemy, were cut down; they did not even seek to gain the reputation of having sacrificed against their will. They indeed did not wait to be apprehended ere they

ascended, or to be interrogated ere they denied. Many were conquered before the battle, prostrated before the attack. Nor did they even leave it to be said for them that they seemed to sacrifice to idols unwillingly. They ran to the market place of their own accord." Many were so impatient to deny their faith that they could hardly wait their turn. Cyprian himself retired before the fury of the persecution and thereby greatly injured his reputation among the stricter sort. Many who would neither flee nor sacrifice suffered the most terrible tortures and died in prison or were at last cruelly executed. Some by bribing the officials procured certificates of having sacrificed without committing the overt act. Some allowed others to say that they had sacrificed or to procure certificates for them. Holders of these fraudulent certificates were called *libellatici* and were regarded as scarcely less culpable than the Lapsi or those who actually denied their faith.

Eusebius gives this account of a woman named Quinta, sometimes called Cointha, who stood firm in her profession of faith:

Next they led a woman called Quinta, who was a believer, to the temple of an idol, and attempted to force her to worship; but when she turned away in disgust, they tied her by the feet, and dragged her through the whole city, over the rough stones of the paved streets, dashing her against the millstones, and scourging her at the same time, until they brought her to the same place, where they stoned her.

Another woman who was also martyred in Alexandria in the same year (252) was Apollonia. *Martyrs Mirror* gives this account:

Apollonia was an aged virgin, whom the enemies of truth apprehended, and with their fists and blows in the face, knocked every tooth out of her head. In the mean time a large fire of wood was kindled, and they threatened to burn her alive, if she would not worship the gods, and forsake Christ. But notwithstanding this miserable death, she would rather go into the fire, and lose her temporal life, than save it by abandoning Christ and losing her soul. Touching the manner of her death, and her great willingness to die, A. Mellinus makes this statement: "This virgin was sentenced to be burned, or to blaspheme the name of Christ; but as she abhorred the latter, she wished to show that she was ready and willing to die for Christ."

Eusebius says, of Apollonia, that:

She appeared at first to shrink a little, but when suffered to go, she suddenly sprang into the fire and was consumed.

Another period of intense persecution came during the rule of Diocletian. On pages 172-173, of *Martyrs Mirror*, T.J. van Braght wrote the following in 1660, ". . . ACCORDING TO THE ACCOUNT OF P.J. TWISCK, FROM VARIOUS ANCIENT AND CELEBRATED AUTHORS":

These two Emperors (namely, Diocletian and Maximian) jointly governed the empire, in harmony and constancy, and remained undivided. However, when they had reigned about ten years, they took counsel together, and resolved to exterminate the Christians, because the discord of religion caused great dissensions, both in the households and in the Roman Empire.

Then, from his quotation of P.J. Twisck:

". . . in the nineteenth year of his reign, which coincides with A.D. 302, issued a public decree (as was done in the days of Antiochus), that everyone, in every place, should sacrifice to the gods of the Emperors; and that he who should refuse to do so, should be punished with death; also, that the churches or meeting places, and the books of the Christians should be utterly destroyed. Yea, there was scarcely a large city in the empire, in which not daily a hundred Christians, or thereabouts, were slain. It is also recorded that in one month seventeen thousand Christians were put to death in different parts of the empire, so that the blood which was shed colored red many rivers. Some were hanged, others beheaded, some burned, and some sunk by whole shiploads in the depths of the sea."

As touching the fearful tortures inflicted, he then writes thus: "These tyrants had some of them dragged through the streets, tied to the tails of horses, and after they were mangled and bruised, they had them put back into prison, and placed upon beds of potsherds, so that rest might be more excruciating for them than actual torment. Sometimes they bent down with great force the branches of trees, and tied one leg to one branch, and the other to another, and then let the branches spring back into their natural position, so that their limbs were shockingly rent

in pieces. They cut off the ears, noses, lips, hands, and the toes of many, leaving them only the eyes, to inflict still more pain upon them. They sharpened wooden pegs, which they inserted between the flesh and the nails; and had lead or tin melted, and poured as hot as possible over their bare backs."

Many who professed Christianity in that period did compromise with paganism during the times of most severe persecution, and then when times were better, sought to return to Christian worship in the fellowship of the Lord's congregations. When they were accepted back, they often brought some of the pagan ways with them. Some refused to admit those who had departed the faith back into the fellowship of the Lord's congregation. That, in fact, is the main thing that led to what is known as the Novation rupture.

In Ecclesiastical Researches (1792) Robert Robinson says (p.126):

The case in brief, was this: Novation was an elder in the church at Rome. He was a man of extensive learning, and held the same doctrine as the church did, and published several treatises in defense of what he believed. His address was eloquent and insinuating, and his morals were irreproachable. He saw, with extreme pain, the intolerable depravity of the church. Christians, within the space of a very few years, were caressed by one emperor, and persecuted by another. In seasons of prosperity, many rushed into the church for base purposes. In times of adversity they denied the faith and ran back to idolatry again. When the squall was over, away they came again to the church, with all their vices, to deprave others by their example. The bishops, fond of proselytes, encouraged all this, and transferred the attention of Christians from the old confederacy for virtue, to vain shows at Easter, and a thousand other Jewish ceremonies, adulterated, too, with paganism. On the death of Bishop Fabian, Cornelius, a brother elder, and a vehement partisan for taking in the multitude, was put in nomination. Novation opposed him; but as Cornelius carried his election, and he saw no prospect of reformation, but on the contrary, a tide of immorality pouring into the church, he withdrew, and a great many with him. Cornelius, irritated by Cyprian, who was just in the same condition, through the remonstrances of virtuous men at Carthage, and who was exasperated beyond measure with one of his elders named Novatus who had quitted Carthage and had gone to

Rome to espouse the cause of Novation, called a council, and got a sentence of excommunication passed against Novation. In the end, Novation formed a church and was elected bishop. Great numbers followed his example and all over the empire Puritan churches were constituted, and flourished through the succeeding two hundred years. Afterward, when penal laws obliged them to lurk in corners, and worship God in private, they were distinguished by a variety of names, and a succession of the continued till the Reformation.

Notice the statements that "Great numbers followed his example and all over the empire Puritan churches were constituted, and flourished through the succeeding two hundred years," and that a succession of them continued till the Reformation."

On page 163 of volume 1 of his 5 volume *A Compendium of Ecclesiastical History*, John Gieseler states:

Though the other bishops, and especially Cyprian at Carthage, and Dionysius at Alexandria, were on the side of Cornelius, great numbers in all parts joined the stricter party.

Under "Carthage," *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1957) says that in A.D. 311 the Donatist "heresy," was supported by 270 African bishops.

These congregations that refused to apostatize and had withdrawn from the disorderly, as well as those that remained intact and sided with them, became known as Novations, Cathari, Puritans (not to be confused with those of more recent times), and Paterins. At about the same time, in other places there were congregations that had taken the same, or similar stands, and became known as Cataphrygians, Quintillianists, Pepuzians, Montanists, and Donatists.

Do not assume that every congregation that was called by one of these names was, or remained, true bodies of Christ. I believe that there has hardly been a time since Jesus built His first congregation, that there has not been a counterfeit or apostate congregation using the same names as the true ones. The Devil is a copy-cat.

About the year 200, baptismal regeneration began to be taught by some, and in 370, or earlier, infant baptism began to be practiced.

Along with these false doctrines, the hierarchical ambitions of some, which we considered in a previous chapter, had been developing. As should be expected, those false doctrines and practices had little trouble finding acceptance among the apostate congregations. The political ambitions of a hierarchical system necessitated a "universal church" concept, and thus the term "catholic" (with a small "c") began to be used.

Writing of the Novations, on page 55 of *A Concise History of Baptists*, G. H. Orchard says:

On account of the church's severity of discipline, the example was followed by many, and churches of this order flourished in the greatest part of those provinces which had received the gospel. Many advenient rites had been appointed, and interwoven with baptism, with a threefold administration of the ordinance, in the old interests, which obscured the original simplicity and design of the institutor. To remove all human appendages, the Novationists said to candidates, "If you be a virtuous believer, and will accede to our confederacy against sin, you may be admitted among us by baptism, or if any catholic has baptized you before, by rebaptism." They were at later periods called anabaptists. The churches thus formed upon a plan of *strict communion* and rigid discipline, obtained the reproach of PURITANS; they were the oldest body of Christian churches, of which we have any account, and *a succession of them*, we shall prove, has continued to the present day. Novation's example had a powerful influence, and puritan churches rose in different parts, in quick succession. So early as 254, these Dissenters are complained of, as having infected France with their doctrines, which will aid us in the *Albigensian* churches, where the same severity of discipline is traced, and reprobated.

Constantine came to the throne in 306, and in 312, after allegedly seeing Christ in a dream and being victorious in a battle, inquired and was instructed by some of the leaders of the apostate "Christianity." Constantine then embraced and became affiliated with their so called "Christianity." In 313, the "Edict of Milan" was issued by Constantine and Licinius, granting religious liberty to all. That edict stated, in part:

. . . we have granted liberty and full freedom to the Christians, to observe their own mode of worship; which as your fidelity understands

absolutely granted to them by us, the privilege is also granted to others to pursue that worship and religion they wish. Which it is obvious is consistent with the peace and tranquility of our times; that each may have the privilege to select and to worship whatsoever divinity he pleases. But this has been done by us, that we might not appear in any manner to detract any thing from any manner of religion, or any mode of worship. And this, we further decree, with respect to the Christians, that the places in which they were formerly accustomed to assemble, concerning which also we formerly wrote to your fidelity, in a different form, that if any persons have purchased these, either from our treasury, or from any other one, these shall restore them to the Christians, without money and without demanding any price, without any superadded value, or augmentation, without delay or hesitancy. . . . (Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, book X chapter V)

The change in situation brought temporary relief to the true Christian congregations as well as the apostate ones. *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1957) says of Constantine:

His claim to greatness rests mainly on the fact that he divined the future which lay before Christianity, and determined to enlist it in the service of his empire . . .

The leaders in the apostate congregations, having already been in pursuit of hierarchical ambitions, were eager to "enlist" in the service of Constantine's empire.

World Book Encyclopedia (1985) says:

Constantine made many gifts to the Christian church, including huge estates which he gave to the church in Rome. He built the first great Christian cathedral, the Lateran Basilica in Rome. He built other famous churches in and near Rome; and in Antioch, Syria (now Antioch, Turkey); Constantinople; and Jerusalem.

On page 31 of *The History of Romanism*, John Dowling wrote:

Soon after Constantine professed conversion to Christianity, he undertook to remodel the government of the church, so as to make it conform as much as possible to the government of the state. Hence the

origin of the dignities of patriarchs, exarchs, archbishops, canons, prebendaries, etc., intended by the Emperor to correspond with the different secular offices and dignities, connected with the civil administration of the empire. Taking these newly constituted dignitaries of the church into his own special favor, he loaded them with the wealth and worldly honors, and richly endowed the churches over which they presided, thus fostering in those who professed to be the followers and ministers of Him who was "meek and lowly of heart" a spirit of worldly ambition, pride, and avarice.

Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* lists a "Copy of an Epistle in which the Emperor grants money to the churches," in book X, chapter VI, which states, in part:

CONSTANTINE AUGUSTUS to Cecilianus bishop of Carthage. As we have determined, that in all the provinces of Africa, Numidia, and Mauritania, something should be granted to certain ministers of the legitimate and most holy catholic (universal) religion, to defray their expenses, I have given letters to Ursus, the most illustrious lieutenant-governor of Africa, and have communicated to him, that he shall provide, to pay to your authority, three thousand folles.* [If the follis be estimated at 208 denarii, according to the usual computation, this sum would amount to about 10,000 dollars.]

The apostate congregations were now developed into a "universal church" and married to the state. The true Christians, the Lord's congregations, previously considered as "the atheists" under paganism, were now known as "heretics." Constantine's main concern being the strength and greatness of his empire, and his recognition of religion as being a valuable tool in accomplishing his goals, religious unity became a high priority to him. The leaders of the apostate congregations which had become the "state church," still angered at the true congregations of Christ for their stand for truth, and no doubt desirous of bringing their numbers under their own power and control, were easily employed in an effort to subdue those true congregations which they called heretics.

Those true congregations were considered trouble-makers and disruptive to unity because they would not conform and compromise. They were hated because they went "fully after the LORD." That has

always been the case, and will be until the end of the age. I have found that the uncompromising, true worshipers of God, are almost always considered as divisive. In Acts 17:6, Paul and Silas were accused of turning the world upside down. In Matthew 10:35-39, Jesus said:

For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

In Luke 14:25-27:

And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

In Matthew 10: 16-18 and 22, Jesus said:

Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

John, in I John 3:12-13, speaking of Cain killing Abel, said:

. . . And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

Here are two of Constantine's letters, recorded in Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*, that show the early development of authority given to the "State church" by Constantine. In book X, chapter V, is the

following "Copy of the Emperor's Epistle, in which he ordains a council of bishops to be held at Rome, for the unity and peace of the church":

CONSTANTINE AUGUSTUS, to Miltiades bishop of Rome, and to Marcus. As many communications of this kind have been sent to me from Anulinus, the most illustrious proconsul of Africa, in which it is contained that Caecilianus, the bishop of Carthage, was accused, in many respects, by his colleagues in Africa; and as this appears to be grievous, that in those provinces which divine Providence has freely entrusted to my fidelity, and in which there is a vast population, the multitude are found inclining to deteriorate, and in a manner divided into two parties, and among others that the bishops were at variance; I have resolved that the same Caecilianus, together with ten bishops, who appear to accuse him, and ten others, whom he himself may consider necessary for his cause, shall sail to Rome. That you, being present there, as also Reticus, Maternus, and Marinus, your colleagues, whom I have commanded to hasten to Rome for this purpose, may be heard, as you may understand most consistent with the most sacred law And, indeed, that you may have the most perfect knowledge of these matters, I have subjoined to my epistle copies of the writings sent to me by Anulinus, and sent them to your aforesaid colleagues. In which your gravity will read and consider in what way the aforesaid cause may be most accurately investigated and justly decided. Since it neither escapes your diligence, that I show such regard for the holy catholic church, that I wish you, upon the whole, to leave no room for schism or division. May the power of the great God preserve you many years, most esteemed.

And then, a "Copy of the Epistle in which the Emperor commanded another council to be held, for the purpose of removing all the dissension of the bishops":

CONSTANTINE AUGUSTUS to Chrestus bishop of Syracuse. As there were some already before who perversely and wickedly began to waver in the holy religion and celestial virtue, and to abandon the doctrine of the catholic (universal) church, desirous, therefore, of preventing such disputes among them, I had thus written, that this subject, which appeared to be agitated among them, might be rectified, by delegating certain bishops from Gaul, and summoning others of the opposite parties from Africa, who are pertinaciously and incessantly contending with one another, that by a careful examination of the matter in their

presence, it might thus be decided. But since, as it happens, some, forgetful of their own salvation, and the reverence due to our most holy religion, even now do not cease to protract their own enmity, being unwilling to conform to the decision already promulgated, and asserting that they were very few that advanced their sentiments and opinions, or else that all points which ought to have been first fully discussed not being first examined, they proceeded with too much haste and precipitancy to give publicity to the decision. Hence it has happened, that those very persons who ought to exhibit a brotherly and peaceful unanimity, rather disgracefully and detestably are at variance with one another, and thus give this occasion of derision to those that are without, and whose minds are averse to our most holy religion. Hence it has appeared necessary to me to provide that this matter, which ought to have ceased after the decision was issued by their own voluntary agreement, now, at length, should be fully terminated by the intervention of many.

Since, therefore, we have commanded many bishops to meet together from different and remote places, in the city of Arles, towards the calends of August, I have also thought proper to write to thee, that taking a public vehicle from the most illustrious Latronianus, corrector of Sicily, and taking with thee two others of the second rank, which thou mayest select, also three servants to afford you services on the way; I would have you meet them within the same day at the aforesaid place. That by the weight of your authority, and the prudence and unanimity of the rest that assemble, this dispute, which has disgracefully continued until the present time, in consequence of certain disgraceful contentions, may be discussed, by hearing all that shall be alleged by those who are now at variance, whom we have also commanded to be present, and thus the controversy be reduced, though slowly, to that faith, and observance of religion, and fraternal concord, which ought to prevail. May Almighty God preserve thee in safety many years.

The oppression continued to escalate, and soon, those who refused to compromise truth and refused to unite with the State church or recognize their baptisms and authority, were again being severely persecuted, this time by the catholic church with State authority.

Constantine's oppressive measures prompted many to leave the scene of sufferings, and retire into more sequestered spots. Claudius Seyssel, the popish archbishop, TRACES the rise of the Waldensian heresy to a pastor named Leo, leaving Rome at this period, for the Valleys. (*A Concise History of the Baptists*, G.H. Orchard, p.58)

In *History of the Donatists*, David Benidict quotes from Augustine's record of a local council held in Carthage in 404, in which it was stated:

It is now full time for the emperor to provide for the safety of the Catholic church, and prevent those rash men from terrifying the weak people, whom they cannot seduce.

In 413, an edict was issued by emperors, Theodosius and Honorius:

. . . declaring that all persons rebaptized, and the rebaptizers, should be both punished with death. Accordingly, Albanus, a zealous minister, with others, was punished with death, for rebaptizing.
These combined modes of oppression led the faithful to abandon the cities, and seek retreats in the valleys of Piedmont, the inhabitants of which began to be called Waldenses. (*A Concise History of Baptists*, G.H. Orchard, p.60-61)

Augustine wrote much against the Donatists, and pope Gregory the Great wrote against them as late as 604. Orchard says of the Novationists, "That they subsisted towards the end of the sixth century, is evident from the book of Eulogius, Bishop of Alexander" (p.63).

We can be certain that there were true congregations of the Lord dwelling in the valleys of Piedmont from the time of Constantine, having gone there to flee persecution. I believe that there were true congregations already established there.

On page 28 of *The Waldenses: Sketches of the Evangelical Christians of the Valleys of Piedmont*, A. W. Mitchell wrote:

Their own account of the matter uniformly has been, that their religion has descended with them from father to son by uninterrupted succession from the time of the apostles. There certainly is no improbability in the conjecture that the gospel was preached by some of

those early missionaries who carried Christianity into Gaul. The common passage from Rome to Gaul at that time lay directly through the Cottian Alps, and Gaul we know received the gospel early in the second century at the latest, probably before the close of the first century. If the apostle Paul ever made that journey into Spain (Rom. 15:28) which he speaks of in his epistle to the Romans, and in which he proposed to go by way of Rome, his natural route would have been in the same direction, and it is not impossible that his voice was actually heard among those retired valleys. The most common opinion among Protestant writers is, that the conversion of the Waldenses was begun by some of the very early Christian missionaries, perhaps by some of the Apostles themselves, on their way to Gaul, and that it was completed and the churches more fully organized by a large influx of Christians from Rome, after the first general persecution under Nero. The Christians of Rome, scattered by this terrible event, would naturally flee from the plain country to the mountains, carrying with them the gospel and its institutions.

The mountains and valleys of the Alps and the Piedmont area were a natural refuge for the persecuted Christians from surrounding territories in every age. In the words of Samuel Morland:

These Valleys, especially that of Angrogna, Pramol, and S. Martino, are by nature strongly fortified, by reason of their many difficult Passages, and Bulwarks of Rocks and Mountains, as if the All-wise Creator had from the beginning designed that place as a Cabinet, wherein to put some inestimable Jewel, or (to speak more plainly) there to reserve many thousands of souls, which should not bow the knee before Baal. [*The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont*, book 1, ch.1, p.3]

These persecuted Christians, given various nick-names in derision at various places and times, fled to the Valleys of Piedmont, and in time became generally known as Waldenses. Ever trying to rob Jesus' true congregations of their heritage and discredit them, the Romish persecutors invented the allegation that the Waldensian Christians originated with Peter Waldo, and got their name from him. *The History of the Ancient Christians* by Jean Paul Perrin, written in 1618, and *The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of the Piedmont* by Samuel Morland, written in 1658, contain various documents, writings,

and confessions of faith, dating back to 1120, which describes their faith and practice, as well as their well established existence, fifty years before Peter Waldo (almost four hundred years before the time of Luther or Calvin). Samuel Morland's book records "a certain Epistle of the Waldenses, inscribed":

An Epistle to the most serene King Lancelau, the Dukes, Barons, and most ancient Nobility of the Realm. The little troop of Christians falsely called by the name of poor people of Lions, or Waldenses. By which it is most evident, that they had not their original from the said Waldo, but that this was a meer nick-name or reproachfull term put upon them by their Adversaries, to make the world believe, that their Religion was but a Novelty, or a thing of yesterday. [book 1, ch.3, p.12]

Of the etymology of the name, Waldenses, most historians agree with Robert Robinson, who says, in his *Ecclesiastical Researches*, written in 1792:

From the Latin word *vallis*, came the English word *valley*, the French and Spanish *valle*, the Italian *valdesi*, the Low Dutch *valleye*, the Provençal *vaux*, *vaudois*, the ecclesiastical *Valdenses*, *Ualdenses*, and *Waldenses*. The words simply signify *vallies*, inhabitants of vallies, and no more. [p.302]

Reinerius Sacco was one of the first employed in the Inquisition by Rome, for the purpose of detecting and punishing the "heretics." Reinerius testified often against the Waldenses and, in 1254, wrote a book of accusation against them. Samuel Morland (p.28) quotes this from Reinerius:

Amongst all the sects which are or ever were, there is none more pernicious to the Church of God, than that of the poor people of Lyons, for three Reasons, First because it is of a longer duration. Some say that it has remained from the time of Silvester, others, from the time of the Apostles.

In *History of the Ancient Christians*, Jean Paul Perrin, in "History of the Waldenses, book II, ch. I, quotes Reinnerius' second reason given:

Because that sect is universal, for there is scarce any country where it hath not taken footing.

In chapter XVI of the same book, Perrin says:

In the year 1229, the Waldenses had already spread themselves in great numbers throughout all Italy. They had ten schools in Valcamonica alone, and sent money from all parts of their abode into Lombardy, for the maintenance and support of the said schools. Rainerius saith, that about the year of our Lord 1250, the Waldenses had churches in Albania, Lombardy, Milan, and in Romagna, likewise at Vincence, Florence, and Val Spoletine. In the year 1280, there were a considerable number of Waldenses in Sicily, as Haillan observes in his History.

In the next chapter, XVII, Perrin says:

The monk Rainerius, in his book of the form or method of proceeding against the heretics, in that catalogue that he made of the Waldenses, or poor of Lyons, observes, that in his time, in the year 1250, there were churches in Constantinople, in Philadelphia, Sclavonia, Bulgaria, and Diagonicia.

From these statements, we can see that the inquisitor, Rainerius Sacco, expressed no doubt about the continuance of these "heretics" from the time of the apostles. It is also evident from this, the testimony of their bloody persecutor, that there was, in his words, "scarce any country where it hath not taken footing." That is definitely not a situation that would develop overnight, but had come about as results of earlier scattering by persecutions and the fact that they had been obedient in the mission to:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. (Matthew 28:19-20)

The inquisitor, Rainerius Sacco, also wrote extensively of the "heresies" that these faithful congregations were guilty of. I will quote a few of those accusations here which tell us some important facts about their

doctrines in the words of the enemy. In volume II, pages 21-27 of *The History of the Christian Church*, William Jones gives the English translation of those charges which can be seen in the original Latin, in the *Ecclesiastical History of Ancient Churches of Piemont and the Albigenses* (original page numbers 188-191) by Peter Allix, written in 1690. Rainerius wrote:

Their first error is a contempt of ecclesiastical power, and from thence they have been delivered up to Satan, and by him cast headlong into innumerable errors, mixing the erroneous doctrines of the heretics of old with their own inventions. And being cast out of the Catholic church, they affirm that they alone are the church of Christ and his disciples. They declare themselves to be the apostles' successors, to have apostolical authority, and the keys of binding and loosing. They hold the church of Rome to be the whore of Babylon, (Rev. ch. xvii.) and that all that obey her are damned, especially the clergy that have been subject to her since the time of pope Sylvester. They deny that any true miracles are wrought in the church, because none of themselves ever worked any. They hold that none of the ordinances of the church, which have been introduced since Christ's ascension, ought to be observed, as being of no value. The feasts, fasts, orders, blessings, offices of the church, and the like, they utterly reject. They speak against consecrating churches, church-yards, and other things of the like nature, declaring that it was the invention of covetous priests, to augment their own gains, in spunging the people by those means of their money and oblations. They say, that a man is first baptized when he is received into their community. Some of them hold that baptism is of no advantage to infants, because they cannot actually believe. They reject the sacrament of confirmation, but instead of that, their teachers lay their hands upon their disciples. They say, the bishops, clergy, and other religious orders are no better than the Scribes and Pharisees, and other persecutors of the apostles. They do not believe the body and blood of Christ to be the true sacrament, but only blessed bread, which by a figure only is called the body of Christ, even as it is said, "and the rock was Christ," &c. Some of them hold that this sacrament can only be celebrated by those that are good, others again by any that know the words of consecration. This sacrament they celebrate in their assemblies, repeating the words of the gospel at their table, and participating together, in imitation of Christ's supper.

According to them there is no purgatory, and all that die, immediately pass either into heaven or hell. That therefore the prayers of the church for the dead are of no use, because those that are in heaven do not want them, nor can those that are in hell be relieved by them. And from thence they infer, that all offerings made for the dead are only of use to the clergymen that eat them, and not to the deceased, who are incapable of being profited by them. They hold, that the saints in heaven do not hear the prayers of the faithful, nor regard the honours which are done to them, because their bodies lie dead here beneath, and their spirits are at so great a distance from us in heaven, that they can neither hear our prayers nor see the honours which we pay them. They add, that the saints do not pray for us, and that therefore, we are not to entreat their intercession, because, being swallowed up with heavenly joy, they cannot attend to us, nor indeed to any thing else. Hence they deride all the festivals which we celebrate in honour of the saints, and all other instances of our veneration for them. Accordingly, wherever they can do it, they secretly work upon holy days, arguing, that since working is good, it cannot be evil to do that which is good on a holy day.

Looking in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1957), under "COUNCIL," it is found that the subject of the third Lateran council, called in 1179, was "Albigensians; Waldensians." Under the article, "LATERAN COUNCILS," the same encyclopedia says, of the fourth Lateran council, that:

The seventy decrees of the council begin with a confession of faith directed against the Cathari and Waldenses, which is significant if only for the mention of a transubstantiation of the elements in Lord's Supper. A series of resolutions provided in detail for the organized suppression of heresy and for the institution of the episcopal inquisition (Canon 3). On every Christian, of either sex, arrived at years of discretion, the duty was imposed of confessing at least once annually and of receiving the Eucharist at least at Easter (Canon 21).

Under the heading, "ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH," *Encyclopedia Britannica* has this:

At the fourth Lateran council (1215) Innocent III (1198-1216) published a definition of the faith which, after affirming the doctrine of the Trinity, the Incarnation and the Judgement, says:

"There is moreover one universal Church of the faithful, outside which no man at all is saved, in which the same Jesus Christ is both the priest and the sacrifice, whose body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the pieces of bread and wine, the bread being transubstantiated into the body and the wine into the blood by the divine power, in order that, to accomplish the mystery of unity, we ourselves may receive of His that which He received of ours. And this thing, the sacrament to wit, no one can make (*conficere*) but a priest, who has been duly ordained, according to the keys of the Church, which Jesus Christ Himself granted to the apostles and their successors.

But the sacrament of baptism, which is consecrated in water at the invocation of God and the undivided Trinity, that is of the Father, and of the Son and Holy Spirit, being duly conferred in the form of the Church by any person, whether upon children or adults, is profitable to salvation. And if anyone, after receiving baptism, has fallen into sin, he can always be restored (*reparari*) by true penitence.

Not only virgins and the continent, but also married persons, deserve, by right faith and good works pleasing to God, to come to eternal blessedness" (cited by Alexander Hamilton Thompson, *Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. vi, p.635).

The last article of the definition quoted above refers to the Catharist or Albigensian heresy, which in the 12th and 13th centuries threatened large areas of Hungary, Germany, Italy and France. It rejected infant baptism, purgatory, the communion of saints, the use of images and the doctrine of the Trinity. Above all, the Cathars attacked the institution of marriage, which was the basis of all social custom and law, sacred and secular, in the west. Catharism was anarchy and heresy at once. It implied the complete subversion of the social structure and the complete denial of the Christian faith.

Most of those charges of Catharist/ Albigensian/ Waldensian "heresy," when using the Bible as the final authority for all faith and practice, sound very complimentary to me. It is to be noted that the statement by *Encyclopedia Britannica*, that they rejected the doctrine of the Trinity, does not agree with the preponderance of evidence. Not only was there agreement in matters of faith and practice between the Cathars, Albigenses, and Waldenses, but the Roman Catholic

persecutors, as well as the encyclopedia at issue, as we have seen, considered the heresy of each as synonymous. In book I, chapter VI, of *The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont*, Samuel Morland exhibits a discourse which he labels, "The noble Lesson written in the Language of the ancient Inhabitants of the Valleys, in the Year 1100. Extracted out of a most authentick Manuscript, the true Original whereof is to be seen in the publick Library of the famous University of Cambridg." "The noble Lesson" is there given in the original, and in the Old English (which the entire book is written in). I will quote a few lines with modern spelling. "The noble Lesson" says, "There are already a thousand and one hundred years fully accomplished, Since it was written thus, For we are in the last time." That statement dates "The noble Lesson" at about a hundred years previous to the fourth Lateran council. On the next page, after mentioning "God the Father," "his glorious Son," and "the Holy Ghost," it says, "These three (the holy Trinity) as being but one God, ought to be called upon." The third reason given by Rainerius as to why "there is none more pernicious" to the Roman Catholic Church was:

Because all others beget in people a dread and horror of them by their blasphemies against God. But this on the contrary hath a great appearance of godliness, because they live righteously before men, and believe rightly of God in all things, and hold all the articles contained in the Creed, hating and reviling the church of Rome; and in this they are easily believed of the people. (Perrin, book II, ch. I)

Had the "heretics" rejected the Trinity, Rainerius would not have said that they, "believe rightly of God in all things." The Creed that Rainerius claimed, in 1254, that they "hold all the articles contained in," says:

1. I believe in one God, the Father, the almighty Creator of heaven and earth.
2. And in Jesus Christ, His only-begotten Son, our Lord.
3. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the virgin Mary. (*Martyrs Mirror* p.27)

Note, also, that the encyclopedia article, quoted earlier, stated that "the Cathars attacked the institution of marriage." The true Christians were

often charged with that accusation. The truth is, they did not attack the institution of marriage; in fact, they believed strongly in the institution of marriage. The Roman Catholics insisted that only their own clergy had the authority to perform a valid wedding ceremony. They held that the "heretic" pastors had no legal authority to marry anyone, and as a result, those married by them were adulterers. The members of the Lord's congregations, of course, refused to submit to the Catholics, and thus were charged with attacking or rejecting the institution of marriage. Representative of their position at that time, is the following statement, in book I, chapter V of *The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Piemont*. In what is labeled, "The ancient Discipline of the Evangelical Churches in the Valleys of PIEMONT. Extracted out of divers Authentick Manuscripts, written in their own Language several hundreds of Years before either Calvin or Luther," ARTICLE VIII states:

Marriage ought to be performed according to the rules prescribed by God, and not within those degrees which he hath forbidden. And there need no scruple of conscience be made concerning what the Pope hath forbidden, although we give him no money for a dispensation; for that which God hath not forbidden may very well be done without his permission.

The bond of holy marriage ought not to be made without the consent of friends on both sides, for as much as children ought to be wholly at the disposal of their parents.

Many of those true congregations of Christ's continued to earnestly contend for the faith through good times and bad. Besides the names already mentioned, some were called Arnoldists, Henricians, Paulicians, and other names. All came to be commonly called Ana-Baptists (rebaptizers). During times of most severe persecution, they were forced to take refuge in the mountains, living in caves and among rocks, and meeting in secret. In times of less severe persecution, missionaries were sent throughout the world. Wherever they went, they were hated and persecuted.

William Jones' *The History of the Christian Church* (volume I, p.486-488) tells this story:

Towards the middle of the twelfth century, a small society of these *Puritans*, as they were called by some, or *Waldenses*, as they are termed by others, or *Paulicians*, as they are denominated by our old monkish historian, William of Neuburg, made their appearance in England. This latter writer speaking of them, says, "they came originally from Gascoyne, where, *being as numerous as the sand of the sea*, they sorely infested both France, Italy, Spain, and England." The following is the account given by Dr. Henry, in his History of Great Britain, vol. viii.p.338. Oct. ed. of this emigrating party, which, in substance, correspondence with what is said of them by Rapin, Collier, Lyttleton, and other of our writers.

"A company, consisting of about thirty men and women, who spoke the German language, appeared in England at this time (1159), and soon attracted the attention of government by the singularity of their religious practices and opinions. It is indeed very difficult to discover with certainty what their opinions were, because they are recorded only by our monkish historians, who speak of them with much asperity. They were apprehended and brought before a council of the clergy at Oxford. Being interrogated about their religion, their teacher, named Gerard, a man of learning, answered in their name, that they were Christians, and believed the doctrines of the apostles. Upon a more particular inquiry, it was found that they denied several of the received doctrines of the church, such as purgatory, prayers for the dead, and the invocation of saints; and refusing to abandon these damnable heresies, as they were called, they were condemned as incorrigible heretics, and delivered to the secular arm to be punished. The king, (Henry II.) at the instigation of the clergy, commanded them to be branded with a red hot iron on the forehead, to be whipped through the streets of Oxford, and, having their clothes cut short by their girdles, to be turned into the open fields, all persons being forbidden to afford them any shelter or relief under the severest penalties. This cruel sentence was executed in its utmost rigour; and being the depth of winter, all these unhappy persons perished with cold and hunger. These seem to have been the first who suffered death in Britain, for the vague and variable crime of heresy, and it would have been much to the honour of the country if they had been the last."

It appears that there remained many of the true congregations of the Lord in the Piedmont valleys and surrounding mountains up to the

sixteenth century. Let me not be mistaken to imply that all congregations up till that time, or at any time, going by the names previously mentioned, were the Lord's true congregations. Many were, but many were not. Rainerius Sacco, the thirteenth century inquisitor, quoted earlier, wrote that some of those "heretics":

. . . frequent our churches, are present at divine service, offer at the altar, receive the sacrament, confess to the priests, observe the church fasts, celebrate festivals, and receive the priest's blessing, bowing their heads, though in the meantime they scoff at all these institutions of the church, looking upon them as profane and hurtful. They say it is sufficient for their salvation if they confess to God, and not to man.
(*The History of the Christian Church* by William Jones, vol. II, p.26-27)

Those were not true disciples. They disliked and disapproved of Papal authority, but were willing to compromise their faith and practice for social acceptance. Such practice led to the existence of many irregular congregations among the Waldenses of the Piedmont valleys. Those irregular congregations had little problem unionizing with the protestants of the Reformation, and were soon practicing infant baptism. In the year 1655 came a very intense and severely bloody persecution to the Piedmont valley area. Many cases, giving specific names, dates, locations, witnesses, and gory details of martyrdom, are catalogued in *The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont*, by Samuel Morland. Probably most, if not all, the congregations remaining true to the Lord in that area were exterminated or driven out at that time.

Not only was the truth preserved among many of Jesus' true congregations in the Piedmont area and taken by them into surrounding countries, but it is often found that the Lord already had true congregations established in those places. That should not be surprising when we consider the territory covered by the apostles, as recorded in the New Testament. Not only that, but most of the other members of those first congregations were preaching the gospel everywhere they went. Throughout most of the centuries, Jesus' congregations have usually been small, scattered, and through the world's eyes, pretty insignificant. Much of the time they have had only very modest, or no, meeting houses; and when they did, they have many times been dispossessed of their buildings through persecution. Sometimes that

dispossession has come by violent persecution, and sometimes, as in more recent times, by simply being "rooted out" by an apostate or unregenerate element of the membership. The world would have us think, "You can't have a church without a building," but I have concluded from history and from personal observation, that the Lord's congregations are often their most effective when they do not have a building. I do not mean that they should not have a building, or that it should not be a nice one, but it should definitely not be a top priority, or be considered a requirement. The New Testament certainly lists no such requirement.

Let us now back up to the first century and study briefly the existence of believers in another locality that has been used by Christ to plant His congregations throughout the world. On page 6 of *History of the Welsh Baptists*, published in 1835, J. Davis wrote:

That the apostle Paul also preached the gospel to the ancient Britons, is very probable from the testimony of Theodoret and Jerome; but that he was the first that introduced the gospel to this island cannot be admitted; for he was a prisoner in Rome at the time the good news of salvation through the blood of Christ reached this region. That the apostle Paul had great encouragement to visit this country afterwards, will not be denied.

Continuing, on pages six and seven, Davis says:

About fifty years before the birth of our Saviour, the Romans invaded the British Isle, in the reign of the Welsh King, Cassibellan, but having failed in consequence of other and more important wars, to conquer the Welsh nation, made peace with them, and dwelt among them many years. During that period many of the Welsh soldiers joined the Roman army, and many families from Wales visited Rome, among whom there was a certain woman of the name of Claudia, who was married to a man named Pudence. At the same time, Paul was sent a prisoner to Rome, and preached there in his own hired house, for the space of two years, about the year of our Lord 63.

Acts 28:30-31 says:

And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.

Back to Davis, on page seven:

Pudence and Claudia, his wife, who belonged to Caesar's household, under the blessing of God on Paul's preaching, were brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and made a profession of the Christian religion. These together with other Welshmen, among the Roman soldiers, who had tasted that the Lord was gracious, exerted themselves on the behalf of their countrymen in Wales, who were at that time vile idolaters.

Paul mentioned Claudia and Pudens in the closing of a letter, written while he was imprisoned at Rome, to Timothy, in II Timothy 4:21, which says:

Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

Of this verse, Matthew Henry says, in his Commentary:

One of the heathen writers at this time mentions one Pudens and his wife Claudia, and says the Claudia was a Briton, whence some have gathered that it was this Pudens, and that Claudia here was his wife, and that they were eminent Christians at Rome.

In his introduction to the "Memoirs" in *Sermons and Memoirs of Christmas Evans*, Joseph Cross, gives the same account as Davis.

In the second preface to his *The History of the English Baptists*, published in 1738, Thomas Crosby said:

Now amongst the converts of the natives of this island, in the first age to Christianity, Claudia surnamed Ruffina, is refuted a principle; she was the wife to Pudence, a Roman senator; and that this is the Claudia, a Briton born, mentioned by St. Paul, then living at Rome.

In the account in the previously mentioned memoirs of Evans, Joseph Cross wrote:

About a century after this, Faganus and Damianus went to Rome, were converted there, and became "able ministers of the New Testament." In the year of our Lord 180, they were sent back to Wales, to preach to their own countrymen. They were zealous and successful laborers. They opposed the pagan superstitions of the Welsh with wonderful energy. They pursued Druidism to its dark retirements, and poured upon it the withering blaze of the gospel. Through their preaching, Lucius, king of Wales, was brought to embrace Christianity.

Bede, a Catholic priest who wrote the *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*, in 731, wrote:

After the days of Lucius, the Britons preserved the faith which they had received, whole and inviolate, in a quiet and peaceable manner, until the reign of Diocletian.

Tertullian wrote that in 209, "those parts of Britain into which the Roman arms never penetrated have yielded subjection to Christ."

Encyclopedia Britannica (1957), under "WALES," says:

As to the coming of Christianity, there is nothing to associate it with Roman rule in Wales.

Back to Davis' *History of the Welsh Baptists*, on page nine, he says:

About the year 300 the Welsh Baptists suffered a terrible and bloody persecution which was the tenth pagan persecution under the reign of Diocletian. All history bearing on the subject testifies that the action of baptism in those times among these martyrs, was "immersion only."

Diocletian's strict orders were to burn up every Christian, every Meeting house, every scrap of written paper belonging to the Christians, or that gave any account of their rise and progress, and, no doubt many valuable documents were burnt that would have been very interesting to the present generation; and it is a wonder that any of them were preserved from the flames.

The Welsh Christians stood firm, resisting the inventions and innovations of the Roman Catholics under the rule of Constantine.

On page 190, volume I, of *A General History of the Baptist Denomination*, printed in 1813, David Benedict wrote:

About sixty years after the ascension of our Lord, christianity was planted in Britain, and a number of royal blood, and many of inferior birth, were called to be saints. Here the gospel flourished much in early times, and here also its followers endured many afflictions and calamities from pagan persecutors. The British christians experienced various changes of prosperity and adversity until about the year 600. A little previous to this period, Austin the monk, that famous Pede-baptist and persecutor, with about forty others, were sent here by pope Gregory the great, to convert the pagans to popery, and to subject all the British christians to the dominion of Rome. The enterprise succeeded, and conversion (or rather perversion) work was performed on a large scale. King Ethelbert and his court, and a considerable part of his kingdom, were won over by the successful monk, who consecrated the river Swale, near York, in which he caused to be baptized ten thousand of his converts in a day.

Having met with so much success in England, he resolved to try what he could do in Wales. There were many British christians who had fled hither in former times to avoid the brutal ravages of the outrageous Saxons. The monk held a synod in their neighbourhood, and sent to their pastors to request them to receive the pope's commandment; but they utterly refused to listen to either the monk or pope, or to adopt any of their maxims. Austin, meeting with this prompt refusal, endeavoured to compromise matters with these strenuous Welshmen, and requested that they would consent to him in three things, one of which was that they should give christendom, that is, baptism to their children; but with none of his propositions would they comply. "Sins therefore," said this zealous apostle of popery and pedobaptism, "ye wol not receive peace of your brethren, ye of other shall have warre and wretche," and accordingly he brought the Saxons upon them to shed their innocent blood, many of them lost their lives for the name of Jesus.

Joseph Cross, in the previously mentioned introduction to the memoirs of Christmas Evans, wrote:

Twelve hundred ministers and delegates were slaughtered, and afterward many of their brethren. Their leaders being slain, the majority of the survivors reluctantly purchased peace at the sacrifice of conscience, submitting to the creed and usages of Rome. Yet there were some who repudiated the doctrine of the pope's supremacy, and maintained for a season the simplicity of the gospel. But they lived among the mountains, in seclusion from the world, like the inhabitants of the vale of Piedmont.

Let us now continue with the quotation of David Benedict, on page 191, vol. I. The memoirs he refers to here, are the "Memoirs of the English Baptists," written by Josiah Taylor of Calne, Wiltshire, England, in the *English Baptist Magazine*. Benedict says:

The Baptist historians in England contend that the first British christians were Baptists, and that they maintained Baptist principles until the coming of Austin. "We have no mention," says the author of the Memoirs, "of the christening or baptizing children in England, before the coming of Austin in 597; and to us it is evident he brought it *not from heaven* but *from Rome*. But though the subject of baptism began now to be altered, the mode of it continued in the national church a thousand years longer, and baptism was administered by dipping, &c." From the coming of Austin the church in this island was divided into two parts, the *old* and the *new*. The old or Baptist church maintained their original principles. But the new church adopted infant baptism, and the rest of the multiplying superstitions of Rome.

Austin's requesting the British christians, who opposed his popish mission, to baptize their children, is a circumstance which the English and Welsh Baptists consider of much importance. They infer from it, that before Austin's time, infant baptism was not practised in England, and that though he converted multitudes to his pedobaptist plan, yet many, especially in Wales and Cornwall, opposed it; and the Welsh baptists contend that Baptist principles were maintained in the recesses of their mountainous Principality all along through the dark reign of popery.

William the Conqueror ascended the British throne in 1066. During his reign, the Waldenses and their disciples from France, Germany, and Holland, began to emigrate to and abound in England. About the year 1080, they are said to have propagated their sentiments throughout England; so that not only the meaner sort in country villages, but the nobility and gentry in the chiefest towns and cities, embraced their doctrines, and of course adopted the opinions of the Baptists, for we have no information that any of the Waldenses at this period, had fallen off to infant baptism. For more than a hundred years, that is from 1100 to 1216, during the successive reigns of Henry I. Stephen, Henry II. Richard I. and John, the Waldenses increased and were unmolested. . .

.

We must now pass on to the reign of Edward II. in 1315, when Walter Lollard, a German preacher of great renown among the Waldenses, and a friend to believers baptism, came into England and preached with great effect. His followers and the Waldenses generally in England for many generations after him were called Lollards

Just as with all the other names, not all that were called Lollards were true congregations of Christ's, but many were.

Although it was no little matter to be an Ana-baptist, or even express agreement with their beliefs, there is good evidence of their continuous existence during this time throughout England and Wales. We are no doubt deprived of much of their history from the 1300s to the 1600s, because of the persecution which forced them to live simple, inconspicuous lives in "out of the way" places. Not only would records and writings have likely been avoided, many probably were destroyed by the enemies. Much of their meeting was done in hiding, and in secret. There were at least some regular "meeting houses" maintained and used when possible. One is that known as Hill Cliffe. In *History of the Baptist Church at Hill Cliffe*, James Kenworthy wrote:

We cannot go back to the foundation of the Hill Cliffe Church, ` but at the time that the earliest reference is made to it, it is then in a flourishing condition, and the very reference itself points to its earlier existence.

The selection of Hill Cliffe as a place of meeting for Christian worshippers can only be accounted for on the ground that the great object in view was concealment from their persecutors. It would be impossible to have chosen a better place for the purpose. Surrounded as it was until recent times by woods, at a safe distance also from the public highways, and very near the boundary of the counties of Lancaster and Chester, it was as safe a place as could possibly have been found in those dark days of persecution. Whenever the persecuting spirit was strong in Lancashire, then the people would worship at Hill Cliffe, but when the persecuting spirit in Cheshire was the stronger, the people worshipped in Warrington, there being at the earliest time of which there remain any records of the existence of Hill Cliffe Chapel, a meeting-house in connection therewith at Warrington.

On page 31, Kenworthy says:

The earliest evidence of the existence of Hill Cliffe is found on a stone in the burial ground and bearing date 1357. Another stone has been found with the date 1414. Another has the date 1523, another 1599, but the dates of the greater portion of the old stones are lost.

The following are copied from stones in the burial ground:-

HERE LYS Ye BODY
OF ELIZABETH PYCROFT WHO
DIED DECEMBER 6,
1522

HERE LYETH THE BODY OF
WILLIAM BATHO OF CHESTER
WHO DIED NOVEMBER 13TH IN YEAR
1584

MARIA HESLOP
EXIT FEBRY. J
1664

JOSHUA SEDDON
1672

Many others are then listed, up to about the time the book was written, the last of which is:

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
SAMUEL KENWORTHY,
THE BELOVED PASTOR OF THIS
CHURCH,
WHO FELL ASLEEP IN JESUS,
AUGUST 3RD, 1892.
AGED 46 YEARS.

On page 39, Kenworthy says:

During the rebuilding of the chapel in 1800 a stone baptistery, well cemented, was found in the ground. As no one at the time knew of its existence and it was evidently of great age, it is likely that as the more troublous times had passed, it fell into disuse, and the baptism of believers in the brooks and streams in the neighborhood took place. (From the ministry of the Rev. John Thompson up to recent times, the chief places of baptisms were at Lower Walton, near the brook that ran through the centre of the village, and in Cann Lane, Appleton.) This stone baptistery points to the great age for the chapel and the practice of immersion there.

The first minister of Hill Cliffe of whom anything is known was Mr. Weyerburton. . . He remained with the people to the end of his days, his death taking place in 1594.

In *Bye-Paths in Baptist History*, published in London, in 1871, J. J. Goadby, on pages 22-23, says:

Although Mr. Weyerburton is the first minister of Hill Cliffe of whom anything is known, he is not necessarily to be regarded as the earliest minister of the congregation. Mr. Dainteth succeeded Mr. Weyerburton. The graveyard contains the tomb of his successor--Thomas Slater Leyland, "a minister of the Gospel," as the inscription tells us. He was buried in the year preceeding the death of Queen Elizabeth. At the outbreak of the Civil War, Mr. Tillam was the minister of Hill Cliffe. Oliver Cromwell worshipped at the chapel when his army lay at Warrington, and one of his officers occupied the pulpit. The

earliest deeds of the property have been irrecoverably lost, but the extant deeds, which go back considerably over two hundred years [this was published in 1871], describe the property as being "for the use of the people commonly called Anabaptists."

Also, on page 23, Goadby says:

The church at Eythorne, Kent, owes its origin to some Dutch Baptists, who settled in this country in the time of Henry the Eighth. They were, doubtless, tempted to make England their home by the brisk trade that sprang up between this country and Holland, soon after the marriage of Henry with Anne of Cleves (1540).

On the next page, he says:

In the Calendar of State Papers (Domestic Series, 1547--1580), under the date of October 28th, 1552, we have this entry: "Northumberland, to Sir William Cecill. Wishes the King would appoint Mr. Knox to the Bishopric of Rochester. He would be a whetstone to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and a confounder of the Anabaptists lately sprung up in Kent." It would be historically inaccurate to regard this as the first intimation of the existence of Baptists, as a separate community in England. Apart from the probabilities about the still earlier origin of Hill Cliffe Church, it should not be forgotten that Henry the Eighth had long before 1550 proclaimed to the nation how, "like a good Catholic priest, he abhorred and detested their (the Anabaptists') wicked and abominable errors and opinions;" that in his second proclamation, he had warned all Anabaptists and Zwinglians to depart out of the country, under pain of death; and that in the third proclamation, when Cranmer was a Protestant archbishop, Cranmer and eight others were authorized to make diligent search for Anabaptist men, Anabaptist letters, and Anabaptist books, full power being put into Cranmer's hands to deal capitally with each offender. The Baptists, in King Edward's days, might have lately sprung up in Kent, but these proclamations show that they were not then known for the first time in England.

Goadby also speaks of a John Knott, who, "became the pastor of Eythorne somewhere between 1590 and 1600."

In *The Church in the Hop Garden*, "A Chatty Account of the Longworth-Coate Baptist Meeting: Berks and Oxfordshire (Ante 1481-1935) and its Ministers," John Stanley tells of an Anabaptist meeting-place being at Longworth, in England, about fourteen miles west of Oxford, in the year 1481, and then its history up to 1934. In chapter V, Stanley tells of the "first-known *definite* fact of the history of the Meeting":

A member of the family, Benjamin Williams, F.S.A., a keen antiquarian, a hundred years ago compiled the annals of his family, and some very full geneological tables. He spent many years and much labour on his researches. He starts with an original Parchment Lease, still in the archives of the family. This is the lease of the Homestead and Farm in Aston (Coate is now a hamlet of Aston) granted to Richard Williams in the twenty-first year of Edward IV. (1481), a hundred years after the death of Wycliffe. From 1547, when Thomas Cromwell made the keeping of Parochial Records compulsory, there is a continuous flow of the family name in the Bampton registers, and the local Court of Probate.

So Richard Williams, the farmer, of the days of Edward IV., is regarded as the founder of the family. The story of the settling is this. A religious persecution in Wales drove out two brothers named Williams. They were sheep farmers, and brought their flocks with them. They wandered on until they came into the neighborhood of Witney-- into a high road between Witney and Bampton. Here is the field known for a thousand years as Kingsway Field, the great field that Alfred the Great crossed to hold his Parliament at Shifford. Tempted by the fresh, sweet grass, the sheep broke through the great boundary hedge into the field. The break is still known as the Welshman's Gap. The Gap is mentioned in a Bishop's Terrier (an Episcopal "Doomsday Book," now in the Bodleian Library) as a well-known landmark, in 1577--ninety-six years after one of the emigrants had obtained the lease at Aston. They crossed the field into Aston. Hungry, weary and perplexed, they knelt down and besought the Divine Guidance. After the sign-seeing manner of the times, they threw a straw into the air, determined to follow its direction. It flew in the direction of Coate. At Coate they came across a friendly farmer, and settled there. One of the Welshmen married the farmer's daughter and became the progenitor of John Williams, the Martyr-Missionary. This would be Richard Williams, who leased the Homestead at Aston. The other brother remained unmarried.

The friendly farmer was an Anabaptist, and worshipped with the Anabaptist Meeting at Longworth, across the river.

The point to be noted is this: that an Anabaptist Meeting is found at Longworth about a hundred years after Wycliffe's death, and fifty years before Henry VIII. formed his new Church of England.

Another congregation that should be mentioned here was organized in London, in 1633. The following is from pages 138-139 of D. B. Ray's *Baptist Succession*, where he quotes from volume I of Thomas Crosby's four volume *History of the English Baptists*, published in 1738. Ray says:

Mr. Crosby introduces the testimony of William Kiffen as follows: "This agrees with an account given of the matter in an ancient manuscript, said to be written by *Mr. William Kiffen*, who lived in those times, and was a leader among those of that persuasion.

This relates, that several sober and pious persons belonging to the congregations of the *dissenters* about *London*, were convinced that *believers* were the only proper subjects of *baptism*, and that it ought to be administered by *immersion* or *dipping* the whole body into the water, in resemblance of a *burial* and *resurrection*, according to Colos. ii:12, and Rom. vi:4. That they often met together to pray and confer about this matter, and consult what methods they should take to enjoy this ordinance in its primitive purity: That they could not be satisfied about any *administrator* in *England* to begin this practice; because, though some in this nation rejected the *baptism* of *infants*, yet they had not, as they knew of, revived the ancient custom of *immersion*. But, hearing that some in the *Netherlands* practiced it, they agreed to send over one Mr. Richard Blunt, who understood the *Dutch* language: That he went accordingly, carrying letters of recommendation with him, and was kindly received both by the church there, and Mr. *John Batte*, their teacher: That upon his return he baptized Mr. *Samuel Blacklock*, a minister, and these two baptized the rest of their company, whose names are in the manuscript to the number of fifty-three.

So that those who followed this *scheme* did not receive their *baptism* from the aforesaid Mr. *Smith*, or his congregation at *Amsterdam*, it being an ancient congregation of foreign *Baptists* in the low *countries* to

whom they sent." *Crosby*, vol. I, pp. 101, 102; see also, *Ivimey*, vol. I, p. 143; *Neal's Hist. Pur.*, vol. II, p. 361; *Orchard*, vol. II, p. 260.

Here we have the undisputed historic fact, that the Baptists of London were so careful to obtain valid baptism that they delegated Richard Blunt, formerly a Pedobaptist minister, to visit a regular Baptist church at Amsterdam, in Holland, which belonged to the old Waldensean succession. And after the baptism of Richard Blunt by John Batte, by the authority of said church, he returned to London and baptized Samuel Blacklock, and they baptized the rest of the company, to the number of fifty-three members; and thus was formed a Baptist church, which was afterward recognized as a Particular Baptist church.

After examining Richard Blunt and the letters he brought with him, the congregation in the Netherlands baptized him and sent him home to London with the authority, approval, and express purpose of baptizing the fifty-three others and organizing them into a true congregation. It may seem strange that they did not know of a congregation in England or Wales from which they could obtain scriptural baptism, but we must remember the situation of the time and place. The climate of persecution from the Church of England of those who would not conform dictated that the Lord's congregations not be very well known about. That they were the same kind, or of like faith and order, is evident in their fellowship, shortly after, with the other Sovereign Grace Ana-Baptist congregations of England and Wales, already in existence.

The American Baptist Heritage in Wales, transcribed from the manuscript of "History of the Baptist Churches in Wales" by Joshua Thomas, a Baptist preacher in Wales who lived from 1719-1797, on pages 28-29, speaking of the congregation at Olchon, in Wales, says:

No doubt the aged people there well remembered the former troubles, before 1640. From 1660 to 1688 they were much persecuted despised, yet a remnant continued through the whole.

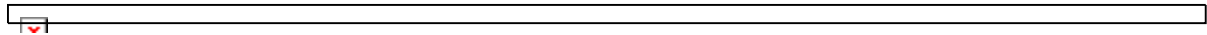
They met to worship in various places where they could; sometimes in a friend's house and often out. One day or night they would meet in some retired place of the Black Mountain, but when they understood that the informers had heard of the place; then they would change it and fix upon another spot; thus they shifted from place to place. A noted rock,

they frequented for the purpose, is called, Y Darren ddn, on the west side of Olchon, and well known still. A little below it, there was then a large wood, there is part of it now; that wood was often their meeting place. That was the estate of Mr. Hugh Lewis, a gentleman of property and influence but no persecutor. His son, Mr. Nathan Lewis, was a strong advocate for the persecuted Baptists. Mr. Thomas Lewis, another son, was a Baptist after and lived at Abergavenny. There was also a daughter, who was a member. So on the whole they had favor and interest there.

Notwithstanding all favors and cautions, the good people were often taken, beaten, abused, fined, and imprisoned. They were hunted like David, through woods, through mountains, and the rocks of wild goats. Of whom the world was not worthy, they wandered in desert, mountains, dens and caves. At times when they met to worship at friends' houses, it was running great risk and hazards.

In a later chapter, we will see the migration of members from these very congregations, and their offspring, into America.

[Return to CONTENTS](#)



CHAPTER NINE

OUR FIRST LOVE

By the undeserved grace of God, I was given a desire to have a greater love for Him who "first loved us." I John 4:19 tells us, "We love him, because he first loved us." In Psalms 116:1 we read, "I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications." In II Corinthians 5:14 we are told, "the love of Christ constraineth us." God's love for us and in us should cause us to love Him.

Seeing, then, that our love for God is subsequent to His love for us, we are forced to conclude that our love for God is either strengthened or retarded in proportion to our knowledge of God's love for us. That fact demonstrates the importance of Holy Spirit led Bible study and exposure to scripturally sound teaching and preaching. It shows as well, how

detrimental the neglect of Bible study and lack of exposure to sound doctrine is.

I first knew that God loved me when He saved me nearly thirty years ago. I knew He must love me a lot, because, as He had so patiently shown me, I was without hope, except through faith in Jesus; and not only was that hope undeserved, I had repeatedly resisted and rejected it. God was not willing that I should perish, but brought me to repentance, and gave me the gift of faith in Jesus.

I later learned that not only did God choose to save me, but that He had made that choice even before He created the world. Study Romans 9:11, Ephesians 1:4, II Thessalonians 2:13, II Timothy 1:9, and Revelation 17:8. That knowledge brought with it a greater recognition of God's love.

I had known all along that salvation was eternal, but as the years have passed and I can look back at all the failure, weakness, and my unprofitability to Him, it is overwhelming to know that God knew all that and still chose to save me before the world began.

The acceptance of the Bible doctrines of grace are essential to the continued learning of the love of God. To the extent of our recognition of how sovereign God really is, and how depraved man really is, we can have a greater awareness and appreciation of the love of God.

Our love for God should cause us to worship Him. Proper and acceptable worship should then lead us to effective service. Our worship is one way of showing our love for God. Can we expect our service for God to be effective if our worship is not proper and acceptable? Notice the difference in Peter's usefulness after the matter of his love for Jesus was dealt with in John 21.

This desire to love God more and the study induced by it has raised many questions. Some ideas and opinions had to be discarded. My narrow minded beliefs have become much more narrow. Many of those beliefs are not popular and are often ridiculed, rejected, and hated. In Matthew 7:14 Jesus said, ". . . narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." It seems that a narrow mind would be proper for going a narrow way. Noah was in the same boat, wasn't

he? In Luke 17:26 Jesus said, "And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man."

A narrow mind is not necessarily a closed mind. There is a time for an open mind and a time for a closed mind. It is absolutely essential though, that we have the Holy Spirit in charge of the opening and closing of our minds and that we heed the warning of Proverbs 3:5 to "lean not unto thine own understanding." When our minds are open, the Word of God should be in front of us.

The importance of love should be seen from reading I Corinthians 13. The first verse of that chapter shows us that no matter what we do or how well we may speak or how pretty we may sing or how much we may spend, if it is without love, we are only making a meaningless noise.

Read the letter in Revelation 2 to the pastor and congregation at Ephesus. The charge made there was "thou hast left thy first love." Jesus said in Matthew 22:37-38, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment." (Also see Mark 12:30.) "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). As a result, we are then able to love Him. As that love grows and matures, we are then able to love others. As love is expressed and exercised, it becomes stronger.

The conversation between Jesus and Peter in John 21 was not necessary for Jesus to find out how much Peter loved Him -- He already knew. It was Peter who needed to know, and he needed to express it. Through conversation and communion with God, we too can be shown our true spiritual condition.

Through our proper worship and communication with God, He can show us of His greatness; and when we begin to see how great God is, we can begin to see how small we really are. That leads us to an even greater awareness and appreciation of God and His greatness, and then we can better see the true size of ourselves.

This, much like looking into a mirror, gives us a more accurate assessment of what changes need to be made. This also helps us to see

others in a proper perspective. We can begin to see that the most wicked and ungodly person is just as good as we are except by the grace of God. From that, by the grace of God, should develop a compassion for and the ability to love others. Proper worship of God should lead us to a proper respect for all of God's creation. That is where we need to be. Most worship, it seems, is little more than self gratification, and I believe we can see the results of it.

Until a person recognizes that he is a sinner in opposition to God, without hope except by His grace, and will repent, that person can have no communication with God. Psalm 7:11 says, ". . . God is angry with the wicked every day." Without repentance and the personal application of Jesus' work alone for our salvation, we have no access to God. In John 14:6 Jesus said, ". . . no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Romans 11:6 tells us, "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace."

The very act of breathing the air and standing on the ground that God has created is a sin for the unsaved person because he is in no position to give thanks to God for it. In Proverbs 21:4 we read that ". . . the plowing of the wicked, is sin." In verse 27 his sacrifice is abomination and in Proverbs 28:9 ". . . even his prayer shall be abomination." He can not pray for himself or for anyone else. He cannot "pray through;" he must repent.

After the receiving of salvation, we can ask God for guidance and understanding; and by His grace, we can begin building an increasingly closer relationship with Him.

When God gives us instructions, we must respond in obedience before we have any right or reason to expect any further instruction, guidance, or growth. Take another look at Proverbs 28:9, quoted from above, and notice that the prayer of the disobedient Christian is also an abomination. The student in school or in any course of study must progress one grade or one level at a time. The comprehension of one lesson is dependent upon the understanding and mastering of the previous one. Is it not reasonable that our spiritual growth and progress would come in the same manner?

When we reject God's will and go our own way, the farther we go, the more we distance ourselves. There can be no closer walk with God until we return to where we left Him.

[Return to CONTENTS](#)

CHAPTER TEN

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

The next step after salvation is to follow the Saviour in the declarative figure of baptism. That baptism is commanded, most will agree. As for the elements--the candidate, the mode, the purpose or design, the administrator, and authority--there is much disagreement among the various denominations. That there are such differences demonstrates that everyone is not administering the same declarative figure. We cannot truthfully say that things which are different are the same. The Bible teaches only one kind of baptism (Ephesians 4:5). We must conclude that the only baptism that can be acceptable to God is that which is defined in His Word, not those that have been altered or designed by men. That is also the only kind of baptism that should be acceptable to Christ's followers.

That the candidate must be already saved by God's grace through faith in Christ must be admitted, because 1 Peter 3:21 says that baptism is ". . . (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ," not the obtaining of a good conscience. How could one have "a good conscience" knowing he was not yet saved? From this verse we also see that baptism is a ". . . figure . . . not the putting away of the filth of the flesh"

Baptism typifies the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It also typifies the death and burial of the old self of the candidate and resurrection to "walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4). If baptism, being a declarative figure, is administered for the wrong purpose, then aren't all who are involved in that declaration involved in declaring a lie about the gospel of Jesus Christ? Would God accept that?

Baptism being a figure, or the declaring of something in typology, shouldn't the figure be declared truthfully? If death, burial, and resurrection, is being typified with water, should there not be a burial in the water? Even if the Bible said nothing more about it, there should be no question about the acceptable mode of baptism. It is universally admitted by all who have investigated that the common and accepted meaning of *baptizo* or *baptizein* in the Greek language, was never anything other than to immerse, submerge, dip, whelm, or cover completely in Christian, pagan, or classical writings until hundreds of years after the New Testament was written.

In John 1:33, John informs us that God sent him "to baptize [immerge] with water." John 3:23 tells us that the reason John was immersing "at Aenon near to Salim" was "because there was much water there." Matthew 3:16 says that when Jesus was baptized, He "went up straightway out of the water." In Acts 8:38, when Philip baptized the eunuch, the Bible informs us that, "they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. The next verse says, "And when they were come up out of the water. . . ." Nowhere in the Bible has God instructed us, or given permission, to change or to immerse in any other way than by immersion.

In *Alien Baptism and the Baptists*, William Manlius Nevins wrote:

When King James would translate the Bible, he called together the scholars of his day to make the translation. They did a magnificent piece of work. But when they came to the Greek word, *baptize*, knowing that it meant to immerse, they dared not so translate it without conferring with the king, for well they knew that the Church of England baptized by sprinkling. The outcome was, by the King's request, not to translate the word at all, but to Anglicize it. And so we have the Greek word, *baptizo*, or baptize in our English Bibles, when, if it had been translated, it would have been *immerse*.

It is a serious thing to pervert or alter the mode, or any other feature, of baptism. It is as serious as Cain's alternative sacrifice to God (Genesis 4:1-8). It is as serious as Moses' striking the rock twice (Exodus 17:1-7, Numbers 20:7-12, I Corinthians 10:1-6). When an act is to be performed as a figure, for the purpose of teaching something with typology, and the figure is changed, then the thing being pictured

or taught is changed. Since the figure of baptism is teaching and picturing Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, the gospel (I Corinthians 15:1-4), to change the figure is to teach another gospel, which is no gospel. It is absurd for anyone to suppose that God would approve of telling a lie about the gospel, which is "the power of God unto salvation," whether in word or in figure.

Let us now briefly consider the authority to baptize. In John 1:6 we read:

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John."

In verse 33, John says that God:

". . .sent me to baptize with water. . . ."

In Matthew 3:13, we see that Jesus traveled from Galilee to Jordan (sixty miles) to be baptized by the only one who had been sent with the authority to baptize. In His baptism, Jesus typified his death, burial, and resurrection, which would "fulfill all righteousness" (v.15). In the next two verses, we can see that God was pleased with it. In Matthew 28:16-20, we find Jesus as He was about to depart, giving some instructions to His congregation, which He had built upon Himself (Matthew 16:18), "the chief corner stone" (Ephesians 2:20). I Corinthians 3:11 says:

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

That this commission was not given to all who were saved is seen in that only the eleven disciples were present at a certain place where Jesus had appointed them for the purpose of giving this commission and authorization (Matthew 28:16). In verses 18 and 19 Jesus said, ". . . All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore"

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have

commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28:18-20)

The authority to teach, baptize, and do mission work was given by Jesus to that congregation and to that congregation only and was to be passed by line of succession only to congregations like it. Reason should tell us that authority can only be given by one who has authority.

We must not mistakenly think that Jesus received His authority from John. Jesus received His baptism from John, the only one authorized to baptize at the time, but Jesus' authority was from God the Father. The authority to teach, baptize, and do mission work was granted to daughter congregations born and organized as results of teaching, baptizing, and doing mission work.

That authority has been passed on in this same manner (and will continue to be) down through the centuries ("alway, even unto the end of the world" Matthew 28:20) and throughout the world ("all nations" Matthew 28:19).

I have been told that since such a line of succession cannot be proven unbroken, step by step, that such a belief should not be held, but I find that there is much more proof for it than there is for any opposing theory.

After quite a bit of genealogical research, I have been unable to trace any line of my "family tree" farther back than about five hundred years, and have little hope of tracing much farther. Does that mean that I should abandon the belief that I am a descendant of Adam and Eve? I believe there has never been a moment in time since Jesus organized His first congregation that there has not been one or more true congregations (bodies of Christ) alive and with an unbroken line of succession, just as surely as I believe that there has always been people since Adam and Eve and that all true persons are descendants of them. That is the only explanation (succession of authority) I know of that totally agrees with the Bible, and it is the most reasonable.

Much error and false doctrine has been perpetrated by the assumption that the terms "church," "kingdom of heaven," "body of Christ," "kingdom of God," and "bride of Christ" are all synonymous, but they

are not. Such assumption is the invention of those trying to give legitimacy to the various organizations, denominations, programs, and counterfeit congregations of professing Christianity. They may fool themselves and many others, but they will not fool God. Different words were used because they had different meanings. Jesus was not so reckless or incompetent with His speech and use of language as to author such confusion, and neither was the Holy Spirit so reckless or incompetent in His inspiration of the Bible.

Notice that the promise, ". . . lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," is conditioned upon ". . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:" (Matthew 28:20). Baptism being a declarative and figurative act, "picture preaching" as Buell H. Kazez described it in *The Church and the Ordinances*, it is an extremely important and indicative part of the preaching and teaching of the congregation administering it.

In his book titled *Old Landmarkism*, J. R. Graves said:

We can not, for one moment, conceive that Christ or His apostles committed the gospel to, and commissioned it to be preserved and preached by, those who neither experimentally understood, nor had themselves obeyed it, and whose teaching and practice tended directly to pervert and subvert it.

To disobey in regard to the following of Christ in proper baptism and membership in one of His congregations is to rebel against God. We should not expect to be able to worship, serve, or make request to God when we are unwilling to follow Christ that far.

He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination. Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit: but the upright shall have good things in possession. (Proverbs 28:9-10)

Having become engaged in a right relationship with our Lord, we can begin to worship and walk with Him. To know that worship must be proper and according to God's instructions to be acceptable to Him, we would have to read no farther than the example of Cain and Abel in the fourth chapter of Genesis. There we read of two brothers and their

attempt to worship God. They both were intending to worship the same God. Probably, both offerings were made about the same place and time, and most likely in the same manner. One of these men changed the rules a little to suit himself; he wanted to do it his own way.

Abel was preaching in a figure that the only way of access to God is by the shed blood of the Lamb. Cain was teaching, as so many still do today, salvation by works. Verses 4 and 5 say:

. . . the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. . . .

There, also, we see the first man to be martyred for preaching with a figurative act that salvation is by grace through faith in Christ alone.

Some have said that that is reading too much into it, but a study of the Bible shows differently. In Matthew 23:24-39 and Luke 11:43-54, we find Jesus accusing the people of killing the prophets that God had sent them, and He includes Abel as one of those prophets. We also have the comments of Hebrews 11:4 and Hebrews 12:24, which the Holy Spirit inspired to be written.

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. (Hebrews 11:4)

And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: (Hebrews 12:24-25)

In Genesis 4:7, God said to Cain:

If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. . . .

Moses learned of the consequences of perverting or changing God's instructions in regard to teaching with a figurative act, when he struck the rock twice (Numbers 20:7-12). 1 Corinthians 10:4 says, ". . . that Rock was Christ."

Read in Leviticus 10:1-2 about Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, whom God killed for adding to His instructions for worship.

And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. (Leviticus 10:1-2)

It is important that our teaching, our worship, and our "picture preaching" be kept pure. Our "picture preaching" is not finished when we come up out of the water of baptism. Galatians 3:27 says:

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Romans 6:4-6 says:

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

It should be very clear, from the above examples, the error and seriousness of perverting, changing, or altering the teachings of God's word to suit ourselves or others or to conform it to changing times or customs. God does not change. We must not change the message and gospel of God's word verbally, in print, or in figure.

I realize this does not agree with the popular teaching and movement of today that we should lay aside our doctrines and all come together for the sake of love and unity, but we should love "the praise of God" more than "the praise of men" (John 12:43). Can you love Jesus as Lord and Saviour and not love truth? In John 14:6 Jesus said, ". . . I am . . . the truth"

Also, Jesus IS Lord AND Saviour. To claim Jesus as Saviour but not accept Him as Lord is to reject Him.

[Return to CONTENTS](#)

CHAPTER ELEVEN

FROM HEAVEN OR OF MEN ?

(Luke 20:4)

As we continue in this study, let us remember the words of Jesus in John 4:23-24. In verse 23 He said:

. . . the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth .
. . .

In verse 24 He said:

God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Let us also keep in mind that each true congregation of the Lord is made up of individual members who are saved, baptized, and joined together as the body of Christ in a certain location or area with the purpose and charge of continuing His work on earth.

This body does not dissolve or cease to exist at the last "amen" on Sunday night and then mystically reconstitute at the next meeting. It is still a body on Monday, Tuesday, and every day. A member or members cannot live an unholy or disobedient life at home, at work, at school, or at play without having a harmful effect on the body it is a part of.

Since the religious holidays have such an influence and impact, it seems sensible to me that we should want to know and do God's will and follow His instructions for us in regard to them.

The celebrations and observance of "Christmas" and "Easter" are undoubtedly the most esteemed and enthusiastically participated in. At "Easter" we often see community wide and inter-denominational

participation in "holy week" observances and "sunrise services" and such things. At "Christmas" time we will see "church houses" packed beyond capacity and folks "goin' early to get a good seat" for "Christmas" programs. At that time of year, many homes where the Bible is never opened suddenly become traffic-stopping religious displays. Many promote the holiday as a great opportunity to "share Christ with the world." Let us ask, "What is proper -- what is acceptable to God regarding our participation in and observance of these holidays?"

I have many times heard, "No one knows the exact date of Christ's birth, but most Christians observe Christmas on December 25." I looked in the *World Book Encyclopedia* under "Christmas," and that is the exact wording of the second sentence in that article. That troubled me because I have also heard many times, and believe that, "if something is worth doing, it's worth doing right."

To appreciate the seriousness of the matter, consider the examples and consequences from the Bible involving improper religious practices that we looked at earlier.

We have clear guidance from the Bible for the observing of "the Lord's day" on the first day of the week, for a memorial of Christ's resurrection as the seventh day had been a memorial of God's finished work of creation.

In John 20:19, we find the disciples assembled on the first day of the week, and Jesus came and "stood in the midst." In verse 26, we see that "after eight days again" the same thing happened. In Acts 2:1 we read:

And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

There, they were again meeting on the first day of the week, and with the presence and approval of the Holy Spirit. Again in Acts 20:7, "upon the first day of the week" the Lord's congregation "came together." In I Corinthians 16:1-2, Paul giving instruction "concerning the collection," said:

Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

It was "on the Lord's day" (Revelation 1:10) when Jesus appeared to John with the Revelation.

Notice the precision of God's instructions in the Old Testament regarding the days for the feasts and other things. Those Jewish feast days were accurately kept up with and are still noted on many calendars. If we are to observe an event of such magnitude as "Christmas", shouldn't we get the date right?

In Luke 1:5, speaking of the father of John the Baptist, the Bible says that he was "a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia." It was "while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course," (Luke 1:8) that an "angel of the Lord" (v.11) told him, ". . . thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John" (v.13).

In I Chronicles 24:10, it is found that the eighth course of priestly duty was assigned to Abia or "Abijah" as it is spelled there. There were twenty-four such courses of duty, each course being one week in duration. Counting one week for the Feast of Unleavened Bread and one week for Pentecost, when all were on duty, Zacharias' course would be the tenth week of the year on the religious calendar in use at that time. Zacharias would also have had another "course" of priestly duty the thirty-fifth week, when his turn would come again, counting one week for the Feast of Tabernacles.

By the wording of Luke 1:23-24, it would seem most probable that Elisabeth conceived as soon as this course of Zacharias' was over. That would have been either about the twenty-first day of the month of Sivan or about the twenty-first day of Heshvan. We can see from Luke 1:56-57 and Luke 2:6 that the birth of John and the birth of Jesus were both at full term. According to Luke 1:36 John was six months older than Jesus. With all this we can be fairly confident that Jesus was born either in mid to late September or mid to late January, as it would come out on our calendar today. The exact date varies from year to year, because of the difference in a lunar based calendar and a solar based calendar.

A close look at Matthew 2:13-23 and Luke 2:21-39, in light of "the law of Moses" (Luke 2:22), which is found in Leviticus 12:1-8, reveals that Mary, Joseph, and Jesus fled to Egypt (Matthew 2:13-14) "And was there until the death of Herod . . ." (v.15).

And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; (Luke 2:22)

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, if a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean. And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled. But if she bear a maid child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her separation: and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days. And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest: Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her; and he shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female. And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean. (Leviticus 12:1-8)

According to these verses, Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to Jerusalem forty-one days after He was born. Herod must have died less than forty days after Jesus' birth.

Josephus wrote quite a bit about this Herod, and described in much detail his illness leading to his death. Josephus even gave a date during that illness of Herod of March 13, 4 B.C., when there was an eclipse of the moon. Josephus then continued telling of Herod's illness and other events up until the time of his death, which was probably several

months later. While it looks like Josephus could easily have given us the date of Herod's death, we are left conspicuously without one.

Polycarp could very well have known the date of Jesus' birth. Polycarp, a pastor at Smyrna, was born around 69 A.D., and was martyred on February 23, 155. Irenaeus, in a letter to Florinus wrote of his remembrance of hearing Polycarp preach and talk of his acquaintance

. . . with John and with the rest of those who had seen the Lord, and how he would relate their words. And everything that he had heard from them about the Lord, about His miracles and about His teaching, Polycarp used to tell us as one who received it from those who had seen the Word of Life with their own eyes, and all this in perfect harmony with the scriptures. To these things I used to listen at the time, through the mercy of God vouchsafed to me, noting them down, not on paper but in my heart, and constantly by the grace of God I brood over my accurate recollections.

This information can be found in the 1957 edition of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, in the article on Polycarp.

Under "Christmas," in *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1957) we read that Polycarp ". . . set His birth on Sunday, when the world's creation began . . . ," but to my knowledge, he never gave a date in any of his writings. Jesus' birthday was obviously not observed or celebrated by Polycarp or by the Christians of that time.

One would think that Mary, Joseph, Elisabeth, Zacharias, the shepherds, the wise men, Simeon, or Anna, realizing what had happened, would have noted and remembered the date of Jesus' birth and one of the writers of the New Testament would have recorded it.

Adam Clark, John Gill, Albert Barnes, J. B. Lightfoot, Joseph Mede, and many other commentators question the likelihood of shepherds being in the fields in winter. For several reasons, I believe the September date, which would be the same date as the first day of creation and of the Feast of Trumpets (marked Rosh Hashanah on many calendars today) to be the most likely, but it must be admitted that we can only speculate as to which of the two dates is correct.

Why does the Bible leave us hanging with those two dates without specifying one? Why has God kept the writers of history from recording the date? Could it be that God did not intend for us to know the date or to celebrate Jesus' birth? I believe that that is precisely the case, and as we continue to investigate, it will be shown why. I believe God has blessed us with the two dates so that we can know that December 25 is not a celebration of Jesus' birth, yet left the ambiguity to show that we are not to celebrate the occasion at all.

All this should lead us to ask, "How did December 25 get chosen for this celebration, and if God didn't give us the holiday, who did?"

Not long after the world had been destroyed by the flood of Noah's time, people were again being led by, and following, the same spirit as had "Cain, who was of that wicked one" (I John 3:12). In every age there have been false prophets such as the "certain men crept in unawares" in Jude verse 4. They, like "the angels which kept not their first estate" in Jude verse 6, and "despise dominion"(v.8), "speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves" (v.10).

. . . ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgement of the great day. Even as Sodom and Gomorrhah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with he devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Woe unto them! for they have gone the way of

Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. (Jude 3-11)

In making his offering to God, Cain taught error in his typological preaching, and rather than repent, he rebelled.

Rejecting God, the people corrupted themselves with "what they know naturally as brute beasts." Recognizing the heat from the sun as the primary cause of the earth's production, the heathen people thought of the sun as the father of all living things, and the earth as a goddess, fertilized by the rays of the sun. That most likely was the religious belief of the builders of the tower of Babel.

That is also the origin of the terms, "Mother Earth" and "Mother Nature" which are experiencing great revival today.

Evidence of the worship of "father sun" and "mother earth," and the many religions that have developed from it, can be found world-wide and in almost every time period. Its influence can be seen in many ways. Notice the similarity and relationship of the words "mother," "maternity," and "maternal," derived from the Latin word "mater," and the words "matter," and "material," which come from the Latin word "materia." Notice how the theme of the fertile mating of the earth and sky is central and universal in about all mythology.

In *The Two Babylons*, Alexander Hislop traces the development of the Babylonian mystery religion back to Semiramis, the wife of Noah's great-grandson Nimrod. Speaking of the worship of Semiramis by the Babylonians, and how she bore a child whom she declared was miraculously conceived, Hislop says on page 21 that:

It was from the son, however, that she derived all her glory and her claims to deification. That son, though represented as a child in his mother's arms, was a person of great stature and immense bodily powers, as well as most fascinating manners. In Scripture he is referred to (Ezek. viii. 14) under the name of Tammuz, but he is commonly known among classical writers under the name of Bacchus, that is "The Lamented one."

On page 291 of *Lectures on the Revelation*, H.A. Ironside says:

From Babylon this mystery-religion spread to all the surrounding nations, as the years went on and the world was populated by the descendants of Noah. Everywhere the symbols were the same, and everywhere the cult of the mother and the child became the popular system; their worship was celebrated with the most disgusting and immoral practices. The image of the queen of heaven with the babe in her arms was seen everywhere, though the names might differ as languages differed. It became the mystery-religion of Phoenicia, and by the Phoenicians was carried to the ends of the earth. Ashtoreth and Tammuz, the mother and child of these hardy adventurers, became Isis and Horus in Egypt, Aphrodite and Eros in Greece, Venus and Cupid in Italy, and bore many other names in more distant places. Within 1000 years Babylonianism had become the religion of the world, which had rejected the Divine revelation.

In Egypt was the myth of Isis, "the Great Mother." Will Durant, in volume one (pages 200-201) of his nine volume *The Story of Civilization* says:

The Egyptians worshiped her with especial fondness and piety, and raised up jeweled images to her as the Mother of God; her tonsured priests praised her in sonorous matins and vespers; and in midwinter of each year, coincident with the annual rebirth of the sun towards the end of our December, the temples of her divine child, Horus (god of the sun), showed her, in holy effigy, nursing in a stable the babe she had miraculously conceived.

In a later chapter of volume one of *The Story of Civilization* (page 235) Durant says:

Ishtar (Astarte to the Greeks, Ashtoreth to the Jews) interests us not only as analogue of the Egyptian Isis and prototype of the Grecian Aphrodite and Roman Venus, but as the formal beneficiary of one of the strangest of Babylonian customs. She was Demeter as well as Aphrodite--no mere goddess of physical beauty and love, but the gracious divinity of bounteous motherhood, the secret inspiration of the growing soil, and the creative principle everywhere.
. . . . her worshipers repeatedly addressed her as "The Virgin," "The Holy Virgin," and "The Virgin Mother,"

Durant then quotes from *The Mothers* by Robert Briffault, a Babylonian litany in which they address Ishtar as "Queen of Heaven."

A couple of pages later (p.238) Durant says:

Tammuz, son of the great god Ea, is a shepherd pasturing his flock under the great tree Erida (which covers the whole earth with its shade) when Ishtar, always insatiable, falls in love with him, and chooses him to be the spouse of her youth. But Tammuz, like Adonis, is gored to death by a wild boar, and descends, like all the dead, into that dark subterranean Hades which the Babylonians called Aralu, and over which they set as ruler Ishtar's jealous sister, Ereshkigal. Ishtar, mourning inconsolably, resolves to go down to Aralu and restore Tammuz to life by bathing his wounds in the waters of a healing spring.

On the next page, Durant says:

To the modern scholar it is only an admirable legend, symbolizing delightfully the yearly death and rebirth of the soil, . . . to the Babylonians it was sacred history, faithfully believed and annually commemorated in a day of mourning and wailing for the dead Tammuz, followed by riotous rejoicing over his resurrection.

Two chapters later, on page 295, Durant says:

And as Ishtar had loved Tammuz, so Astarte had loved Adoni (i.e., Lord), whose death on the tusks of a boar was annually mourned at Byblos and Paphos (in Cyprus) with wailing and beating of the breast.

Encyclopedia Britannica (1957), which also contains much of this information, says:

The liturgical wailings for Tammuz during the period of his sojourn in Aralu are numerous and describe every aspect of the theological doctrines concerning him.

In Persia, at the time of Artaxerxes II (404-359 B.C.), the worship of Mithra became strong. In chapter 13, on page 372, Durant says:

. . . in the first centuries of our era, the cult of Mithra as a divine youth of beautiful countenance with a radiant halo over his head as a symbol

of his ancient identity with the sun -- spread throughout the Roman Empire, and shared in giving Christmas to Christianity.

Encyclopedia Britannica mentions the date of December 25 as being a Mithraic feast in the fourth century.

Instead of believing the first verse of the Bible that, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," those worshipers believe that the gods were created by the earth and sun.

In *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1957), the article on "Christmas" says:

In the beginning many of the earth's inhabitants were sun worshipers because the course of their lives depended on it's yearly round in the heavens, and feasts were held to aid its return from distant wanderings. Thus these ancient peoples held feasts at the same period that Christmas is now observed; they built great bonfires in order to give the winter sun god strength and to bring him back to life again. When it became apparent that the days were growing longer, there was great rejoicing because of the promise of the lengthening days to follow. when the fathers of the church in A.D. 440 decided upon a date to celebrate the event, they wisely chose the day of the winter solstice which was firmly fixed in the minds of the people and which was their most important festival. Because of changes in man-made calendars, the time of the solstice and the date of Christmas vary by a few days.

Notice that God did not instruct us to have any such celebration or observance and gave us no date for it. It was "the fathers of the church" who "decided" upon the celebration and the date. It is important to recognize that the "church" we are talking about here is the "church" whose "father's" also had about two-hundred years earlier "decided" on the false doctrine of baptism being necessary for the obtaining of salvation, and about one-hundred years earlier, had "decided" that babies must be baptized to keep them from going to hell. It is the same "church" that has killed over fifty-million people for refusing to recognize their baptism ("picture-preaching") as valid.

In Mark 11:28 Jesus was asked the question:

By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?"

Jesus answered their question with a question, saying in verse 30:

The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me.

(Implying that it was from heaven.)

In our evaluation of our participation with this so called "church" or her daughter "churches" (those who protested out of her) or her baptisms, ceremonies, and holidays, I believe it is imperative that we ask the question, "Is it from heaven or of men?"

The next item concerning the history and development of the holidays that I want to present is a quotation of Pope Gregory I, from the writings of Bede.

Bede was born in 672 or 673, and lived until 735. He was a Catholic priest and according to his autobiography, spent his whole life, from the age of seven, in a monastery. In 731 Bede wrote the *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*. *Encyclopedia Britannica* says of Bede:

. . . he showed a very unusual conscientiousness in collecting his information from the best available sources, and in distinguishing between what he believed to be fact, and what he regarded as rumor or tradition.

Bede had at his disposal the library of books collected by Benedict Biscop. In *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*, Bede quoted instructions given by Pope Gregory I, in 601 A.D., to missionaries sent from Rome. In those instructions, Pope Gregory I said:

Let the shrines and idols by no means be destroyed but let the idols which are in them be destroyed. Let water be consecrated and sprinkled in these temples; let altars be erected . . . so that the people, not seeing their temples destroyed, may displace error, and recognize and adore the true God. . . . And because they were wont to sacrifice oxen to devils, some celebration should be given in exchange for this . . . they should celebrate a religious feast and worship God by their

feasting, so that still keeping outward pleasures, they may more readily receive spiritual joys.

That quotation is in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1957), under "Christmas."

In 719, Pope Gregory II commissioned St. Boniface as a missionary to Germany. While in Germany, St. Boniface found that the Teutonic people had a tradition of sacrificing a child each year under a large oak tree. St. Boniface suggested that rather than sacrifice the child, they should cut a fir tree and celebrate around it at home. The Christmas tree tradition continued down through the years in Germany and, in the sixteenth century, Martin Luther decorated one with candles. From that, the decorating with lights and ornaments caught on. Early in the nineteenth century (less than two hundred years ago), the Christmas tree tradition was brought into America by German settlers.

Most of this information can be gleaned from *Encyclopedia Britannica* under "Boniface, Saint," "Christmas," and "Teutonic Peoples."

World Book Encyclopedia (1985) says:

The popularity of Christmas grew until the Reformation, a religious movement of the 1500's. This movement gave birth to Protestantism. During the Reformation, many Christians began to consider Christmas a pagan celebration because it included nonreligious customs. During the 1600's, because of these feelings, Christmas was outlawed in England and in parts of the English colonies in America. However, *people continued to exchange Christmas gifts and soon started to follow the other old customs again.* [emphasis added]

Let us now look at what the Bible says about the worship of these gods and goddesses of the sun and the earth. Review the paragraphs, a few pages ago, about Ashtoreth, Ishtar, and Isis. In Judges 2:13 we find that Israel was worshiping Ashtaroth.

And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.

Baal is also synonymous with Tammuz. Notice God's response in verses 14 and 15:

And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.

I Kings 11:5 says:

For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians. . . .

Verse 6 says:

And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father.

It will be shown that God considers participating in the worship of those gods and goddesses to be adultery. It is not that Solomon totally renounced God, or came to the point of no longer believing in God, but that he tried to serve both; he "went not fully after the LORD." Notice also that spiritual adultery is far more serious than physical adultery. David had committed physical adultery with Bathsheba, which was wrong, and even had her husband murdered, which was wrong, but Solomon's spiritual adultery was far worse.

In Matthew Henry's commentary on this eleventh chapter of I Kings, he says that Solomon "left his first love." Reading farther, verses 9-11 say:

And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, And had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant.

Nergal, mentioned in II Kings 17:30, is the sun god Horus, the "divine child" of Isis ("Mother of God" to the Egyptians), mentioned earlier.

In I Samuel chapter 7, we also find record of a time when the Israelites were worshipping Ashtaroath. Note that they had not intentionally abandoned God and renounced Him, but were trying to hang on to both. Verse 2 says that, ". . . all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD." They wanted God and His blessings, but they were sinning against Him, committing adultery with the "strange gods and Ashtaroath."

And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroath from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroath, and served the LORD only. (I Samuel 7:3-4)

They repented with a genuine repentance and verse 9 says that ". . . the LORD heard"

Not long afterwards, in I Samuel 12:10, the same people were again serving Baalim and Ashtaroath.

We know that adultery does not necessarily mean the divorcing or total abandonment of one's spouse for another, but is often an attempt to love more than one. One need only give the appearance of having an "affair" to show dishonor and disrespect. These things are true in the spiritual sense as well.

In II Kings 23 we see the proper action taken by Josiah, regarding the "high places . . . which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth (v.13). In verse 14, Josiah "brake in pieces the images, and cut down the groves."

Israel, as the wife of God, is to be seen as a type of the bride of Christ, to whom He has engaged Himself to be married. The bride of Christ, I believe, will consist of the saved who have followed Christ in proper baptism, served Him as obedient members of one of His true congregations, and have kept themselves pure by ecclesiastical separation and going "fully after the LORD." Every person who is saved will not be in the bride of Christ, although one who is saved can be, by repenting of what is wrong and making it right. While all who go to

Heaven will be clothed in the imputed righteousness of Christ, Revelation 19:7 shows that the Lamb's wife will have "made herself ready." We can start today. We can learn much from the study of the typology of the wife of God.

I Corinthians 10:6-11 says:

Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolators, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Isaiah 54:5-6 says to Israel:

For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.

In Jeremiah 3:8 God said:

And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.

In verse 11 He said:

The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.

Verse 14 says:

Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you
. . . .

In Jeremiah 31:31-32, God said of Israel and Judah, ". . . I was an husband unto them."

In Hosea chapters 1 and 2, Israel is pictured as the cast off wife.

I believe Jesus made the formal announcement and declaration of His engagement and intention to marry His bride elect in Matthew 26:29 when He said:

But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.

He then went on to say:

In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

Notice that He said, "are many mansions" (as in already are), yet promised, "I go to prepare a place for you" (His bride).

I believe that that indicates that while all who are truly saved by God's grace through faith in Christ will go to Heaven, there will be something special for those who have followed Christ in proper baptism and serving in one of His congregations with obedience, ecclesiastical separation, and spiritual purity. We may stumble, fall, and fail many times, like Peter did that night, when he denied the Lord. Matthew 26:75 says, ". . . And he went out, and wept bitterly." God stands ready to forgive, if we will turn to Him in sincere repentance.

I find that my beliefs concerning the bride of Christ are strongly rejected, hated and despised among most of professing Christianity. Often, when those beliefs have been defended with the Bible, the response is, "What does it matter anyway? The main thing is getting people saved." That is just the point; the main thing is getting people saved, but it is God that does the saving, and He has chosen to use the truth in doing it. God may occasionally save someone where false doctrine is being preached, but we can be sure that He did not use the false doctrine to accomplish it. Too many have decided that God can

save more people if we can just trick them into believing. Is that "from heaven, or of men"?

Ephesians 5:22-32 should leave no doubt but that the Lord's true congregations are the ones engaged to be His bride. Notice especially verse 27: ". . . not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." How can we teach, or support and encourage, error and false doctrine and not have spot, or wrinkle, or blemish?

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:22-32)

Seeing the connection of the typology of Israel and Judah as the wife of God, and how it applies to those engaged to be married to the Lamb, ("For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning . . ." Romans 15:4) let us go back and study further of their spiritual adulteries. If God regarded Judah's sin as worse than Israel's because she should have learned from Israel's mistakes, where does that put us who have the examples of both?

Go back and review the pages on Ishtar/Ashtoreth and Tammuz/Adonis, and notice also the names with which the Babylonians spoke of Ishtar/Ashtoreth, such as "The Holy Virgin," "The Virgin Mother," and "Queen of Heaven." As we study through the books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, we find that much is said about all this.

It is observed that the "green tree" has always been much a part of the adulterous observance of "Christmas." In Jeremiah 3:6, God accused Israel of having gone "under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot." Jeremiah 10:1-2 says:

Hear ye the word which the LORD speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them.

Remember how the heathen were dismayed by the shortening of the days toward winter solstice, and worshiped the sun to encourage it back to life? In Matthew Henry's comments on these verses, he says:

It ill becomes those that are taught of God to learn the way of the heathen, and to think of worshiping the true God with such rites and ceremonies as they used in the worship of their false gods.

Continuing in verses 3 and 4 of Jeremiah 10, God said:

For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.

The involvement of green trees in the worship of false gods and goddesses is found in Deuteronomy 12:2; I Kings 14:23; II Kings 16:4; II Kings 17:10; II Chronicles 28:4; Isaiah 57:5; Jeremiah 2:20; Jeremiah 3:6,13; Jeremiah 17:2; and Ezekiel 6:13.

Groves are mentioned in that context in Exodus 34:13; Deuteronomy 7:5; 12:3; 16:21; Judges 3:7; 6:25, 26, 28, 30; I Kings 14:15,23; 15:13; 16:33; 18:19; II Kings 13:6; 17:10, 16; 18:4; 21:3,7; 23:4,6,7,14,15; II Chronicles 14:3; 15:16; 17:6; 19:3; 24:18; 31:1; 33:3,19; 34:3,4,7; Isaiah 17:8; 27:9; Jeremiah 17:2; Micah 5:14.

Look at the celebration going on in Jeremiah 7:17-19 where God said:

Seest thou not what they do in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of

heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger. Do they provoke me to anger? saith the LORD: do they not provoke themselves to the confusion of their own faces?

Notice that the "queen of heaven" was being worshiped there by the people of Judah. You will remember this was one of the titles given to Ishtar/Ashtaroth by the Babylonians. Judah had learned "the way of the heathen" in that holiday celebration.

God's response in verse 20 was:

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, mine anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place, upon man, and upon beast, and upon the trees of the field, and upon the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched.

In verses 25 and 26, God said:

Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers.

Remember that Romans 15:4 says:

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning

And I Corinthians 10:6-7 says:

Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them

Notice again verses 11 and 12:

Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

If the people of Judah, having the examples of their fathers, and God's repeated warnings and chastisement, "did worse than their fathers," then how much worse it must be for us today to be involved in the same holiday observances!

Notice how that the heathen holidays, dressed up as "Christian Holidays," gain more and more influence and emphasis each year, while going "fully after the LORD," and true Christianity, has become almost extinct. "Christmas" was hardly even observed in our country two hundred years ago. *World Book Encyclopedia* says:

During the 1600's . . . Christmas was outlawed in England and in parts of the English colonies in America.

Encyclopedia Britannica says:

The festive aspects were not accepted in New England until about 1875
. . . .

There are people living today, who have, in their lifetime, seen the holiday grow from when they "were little the boys got firecrackers, the girls got a corn-shuck doll, and everybody got an apple, and sometimes an orange if daddy was able to get them," to the enormous affair that it is now, starting about a week earlier each year. In twenty years, Easter has gone from hunting Easter eggs and "dressing up" on Easter Sunday, to Easter gifts, Easter cards, Easter plays, Easter egg trees, and now, even lights. All sorts of community wide inter-denominational "holy week" activities go on.

I Corinthians 10:14 says:

Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

Verse 21 says:

Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and the table of devils.

In the next chapter, teaching on the Lord's supper, I Corinthians 11:27-29, says:

Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

How can we fool with Santa Claus (Saint Nicholas) and the Easter Bunny and with Ashtaroth and Tammuz celebrations, and then observe the Lord's supper without eating and drinking "unworthily"? I Corinthians 10:30 says:

For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

Is it any wonder that our world is "going to hell in a handbasket," and that so many of the Lord's congregations are so weak? Is it any wonder that our families are falling apart, and that loved ones are going to hell? Is it any wonder we are perceived, like Lot was, "as one who mocked"?

And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters, and said, Up, get you out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city. But he seemed as one who mocked unto his sons in law.

Let us return to the book of Jeremiah, and in chapter 19, notice the descriptions of the observances there in verses 4 and 13.

Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents; (v.4) They have built also the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind: (v.5)

And the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses of the kings of Judah, shall be defiled as the place of Tophet, because of all the houses upon whose roofs they have burned incense unto all the host of heaven, and have poured out drink offerings unto other gods. (v.13)

It is striking that we repeatedly see the sacrificing of children in connection with these pagan observances. It should not surprise us that

the practice of abortion and the murdering of children is enjoying an increase of popularity in proportion to that of Christmas and Easter. There are about 4400 legalized abortions per day in America. There are twice as many legalized abortions per year, in America, than the total casualties of the Civil War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War combined. Without any research or much thought, I can think of about ten children who have been allegedly murdered by their own parents in the past year.

Notice that the worship of Baal, mentioned in verse 5 above, is often spoken of in the Bible, and often, as in Judges 2:13 in connection with Ashtaroth ("The Holy Virgin" and "Queen of Heaven). *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1957) says:

Of the worship of the Tyrian Baal, who is also called Melkart (king of the city), and is often identified with the Greek Heracles, but sometimes with the Olympian Zeus, we have many accounts in ancient writers, from Herodotus downwards. He had a magnificent temple to which gifts streamed from all countries, especially at the great feasts. The solar character of this deity appears especially in the annual feast of his awakening after the winter solstice.

Reference to Baal is found in Numbers 22:41; Judges 2:13; 6:25,28,30,31,32; I Kings 16:31,32; 18:19,21,25,26,40; 19:18; 22:53; II Kings 3:2; 10:18,19,20,21,22,23,25,26,27,28; 11:18; 17:16; 21:3; 23:4,5; I Chronicles 4:33; 5:5; 8:30; 9:36; II Chronicles 23:17; Jeremiah 2:8; 7:9; 11:13,17; 12:16; 19:5; 23:13,27; 32:29,35; Hosea 2:8; 13:1; Zephaniah 1:4; and Romans 11:4.

Now look at Jeremiah 44:15-29, where the people are again worshipping "the queen of heaven," Ashtaroth, the mother of Tammuz, the sun god.

Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee. But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the

cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine. And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men? Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, and to all the people which had given him that answer, saying, The incense that ye burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye, and your fathers, your kings, and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember them, and came it not into his mind? So that the LORD could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, and because of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore is your land a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, as at this day. Because ye have burned incense, and because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day. Moreover Jeremiah said unto all the people, and to all the women, Hear the word of the LORD, all Judah that are in the land of Egypt: Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saying; Ye and your wives have spoken with your mouths, and fulfilled with your hand, saying, We will surely perform our vows that we have vowed, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her: ye will surely accomplish your vows, and surely perform your vows. Therefore hear ye the LORD, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt; Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the LORD, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, The Lord GOD liveth. Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them. Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or their. And this shall be a sign unto you, saith the LORD, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall surely stand against you for evil: (Jeremiah 44:15-29)

Speaking further about the Babylonian mystery-religion, on pages 292 and 293 of *Lectures on the Revelation*, H.A. Ironside says:

Linked with this central mystery were countless lesser mysteries, the hidden meaning of which was known only to the initiates, but the outward forms were practised by all the people. Among these were the doctrines of purgatorial purification after death, salvation by countless sacraments such as priestly absolution, sprinkling with holy water, the offering of round cakes to the queen of heaven as mentioned in the book of Jeremiah, dedication of virgins to the gods, which was literally sanctified prostitution, weeping for Tammuz for a period of 40 days, prior to the great festival of Istar, who was said to have received her son back from the dead; for it was taught that Tammuz was slain by a wild boar and afterwards brought back to life. To him the egg was sacred, as depicting the mystery of his resurrection, even as the evergreen was his chosen symbol and was set up in honor of his birth at the winter solstice, when the boar's head was eaten in memory of his conflict and a yule-log burned with many mysterious observances. The sign of the cross was sacred to Tammuz, as symbolizing the life-giving principle and as the first letter of his name. It is represented upon vast numbers of the most ancient altars and temples, and did not, as many have supposed, originate with Christianity.

Those things are covered in great detail in *The Two Babylons*, by Hislop.

Finally, let us read Ezekiel 8. In this chapter, Ezekiel, who was in Babylon at the time, was taken by God, in a vision, to Jerusalem, to see the idolatry going on there. Verse 14 says:

Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD'S house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.

There, there were "women weeping for Tammuz," like the Babylonians, only they were doing it at "the LORD'S house." In verse 16, Ezekiel said:

And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD'S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and

the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.

They were having a "sunrise service" in God's house and He was not pleased with it.

In verse 18, God said:

Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.

God is still God, and does not change. We, having these examples can expect no more leniency than those of old, who are our examples. Proverbs 28:9 is still true :

He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.

Encyclopedia Britannica (1957) says that, according to Bede (introduced earlier), in *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation* written in 731 A.D., that:

Eostur-monath, or Easter month, corresponding to our month of April and dedicated to Eostre, or Ostara, goddess of the spring, gave its name to the Christian holy day.

Encyclopedia Britannica goes on to say:

The customs and symbols associated with the observance of Easter have ancient origins, not only in the Teutonic rites of spring but also go far back in antiquity. . . the conception of the egg as a symbol of fertility and of renewed life goes back to the ancient Egyptians and Persians, who had also the custom of colouring and eating eggs during their spring festival.

World Book Encyclopedia says:

The ancient Romans held the festival of Lupercalia on February 15 to ensure protection from wolves. During this celebration, young men

struck people with strips of animal hide. Women took the blows because they thought that the whipping made them more fertile. After the Romans conquered Britain in A.D.43, the British borrowed many Roman festivals. Many writers link the festival of Lupercalia with Valentine's Day because of the similar date and the connection with fertility.

Two stories are then related in the article, of men named Saint Valentine, and then it says:

Many stories say Valentine was executed on February 14 about A.D. 269.

The next sentence states the fact that:

In A.D. 496, Pope Gelasius named February 14 as St. Valentine's Day.

Another part of the celebration of the Roman Lupercalia, dedicated to the fertility god Lupercus was a "love lottery," in which the names of women were placed in a jar and drawn out by the young men to whom they would serve as companions for the year.

Encyclopedia Britannica (1957) says:

Halloween (Allhallows Even) is the evening of Oct. 31. In its strictly religious aspect, this occasion is known as the vigil of Hallowmas or All Saints' day, Nov. 1, observed by the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches. Pope Gregory III (731-741) assigned this date for celebrating the feast

The article then tells much about the popular customs and practices of Halloween that were handed down from the Roman harvest festival of Pomona, and from Druidism.

Later the article says:

By the end of the middle ages, the celebration of Allhallows Eve was an established part of the annual calendar of the Roman Catholic Church. However after the Reformation, Protestants rejected this feast along with other important ones such as Christmas and Easter.

It has been shown here, by well documented history, and by two commonly available and well recognized encyclopedias, not only that these so called "Christian holidays" are totally of pagan origin, having been dedicated to sun gods, fertility gods and goddesses, and satanism, but also how and even when that they have been adapted and adopted by the founders of a counterfeit "Christianity."

It has been shown from the Bible, the written Word of God, numerous examples of the observances of these pagan feasts, and the attempts of the people to incorporate their observance and practice into serving or worshipping and following God.

It has also been shown from the Bible, God's disapproval of such practice, the warnings and instructions against such practice, and the consequences and costs of ignoring God's warning and instructions by continuing such practice.

Lacking spiritual discernment, most of the world's writers of history, philosophy, and religion have, knowing the things presented here, but being unable or unwilling to distinguish between the counterfeit "Christianity" and true Christianity, wrongly concluded that Christianity is no more than a "tradition" that has evolved and that changes as man does. Sadly, many of their readers, as well as many educators, and tragically many in so called Bible colleges, theological seminaries, and pulpits, have swallowed this deadly and damning lie of Satan.

Those who profess to be saved by grace through faith in Christ, and claim to be bearers of the truth, yet hold on to paganism, are just helping to support the lie. Satan must really have a big time hearing people gripe about how "the world has taken Christ out of Christmas." Christ has never been in "Christmas" --His name has been taken in vain.

Satan has known Bible doctrine and prophecy for a long time. He was familiar with God's word when he was twisting it around to deceive Eve. In Matthew 4:5-6, we find Satan able to quote scripture from Psalm 91:11-12, and understanding it to be speaking prophetically of Jesus.

Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge

concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. (Matthew 4:5-6)

James 2:19 says that the devils "believe, and tremble." The devils in Matthew 8:29 asked Jesus, "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" Those devils had no doubt but that torment was in their future, and likely understood Tophet in Isaiah 30:33 to be a symbol of the fires of hell, which Jesus later, in Matthew 25:41, spoke of as "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." That they asked "Art thou come to torment us before the time?" indicates that they knew that there were things that must yet be fulfilled before the time of their torment.

With that kind of knowledge and insight, we should not be surprised that Satan knew enough about the future events of Jesus' birth and death, to be able to earlier lay the foundations in pagan worship, which could so easily be incorporated into his scheme of counterfeiting Christianity. Satan really meant it when he said, "I will be like the most High" (Isaiah 14:14).

Satan has established his counterfeit "Christianity" complete with congregations he has built, false apostles, false prophets, and false ministers.

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. (II Corinthians 11:13-15)

Let us now look at yet another reason why we should not observe Christmas or Easter. Return to John 4:23-24, in which Jesus said:

. . . the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Earlier, we considered the requirement of these verses that we must worship "in truth," but notice that we also "must worship him in spirit"

because "God is a Spirit" and II Corinthians 3:17 says that "the Lord is that Spirit."

If we "*must*" worship Him in spirit and as Spirit, we can conclude that to worship Him in the flesh and as flesh, which is not commanded, is not acceptable worship. Jesus does still have a living and physical body, but it is not with us at the present time; He is with us in Spirit only.

II Corinthians 5:16 says:

. . . yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

In Matthew Henry's comments on this verse, he makes this note:

Those who make images of Christ, and use them in their worship, do not take the way that God has appointed for strengthening their faith and quickening their affections; for it is the will of God that we should not know Christ anymore after the flesh.

Galatians 5:24-25 says:

And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Consider the record of Jesus' visit with Mary and Martha in Luke 10:38-42.

Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about with much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Martha was "cumbered about with much serving," much like you or I might be when someone special comes to visit. Martha was no doubt working hard to present the finest of accommodations within her

means, but in all that, she was only relating to Jesus physically, and regarding Him in the human sense, however highly it may have been.

That was permissible at the time, since Jesus was still with them in His physical body, but such relationship and regard paled miserably in comparison to regarding and relating to Him in recognition of all that He is spiritually, as did her sister Mary.

Jesus said, "one thing is needful," and His neglect to instruct Mary to serve as was Martha, shows that that was not the "one thing" that is needful. Jesus could have provided the food that Martha was so cumbered about with, just as easily as He had fed the five-thousand. Jesus said:

But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Mary had chosen the spiritual part of Jesus. Physically, Jesus was about to be taken away from them, and Mary had wisely "chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

Now that Jesus has departed physically, it is no longer acceptable to worship Him in the physical sense. To attempt to worship Jesus as a baby in a manger or as a man on a cross is to detract from Him as resurrected and eternal Lord and Saviour. Jesus is to be "lifted up," not brought down and degraded with paganism and idolatry, as is done with Christmas and Easter.

If we stop to consider the matter, not through man's eyes, but with spiritual discernment, (led by the Bible and the Holy Spirit) it becomes very clear that there are actually two different "Christs" we are talking about here. There is the "Christ" of Christmas and Easter that is so universally accepted and honored by the world, and there is the true Christ who is the Son of the living God, the resurrected Lord and Saviour who hates sin and has conquered death and hell, whom the world hates. As I write this paragraph, I literally tremble to think of how easily people will be deceived by "that man of sin" (II Thessalonians 2:3), after the saved are "caught up . . . in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." Will the testimony we leave behind be a help or a hindrance in the deception of friends and relatives left behind?

Think of how that big factories will shut down for Christmas, huge bonuses are sometimes given, and businesses, restaurants, and grocery stores will close so that their employees can "observe" the holiday (holy day).

Can you picture a factory shutting down for someone to preach God's Word? Can you picture bonuses being handed out to employees for telling co-workers and customers about their Saviour? Can you picture all the stores and restaurants closing so that their employees may observe the Lord's day? Can you imagine going to Sunday school and finding no empty parking spaces?

Let us pay attention to the warning Paul gave to the Galatians, to whom he said:

Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. (Galatians 4:10-11)

In Galatians 1:6-12, Paul gave them and us this warning and instruction:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

It would be inexcusable not to also point out here, that to preach a Christ that can save if we can hold on to Him, or a Christ that can save if we are baptized, or if we live right, or the many other ifs that man may append, is to preach another "Christ" or another "gospel."

Let us consider one other example of someone serving and following Jesus, but not as all that He is. That is the tragic example of Judas Iscariot. I believe that Judas recognized Jesus as one who would rule and reign, as one who would set up His kingdom and rule with a rod of iron. Judas very likely recognized Jesus as virgin born and as the Son of God, having seen many miracles performed and the display of the power and presence of God as he had traveled and companied with Jesus daily. But, having not been born again, having not been quickened by the Holy Spirit, Judas was unable to recognize Jesus as Saviour. Judas could only regard Jesus in a political or worldly sense. I believe Judas was getting impatient with the present pace of things, and decided that in betraying Jesus, he could bring things to a head, to force a showdown, and get the ruling and reigning underway.

It is understandable that Judas would have been enthusiastic about such an arrangement; after all, as he probably thought, he would be the treasurer, the chief financial officer of the kingdom. Judas probably knew that Jesus couldn't be captured or killed against His will. Judas had no doubt many times witnessed Jesus eluding and escaping from those who wanted to kill Him when "his hour was not yet come." Judas no doubt knew much about Jesus' greatness and power, but did not know Him as Saviour. He didn't have "that good part," as did Mary.

Many try to follow with a pick and choose "Christianity," in which they can pick and choose and design a "Christ" that suits the fancy of their own fleshly desires. In doing so, they will tragically reject and betray the true Christ for a handful of silver, or less.

Notice how easily one can become amused and fascinated with holidays, or the abuse and perversion of Christian music, or "Christian" jewelry, "Christian" bumper stickers, "Christian" cruises and tours, books, tapes, and cards, but have no time or interest for prayer, Bible study, or even Sunday school. It is so easy to become caught up in revelry of how wonderful it will be "over yonder," but neglect to be surrendered and submissive to the Lord and His work here and now. We must examine our Christianity, and ask if it is "from heaven, or of men."

The holiday or day of special observance for a true Christian is "the Lord's day," the first day of the week. No other day should come any

where close to our regard for, and the observance of "the Lord's day." That is the day which we are to observe in celebration of Jesus as resurrected Lord and Saviour. The Bible gives us instructions and examples for how to do it and when.

Just as those of old had the seventh day as a sabbath in honor of God's completion of creation, we have the first day as our sabbath in honor of the completed work of Jesus. The Lord's day should be the highest day of our life; it is the day to go all out. Nothing good should be held back in our observance and honoring of the Lord's day. It is then that our gifts are to be given in honoring Jesus.

Jesus also gave us the observance of the Lord's supper as an ordinance to His congregations, saying, "this do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). The Bible gives us much clear instruction and teaching on this ordinance, and since it is also a part of our teaching in picture or typology, as is baptism, it is imperative that we follow the New Testament teachings on it with all sincerity and diligence.

I have shown that since Jesus no longer dwells with us in a physical body such as a baby in a manger, or a man on a cross, it is improper and degrading to worship Him as such. We do, however, have the presence of His body in the form of each of His congregations of saved and scripturally baptized followers. If we have gifts to give or honor to show unto Jesus, then it must properly be given to one of His congregations. If it is our desire to share the good news about Jesus with the world, it is to "be done decently and in order" (I Corinthians 14:40), and through one of the true congregations and bodies of Christ, not through some pagan holiday.

It seems that often the final holdout with Christmas is the giving of gifts. The objection is sometimes given, "I just like to give gifts. What's wrong with that?" With 364 other days, 51 other weeks, or 11 other months, why pick a time that would dishonor the Lord? Much is made at that time of year of "helping the needy," or giving a friend or loved one "something they really need." Why make them wait all year? Do people just get needy once a year? In I Corinthians 16:1-2, these instructions are given:

Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

Let us go back to a statement which I quoted earlier from *World Book Encyclopedia*, about Christmas being considered a pagan celebration by many Christians, and the outlawing of the holiday in England and the English Colonies of America during the 1600's. That article said:

However, people continued to exchange Christmas gifts and soon started to follow the other old customs again.

In light of all this, we are forced to ask, "What is the proper response and disposition concerning these holidays?" What part does one who has been engaged to be married as the bride of Christ have in such holidays and observances? I believe that the question can best be answered with another question. What part should a lady, engaged to be married, have in dating those other than the groom to be? What if she insists, "It's just for fun," or, "We don't really mean anything by it," or, "Everyone else does it"? What if she were your fiancée? What will Jesus say? What has God's Word already said?

I realize that much of what has been written here is very harsh and strong; but the strongest, and most harsh, I have only copied from the pages of the Bible. The rest, I believe, is clearly supported by it. What I have written, I have written with the desire for lost souls to be saved, and for the Lord's congregations to be all that He meant for them to be. It is written with a desire that you and I may glorify God and experience the power, the joy, and the effectiveness of life in Christ to its fullest. It is written in humility, knowing that not so long ago I was ignorantly partaker of some of the very things written about.

Some think that I have gone too far by not observing the holidays, so I must ask, "How far is too far to go in following Jesus?" Can we ever go far enough? We must go "fully after the LORD." Remember that when Solomon "went not fully after the LORD," the Bible says that "Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD," and that "the LORD was angry with Solomon" (I Kings 11:5-11).

I am well aware, by experience, of the problems and implications in taking such a stand, but it must be done.

Are you willing to stand for the real Jesus, and let the world go by? Christian parent or head of household, are you willing to lead and to teach these truths to those whom God has given you responsibility for? This must be done in love and with patience, not procrastination but patience; but it must be done.

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. (Joshua 24:15)

As it has already been shown, if we reject God's instructions, even our prayer is abomination (Proverbs 28:9). Will your prayer be abomination in your time of need? Will you be able to pray for those you love?

Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. (James 4:3-4)

Teacher or pastor whom God has called to lead His people, and to teach them to observe all things whatsoever He has commanded, will you declare "all the counsel of God"? (Acts 20:27)

Someone may say, "That would split my church." I realize that that is a very serious matter, but we must ask, "Who has been doing the building?" To the extent that man has been doing the building, there is likely to be problems. If Jesus has done the building, then, conditioned on the terms that a congregation "teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," we have His promises that "lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20), and "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). We have no promise of God's blessing upon disobedience.

For other foundation can no man lay than that 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 3:11-15)

* * * * *

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. (Colossians 2:8)

* * * * *

My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children. (Hosea 4:6)

* * * * *

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 to fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. (II Timothy 4:2-5)

* * * * *

. . . that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. (Luke 16:15)

* * * * *

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the

hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:29-30)

* * * * *

Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. (Ephesians 5:4-11)

* * * * *

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty. (II Corinthians 6:14-18)

* * * * *

Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. (James 4:3-4)

* * * * *

He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination. (Proverbs 28:9)

* * * * *

The subject of this chapter is not just the product of an over-active imagination or the adoption of a pet-peeve with frantic search for a Bible verse to support it. It is one of the major subjects dealt with in the Bible, and is addressed repeatedly from cover to cover. The subject is just as serious as it is real. I am convinced that participation in these pagan holy-days is as sinful and damnable now as it was four thousand years ago. We are more accountable now than ever before.

The gods and goddesses of the Babylonians and Romans are the very gods and goddesses that are worshipped and honored in the "Christ-mass" and *Eostur* celebrations and observances. Review chapter eight of this book, and notice that the refusal to acknowledge the gods and goddesses of these holidays was the primary reason the Christians of the first three centuries, A.D., were persecuted by the Roman pagans. Notice on page 68 that they were not persecuted because they believed in God, but because they believed in God *only* and refused to acknowledge the other gods. Notice on page 70 that the populace considered the Christians the enemies of their gods and blamed them for anything that went wrong. The Christians were then called, "the atheists" or, "the deniers of the gods." Notice on pages 75 through 79 that there was a time when everyone was required by law to worship those false gods, and the Christians were killed for refusing to do so. Study pages 82 and 83 where it is seen that people who claimed to be Christians, but defiled themselves with those pagan gods and holy-days is the very thing that, in the year 251 A.D., led to the Novations declaring dis-fellowship with the "church" at Rome, and others who compromised with paganism to escape persecution rather than go "fully after the LORD." That is the reason Jesus' true congregations refused to recognize the baptism of those who compromised, and as a result, have been persecuted as Re-baptizers, Ana-baptists, or Baptists ever since. I doubt that the Novations, Donatists, and ancient Waldenses congregations would accept many of us as members by letter of recommendation if they were here today. How would anyone defend his participation in the holidays to folks like Polycarp, Appolonia, Quintilla, and many others who were martyred on such occasions.

The inquisitor Aeneas Sylvius who wrote a history of Bohemia and afterwards ascended to the title of Pope Pius II, made the following charge against the Waldenses of Bohemia:

Their third class of errors is as follows. They contemn all approved ecclesiastical customs which they do not read of in the gospel, such as the observation of Candlemas, Palm-Sunday, the reconciliation of penitents, and the adoration of the cross on Good-Friday. They despise the feast of Easter, and all other festivals of Christ and the saints, and say that one day is as good as another, working upon holy-days, where they can do it without being taken notice of. (*The History of the Christian Church* by William Jones, volume II, pages 34-35).

Notice on page 107, that the inquisitor Reinerius Sacco complained that "they deride all the festivals" and do work on holy days.

Page 25 of *History of the Ancient Christians*, written by Jean Paul Perrin in 1618 says:

The Waldenses rejected the Romish festivals, and observed no other day of rest than Sunday; whence they were named "Insabbathas," regards not of the Sabbaths.

In book I, pages 33 and 34, of *The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piedmont*, written by Samuel Moreland in 1658, we find article ten of "An ancient Confession of Faith of the *Waldenses*, Copied out of certain Manuscripts, bearing date Anno Dom. 1120" which says:

Article 10

Item, we have always accounted as an unspeakable abomination before God, all those Inventions of men, namely, the Feasts and the Vigils of Saints, the Water which they call holy. As likewise to abstain from Flesh upon certain Days, and the like; but especially their Masses.

One of the chiefest of "those Inventions of men" which they "accounted as an unspeakable abomination before God" was the "Christ-Mass." Consider this Christmas story of some Waldensians' experience with the Roman Catholic Inquisitors, copied from pages 49 and 50 of *Bright Lights in Dark Times*:

The scene of this catastrophe was the Valley of the Pragelas. It was the Christmas of 1400, and the inhabitants dreaded no attack, believing themselves sufficiently protected by the snows which then lay deep on their mountains. They were destined to experience the bitter fact that the rigours of the season had not quenched the fire of their persecutors' malice. An inquisitor named Borelli, at the head of an armed troop, broke suddenly into Pragelas, meditating the entire extinction of its population. The miserable inhabitants fled in haste to the mountains, carrying on their shoulders their old men, their sick and their infants, knowing what fate awaited them should they leave them behind. In their flight a great many were overtaken and slain. Nightfall brought them deliverance from the pursuit, but no deliverance from the horrors not less dreadful. Without shelter, without food, the frozen snow around them, the winter's sky overhead, their sufferings were inexpressibly great. When morning broke, what a heart-rending spectacle did day disclose! Of the miserable group the hands and feet of many were frozen; while others were stretched on the snow, stiffened corpses. Fifty young children, some say eighty, were found dead with cold, some lying on the bare ice, others locked in the frozen arms of their mothers, who had perished on that dreadful night along with their babes. In the Valley of Pragelas, to this day, sire recites to son the tale of that Christmas tragedy.

That event is also told about on pages 220 and 221, volume II, of *The History of the Christian Church* by William Jones; in Vignaux's *Memoires des Vaudois*, in book II, chapter III of the section on the history of the Waldenses in *History of the Ancient Christians* by Jean Paul Perrin; in Pierre Gilles' *Histoire Ecclesiastica*; and on page 194 of *The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont*, by Samuel Morland.

On pages 223 and 224 of *Memorials of Baptist Martyrs* by J. Newton Brown, is found the following record of a meeting of Ana-baptists in Aldgate, London, England, in 1575:

These persons had fled from the slaughterings and devastations caused by the Duke of Alva in Flanders, and in the expectation that in now Protestant England they would be free from the persecutions to which they had been exposed. But their peace and security did not last long. Popery had passed away only in name, and its spirit still lived in full

vigor in the queen and government; and these simple-hearted Christian people soon felt its power.

The morning of the Sabbath, April 3d, 1575, had dawned. It was deemed by the dominant party a holy season--Easter day, the grand feast in commemoration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Thirty disciples of the Lord, men and women, had assembled in an upper room for worship near the *Aldgate*, one of the entrances of the city of London. How pure, how tender, but how unearthly the devotion of such a meeting! Outcasts and strangers, they sought a heavenly citizenship, and in this sojourn met to comfort each other, and to unite their prayers at a throne of grace. What a power of principle did they unfold! All the dignity of Christian manhood was there seen! They knew the power of suffering; they were prepared again to brave its fury, if necessary, for the advancement of the truth. Imagination realizes more than this, as by an effort it aims to identify itself with this little band of Christian disciples.

Their meeting, though conducted in quietude, was detected by their neighbors, and a constable was soon on the spot with an assistant or two from whom they might all have easily escaped. Addressing them as devils, this professed officer of justice demanded which was their teacher. Seven and twenty of their names were at his command recorded, and taking the promise of the rest to remain, he proceeded with seven of them to a magistrate. He soon after returned, and with opprobrious and cruel words drove the rest before him to the jail. Two escaped on the way; the rest were led "as sheep to the slaughter."

It is to be noticed that the word "Easter" is found in the King James Translation, in Acts 12:4. *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* says:

EASTER

PASCHA, mistranslated "Easter" in Acts 12:4, A.V., denotes the Passover (R.V.). The phrase "after the Passover" signifies after the whole festival was at an end. The term Easter is not of Christian origin. It is another form of *Astarte*, one of the titles of the Chaldean goddess, the queen of heaven. The festival of Pasch held by Christians in post-apostolic times was a continuation of the Jewish feast, but was not instituted by Christ,

nor was it connected with Lent. From this Pasch the Pagan festival of Easter was quite distinct and was introduced into the apostate Western religion, as part of the attempt to adapt Pagan festivals to Christianity.

I suppose that "Easter" is one of those "Old Ecclesiastical Words" that King James ordered "to be kept" (page 20). Read the following samples of what a few others have written.

Certainly we do not believe in the present ecclesiastical arrangement called Christmas: first, because we do not believe in the mass at all, but abhor it, whether it be said or sung in Latin or in English; and, secondly, because we find no Scriptural warrant whatever for observing any day as the birthday of the saviour; and consequently, its observance is a superstition, because not of divine authority. (Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892) in a sermon preached December 24, 1871, titled "Joy Born at Bethlehem", found on page 67 of *12 Christmas Sermons* by Charles H. Spurgeon)

* * * * *

When it can be proved that the observance of Christmas, Whitsuntide, and other Popish festivals was ever instituted by a divine statute, we also will attend to them, but not till then. It is as much our duty to reject the traditions of men, as to observe the ordinances of the Lord. (Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892) in comments on Psalm 81 in *The Treasury of David* by Charles H. Spurgeon)

* * * * *

And who is it that celebrates "Christmas"? The whole "civilized world." Millions who make no profession of faith in the blood of the Lamb, who "despise and reject Him," and millions more who while claiming to be His followers yet in works deny Him, join in merrymaking under the pretense of honoring the birth of the Lord Jesus. Putting it on its lowest ground, we would ask, Is it fitting that His friends should unite with His enemies in a worldly round of fleshly gratification? Does any truly born-again soul really think that He whom the world cast out is either pleased or glorified by such participation in the world's joys? Verily, "the customs of the people are vain"; and it is written, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil" (Exodus 23:2). (A. W. Pink (1886-1952) in a

sermon titled "Xmas", printed in *The Berea Baptist Banner*, December, 1995)

* * * * *

H. A. Ironside, writing of the woman in Revelation 17:

There is no mistaking her identity. Pagan Rome was the lineal successor of Babylon. Papal Rome absorbed the Babylonian mysteries; and the Rome of the Beast of the last days will be the seat of the revived satanic system that began with Nimrod and his infamous consort Semiramis, which has from that day to this been opposed to everything that is of God; and which changed the truth of God into a lie, worshiping and serving the creature more than the Creator.
. The images of the mother and child that are enshrined in Rome's temples are only different in name to the images worshiped in the groves and temples of Semiramis, Ashtoreth, Isis, and other so-called "queens of heaven." In many instances the old idols were simply re-named and adored as before. It is a lamentable fact that Babylon's principles and practices are rapidly but surely pervading the churches that escaped from Rome at the time of the Reformation. We see evidences of it in the wide use of high-sounding ecclesiastical titles, once unknown in the reformed churches, and in the revival of holy days and church feasts such as Lent, Good Friday, Easter, and Christ's Mass, or, as it is generally written, Christmas. (*Lectures on the Revelation* by H. A. Ironside)

* * * * *

What Would They Think?

. . . What would they think about the carnival atmosphere that pervades many "Baptist" churches? What would they think about the gimmicks, the worldly music, the fleshly allurements? What would they think -- they who knew the cost of true discipleship and in many cases paid for their faith with their lives?

What would they think of "Baptist" churches that highly exalt the Christmas and Easter holidays of Rome with parties, banquets, and

cantatas? What would they think -- they who gladly suffered martyrdom rather than bend the knee to such Popery and paganism?

What would they think of the "Baptist" preachers who preach a gospel devoid of repentance? What would they think of those who preach Christ as Savior, but not as Lord? What would they think -- those who died confessing: "*Jesus Christ is Lord?*"

What would those ancient witnesses think of all the modern "Baptist" churches that receive every sort of alien immersion? What would those Baptists of old think -- those who bore the hated epithet of "Ana-Baptist" (re-baptizer) because they would not recognize the spurious baptisms of apostate Christianity? What would they think -- they who suffered unto death the persecutions of the Roman whore and her Protestant harlot daughters rather than accept their false baptisms?

What would those staid saints of the past think of "Baptist" women who dress alternately like men or harlots? What would they think of the unashamed nakedness of modern "Baptist" Sunday School beach parties? What would they think of "Baptist" men who refuse to be the spiritual heads of their houses? What would they think of "Baptist" presidential candidates that support the right of women to murder their unborn children? What would they think of good "Baptists" who change mates like they do T-shirts?

Yes indeed -- What would they think? I rather hope that they can't observe what takes place here below!

(Greg Wilson, in article titled "What Would They Think?" in *The Landmark Baptist Contender*, published by Landmark Independent Baptist Church, Homestead, Fla., November 1994)

* * * *

Study Romans 1:16-32, which says:

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith:

as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

21 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.

22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.

24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,

30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

31 Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:

32 Who knowing the judgement of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.

These verses describe the development of the belief and worship of the father sun and mother earth, Tammuz and Ishtar, and the condition and circumstances that it leads to. It started with people who "knew God" but "glorified him not as God," and "their foolish heart was darkened" (v.21). They "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature," the creation, the thing or things created, "more than the Creator" (v.25). Verse 26 says, "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections. . . ." And, ". . . as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind. . . ."

Is it only coincidence that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, which were given "up unto vile affections" and destroyed by God were located in southern Babylonia, where the worship of Tammuz and Ishtar originated? Is it only coincidence that our country, where the pagan holidays have flourished so, has to a great extent been given "up unto vile affections," and verses 28-32 are so descriptive of the true state of the Union? Is it only coincidence that the Roman Catholic Church, the new Babylon, that adapted the pagan holy-days to apostate "Christianity," are being so troubled by the "vile affections" of verses 26 and 27? Is it only coincidence that her Protestant daughters are being similarly plagued as they try to "be like mommy?" Is it only coincidence that we are experiencing such an epidemic of reprobate mindedness? No, No, No, No, and No. Yes, the pagan "Christian" holidays are as sinful and damning as ever, regardless of what we may pretend or call them. It all starts with "when they knew God, thy glorified him not as God."

On page 25 of *Sanctification as Taught in God's Word*, Clarence Walker wrote:

I know many churches that ought to get rid of their many "spots" and "wrinkles" among which is the observing of Easter and other days. They need to be "SANCTIFIED BY THE WORD."

[Return to CONTENTS](#)



CHAPTER TWELVE

NOTHING GOOD ABOUT GOOD FRIDAY

According to Jewish reckoning, each day began at sundown the day before. "The evening and the morning were the first day" (Genesis 1:5), and it is logical that all other days following would come in the same order. The day began at 6:00 PM, was measured in "watches" until 6:00 AM, and then was measured in "hours" until 6:00 PM. Passover began on the fourteenth day, with the preparation day when the lamb was slain, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread began on the fifteenth of the first month of the religious calendar (Exodus 12; Leviticus 23) and continued for seven days. The Feast of the Firstfruits was on the day after the first weekly sabbath during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Passover and Feast of the Firstfruits were both connected with the Feast of Unleavened Bread and sometimes, as in Luke 22:1, Passover referred to the entire eight day observance.

Luke 22:7 says, "Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed." Remember that this is in the evening of what we today would think of as the day before (the evening of Wednesday, Nisan 14th, what we would call 6:00 Tuesday evening). This same evening, Jesus said, "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer: For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God" (Luke 22:15-16). The "passover" would not be killed until 3:00 in the afternoon (this same day), Wednesday.

Later on this same day, in the morning, "Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgement: and it was early: and they themselves went not into the judgement hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover" (John 18:28). They were more interested in ceremonial purity than justice. There Jesus was questioned by Pilate, scourged, smitten, spat upon, mocked, and dressed in a crown of thorns and a purple robe. "And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!" (John 9:14). Daytime was measured from sunrise at 6:00 AM, the first hour, until sunset at 6:00 PM, the twelfth hour. The time then ("about the sixth hour") would be about noon. Mark 15:33 tells us that "there was darkness over the whole land" from "the sixth hour" "until the ninth hour." At the "ninth hour,"

3:00 PM, "Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost. And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Mark15:37-38).

The veil was rent in two by God simultaneously with the death of Jesus.

Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) (Hebrews 10:19-23)

According to Jewish law, the body had to be buried before night (Deuteronomy 21:22-23). It was of course late in the day and as John tells us, "there laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand" (John 19:42).

Luke says, "And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on" (Luke 23:54). Friday was commonly referred to as "the preparation," but "the preparation" was also used to refer to the day before a special feast, and in that case the reference to the sabbath would refer to the feast itself, rather than the seventh day of the week.

John points out, "for that sabbath day was an high day" (John 19:31). Notice how Matthew avoids using the term "sabbath" in Matthew 27:62. He says, "Now the next day, that followed the day of preparation" (and crucifixion), "the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate." These Jewish leaders would more likely have met with Pilate on a Thursday or Friday than on the seventh day of the week. This is further clarified by John when telling of the events of the day of the crucifixion in John 19:14. This verse says, "And it was the preparation of the passover. . . ."

According to Luke 23:55-56, the women that followed Joseph of Arimathaea, when he placed Jesus' body in the sepulchre, "and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid," then "returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according

to the commandment." With the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Nisan 15) only minutes away, it is not likely that those women prepared the spices and ointments until Friday, Nisan 16, and as Luke 23:56 says, they "rested the sabbath day" [Saturday, the weekly sabbath] "according to the commandment."

When telling of the resurrection, Matthew says, in Matthew 28:1, "*In* the end of the sabbath, as it *began* to dawn *toward* the first day of the week. . ." (underlining added). The wording there strongly indicates that the resurrection took place *in the end* of the seventh day of the week (6:00 PM), NOT at the rising of the sun on the first day of the week. William Tyndale translated it, "The sabbath day at even which dawneth the morrow after the sabbath."

Mark 16 describes the situation "when the sabbath was past" (verse 1), "And very early in the morning the first day of the week . . . at the rising of the sun" (verse 2). At that time, "Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome" had already been there. The resurrection had already taken place. It is easy to confuse "they" spoken of in verse 2, who came "at the rising of the sun" with the two Marys mentioned in verse 1, who had already been there hours before and left. Verses 8, 9, and 10 show clearly that "they" in verse 2 are people other than the two Marys. Verse 8 says that "they [those of verse 2] went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid." Verse 10 informs us that Mary Magdalene "went and told them that had been with him." Mary told some people about the resurrection, but "they," of verse 2, didn't say "any thing to any man."

With the first day of the week, "the Lord's day," being ordained to honor Jesus' completed work, as the anti-type of the seventh day sabbath commemorating the completion of creation, it should be no surprise that Jesus rose in the end of the seventh day of the week, toward the first day of the week.

To teach a Friday evening death and Sunday sunrise resurrection is to be deceived and/or deceitful. There is no honest way of fitting "three days and three nights" (Matthew 12:40) into thirty-six hours.

"They that passed by" made fun of Jesus for His claim to destroy the temple and build it "in three days" (Matthew 27:40 and Mark 15:29). In Matthew 27:63, the chief priests and Pharisees said, "that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again." In Mark 14:57-58, some that "bare false witness against him" said they heard him say "within three days."

More important is Jesus' own words. In John 2:19, Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Verse 21 says, "But he spake of the temple of his body." In Luke 24:46, Jesus said, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." In Mark 8:31, Jesus was teaching that he must "be killed, and after three days rise again." In Matthew 12:40, Jesus says, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Some may say, "Well, what difference does it make?" First of all, to read that Jesus said "three days and three nights," but participate in the proclamation that Jesus was only in the grave for thirty-six hours, is to dispute the very words of Jesus.

Any worship activity that infers, suggests, or endorses a Friday crucifixion is NOT worship "in truth," whether ignorantly or knowingly, and that is a fact that condemns the entire "Good Friday"/"Easter Sunday" celebration.

To aid in the propagation or approval of the thirty-six hour Friday until Sunday myth is to be guilty of the *perversion of the gospel*. In I Corinthians 15, Paul claims to declare "the gospel" (verse 1), which he defines as "how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day *according to the scriptures*. And that he was seen . . ." (emphasis added). Notice that "the third day" is not optional, but is part of the definition given. Notice also, that "according to the scriptures" is included also, and stated twice. "The scriptures" that the death, burial, and resurrection must be "according to" is what we know as the Old Testament. There is a multitude of prophecies and types of Christ and of the gospel throughout the Old Testament "scriptures." As already mentioned, Jesus

referred to the "three days and three nights" of Jonah. When Jesus was walking with the two on the road to Emmaus, Luke 24:27 says:

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

And later, verses 44-46 of the same chapter say:

And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. 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.

Most Bible scholars will agree that Abraham's son Isaac is a type of Christ. Study Genesis 22. Notice that in verse 2, God spoke of Isaac as "thine only son," even though Isaac was not the only son Abraham had. Abraham understood, because he knew that it was through Isaac that God was to keep His promise to him. In case we didn't catch the hint of "thine only son" in verse 2, it is repeated in verse 12, and to be sure, God said it a third time in verse 16. In verse 2, God told Abraham to offer Isaac for a burnt offering. Imagine yourself in Abraham's place. If God gave such an order and you were totally surrendered to obey God, it would seem as if the child were already dead. Hebrews 11:19 tells us that by faith Abraham offered up Isaac, "Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." Notice in verse 4 of Genesis 22 that it was "on the third day," after God informed Abraham of the requirement, that Isaac was given back to Abraham from the dead.

Romans 4:21-25 says:

And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

Jesus, our Passover, died at the same time of day, and on the same day of the year, that the Passover lamb had been slain since the exodus from Egypt.

Read about "Noah's ark" in Genesis 8:4, which says:

And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.

Looking at the calendar previously exhibited, notice that what was the "seventh month" in Noah's days became, at God's command in Exodus 12:2, the first month. The ark that saved Noah from the flood rested upon the mountains of Ararat on the same day of the year that Jesus rose from the grave.

All these things happened exactly when God intended. In Matthew 26:2, Jesus said, ". . . after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified." Many wanted Him crucified, but it was not man's design that it would happen when it did. Matthew 26:3-5 says:

Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.

Who was in control? Is God sovereign? Remember, as was shown in the previous chapter, from Romans 1:21, that the idolatry and false doctrine of the holidays developed "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God." When God is not glorified as the totally sovereign God that He is (the condition necessary to believe that God would plan on "three days and three nights," but have to settle for thirty-six hours), occasion is given for *vain imaginations* and the *darkening of foolish hearts*.

Someone may ask, "Are we not to celebrate the resurrection?" Yes, we most definitely are, every "Lord's day," every "first day" of the week. No other day should ever compete with, or detract from it! And, it should be celebrated by worshipping "in spirit and in truth!"

The Waldenses recognized these truths, as is evident in their treatise called "Antichrist," which is dated 1220 A.D. That treatise may be found in *History of the Ancient Christians* by Jean Paul Perrin, on pages 242-259, and says:

. . . The first work of antichrist is, to take away the truth, and change it into falsehood, error, and heresy. The second work of antichrist is, to cover falsehood over with a semblance of truth, and to assert and maintain lies by the name of faith and graces, and to dispense falsehood intermingled with spiritual things.
The errors and impurities of antichrist, forbidden by the Lord, are these, viz. a various and endless idolatry, against the express command of God and Christ. Divine worship offered not to the Creator, but to the creature, visible and invisible, corporal and spiritual, rational and sensible, natural and artificial, under the name of Christ, or saints, male and female, and to relics and authorities. Unto which creatures they offer the service or worship of faith, and hope, works, prayers, pilgrimages, and alms, oblations, and sacrifices of great price. And those creatures, they serve, honour, and adore several ways, by songs and hymns, speeches, and solemnities, and celebrations of masses, vespers fitted unto the same, by certain hours, vigils, feast-days, thereby to obtain grace, which is essentially in God alone, and meritoriously in Christ, and is to be obtained by faith alone through the Holy Spirit. And indeed there is nothing else that causeth idolatry, but the false opinions of grace, truth, authority, invocation, intercession, which this antichrist hath deprived God of, to attribute the same to these ceremonies, authorities, the works of a man's own hands, to saints, and to purgatory. And this iniquity of antichrist is directly against the first article of faith, and against the first commandment of the law.

The inquisitor, AEneas Sylvius, who wrote a history of Bohemia said of the Waldenses, that:

Their third class of errors is as follows. They contemn all ecclesiastical customs which they do not read of in the gospel, such as the observation of Candlemas, Palm-Sunday, the reconciliation of penitents, and the adoration of the cross on Good-Friday. They despise the feast of Easter, and all other festivals of Christ and the saints, and say that one day is as good as another, working upon holy-days, where they can

do it without being taken notice of. (*The History of the Christian Church* by William Jones, volume II, pages 34-35)

On page 500 of volume I, Jones says, of the Paterines in the eleventh century, that, "They called [the adoration of] the cross the mark of the beast." The inquisitor Aeneas Sylvius, quoted above, who came to be Pope Pius II, and in his words, "had an exact knowledge of the Waldenses," and attended many of their trials and executions, wrote in his *History of Bohemia*, in the fourteenth century, that:

They abhor the holy cross, because of Christ's suffering thereon. Their aversion seems to have been taken from the sermons of those who maintained, that the cross being taken away from Christ, returned of itself. They say, that the wood of the cross is no more than other wood: they do not arm themselves with the sign of the cross. They set no value upon the sepulchre of our Lord, nor of the saints; Matth. "Woe to you, Pharisees, for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets." (*The Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of Piedmont* by Peter Allix, page 255.)

Those sincere Christians recognized the fact that the use of a cross as furniture or decoration is idolatry, relic worship, making a graven image. The Waldenses believed, as Jonas Aurelianensis wrote in the year 820, that, "they ought not to worship Images, nor so much as have them in their Churches" (*The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont* by Samuel Morland, book I, chapter III).

Let us consider the origin and history of the cross as a symbol. *The Encyclopedia Britannica* (1957) says:

The cross has been used both as a religious symbol and as an ornament from the dawn of man's civilization. Various objects, dating from periods long anterior to the Christian era, have been found, marked with crosses of different designs, in almost every part of the old world. India, Syria, Persia, and Egypt have all yielded numberless examples, while numerous instances, dating from the later Stone age to Christian times, have been found in nearly every part of Europe. The use of the cross as a religious symbol in pre-Christian times and among non-Christian peoples may probably be regarded as almost universal, and in very many cases it was connected with some form of nature worship. Two of

the most frequent forms of pre-Christian cross are the tau cross, so named from its resemblance to the Greek capital letter T, and the *swastika* or *fylfot* also called "*Gammadion*" or *crux gammata*, owing to its form being that of four Greek capital letters *gamma* placed together. The tau cross with a handle (*crux ansata*) often occurs in Egyptian and Assyrian sculptures as a symbol of divinity. The *swastika* has a very wide range of distribution and is found on all kinds of objects. It was used as a religious emblem in India and China many centuries before the Christian era, and is met with on prehistoric monuments from various parts of Europe, Asia and America. It is, in fact, a device of such common occurrence on objects of pre-Christian origin that it is hardly necessary to specify individual instances. The cross, as a device in different forms and often enclosed in a circle, is of frequent occurrence on coins and medals of pre-Christian date in France and elsewhere. Indeed, objects marked with pre-Christian crosses are to be seen in every important museum.

Early Christian Crosses.-The death of Christ on a cross necessarily conferred a new significance on the figure, which had hitherto been associated with a conception of religion not merely non-Christian, but in essence often directly opposed to it. It was not, however, till the time of Constantine that the cross was publicly used as the symbol of the Christian religion.

On pages 197 and 198 of *The Two Babylons*, Alexander Hislop wrote:

The same sign of the cross that Rome now worships was used in the Babylonian Mysteries, was applied by Paganism to the same magic purposes, was honoured with the same honours. That which is now called the Christian cross was originally no Christian emblem at all, but was the mystic Tau of the Chaldeans and Egyptians--the true original form of the letter T--the initial of the name of Tammuz--which, in Hebrew, radically the same as ancient Chaldee, as found on coins, was formed as in No. 1 of the accompanying woodcut (Fig. 43); and in Etrurian and Coptic, as in Nos. 2 and 3. That mystic Tau was marked in baptism on the foreheads of those initiated in the Mysteries, [Tertullian, *De Proscript. Hoeret.* cap.40, vol. ii. p.54, and Note. The language of Tertullian implies that those who were initiated by baptism in the Mysteries were marked on the forehead in the same way, as his Christian country-men in Africa, who had begun by this time to be

marked in baptism with the sign of the cross.] and was used in every variety of way as a most sacred symbol. To identify Tammuz with the sun it was joined sometimes to the circle of the sun, as in No. 4; sometimes it was *inserted* in the circle, as in No. 5. [Stephen's *Central America*, vol. ii. p.344, Plate 2.] Whether the Maltese cross, which the Romish bishops append to their names as a symbol of their episcopal dignity, is the letter T, may be doubtful; but there seems no reason to doubt that that Maltese cross is an express symbol of the sun; for Layard found it as a sacred symbol in Nineveh in such a connection as led him to identify it with the sun. [Layard's *Nineveh and Babylon*, p.211; *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii, p.446.] The mystic Tau, as the symbol of the great divinity, was called "the sign of life;" it was used as an amulet over the heart; [Wilkinson, vol. i. p. 365, Plate.] it was marked on the official garments of the priests, as on the official garments of the priests of Rome; it was borne by kings in their hand, as a token of their dignity or divinely-conferred authority. The Vestal virgins of Pagan Rome wore it suspended from their necklaces, as the nuns do now. [Pere Lafitan, *Moeurs des Sauvages Ameriquains*, vol. i. p. 442.]

On page 199, Hislop says:

There is hardly a Pagan tribe where the cross has not been found. The cross was worshipped by the Pagan Celts long before the incarnation and death of Christ. [Crabb's *Mythology*, p.163.] "It is a fact," says Maurice, "not less remarkable than well-attested, that the Druids in their groves were accustomed to select the most stately and beautiful tree as an emblem of the Deity they adored, and having cut the side branches, they affixed two of the largest of them to the highest part of the trunk, in such a manner that those branches extended on each side like the arms of a man, and, together with the body, presented the appearance of a HUGE CROSS, and on the bark, in several places, was also inscribed the letter Thau." [Maurice's *Indian Antiquities*, vol.vi.p.49.] It was worshipped in Mexico for ages before the Roman Catholic missionaries set foot there, large stone crosses being erected, probably to the "god of rain." [Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico*, vol. i.,p. 242.] The cross thus widely worshipped, or regarded as a sacred emblem, was the un-equivocal symbol of Bacchus, the Babylonian Messiah, for he was represented with a head-band covered with crosses. . .

The chapter quoted from, above, by Hislop, closes with this footnote:

If the above remarks be well founded, surely it cannot be right that this sign of the Cross, or emblem of Tammuz, should be used in Christian baptism. At the period of the Revolution, a Royal Commission, appointed to inquire into the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England, numbering among its members *eight* or *ten* bishops, strongly recommended that the use of the cross, as tending to superstition, should be laid aside. If such a recommendation was given then, and that by such authority as members of the Church of England must respect, how much ought that recommendation to be enforced by the new light which Providence has cast on the subject!

In consideration of these facts, we must conclude that such a symbol or image has NO place in a Christian life, and definitely does not belong in our "meeting-houses." There is not a hint in the entire Bible that can *honestly* be considered as teaching, endorsing, or giving permission to use, make, or have a cross as an image or symbol. *If* all the above evidence could be discredited, there would still be no wrong done in avoiding the displaying of a cross. *But*, if these things be true, the use of the symbol is dishonoring our Lord and Saviour, who died on a cross, and is to express an alliance with religious systems that are totally opposite to true Christianity! And, what about bringing in a crowd of children and leading them to pledge their allegiance to a flag with a big red cross on it, and "to the Saviour for whose kingdom it stands"?

But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. (Matthew 18:6)

It is to be noticed that people will disobey and disregard the clear and plain teachings of the Bible, but eagerly accept a practice that is not taught in the Bible. Many excuse themselves from doing the "little things that the Bible only mentions once," but go "whole hog" after pagan practices.

Remember what the Waldenses taught about antichrist. Remember that about the year 1040, the Paterines "called [the adoration of] the cross the mark of the beast." What if it turns out that the symbol of a cross is

literally used in "the mark of the beast"? What effect might our teachings and practice have on those who will be left to face that day?

[Return to CONTENTS](#)

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THROUGHOUT ALL AGES

(Ephesians 3:21)

In an earlier chapter, we have traced the history, continuation, and existence of some of the true congregations of Christ up to the 17th and 18th centuries in Britain. In this chapter, we will see their migration into America. At this point, someone may ask, "Where does John Smyth fit in?" The answer is that he does not. If the records of history are accurate about his religious activities, there is no way that we can consider the congregation gathered by him, or any of its offspring, as a congregation of Christ's, according to our interpretation of the New Testament. But, because many are so fond of perpetuating the myth that the Baptists in England originated with Smyth, I suppose the matter should be addressed here.

As sources, I will use the encyclopedias, and various "Baptist histories," as well as books of general history. Those things such as names, dates, and places, commonly agreed upon, I will simply present as fact, rather than be overly cumbersome with quotations.

In 1600, John Smyth became a lecturer or preacher of the city of Lincoln, in the established Church of England. After dispute and debate about the discipline and ceremonies of the Church of England, Smyth either left, or as some think, was thrown out of, the Church of England. He then became the pastor of one of the Brownist congregations in Lincolnshire. In 1606, or 1607, Smyth, Thomas Helwys, John Murton, along with Robinson and Clifton, who were co-pastors of another Brownist congregation nearby, and others, left England to escape religious persecution, and went to Amsterdam in Holland. In Amsterdam, these exiles joined a congregation of Brownist where F. Johnson was pastor, and H. Ainsworth was a teacher. After some time,

controversy arose between Smyth and the Brownists there. J. J. Goadby, on pages 30-31 of *Bye-Pathes in Baptist History*, says:

The New Testament churches, with their simple order and discipline, seemed strangely unlike the half Jewish society at Amsterdam, with which he was united. He felt, moreover, that he could no longer hold the doctrines of personal election and reprobation. His faith was also shaken in some other points "assuredly believed among" the Amsterdam Separatists. He had ceased to be a Calvinist, and had become an Arminian. Much talk arose about these changes in his opinions. Meanwhile, Smyth adopted new views on the subject of baptism.

The last question came up in reviewing his dissent from the Establishment. He and his Brownist friends had rejected the ordination of the State Church, but they still retained her baptism. Smyth now made the subject his special study, and was speedily led to adopt believers' baptism as alone consistent with New Testament teaching. With his usual frankness he openly and zealously advocated his new opinions.

This was more than the charity of his associates could bear. Arminianism was bad enough; but believers' baptism was worse; at least so thought Robinson, Clifton, and others. Smyth, and those who sympathised in his opinions, were cut off from the church.

The exclusion of John Smyth, Thomas Helwys, and others who agreed with him, resulted in their proceeding to form a congregation of their own. In *The Early English Baptists*, B. Evans, whose account agrees with that of Goadby's, above, says, in volume I, pages 203-204:

Upon the very threshold of their enterprise a formidable difficulty presented itself. Who should baptize them? There were Baptists in Holland, those who administered the ordinance by immersion, as well as those who adopted the mode at present practised by our brethren in the Netherlands. From some cause or other, application was not made to any of them, and the story goes that after much prayer Smith baptized himself, then Helwys, and then the remainder of the company.

Now that the dust has settled, most who have studied the matter are in agreement, rather than John Smyth "baptizing" himself, as he was accused of, it is most probable that Smyth "baptized" Helwys, Helwys "baptized" Smyth, and then the two "baptized" the rest. It does not matter which way they did it, if the information we have is correct, because neither had any authority to baptize. Since God had not given either of them authority to baptize, as He did John the Baptist, and neither had Jesus or any of His congregations given them that authority, we must conclude that what took place was not baptism.

Most think that the mode of "baptism" used by Smyth and Helwys was pouring, and the weight of evidence agrees. That does not matter either, since they were grossly in error anyway. The Bible does not teach of any such thing as "plan A, plan B, and plan C," for baptism. It is either scriptural and valid, or unscriptural and of no benefit. They were no more able to baptize (with a baptism acceptable unto God) than Mother Goose, Humpty Dumpty, or Donald Duck.

There is no doubt in my mind why the Smyth/Helwys congregation didn't go to the Baptists in Holland who "administered the ordinance by immersion," mentioned in the above quotation from Evans. Those Baptists believed in the Sovereignty of God, and the total depravity of man. They would not have approved of the Arminian profession of faith of Smyth and his followers.

It was in 1609 or 1610 that the Smyth/Helwys congregation was founded, and very shortly after, a difficulty arose and John Smyth and others were excluded from it. They then joined a congregation of Mennonites, who by then were practicing baptism by pouring and sprinkling, and had fallen into other error. As *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1957) says, "The Arminianism of the Mennonites and their rejection of infant baptism appealed to Smyth." Evans, on page 208, vol. I, of *Early English Baptists*, says:

It is admitted, on all hands, that from some cause or other, the church over which Smith and Helwys presided was divided, but the cause of the division is not so manifest. Smith, with some twenty-four persons, was excluded from the church, and these sought communion with one of the Mennonite churches in the city. It is more than probable that it

was one of the Waterland, one of the most liberal of the Mennonite churches, and their mode of baptism was by sprinkling, or affusion.

On page 209, Evans gives the confession and appeal for membership to the Mennonites, and in the appendix on pages 244 and 245, the names of Smyth, his wife Mary, and thirty others who signed it:

The names of the English who confess this their error, and repent of it, viz., that they undertook to baptize themselves contrary to the order appointed by Christ, and who now desire, on this account, to be brought back to the true church of Christ as quickly as may be suffered. We unanimously desire that this our wish should be signified to the church.

The Smyth party was accepted by the Mennonites, who concluded that:

The said English were questioned about their doctrine of salvation, and the ground and the form (mode) of their baptism." "No difference was found between them and us. (Evans, p.208)

Thomas Helwys continued as sole pastor of the remaining congregation until 1614, when he and some of the rest returned to London. The few remaining then joined the Mennonites in 1615. John Smyth died in Holland of consumption in August, 1612. Helwys and those returning with him formed yet another congregation after they settled in London. Some insist that that was the start of the General Baptists of England, who were of Arminian persuasion. I find no evidence or indication that any of the Particular Baptists of England received their baptism or origin from the Helwys congregation. The preponderance of the evidence indicates that even the General Baptists did not receive their baptism from the Helwys congregation, even though it may have been the first to have claimed the name of "General Baptist church." I believe Thomas Crosby's four volume *History of the English Baptists*, published in 1738, well supports that opinion.

It appears to me that the congregations that showed the most evidence of being Jesus' kind of congregation have been the slower, and more reluctant to give themselves a name. They would describe themselves as "the baptized congregation at _____," or "the baptized church of Christ meeting at _____," or some similar description. Representative of

their terminology in the late 1600s is in this inscription on the tombstone of Thomas Lowe, buried at Hill Cliffe:

HERE LYETH THE BODY OF THAT EMINENT AND FAITHFUL SERVANT OF CHRIST THOMAS LOWE, PASTOR OF THE BAPTIZED CONGREGATION AT WARRINGTON, WHO DIED AT DRAKELOW THE 21 FEBY. 1695 AND IN THE 62 YEAR OF HIS AGE.

(*History of the Baptist Church at Hill Cliffe*. James Kenworthy, p.53)

On page 105 of *Baptist Piety*, "The Last Will and Testimony of Obadiah Holmes," Edwin S. Gaustad explains:

Obadiah Holmes addresses his letter simply to "the Church of Christ at Newport . . . who are baptized upon the professing of their faith. . . ." Letters from the Newport Church to the Boston Baptists often said merely, "To the Church of Christ gathered at Boston," while John Russell, the pastor of that church in 1680, described it as "a Church of Christ in Gospel Order." But gradually the word "baptized" became less a verb and more an adjective. In 1719 a letter from the Boston fellowship, which began "The Church of Christ in Boston Baptized Upon Profession of their Faith," was shortened that same year in a Newport letter to "We, the baptized Church of Christ meeting at Newport." The distinguishing tag "Baptist," or earlier "Anabaptist," was meant -- like most tags in the history of Christianity -- to be a pejorative one thrust upon the despised sect by its enemies. The sect itself -- like most new groups in the history of Christianity -- saw no need for any label at all since it was only re-creating the true and pure church of Jesus and the apostles. But history is more powerful than logic, and denominational names are the result.

As to the General Baptists of England originating with the Smyth/Helwys affair, I believe the most probable case is that a few may have received their baptism from Helwys, but for the most part, the strongest connection is that existing congregations were seduced and corrupted by the propaganda and teaching of the Helwys organization, and thereby fell into their errors and accepted their name. Either way, if they were corporately and consciously preaching a gospel that involves a God that is less than completely sovereign, and man that is not totally depraved, they were administering a defective "baptism." Remember that baptism is picturing or preaching in typology.

Of the John Smyth organization, Thomas Crosby says, on page 99, volume I of his *History of the English Baptists*, that:

If he were guilty of what they charge him with, 'tis no blemish on the English Baptists; who neither approved of any such method, nor did they receive their baptism from him.

Dr. John Clarke, who was a Baptist preacher in London, came to Boston, Massachusetts, probably in 1636, with his wife Elizabeth. Due to religious persecution, John and Elizabeth Clarke, and others left Boston. In the second edition of *The First Baptist Church in America*, by J.R. Graves and S. Adlam, Conrad N. Glover writes, on page 219:

John Clarke was respected as a man of great learning. He bore high repute for scholarship and ability in languages, including Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Law, Medicine and Theology. He was by profession a physician and a Baptist minister. He possessed the qualifications of a leader, and a leader he became.

The conditions in Massachusetts Bay Colony became so intolerable in 1637 that John Clarke and some three hundred with him entered into a compact to remove themselves out of the colony.

They traveled to New Hampshire, but, being dissatisfied with the colder climate, returned south to a place named, by the Native Americans, Pocasset. On page 220 of the above named book, C.N. Glover says:

The land settled by John Clarke and his followers was purchased from the Indians. The date of the transaction was March 24, 1638.

Later in the same year, a congregation was organized with John Clarke as the pastor. On page 235, Glover says:

There are historic statements which lead me to believe that John Clarke began his ministry with the people of his colony immediately after they settled at the north end of Aquidneck Island, first called by its Indian name, Pocasset, and in 1638 changed to Portsmouth, and a meeting house built. Then during the next year in April, 1639, Dr. Clarke and others moved to the present site of the city of Newport and founded Newport where another meeting house was erected. It is believed by

historians that the church begun at Portsmouth in 1638 was moved along with the settlers to Newport, where it has continued in active service ever since, with the exception of a period of interruption during the Revolutionary War when the British occupied the town of Newport.

The lengthy inscription on John Clarke's tombstone gives this informative and authoritative account:

To the Memory of
DOCTOR JOHN CLARKE,

One of the original purchasers and proprietors of this island and one of the founders of the First Baptist Church of Newport, its first pastor and munificent benefactor; He was a native of Bedfordshire, England, and a practitioner of physic in London. He, with his associates, came to this island from Mass., in March, 1638, O.S., and on the 24th of the same month obtained a deed thereof from the Indians. He shortly after gathered the church aforesaid and became its pastor. In 1651, he, with Roger Williams, was sent to England, by the people of Rhode Island Colony, to negotiate the business of the Colony with the British ministry. Mr. Clarke was instrumental in obtaining the Charter of 1663 from Charles II., which secured to the people of the State free and full enjoyment of judgement and conscience in matters of religion. He remained in England to watch over the interests of the Colony until 1664, and then returned to Newport and resumed the pastoral care of his church. Mr. Clarke and Mr. Williams, two fathers of the Colony, strenuously and fearlessly maintained that none but Jesus Christ had authority over the affairs of conscience. He died April 20, 1676, in the 66th year of his age, and is here interred.

Of his visit to the site of John Clarke's grave, in 1854, J.R. Graves, on pages 14 and 15 of *The First Baptist Church in America*, wrote:

The worn appearance of the stone testifies to its extreme age, and the language and style of the epitaph witness that it has come down to us from "former generations"--the centuries past.

I unhesitatingly accepted this mural witness as unimpeachable, and studied it, examining and cross-examining it for the utmost syllable of its testimony.

On page 162 of *The First Baptist Church in America*, J.R. Graves wrote:

In the course of my reading I met with the following statements in Crosby, and in the history of the Philadelphia Association, to which I called the attention of Elder Adlam:

"When the First Church in Newport was one hundred years old, in 1738, Mr. John Callender, their minister, delivered and published a sermon on the occasion." Note on page 455.

That statement, made in a note at the bottom of page 455 of *Minutes of the Philadelphia Association*, published by the American Publication Society, is further evidence as to the correctness of the 1638 date.

In 1663, a congregation was organized in Massachusetts, with John Miles as pastor. John Miles was pastor of a Baptist congregation at Swansea, in Wales, who came to America to escape persecution under Charles II. Page 61 of *The American Baptist Heritage in Wales* says:

It does not appear when Mr. Miles sailed for America, when he landed in that country, nor what family, friends, or neighbors accompanied him. The first account we have of him west of the Atlantic is in Mr. Backus' History [*A History of New England With Particular Reference to the Denomination of Christians Called Baptists*. Isaac Backus] above referred to, Vol. 1, Page 353, naming Mr. Miles among the ejected ministers, it is added, "upon which, he and some of his friends came over to our country, and brought their church Records with them. And at Mr. Butterworth's in Rehobath, in 1663, John Miles, elder, James Brown, Nicholas Tanner, Joseph Carpenter, John Butterworth, Eldad Kingsley, and Benjamin Alby, joined in a solemn covenant together."

This was the first Baptist church in that part of America as noted above. It seems the men members of it were only seven. What number of women members there were we know not. It does not appear that any of the men members went with Miles to America, but Mr. Nicholas Tanner, said in the records to have been baptized on the 11th of the 11th month, 1651. This young church was then in Plymouth Colony; where they had quiet about four years: but at a court holden at Plymouth, 2nd July 1667, the society was fined in a considerable sum of money, and ordered to remove from that place. On the 30th of October

ensuing, that court made them an ample grant in another place, which Mr. Miles and his friends called Swanzay. It seems they so spelled Swansea in Wales then. "There they made a regular settlement which has continued to this day Their first meeting house was built a little west of Kelly's Ferry, against Warren; but Mr. Miles settled the west side of the great bridge which still bears his name," Page 354.

But what about Roger Williams? That is a situation similar to the John Smyth story. All reliable sources are in agreement with the following account of what happened in 1639 (one year after the organization of the congregation at Newport), from page 475, volume I, of *A General History of the Baptist Denomination* by David Benedict:

Being settled in this place, which, from the kindness of God to them, they called PROVIDENCE, Mr. Williams and those with him, considered the importance of Gospel Union, and were desirous of forming themselves into a church, but met with considerable obstruction; they were convinced of the nature and design of believer's baptism by immersion; but, from a variety of circumstances, had hitherto been prevented from submission. To obtain a suitable administrator was a matter of consequence: at length, the candidates for communion nominated and appointed Mr. Ezekiel Holliman, a man of gifts and piety, to baptize Mr. Williams; and who, in return, baptized Mr. Holliman and the other ten.

It has been much alleged that the Baptists in America began with Roger Williams, and that Williams was the founder and first pastor of the First Baptist Church in Providence, but the facts, and the older records show that not to be the case. The whole mess, at least in great part, appears to have originated with the manufacture of history at the hand of John Stanford, who was pastor of "The First Church in Providence." Benedict says, on page 485, vol. I:

Thus far the history of this church has been transcribed from its records, which were set in order in 1775, by Rev. John Stanford, now of New-York, who was then preaching with them. This account, up to Dr. Manning's beginning in Providence, is found almost in the same form as here stated in Morgan Edward's MS. History, &c. prepared in 1771. It was published in Rippon's Register in 1802, and as it is well written, I have chosen to copy it without scarce any alteration.

J.R. Graves visited Benedict at his home in Pawtucket, R.I., and on page 21 of *The First Baptist Church in America*, wrote:

Touching the conflicting claims of the Newport and Providence churches above referred to, and his verdict in favor of Providence, expressed in his History, he remarked, that "it was his rule not to go behind the records of the churches. His verdict was in accordance with the records of the Providence church. If he had erred he had been misled by those records, and with no intention to disparage the claims of the Newport church. He admitted the growing perplexities that had for years confused and unsettled his mind as to the correctness of Mr. James [John] Stanford's history of the Providence church, *compiled without any church record*, and a full century after its origin. It would not be strange, but indeed probable, that errors, and not a few, would occur."

John Callender was called as the sixth pastor of the First Baptist Church of Newport in 1731. In 1738, concerning the First Baptist Church at Providence, Callendar wrote:

The most ancient inhabitants now alive, some of them above eighty years old, who personally knew Mr. Williams, and were well acquainted with many of the original settlers, never heard that Mr. Williams formed the Baptist Church there, but always understood that Brown, Wickenden, or Wigginton, Dexter, Olney, Tillinghast, etc., were the first founders of that church. [*The First Baptist Church in America*. J.R. Graves and S. Adlam, pages 137-138]

On pages 22 and 23 of *A History of the Baptists in New England*, Henry S. Burrage says:

Mr. Williams was baptized by Ezekiel Holliman, and he in turn baptized Holliman and "some ten more." But Williams remained only a few months in connection with the church. He had doubts in reference to the validity of his own baptism, and the baptism of his associates on account of the absence of "authorized administrators." For him there was no church and no ministry left. The apostolic succession was interrupted and apostolic authority had ceased. It was the baptizer, and not the baptism about which he doubted. He was a high church Anabaptist. He went out of the church, left his little congregation behind, preached when and where he could, and became a "seeker" the

rest of his days. And during the rest of his days he never came to a "satisfying discovery" of a true church or ministry.

In *A History of New England With Particular Reference to the Denomination of Christians Called Baptists*, Isaac Backus wrote:

Mr. Williams had been accused before of embracing principles which tended to Anabaptism; and in March, 1639, he was baptized by one of his brethren, and then he baptized about ten more. But in July following, such scruples were raised in his mind about it, that he restrained from such administrations among them.

On pages 162 and 163 of *The First Baptist Church in America*, J.R. Graves introduced a quotation of Cotton Mather, from Thomas Crosby, with this:

This is Cotton Mather's testimony as to the perpetuity of Williams' informal society. If it was in existence when Mather wrote, he well knew it. If it dissolved when Williams left it, and repudiated it as a scriptural church, he knew it; and he says it "*came to nothing*," there was nothing left for even Mather to reproach, and Mather died in 1727-8:

The quotation of Mather, from Crosby (Vol. I, p. 117) says:

One Roger Williams, a preacher, arrived in New England about the year 1630; was first an assistant in the church of Salem, and afterwards pastor. This man, a difference happening between the government and him, caused a great deal of trouble and vexation. At length the magistrates passed the sentence of banishment upon him, which when he removed with a few of his own sect and settled at a place called Providence. There they proceeded," says Mr. Mather, "not only unto the gathering of a thing like a church, but unto the renouncing of their infant baptism." After this, he says, "he turned *Seeker* and *Familist*, and the church came to nothing." (*Ecclesiastical History of New England*, p. 7, Cotton Mather).

It is conclusive that the Roger Williams organization "came to nothing" within about four months. Although it is known that there were members of the Newport congregation living at Providence, there are no known records, or hint of the existence, of a Baptist congregation at

Providence until about 1652. In 1653 or 1654, there was a division in that congregation (the one organized at Providence in 1652), and a new one was organized with Gregory Dexter as pastor. Wickenden and Browne were apparently co-pastors, also. In *The Baptist Succession*, D.B. Ray says:

Gregory Dexter was a Baptist preacher in London, who came over to Providence, Rhode Island, in 1644. He was associated with Wickenden and Browne, as one of the founders of the present Providence first church.

The original congregation (organized in 1652) continued until about 1715 or 1718, when, "becoming destitute of an elder, the members were united with other churches," (Callender) and became extinct. The congregation of whom Dexter, Wickenden, and Browne were pastors, has continued to the present at Providence.

Now, let us go back to the congregation at Newport, where John Clarke was pastor. History shows that many, many congregations throughout the country are descendants of that congregation. Another evil myth (like those of the Baptists being started with John Smyth or Roger Williams) is that effective mission work among Baptists is of modern origin. Effective in man's eyes, or God's? How much more effective can you get than doing something God's way? With even the very minimal amount of history I have related here in this book, it is clearly seen that members of Jesus' congregations, in every era, have gone into all the world, preaching the gospel, baptizing those whom God saves, and organizing them into true bodies of Christ, by His authority.

In *A Brief History of the First Baptist Church of Harrison, Ohio*, Larry L. Burton and Berlin Hisel traced the genealogy of the First Baptist Church of Harrison, step by step, back to the First Baptist Church of Newport, Rhode Island. After a paragraph about the organization of the First Baptist Church of Newport, Burton and Hisel wrote:

In about the middle of the 17th century, a Baptist minister, Elder Thomas Dungan from Ireland, left his native home to escape persecutions under King Charles II, and coming to Rhode Island, joined himself to Dr. Clarke's church. In 1684, Elder Dungan and a small group of members from the church in Newport came south to Bucks County,

Pennsylvania, and established as a church body there. This was the Cold Spring Baptist Church, and it was about three miles north of Bristol, Penn., not too far from Trenton. Elder Dungan was old when he came to America, and he died in 1688. But something he did just prior to his death has had lasting results.

That "something he [Dungan] did" was to be used of God to instruct and counsel Elias Keach, who was baptized and ordained at the Cold Spring Baptist Church. The circumstance, as recorded by Morgan Edwards in his *Materials Toward a History of the Baptists of Pennsylvania*, can be found on page 91, volume II, of *A History of the Baptists* by John Christian, or on pages 581 and 582, volume I, of *A General History of the Baptist Denomination* by David Benedict, and elsewhere. On pages 581 and 582, Benedict's History says, of Elias Keach:

He was son of the famous Benjamin Keach, of London; arrived in this country a very wild youth, about the year 1686. On his landing, he dressed in black, and wore a band, in order to pass for a minister. The project succeeded to his wishes, and many people resorted to hear the young London Divine. He performed well enough, till he had advanced pretty far in the sermon; then stopping short, he looked like a man astonished. The audience concluded he had been seized with a sudden disorder; but on asking what the matter was, received from him a confession of the imposture, with tears in his eyes, and much trembling. Great was his distress, though it ended happily; for from this time he dated his conversion. He heard of Mr. Dungan. To him he repaired to seek counsel and comfort, and by him he was baptized and ordained. From Coldspring, Mr. Keach came to Pennepek, and settled a church there as before related; and thence travelled through Pennsylvania and the Jersies, preaching the Gospel in the wilderness with great success, insomuch that he may be considered as the chief apostle of the Baptists in these parts of America. He and his family embarked for England, early in the spring of the year 1692, and afterwards became a very famous and successful minister in London.

About the year 1702, the congregation at Cold Spring dissolved. In 1688, a congregation was organized at Pennepeck, in Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania, called the Lower Dublin Baptist Church. It is often referred to as "the Pennepeck Church." Elias Keach, missionary

out of the congregation at Cold Spring, was called as their first pastor. Page 90 of volume II of *A History of the Baptists* by John T. Christian says:

The records of the church state that "by the good Providence of God, there came certain persons out of Radnorshire in Wales, over into this Province of Pennsylvania, and settled in the Township of Dublin, in the County of Philadelphia, viz.: John Eatton, George Eatton and Jane, his wife, Samuel Jones, and Sarah Eatton, who had all been Baptized upon Confession of Faith and Received into Communion of the Church of Christ meeting in the Parishes of Llandewi and Nantmel, in Radnorshire, Henry Gregory being Chief Pastor. Also John Baker who had been Baptized and was a member of a congregation of Baptized believers in Kilkenny, in Ireland, Christopher Blackwell, pastor, was in the providence of God settled in the township aforesaid. In the year 1687 there came one Samuel Vaus out of England, and settled near the aforesaid Township and went under the denomination of a Baptist and was so taken to be."

The next year Elias Keach came from London and baptized some persons. [There was two years interval between Keach's coming from London in 1686 and his settling at Pennepeck, in 1688, in which he was a member of the congregation at Cold Spring, as described previously. S.F.] Twelve entered into church relations and chose Mr. Keach as pastor. Soon after, a few Baptists from this province and West Jersey joined them, also some persons baptized at the Falls, Cold Spring, Burlington, Cohansey, Salem, Penn's Neck, Chester, Philadelphia and elsewhere united with the church. These were all in one church, and Pennepeck was the center of the union, where as many as could met to celebrate the Lord's Supper. Quarterly meetings were held in other places to accommodate the members there. From this church went out many others. . . . (Horatio Gates Jones, *The Baptists in Pennsylvania*. Being a sketch of the Pennepeck or Lower Dublin Baptist Church. *The Historical Magazine*, August, 1868. New Series, IV. 76).

Benedict adds, on page 581, that:

Thus, for some time, continued their Zion with lengthened cords, till the brethren in remote parts set about forming themselves into distinct churches, which began in 1699. By these detachments it was reduced

to narrow bounds, but continued among the churches, as a mother in the midst of many daughters.

In 1701, sixteen people were organized as a Baptist congregation in South Wales, and came, as a complete body with Thomas Griffith as pastor, to America on the ship named "James and Mary." In *History of the Welsh Baptists*, J. Davis says, on page 72:

In the year 1701, he [Thomas Griffiths] and fifteen of the members of the church went to America in the same vessel. They formed themselves into a church at Milford, in the county of Pembroke, South Wales, and Thomas Griffiths became their pastor in the month of June, 1701. They embarked on board the ship *James and Mary*, and on the 8th day of September following, they landed at Philadelphia. The brethren there treated them courteously, and advised them to settle about Pennepeck. Thither they went, and there continued about a year and a half. During that time twenty-one persons joined them, but finding it inconvenient to abide there, they purchased land in the county of Newcastle, and gave it the name of Welsh Tract, where they built a meeting-house, and Thomas Griffiths labored among them as their pastor till he died, on the 25th of July, 1725, aged eighty years.

On pages 106 and 107 of *The American Baptist Heritage in Wales*, we have, preserved by Joshua Thomas, the following account of the "extracts" translated into English by later members of that congregation from their records which were kept in Welsh until 1732:

"In the year 1701, there was a number of the members of the Baptist churches in the counties of Pembroke, Carmarthen, and Cardigan inclined to emigrate to Pennsylvania. Having consulted among themselves, they laid the case before the churches, who agreed to grant them leave to go. But the churches considered that as they were sixteen members and one of them a minister, it would be better for them to be constituted a church in their native land; they agreed and did so. Being thus formed into a church, they gave them a letter of recommendation for their reception as brethren, should they meet any Christians of the same faith and practice. They sailed from Milford-Haven in June that year, and arrived in Philadelphia in September.

They met with kind reception from the church meeting at Pennepec and Philadelphia. They spent about a year and a half in that vicinity, in a dispersed way. These new comers kept their meetings weekly and monthly among themselves: but held Christian conference with the other church, with which they wholly agreed but in the article of Laying on of hands, to which the newcomers strictly adhered: but the majority of the other church opposed it. In the year and a half that way they had two and twenty added to them, which probably made 38. But at the end of this term, these with others from Wales, purchased a large tract of land in Newcastle county on Delaware, which in their own language, they called Rhandiry cymrn, but being turned into English, Welshtract. This was in the year 1703, and in the same year they built their meeting house. In the extract the names of the sixteen are given, there Thomas Griffiths is called pastor; and Elisha Thomas is called Elijeus Thomas. There also they give the names of the two ad twenty added, as above. .

. .

And on the next page:

"There were thirteen added to them the first after their abode at the Tract, two by letters from Wales, and eleven by Baptism, and in a few years they became numerous, many were added to them from different churches in Wales, and large additions yearly by personal profession before the church; so that in a few years a hundred and twelve were added to the first thirty-eight, and many of these were gifted brethren, in all 150." But probably some had died.

Also on page 108, Thomas says:

Mr. Morgan Edwards, author of the *Materials [Materials Toward a History of the Baptists of Pennsylvania]*, in a letter to the writer of this dated 5th Nov. 1784, says "Mr. Joshua Edwards was born in Pembrokehire Feb. 11th 1703, landed (in America) about 1721, was ordained July 15th 1751, was alive in 1772, had eleven children, but had not the particular care of any church." Then in the same letter he informs, that about the year 1737, about thirty members from Welshtract removed to Peedee, in South Carolina, and there formed a church in 1738, which church is now (said he then) shot into five branches, that is Cashawa, Catfish, Capefear, Linches Creek, and Mar's

Bluff or Cliff. Mr. Joshua Edwards is one of the ministers who served those churches lately.

Mr. (now Dr.) J. Jones, in a letter of June 1784, said that he assisted at the constitution of a branch of Welsh tract church, in Nov. 1780. That new church is called London tract; the minister Mr. Thomas Fleeson. He mentions another church formed out of it, but does not give the name.

For several years, many Baptists came to America from Wales and England. Many Baptist preachers were sent from the congregations there, to work in America. From pages 76 and 77 of *The American Baptist Heritage in Wales* is the following letter of recommendation, which is a sample of the order practiced among the Lord's congregations:

South Wales in Great Britain

The church of Jesus Christ meeting at Swansea, in Glamorganshire, teaching believers baptism, laying on of hands, the doctrine of personal election, and final perseverance. To any church of Christ Jesus in the province of Pennsylvania, in America, of the same faith and order to whom this may concern. Send Christian Salutation: Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you from God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dearly beloved, Brethren in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Where as our dearly beloved brethren and sisters by name, Hugh David, an ordained minister, and his wife Margaret, Anthony Matthew, Simon Matthew, Morgan Thomas, Samuel Hugh, Simon Butler, Arthur Melchoir, and Hannah his wife, design by God's permission to come with Mr. Serenity to the fore said province of Pennsylvania: This is to testify unto you, that all the above names are in full communion with us, and we commit them, all of them to your Christian care, beseeching you therefore to receive them in the Lord, watch over them, and perform all Christian duties toward them as becometh Christians to their fellow members. So we commit you and them to the Lord, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you and them up in the most holy faith. May the God of peace ever sanctify you wholly, and that your, and their spirits, souls, and bodies, may be preserved blameless unto the coming

of our Lord Jesus Christ shall be the earnest prayers of your brethren in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel.

Dated the 30th of the 7th month 1710: signed at our meeting by a part for the whole:

Morgan Jones, John David, William Matthew, Jacob Morgan, Owen Dowle, Morgan Nichols, John Howell, Hugh Matthew, Robert Edwards, John Hughs, Philip Matthew, Thomas Morgan, William Morgan, (and another name not legible).

According to the minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association (1707-1807), Morgan Edwards, J. Davis, Joshua Thomas, and others, Hugh Davis (spelled David in the above letter) and fifteen others organized a congregation at Great Valley, Chester County, Pennsylvania, April 22, 1711, and chose Hugh Davis as pastor.

In 1710, Nathaniel Jenkins, who was born in Cardiganshire, Wales, in 1678, came to America, and became the first pastor of a congregation of Baptists constituted in 1712 at Cape May, New Jersey. (*A General History of the Baptist Denomination* by David Benedict, vol. I, p. 570)

Abel Morgan, born in 1637 at Llanwenog, in Carmarthen County, Wales, began preaching at nineteen years old. He was ordained at Blaenegwent, in Monmouthshire, and arrived in America on February 14, 1711, and pastored the congregation at Lower-Dublin, at Pennepek, Pennsylvania (mentioned earlier), until he died December 16, 1722. (Benedict, vol. I, p. 583)

By migration, sometimes by choice and many times by persecution, and the mission efforts of these and other congregations and their descendant congregations, God used them to take the truth into New York, Ohio, Kentucky, Virginia, the Carolinas, and other surrounding territories. People who were saved by God's grace and baptized under the authority granted these congregations by Jesus, covenanted themselves together and were organized into new congregations of Jesus' after the New Testament pattern.

Robert Nordin and Thomas White were ordained in London, and sent by the General Baptists to Virginia in 1714. Benedict says:

But White died by the way, and Nordin arrived in Virginia, and gathered a church at a place called Burley, in the county of the Isle of Wight. [vol. II, pages 23-24]

Robert Nordin died in 1725. In 1727, Richard Jones and Casper Mintz came from England to Burley, and Jones became their pastor.

On page 25, Benedict says:

In 1756, the church at Burley sent the following letter to the Philadelphia Association:

"The church of Jesus Christ in Isle of Wight county, holding adult baptism, &c. to the Reverend and General Assembly or Association at Philadelphia, send greeting. We the above mentioned church, confess ourselves to be under clouds of darkness, concerning the faith of Jesus Christ, not knowing whether we are on the right foundation, and the church much unsettled; wherefore, we desire alliance with you, and that you will be pleased to send us helps, to settle the church, and rectify what may be wrong; and subscribe ourselves, your loving brethren in Christ, Casper Mintz, Richard Jones, Randal Allen, Joseph Mattgum, Christopher Atkinson, Benjamin Atkinson, Thomas Cafer, Samuel Jones, William Jordan, John Allen, John Powell, Joseph Atkinson.--Dec. 27, 1756."

Shortly afterwards, according to Morgan Edwards, the congregation at Burley "was broken up, partly by sickness, and partly by the removal of families from hence to North-Carolina, where they gained many proselytes, and in ten years became sixteen churches." [Benedict, vol. II, p.24] Of them, Benedict says, on page 98 of vol. II, that:

These people were all *General Baptists*, and those of them who emigrated from England, came out from that community there. And although some of their ministers were evangelical and pure, and the members regular and devout; yet, on the whole, it appears to have been the most negligent and the least spiritual community of Baptists, which has arisen on the American continent. For so careless and indefinite were they in their requisitions, that many of their communicants were baptized and admitted into their churches; and even some of their ministers were introduced into their sacred

functions, without an experimental acquaintance with the gospel, or without being required to possess it. It does not appear that they extended the bounds of their communion to any but those of their own order; but so loose and indefinite were their terms in other respects, that all, who professed a general belief in the truths of the gospel, submitted to baptism, and religiously demeaned themselves, were admitted to it.

In this situation, this cluster of churches continued, until more orthodox principles were introduced, and a spirit of reformation began to prevail, which finally leavened nearly the whole body, and transformed it into an Association of Calvinistick, or as they were then called, Regular Baptists.

John Gano, Benjamin Miller, and Peter P. Vanhorn were instrumental in that transformation. On page 99, Benedict says:

Mr. Gano was sent out by the Philadelphia Association, with general and indefinite instructions, to travel in the southern States, &c. He, on his return, represented the melancholly condition of this people to the Association, who appointed Messrs. Miller and Vanhorn for the special purpose of instructing and reforming them. Mr. Gano appears to have shaken the old foundation, and begun the preparation of the materials which Messrs. Miller and Vanhorn organized into regular churches.

Probably, the first Baptist congregation in North Carolina was organized more than twenty years earlier, about 1727. It was gathered by Paul Palmer at a place called Perquimans, on Chowan-river. He was born in Maryland, and baptized at Welsh tract.

In 1683, some Baptists moved to near Charleston, South Carolina, from Piscataway, in Maine, to escape persecution by the Pedobaptists of New England. They organized a congregation, with William Screven as pastor, and about the same time were joined by some emigrating from England, who were Particular Baptists. [Benedict, vol. II, p.120] On May 24, 1736, twenty-eight members of that Congregation at Charleston were organized into a separate congregation at Ashley River. [Benedict, vol. II, p. 125] The following year, in 1737, thirty members moved from Welsh Tract church [mentioned earlier], to South Carolina, and constituted the third congregation of Baptists in that state. David

Benedict gives the following account on page 130, vol. II, of *A General History of the Baptist Denomination*:

This church was at first called Pedee, from the circumstance of its being situated on the Great Pedee-river, 60 miles north of Georgetown; but when other branches were settled on the same river, it became necessary to give this a more special name, and accordingly the compound name of *Welsh-Neck* was selected, which is descriptive of the people who founded the church, and of its local and peninsulated situation. This church originated in the following manner: In the year 1737, the following Baptist members of the Welsh-Tract church, which was then in the province of Pennsylvania, but now in the State of Delaware, arrived here; viz. James James, Esq. and wife, and three sons, Philip, who was their minister, Abel, Daniel, and their wives; Daniel Devonald and wife, Thomas Evans and wife, one other of the same name and his wife; John Jones and his wife, three of the Harrys, Thomas, David, and John and his wife; Samuel Wilds and wife, Samuel Evans and wife, Griffith Jones and wife, and David and Thomas Jones and their wives. These thirty members, with their children and households, settled at a place called *Catfish*, on Pedee-river, but they soon removed about fifty miles higher up the same river, where they made a permanent settlement, and where they all, except James James, Esq. who died at Catfish, were embodied into a church, Jan. 1738.

Now, let us go back to Virginia, where a congregation was organized on Opeckon Creek in 1751. Volume II, pages 26 and 27, of Benedict's History says:

In the year 1743, a number of the members of the General Baptist church at Chesnut Ridge, in Maryland, removed to Virginia, and settled in this place; the most noted of whom were Edward Hays and Thomas Yates. Soon after their removal, their minister, Henry Loveall, followed them, and baptized about fifteen persons, whom he formed into a church on the Arminian plan. Mr. Loveall, becoming licentious in his life, was turned out of the church [*Life of Gano*, pp.40 and 50], and returned to Maryland; and the church was broken up, or rather transformed into a church of Particular Baptists, in 1751, by the advice and assistance of Messrs. James Miller, David Thomas, and John Gano, who was, at that time, very young. Mr. Miller had visited this church in

some of his former journies, and had been instrumental of much good among them; and when they, in their troubles occasioned by Loveall's misconduct, petitioned the Philadelphia Association for some assistance, he and Mr. Thomas were appointed by the Association for the purpose. Mr. Gano, though not appointed, chose to accompany them. The account of this transaction is thus given by Mr. Gano: "We examined them, and found that they were not a regular church. We then examined those who offered themselves for the purpose, and those who gave us satisfaction, we received, and constituted a new church. Out of the whole who offered themselves, there were only three received. Some openly declared, they knew they could not give an account of experiencing a work of grace, and therefore need not offer. Others stood ready to offer, if a church was formed. The three beforementioned were constituted, and six more were baptized and joined with them.

The congregation at Opeckon united with the Philadelphia Association soon afterwards, in the same year. Congregations in the Philadelphia Association continued to send missionaries to Virginia, as well as many other places. Some of those emigrating from England were Particular Baptists. As the population grew, and evangelistic efforts continued, new congregations were organized. In 1760, the above mentioned David Thomas moved, permanently, from Pennsylvania to Virginia, where he worked for thirty years, and then moved to Kentucky.

Imprisoned Preachers and Religious Liberty in Virginia, by Lewis Peyton Little, says, on pages 76 and 77, that:

David Thomas was the first Baptist preacher to carry the gospel into Orange County. This occurred in 1763. Then came Samuel Harriss in 1765. James Read became an early co-laborer with Samuel Harriss, and by the labors of these three many converts were made, among whom were Lewis Craig, Elijah Craig, Nathaniel Saunders and Lewis Conner.

"When Mr. Harris left them he exhorted them to be steadfast and advised some in whom he discovered talents, to commence the exercise of their gifts, and to hold meetings among themselves. * * * The young converts took his advice, and began to hold meetings every Sabbath, and almost every night in the week, taking a tobacco house for the meeting house." (Semple's *History* (1810),p.8)

On November 20, 1767, a congregation was organized with twenty-five members, called Upper Spottsylvania. In November, 1770, Lewis Craig was ordained and became pastor at Upper Spottsylvania. [*A History of Kentucky Baptists* by J. H. Spencer, p. 27, vol. I.] Baptist preachers were regularly whipped, jailed, fined, and otherwise persecuted in Virginia at that time. On page 29 and 30, vol. I, of *A History of Kentucky Baptists*, Spencer says:

As has been stated, Mr. Craig was ordained to the pastoral office, in November, 1770. But this did not prevent his preaching abundantly in all the surrounding country. In 1771, he was arrested in Caroline county, where he was committed to prison and remained in jail three months. Before he left Virginia, he was instrumental in gathering at least three churches in Dover Association-Tuckahoe, Upper King & Queen, and Essex. During a revival in Upper Spottsylvania, in 1776, over one hundred were added to its membership. This church prospered as long as Mr. Craig remained with it in its first location.

Mr. Craig continued to serve Upper Spottsylvania church as pastor, till 1781, when he moved to Kentucky. So strongly was the church attached to him, that most of its members came with him. At exactly what time in the fall they started has not been ascertained. But Mr. Craig was on the Holsten river on the road leading from his former home, by way of Cumberland Gap, to his destination in Kentucky, on the 28th of September, 1781; for on that day, he aided in constituting a church at that point, then in the extreme western settlement in Virginia.

Dr. S. H. Ford, in the *Christian Repository* of March, 1856, says of Craig and his traveling charge: "About the 1st of December, they passed the Cumberland Gap, . . . and on the second Lord's day in December, 1781, they had arrived in Lincoln (now Garrard Co.), and met as a Baptist church of Christ at Gilberts Creek. Old William Marshall preached to them, with their pastor, the first Sunday after their arrival."

That congregation at Gilberts Creek was, as far as is known, the third of its kind in Kentucky. The first, Severns Valley, (near Elizabethtown) had been constituted earlier the same year, on June 18, 1781, with 18 members, and on the same day ordained John Gerrard as pastor. On page 21, vol. I, of *A History of Kentucky Baptists*, Spencer quotes

Samuel Haycraft in the *Christian Repository* of April, 1857, in which he says:

When this present wide-spread and favored country was but a wilderness; when not a human habitation was to be found between Louisville (then called the Falls of the Ohio,) and Green river, save a few families, who had ventured to Severn's Valley--a dense forest, and unexplored--and commenced a rude settlement far from the haunts of civilized man; there the lamented John Gerrard, a minister of God, came like John the Baptist, "*The voice of one crying in the wilderness,*" and finding a few disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ like sheep without a shepherd, on the 18th day of June, 1781, they were collected together under a green sugar tree; and in the fear of God, in church covenant gave themselves to the Lord and to one another, and were constituted a Baptist Church, named after Severns Valley and the creek which flows through it.

Sixteen days later, another was organized. On page 23, vol. I, Spencer says:

Cedar Creek church was the second organized in Kentucky. It was gathered by Joseph Barnett who was assisted in its constitution by John Gerrard, July 4, 1781. It is located in Nelson county, about five miles south-west from Bardstown.

Now, back to the congregation at Gilberts Creek, of which, on page 31, vol. I, Spencer says that:

It continued to prosper under the care of Mr. Craig, till 1783, when he and most of the members moved across Kentucky river, and formed South Elkhorn church. . . .

Immediately after moving to Fayette county, in 1783, Mr. Craig gathered South Elkhorn church, and was chosen its pastor. He occupied this position, about nine years, laboring abundantly in all the surrounding country. During this period, Elkhorn Association was formed, and many other preachers moved to that region of the country.

During the years that followed, many other congregations were organized. One of the most sound congregations in existence today was

organized just five years later at Bryants Station, now written Bryan Station. On page 112, vol. I, of *A History of Kentucky Baptists*, J. H. Spencer says:

The church at this point was probably gathered by Augustine Eastin, and was constituted by Lewis Craig and other "helps," on the third Saturday in April, 1786. The following eight persons were in the constitution. Augustine Eastin, Henry Roach, Wm. Tomlinson, Wm. Ellis, sr., Joseph Rogers, Ann Rogers, Elizabeth Darnaby and Elizabeth Rice.

About a month later, Ambrose Dudley became the first pastor at Bryants Station. Ambrose Dudley came from Spottsylvania County, Virginia. On page 113, vol. I, Spencer says, of Dudley, that:

After preaching with much acceptance several years he moved with his young family to Kentucky, arriving at his destination, six miles east of Lexington, May 3, 1786. Within a few weeks after his arrival he took charge of the church at Bryant's. Here and at David's Fork church, and perhaps at other points, he ministered till the Master took him to himself.

About two months later, a congregation was organized nearby, at Town Fork. On page 115, vol. I, Spencer says:

It was constituted of about ten members, in July, 1786, by Lewis Craig, John Taylor, Ambrose Dudley and Augustine Eastin.

John Gano, who has been earlier mentioned, became the first pastor at Town Fork. These congregations, and others, continued to multiply, both near and far. Page 220 of *A General History of the Baptist Denomination* by David Benedict, vol. II, says:

The church at the Mouth of Sulphur Fork is the oldest now in existence [1813] in West-Tennessee. It was constituted in 1791, by the assistance of Elder Ambrose Dudley and John Taylor, from the Elkhorn Association in Kentucky. These ministers by request of the brethren in this place travelled not far from two hundred miles, mostly through a wilderness, where they were continually exposed to be destroyed by the Indians. This church was at first called Tennessee; it united with the Elkhorn Association, where it continued until the Mero District Association was

formed. This church remained alone in the wilderness, having no other within more than a hundred miles of it, until 1794, when that on White's Creek in Davidson county, about six miles to the north of Nashville, was gathered.

Lengthy as it has become, this is but a very brief sketch of history of some of Jesus' congregations, hopefully arousing an increased awareness and appreciation of how that He has propagated them, just as He promised, almost two-thousand years ago. Although they have been despised, persecuted, and most of the time seen in the world's eyes as insignificant, there has been a continued existence of Jesus' kind of congregation ever since He built the first one as a pattern and declared, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18). It is very clear that it was Jesus' intention that His kind of congregation continue until the day that all the saved are called up to meet Him in the air. Matthew 16:18 sounds like Jesus was confident in His ability to preserve His kind of congregation. He surely would not make such a bold statement and undertake something that He would not be able to accomplish. To have done so would have been to ignore His own advice in Luke 14:28-31, where He said:

For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

The counterfeits of Christianity have assailed and taunted Jesus' congregations with John Smyth and Roger Williams fables, "universal church" theories, and other such absurdities, until the day has come when most, unaware of their own heritage, and weak in the faith, have sold, or are about to sell, their birthright for a mess of unionism and compromise.

If God is able to create man, and accomplish a continued existence of the human race by procreation, through fire, flood, famine, and disease, for six thousand years without any change of method, and is able to save lost sinners and keep them saved throughout all eternity without

any change of method, He is surely able to accomplish the perpetuity and baptismal succession of His congregations without any change of method for two thousand years! Is God sovereign or not? He is not just partly sovereign, He either is, or is not. My God is sovereign! "He's got the whole wide world in his hands."

Rather than be repetitious of matters already discussed in this and previous chapters, allow me to simply re-state some conclusions drawn that are relative to the subject at hand.

*Jesus built something that He called His *ekklesia*, which can best be translated in English as assembly, or congregation.

*Jesus built His congregation as a pattern by which He would build all others. *Jesus' kind of congregation is spoken of as a body, is compared to a human body, is claimed to be a body of Christ, with Him and no other as its head.

*Jesus has given a commission *exclusively* to His bodies, with the promise of perpetuity.

*A congregation ceases to be Jesus' congregation when He is no longer its head or when it is no longer declaring the *true* gospel, in word or in picture, regardless of its past virtue or the name over its door.

In following these conclusions, we are immediately led to the fact that when one of Jesus' congregations compromises the truth of the gospel in its preaching, either verbally, or in its practice or typology, regardless of man's opinion or designation, that congregation forfeits its status as one of Jesus' congregations, as well as its authority to administer a baptism that is acceptable to God. Now, this brings it down to the point that we begin to feel uncomfortable, and many will say that that is drawing the line too close, but what does God say? Has God passed some amendments to His Word, or is the Bible still to be our final authority for all faith and practice?

When a congregation receives a person as a member, whose baptism was administered by another congregation, organization, or individual, that congregation is declaring that that baptism in its entirety (administrator, mode, candidate, authority, and design and purpose) is

acceptable. When they declare that it is acceptable, and it is not, they are declaring a lie. People often take offense at the "L" word, but it is a Bible word. The receiving and approving congregation is declaring that the "picture preaching" of the administrator is acceptable, and in doing so, declaring that they are alike, that they are fellows, that one is as good as the other in that respect. Any congregation *knowingly, without repentance and rectification* of the matter, making such a false declaration, CANNOT be Jesus' kind of congregation, though they may have been yesterday.

The same conclusion must be drawn concerning pulpit affiliation. When a congregation knowingly and willfully places someone in their pulpit who, by their affiliation with some denomination, professes belief in, or allowance for, a salvation that is not wholly of grace (obtained by praying through, holding on, holding out, baptism, membership, sacraments, easy believism, or any other works of man), that congregation is showing approval of the same and is partaker of the evil deeds. To be consistent, I believe we must say the same for those who "minister in song." The same reasoning must be applied in the sending and supporting of missionaries. Participation and dabbling in such practices must be considered as spiritual adultery, just as the idolatry of the Israelites. Any carelessness, compromise, and indiscretion in those regards should be considered as conduct unbecoming of any engaged to be the bride of Christ.

Whenever those practices surface within a body, where there still exists a congregation of true disciples who are committed to going "fully after the LORD," there *will* be a reaction. The true disciples will rebuke and try to counsel and correct those in error. If the counsel is accepted, repentance and rectification will take place. If the admonition is not accepted, those in error are to be rejected (Titus 3:10, Romans 16:17, and II Timothy 3:5). If the true disciples find themselves the minority, and their admonition rejected, they must "come out from among them," and be separate (II Corinthians 6:17), and the Head, and the authority will go with them. That is what happened to the Novations, Donatists, and others, in the third century. Their refusal to accept the defective baptism of those in error resulted in the label of Anabaptist, which has been given the Lord's congregations all the way into the nineteenth century.

Study Revelation 2:1-7, with the interpretation given in Revelation 1:20. In those verses, Jesus dictated a letter addressed to the *pastor* of the congregation at Ephesus. In that letter, Jesus made the accusation that, "thou hast left thy first love." The first love of any person that has been saved by the grace of God should be a love for God and *all* that He is. I John 4:19 says, "We love him, because he first loved us." We can not really love the real Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the living God, without a jealous and fervent love for truth. In John 14:6, Jesus declared that He, Himself, is *the* truth. The love for truth, especially in regard to salvation and the gospel, will be directly proportional to our love for God. The plea and advice given to that pastor was, "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works" (preach and uphold *all* the truth). The consequence of not doing so was that Jesus would remove His congregation from that place, "quickly," and we can be sure that Jesus, and its authority, went with it.

Just the fact someone calls something "the gospel" does not make it the true gospel. Just the fact that someone calls something "baptism" does not make it acceptable to God. Just the fact that someone calls something "a church" does not make it the Lord's.

So, what happens when a true congregation of Jesus' shows its approval of the preaching or the baptism of something that claims to be the same, uses the same name, and claims to be of like faith and order, but are *known* to be guilty of the errors discussed above? I believe the answer is obvious. Irregular congregations are not to be given approval or recognition by Jesus' congregations. We are to "mark" them, and "avoid" them. The scriptural reaction is:

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. (Romans 16:17-18)

Before going this far with the subject, someone will usually say, "Perhaps you have not considered all the implications of this." I have. I have seriously considered the implications (and there are many) of this stand for the past fifteen years, and have made an intense study of the subject for five years. We had better be concerned with the implications

of rejecting and disobeying an unchanging God's instructions in such an important matter! What will be God's reaction to those who are willing to advance a false gospel? "The pillar and ground of the truth" (I Timothy 3:15) must uphold the truth. We must take side with God, even if it causes the sky to fall on the front steps, and causes the creek to run backward.

Truth cannot be altered. Our fear of implications or disregard for reality does not change the truth. It appears that these doctrines are often shunned or rejected out of fear that one's own baptism will be proven irregular. If such information were to ever be made manifest that would indicate that my baptism is improper, I pray that God will grant me the soundness of mind to get it done right and to not worry about implications.

Congregations finding their garments dirtied by their affairs with false religion and false doctrine must "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works." For disciples finding themselves in unrepentant company, it is high time to "come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. . . ."

Many have assumed that Jesus has given His congregations all power in heaven and in earth, but He has not. Jesus declared, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," but He has never transferred or assigned *all* power to anyone or anything. He has given much power to His kind of congregation, but He is still the head. Jesus certainly has not authorized His congregations, or anyone else, to disobey, or to change the rules as we go. As already seen, Jesus not only gave His congregations the exclusive authority to teach and to baptize, but has commissioned them to. They are, of course, by design, authorized to do such things as purchase and own buildings and property, use electricity, choose furniture, have a bank account, and other things of expediency, but never to disobey, or to teach false doctrine. Jesus' congregations have the authority to bind only in accordance with what has been bound in heaven. They have the authority to loose only in accordance with what has been loosed in heaven. Our binding and loosing must be confined to the limits predetermined by God in heaven (Matthew 16:19, 18:18).

Many, many congregations and pastors have been seduced into apostasy by peer pressure, association, pride, and ambition, resulting from participation in various schemes that men have invented for the execution of mission work, training, pension plans, and other programs by boards, or co-operative arrangements rather than adhering to Jesus' method. Jesus authorized His congregations, exclusively, as the only kind of organization authorized to do His work. They are His bodies. Jesus has not given His congregations the authority, nor permission, to delegate, or re-assign that authority to anything other than one of His congregations.

To be consistent with the belief in an unchanging God, with unchanging ways, and an unchanging plan of salvation, we are forced to admit that the qualifications, consequences, and implications of apostasy are the same today as they were when the New Testament was written. God has not issued a "grandfather clause", nor does He make any exceptions just because someone continues to use (abuse) a good name. Those who refuse to have Christ as their head today are just as much in error as those from whom the Novations and Donatists withdrew in the third century.

Since the succession of authority is lost in apostasy, and in consideration of the facts of history, it is conclusive that the only true congregations of Jesus in existence today are found among those known as Baptists, and sadly, we must say, *most* congregations by that name have also fallen away.

If we use the New Testament as the "measuring stick," the latest date that we could credit the Catholics, either Roman or Greek, with any possibility of having any succession of authority is about the year 251, before they were ever known as catholic, when the irregular and apostate congregations, being rebuked for their errors, refused to repent and submit to Christ as their head and choosing, instead, to do as they pleased. In 313, only sixty-two years later, they openly acknowledged Constantine as their head rather than Christ.

None of the Protestant denominations existed until the sixteenth century, with whatever authority they may claim coming from the Roman Catholics who had no authority from God, and possessing a "baptism" that was no baptism.

The Lutheran Church was started in 1520 by Martin Luther, with Roman Catholic "baptism." The Episcopal, or Church of England, was started in 1534 by King Henry VIII, with Roman Catholic "baptism." The Presbyterian Church was started two years later, in 1536, by John Calvin, also with Roman Catholic "baptism." The Reformed Churches originated late in the sixteenth century, being, as the name would suggest, a product of the Reformation, with a "baptism" received from the Roman Catholics or Presbyterians. Congregationalism was started in 1580 or 1581, by Robert Browne, in Norwich, England, with Church of England "baptism." The Methodist Church was started sometime around 1740, by John and Charles Wesley, with Church of England "baptism."

It was noticed earlier, the presence of those who were called General Baptists, in England, who were of Arminian persuasion, and the earlier appearance of some in Virginia, but, as David Benedict wrote, in 1813, on pages 410 and 411, volume II, of *A General History of the Baptist Denomination*:

. . . there has always been some churches and many individuals, who have objected to some of the strong points of Calvinism, or adopted them with some peculiar modifications; but no very considerable party of this character arose, until a little more than thirty years ago, when one was founded by Elder Benjamin Randal, of New Durham, New-Hampshire. This Elder Randal, as his biographer observes, was led, about 1780, "to object against the whole doctrine of John Calvin, with respect to eternal, particular, personal, unconditional election and reprobation. A number soon fell in with his views, broke off from the Calvinistick churches in New-Hampshire and the District of Maine, and from a small beginning they have arisen to a large community, which is scattered in different parts of Maine, New-Hampshire, Vermont, New-York, the Canadas, and in some other places. This party was as strenuous for believers' baptism as before; they were, like all new sects, very sanguine in their new discoveries, and from a distinguished article in their doctrinal system, they were denominated *Free-will Baptists*.

They, in teaching that salvation is obtained or lost as much or more by man's will and works, reject the salvation taught by Jesus and the apostles, and thereby teach a "gospel" that is no gospel, and administer a "baptism" that is no baptism.

The Christian Church, or Disciples of Christ, was started in the early 1800's by the work of Alexander Campbell. *World Book Encyclopedia* (1985) says, with a note that the article was "Critically reviewed by the Disciples of Christ," that:

Disciples of Christ is a Protestant denomination that developed in the United States during the early 1800's. Its full name is the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Its founders included three men of Presbyterian background--Thomas Campbell and his son Alexander in Pennsylvania and Barton W. Stone in Kentucky.

Thomas and Alexander Campbell were Presbyterians who came from Scotland, to Pennsylvania, and, adopting immersion as the only proper mode of baptism, sought and received a supposed Baptist baptism. In 1823, Alexander Campbell began the monthly publication of *The Christian Baptist* by which he sowed much discord and false doctrine, especially throughout Pennsylvania and Kentucky. On pages 609 and 610 of *A History of Kentucky Baptists*, volume I, J. H. Spencer says:

Up to August, 1829, Mr. Campbell was a member of a society, recognized as a Baptist church. This church was a member of Mahoning Baptist Association. Mr. Campbell's influence was so great, both in the church of which he was a member, and the small association to which it belonged, that, notwithstanding his known and publicly avowed heterodoxy, neither had he been disciplined by his church for heresy, nor his church by its association for retaining him as a member. The Baptist denomination was therefore, held responsible for his teaching. The Baptists, generally, were becoming very restless under this exceedingly odious responsibility, while his disciples were daily multiplying in the Baptist churches, and becoming more bold and confident in proclaiming his heresies, under the pseudonym of the "ancient gospel."

In August, 1829, Beaver Association, a small Baptist fraternity in Pennsylvania, met at Providence meeting-house, near Pittsburg, and, after discussing the subject of Mr. Campbell's teaching, resolved to withdraw fellowship from Mahoning Association, on account of its maintaining, or countenancing, the following sentiments, or creed:

1. They maintain that there is no promise of salvation without baptism.

2. That baptism should be administered to all who say that Jesus Christ is the son of God, without examination on any other point.
3. That there is no direct operation of the Holy Spirit, on the mind, prior to baptism.
4. That baptism produces the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.
5. That the Scriptures are the only evidence of interest in Christ.
6. That obedience places it in God's power to elect to salvation.
7. That no creed is necessary for the church but the Scriptures as they stand.
8. That all baptized persons have a right to administer the ordinance of baptism.

This is believed to have been the first official declaration of nonfellowship for Mr. Campbell and his followers. The other associations corresponding with Mahoning, withdrew fellowship from it, during the same, and the following month.

The following pages of Spencer's History relate the like action taken by congregations and associations throughout Virginia and Kentucky, where the Campbellite heresy had infiltrated some of the Baptist congregations in their areas. Although Campbell and his disciples practiced the proper mode (immersion only), and some of the congregations *might* have once had authority, in teaching and practicing the immersion for obtaining salvation, they rejected Jesus' salvation by grace through faith alone, and in so doing, rejected His authority as well. In immersing a person thinking himself to be a lost sinner until the act was completed, they were immersing an improper candidate. They were and are, therefore, immersing an improper candidate for an improper purpose with improper authority.

At about the same time, the Primitive Baptists, or "Hard-Shell Baptists," were started in much the same way as the Campbellites by the work of Daniel Parker. Not only is being "missionary" an integral and inseparable part of the commission given by Jesus to His congregations in Matthew

28:19-20, mission activity is seen to have been practiced in every age by His true congregations. Spencer, speaking of the Baptists in Kentucky in regard to this subject and period of time, on page 581, volume I, says that in 1820, "The spirit of missions had been greatly revived and the churches were contributing more liberally to Foreign Missions than those of any other portion of the United states." In 1820, and again in 1824, Daniel Parker published a 38 page Pamphlet titled, "A Public Address to the Baptist Society," in opposition to the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions. Two years later, about 1826, Parker published a pamphlet on his "Doctrine of the Two-Seeds," and in 1829, he began a monthly publication called *The Church Advocate*, devoted to the opposition of missions. [Spencer, pages 576-578, volume I.] The spread of Parker's propaganda resulted in the splitting of some congregations and associations, about the year 1832, with the seceders adopting the Anti-mission, Two-seedism, and Non-resurrectionism doctrines of Parker. In *The Baptist Succession*, D.B. Ray says, on pages 93-94, that:

This secession, upon the part of our Anti-mission brethren, occurred at different times in different parts of the country. In Virginia, the separation took place in the year, 1832. Elder S. Trott, an "Old School Baptist" of distinction, says of the separation: " We took as a distinguishing appellation the name, 'Old School Baptists'." [*Religious Denominations in the United States and Great Britain* by Charles Desilver.,p.87.(The history of each denomination is furnished by a leading writer of its own communion.)] Here is the candid confession of a leading Anti-Mission Baptist, that the brethren now claiming to be "Old School" or "Primitive" Baptists, *separated themselves* from the body of the denomination, and took a stand "as a distinct people;" and at that time, about 1832, took the appellation or name, "Old School Baptists." Therefore, according to Elder Trott, there was no body of Baptists in the world calling themselves "Old School," prior to the year 1832.

In Tennessee the separation occurred later. Dr. John M. Watson, says: "After our painful separation from the Missionaries in 1836, a number of churches, in the bounds of the Old Concord Association, met together and formed the *Stone River Association*. We had then, as was generally supposed, a strong and happy union; but, alas! there was an element of heresy incorporated in that body as bad, if not worse, than that from

which we had just withdrawn." [*Old Baptist Test.*,p.36, By Dr. John M. Watson, a leading Anti-Mission Baptist of Tennessee.] In the above, Dr. Watson admits that the "Old Baptists" separated or *withdrew* from the "Missionaries." It is admitted that, in some cases, the Anti-Mission brethren had the majority in churches, and even in some associations; but as a body they were largely in the minority--only a fraction--when the separation occurred. Elder Jeter says of these Baptists: "The class of Baptists described in the above extract were called in some places, Old School and in others, from the name of the place at which they held their seceding convention--'Black Rock' Baptists. They separated themselves from the Regular Baptists about the time of the rise of Mr. Campbell's Reformation." [*Campbellism Re-examined*, p. 33.]

They, in departing from the "one faith," departed from the "one baptism" (Ephesians 4:5) as well. The Mormon Church was founded by Joseph Smith in Fayette, New York, on April 6, 1830. In 1834, after two name changes, they settled on the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. [*Mormonism* by Kurt Van Gorden, page 11] They believe that God continues to reveal and inspire new truths having equal authority with, and even superseding or amending the Bible and previous revelations. They believe and teach that the atonement of Jesus Christ alone is not sufficient for salvation, but must be obtained by works of man. Page 670 of *Mormon Doctrine* by Bruce R. McConkie says:

Full salvation is attained by virtue of knowledge, truth, righteousness, and all true principles. Many conditions must exist in order to make such salvation available to men. Without continuous revelation, the ministering of angels, the working of miracles, the prevalence of gifts of the spirit, there would be no salvation. There is no salvation outside the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

That must be a different "Jesus Christ" than the one who said:

I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John 14:6)

In 1863, the Seventh-day Adventists were organized by followers of William Miller, a so-called "Baptist minister," who had predicted that the second coming of Christ would occur in the spring of the year 1844. [*The World Book Encyclopedia*. "Critically reviewed by the Seventh-day

Adventists"] Regardless of the background of William Miller, or any of his followers, they, in believing and teaching of man's works for the obtaining of salvation, rather than works as a result of salvation, teach another "gospel" which is no gospel.

The Pentecostal and Holiness denominations have originated in the present century, within the lifetime and memory of persons still living. As *The World Book Encyclopedia* (1985) says:

Pentecostal churches trace their origins to revivals of tongue-speaking that occurred at Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kans., in 1901, and at the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles in 1906. Similar revivals also took place in Great Britain and in Europe, Asia, and Latin America during the early 1900's. Since the 1930's, the Pentecostal denominations have grown rapidly. The Pentecostals are sometimes called Christianity's "Third Force," alongside Roman Catholicism and traditional Protestantism.

Also, *The World Book Encyclopedia*, in an article titled "Assemblies of God," which it says was "Critically reviewed by the Assemblies of God," says:

Assemblies of God is the largest Pentecostal religious denomination in the world. The church developed from a revival movement in the early 1900's and was organized in Hot Springs, Ark., in 1914.

Of "Churches of God," *The World Book Encyclopedia* says:

Churches of God consist of about 15 religious groups in the United States that use the same name--Church of God--but differ in faith and practice. Most of these groups trace their origins to the Pentecostal, Holiness, or Adventist movements.

And, *The World Book Encyclopedia* says, of "The Church of God in Christ," that it:

. . . is a Christian denomination that bases its faith on the doctrines of the apostles as received on Pentecost (Acts 2:4). Bishop C. H. Mason and others founded the church in 1895. They began preaching that there could be no salvation without holiness. The Baptist Church

expelled them because of this teaching. Members believe that the church name was revealed to the bishop in 1897 from a reference in I Thessalonians 2:14. In 1907, a church meeting in Memphis, Tenn., formed the First General Assembly of the Church of God in Christ.

Notice that although they profess and teach some sort of belief in Jesus as the Son of God and Saviour, each of these denominations adds some kind of works for the obtaining of salvation. That makes their faith a different faith. Things cannot be different and still be the same. Ephesians 4:5 teaches that there is but "one faith" that is acceptable to the "One God and Father of all" (v.6), and only "one baptism" that can declare that faith in a manner that God will approve. That "one faith" and "one baptism" are the only ones we should approve of, also. I am not saying that there are none saved that are affiliated with one of those denominations. The contention is that if they are saved, they are not declaring it properly. They are not giving God all the glory, and by that improper declaration, people are being misled about a matter of eternal life or death. Certainly, those who believe what they claim, that their faith is not in Jesus alone, but in Jesus plus their own works, or the works or merit of their "church," or any other formula, *do not* possess a saving faith. I realize that the making of such a statement will procure much hatred, but I would rather be hated for just a little while for telling the truth, than to be hated for eternity for concealing the truth.

I wish that this narrative of departure from the faith could be concluded here, but it cannot. Although the Lord's true congregations have for many years been found among those called Baptists, the present situation is that most have departed rather than to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). Observation and investigation will show that many congregations who still hang on to the name of Baptist are filled with teachers, deacons, and even pastors who will concede that "we are all (denominations) pretty much alike, and have only minor differences." Many insist that, "The Baptists started with John Smyth, in the seventeenth century." Most have accepted a "universal church" theory, and many insist that one immersion is as good as another. Many will agree that some other congregation of the same name teaches false doctrine, or "don't know what they believe," but are eager to recognize their baptism. Most will accept the baptism of anything called a "Baptist church," even though it

recognizes and accepts the baptisms administered by other denominations. Many send all their mission money to unscriptural and ungodly missionaries, schools, and programs which they have no control of. Many praise and glorify their adulterous and scandalous members, instead of disciplining them. Many show no reservation or hesitation about inviting someone from another denomination to fill their pulpit. If the Bible means anything at all, if it is worth the paper it is written on, that is not Jesus' kind of *ekklesia*. We can see in the New Testament that Jesus' congregations can sometimes be terribly in error about some things, and ignorant about some things, and still be His; but when God's simple plan of salvation gets changed, it becomes the congregation of someone else.

The authority to baptize must come from God. God gave John the Baptist the authority to baptize. God could have given direct authority, if He wanted to, to Philip to baptize the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8, (we can certainly see that He made all the other arrangements for the occasion), but I believe that Philip had been granted the authority by the congregation of which he was a servant and member, to conduct such a matter in that manner. The same can be said about Ananias, who baptized Paul. Acts 9:17-18 says:

And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

But, I believe that in this case, also, the most probable is that Ananias was pastor of Jesus' congregation at Damascus, and had been granted the authority by that congregation to baptize those he thought to be proper candidates.

As has already been shown, Jesus gave His kind of congregation the authority to teach and baptize. If the Bible is to be our final authority for all faith and practice, we must reject any and all revelation or authority claimed to have been received contradictory to the Bible, or since it was written. The fact that obedience in following our Lord in proper baptism is basic and elementary to any further following or walk

with Him insists that only properly baptized persons can properly be a member of one of Jesus' congregations. If a congregation must consist of saved and properly baptized persons joined together and teaching the true gospel in order to qualify as one of Jesus' congregations, then any congregation that is made out of persons who obtained their "baptism" from an improper source cannot be one of Jesus' congregations, no matter how saved they may be, nor how sound their teachings are otherwise. And, a true congregation can never evolve from it. That is a conclusive fact, and no quantity of time or variety of circumstance and opinion can change it.

It is important that the doctrine of baptismal succession be taught. The consequence of neglect is disaster. A doctrine that is neglected by one generation will be abandoned, ridiculed, and rejected by the next. The result will be a congregation that is highly susceptible to the ever intensifying efforts of counterfeit Christianity to seduce and defile them. Where Baptist succession is not taught and defended, alien immersion is likely to soon be accepted. Someone may say, "As long as I'm there, it will not." That brings up a good point. You may not be, and if you are, you may be so much in a minority that it will be the occasion of your departure. Baptist succession must be taught, not just on Wednesday night, not just to a fourth of the congregation, not just to the older folks, and not just once in fifteen or twenty years.

Notice that each of the Protestant denominations (Jesus' congregations are *not* Protestant) have held on to "something old" from the Roman Catholics, some sort of works for salvation. All, except Jesus' congregations that have earnestly contended for the faith once delivered to the saints, have invented "something new" that is contradictory to God's Word. Most, even many that I believe are still Jesus' congregations (if they will repent and turn from their error), have "something borrowed" from the Roman Catholics, and that is the "Christian" holidays that were adopted from paganism, and change the truth of God into a lie. It seems that there are a blue million gimmicks, plans, programs, methods, and devices that have come along to distract congregations from doing "the first works" (Revelation 2:5). There is much talk these days about the bride of Christ. The bride of Christ will not be dressed in "something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue"!

All "guests" (Matthew 22:11-13) will be required to have on a "wedding garment" which is the imputed righteousness of God (Romans 4:6). No one will be present except those whom God has clothed with the work of Christ. All efforts of our own to cloth ourselves will be worthless, as far as gaining admittance into heaven and attending the wedding. But, notice in Revelation 19:7-8, that, the bride of Christ will not only be clothed in the righteousness of God, but will have additional clothing, also. It is seen in verse 7, that, the Lamb's wife will have "made herself ready." Not only will the bride be clothed in the righteousness of God, but it is seen in verse 8 that she will "be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white," which "is the righteousness of saints."

If we look at the "Textus Receptus" (the original Greek), or in Strong's Concordance, it is seen that the word translated, "righteousness" in Revelation 19:8 to describe "the righteousness of saints" is different to the Greek word translated, "righteousness" to describe "the righteousness which is by faith," as in Hebrews 11:7. The Greek word in Revelation 19:8 is *dikaioma* (Strong's # 1345), which Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* defines:

1. *that which has been deemed right so as to have the force of law; a what has been established and ordained by law, an ordinance. . . .*

The Greek word in Hebrews 11:7 is *dikaioisune* (Strong's # 1343), which Thayer's Lexicon defines:

1. in the broad sense, *the state of him who is such as he ought to be, righteousness* (Germ. *Rechtbeschaffenheit*); *the condition acceptable to God. . . .*

Berry's *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* translates the word in Revelation 19:8 as "righteousnesses" (plural). The bride of Christ will be made up of persons who not only have been saved by God's grace, but have also, by God's grace, gone "fully after the LORD," no matter what the cost.

In 1554, Cardinal Hosius, a Catholic, and chairman of the Council of Trent, wrote:

If the truth of religion were to be judged of by the readiness and cheerfulness which a man of any sect shows in suffering, then the opinions and persuasions of no sect can be truer or surer than those of the Anabaptist, since there have been none for these twelve hundred years past that have been more grievously punished. (*My Church* by J. B. Moody, p.314)

Cardinal Hosius was admitting that the Anabaptists had existed since at least 354 A.D.

John Clark Ridpath, a Methodist who was Professor of History at DePaul University, and author of the three volume *Cyclopaedia of Universal History, A History of the United States, and Ridpath's History of the World* wrote, in a letter to W. A. Jarrell, author of *Baptist Church Perpetuity or History*, that:

I should not readily admit that there was a Baptist church as far back as A.D. 100, though without doubt there were Baptists then, as all Christians were then Baptists. (*Baptist Church Perpetuity or History* by W. A. Jarrell, p.59)

In 1819, two men, both members of the Dutch Reformed Church, were appointed by the King of Holland to write a history of the Dutch Reformed Church. They were J. J. Dermout, the Kings chaplain, and A. Ypeij, a professor of theology in Groningen. They wrote *History of the Dutch Reformed Church*, which, on page 148 of Volume I, says:

. . . the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the days of the apostles, and as a Christian society which has preserved pure the doctrines of the gospel through all ages.

[Return to CONTENTS](#)



CHAPTER FOURTEEN

AS HE IS

In John 5:24, Jesus said:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is past from death unto life.

And, in verse 40, Jesus said:

And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

In the next chapter, in John 6:40, Jesus said:

And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

When those He was speaking to began to murmur in unbelief, Jesus said, in verse 44:

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

In John 11:26 Jesus said:

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

In John 12:46 Jesus said:

I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

Verses 37-41 say:

But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor

understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

Acts 2:21 says:

And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Acts 10:43, speaking of Jesus, says:

To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

In Romans 1:16 Paul says:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

But, in Romans 3:11 Paul wrote:

There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

Romans 8:7-8 say that:

. . . the 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.

And, I Corinthians 2:14 says:

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Total Depravity or Inability

The case is clearly this-- *Whosoever will* believe on and receive Jesus as He is and for who and what He is *shall be saved, BUT, whosoever WON'T* unless God gives him *a new will-er*. The natural man *cannot* believe (I Corinthians 2:14) because he is "dead in trespasses and sins"

(Ephesians 2:1) and his mind "is enmity against God" (Romans 8:7). "No man" (John 6:65) can believe unless he is given a new nature by being "born again" (John 3:3), being *given* the faith to believe, as a "gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8).

This true and indisputable fact raises many questions. The answers to those questions, if answered in total consistency with the Bible, form the system of doctrine to be presented here. It must be considered as a system because each of the several points either stand together or they all fall together. No one point can be held and proven with consistency while rejecting any of the others. No one point can be rejected without ultimately surrendering and abandoning the rest.

A Just and Merciful God

It is commonly objected that God could not be just in requiring man to repent and believe if man is unable to do so. The same logic would insist that God was unjust in giving the law, knowing that no one would be able to keep it. It further implies that God was unjust in creating man, knowing that he would sin. Those doctrines, if followed, will lead its adherents to the acceptance or approval of some form of belief in works for the obtaining of salvation. That system of belief eventually says that a loving God would not have created a literal hell, and ultimately, that man is his own god, and that every man is free to do whatsoever is right in his own eyes. These false doctrines depend upon the false assumption that salvation is deserved, that since God let things get out of hand, and if by Adam all men have inherited a sinful nature, that God was *obligated* to provide a plan of salvation. Salvation is not deserved. God did not provide a plan of salvation because of man's merit, but *because of His mercy*. God was not obligated to save anyone. He is God. He is totally sovereign. He is just. He is merciful. God has said, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion" (Romans 9:15). As Romans 9:16 points out, salvation does not come by man's choice, but by God's choice:

So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

Election--God's Choice

The fact of man's total inability and unwillingness to understand or receive God's *only* plan of salvation being proven from the Bible, we are led to the logical conclusion that if anyone is ever saved, it is by God's choice. In John 6:65 Jesus said:

Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

In John 6:44, Jesus said:

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Romans 9:16 says:

So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

Not only did God specifically choose or elect to save those who would be saved, He made His choice "before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:4), proving that God's decision was not because of any merit or goodness that we possess. Romans 9:11, using Jacob and Esau for an example, explains it in these words:

For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth.

Ephesians 1:4-14 says:

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in

heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being *predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will*: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. [emphasis added]

Many, finding these verses incompatible with their preconceived "way which seemeth right" (Proverbs 14:12), have labeled them as "difficult passages that are hard to explain" and, not quite willing to literally tear out those pages or to highlight them with a black "magic marker", have abandoned them. Ignoring the truth of God's Word does not make it any less true. We must lay aside all prejudice in the matter and accept these verses as part of the "all scripture" that "is profitable for doctrine" and as part of the "all scripture" that is "given by inspiration of God" (II Timothy 3:16).

Some, in trying to bypass the truth of the doctrine of election have suggested that since God knows all things, He knew who would believe and who would not, and therefore has elected those He knew would believe. That cannot be correct because it is crediting man with the ability to make the right choice and to make himself acceptable unto God, and pictures God as a powerless "yes man" at the mercy of man's free will. Why would God have wasted His time electing people if He knew they would be saved anyway? God knew that there would be "none that understandeth" and "none that seeketh after God" unless He caused them to do so. Man was created with a free will, and look at what he has done with it. Consider Adam and Eve. There were two people with a perfect chance to make a go of it. There were no neighbors to offend, no enemies to hate, no money to steal or cheat for, no bills to worry over, no one to lust after. They had daily communication with God. They had the best of everything. They had a free will, and look how they used it.

Since "there is none that seeketh after God" (Romans 3:11) *as He is*, and "none that understandeth" God's simple plan of salvation *as it is*, "none" would ever be saved unless they be given the ability to seek and

understand and the mind to receive God and His plan *as is*. Since "none" are able to help themselves, we can be sure that "none" can give that ability to another. It must be God that gives that ability, and He does so through the new birth that Jesus was telling Nicodemus about in John 3:3-8. God "hath chosen" some unto salvation "according to the good pleasure of his will."

The reality of the total inability and unwillingness of the natural man to understand or to seek a right relationship with God being proven and accepted, we are forced to conclude that no one would be saved unless God elected some. The fact that God has elected some implies that there are others whom God has not elected. That is exactly the case according to the Bible, both Old and New Testaments. God elected Israel to be His chosen nation of people, but did not elect the Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines, and others to be His chosen nation of people.

Many are teaching that God does not elect some to salvation, while *not* electing others, and claim that God would be unfair to do so. We must remember that salvation is not deserved by anyone. Salvation is a free gift of God's mercy, not something that God is obligated to provide. God would be perfectly just in allowing every person that has ever sinned to go to hell, without ever having provided a plan of salvation. God said:

I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. (Romans 9:15)

Romans 9:16 says:

So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

On pages 75 and 76 of *Abandoned Truth*, one of the best and most thorough books available on this subject, Tom Ross says:

Men will often commend other men for what they condemn a holy God for. For example, if a wealthy man goes to the orphanage and chooses to adopt a child who is fatherless we would consider it an act of charity. If he would choose a child with several known deformities and defects we would consider the man to be saintly and gracious and worthy of

praise. After all, he was in no way obligated to choose any of the children. He did not have to share his wealth, his goodness, his name, and his home, he merely did so because it pleased him. Such a man is to be honored and admired. Yet when you apply the same circumstances to God, men will charge Him with unfairness and injustice in saving some and not others. All of us were deformed rebels corrupted by the same lump of sin, with no righteousness or merit before God. Yet as a loving Father, in an act of sovereign grace, He chose some unto salvation. He sent His Son to blot out the eternal debt of sin which we owed to divine justice. He called us and drew us by His power. He took us out from under the condemnation of the law and now deals with us in grace as His sons and daughters. He has promised an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for us. All of this simply because it pleased Him to love us with an everlasting love.

In Proverbs 16:4, the Bible says:

The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

The purpose of man is to glorify God, and everyone will sooner or later, willing or not. "Every knee shall bow" and "every tongue shall confess to God" (Romans 14:11). God has created man to glorify Him and God accomplishes the things He wants to do. God uses all people to glorify Himself; He even uses the ungodly. Romans 9:17 uses Pharaoh for an example on the subject of divine election:

For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

We find that message, delivered by Moses, from God to Pharaoh in Exodus 9:16:

And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.

Exodus 10:1-2 says:

And the LORD said unto Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh: for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might shew these my signs before him: And that thou mayest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know how that I am the LORD.

Exodus 11:9 says:

And the LORD said unto Moses, Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.

The example of Jacob and Esau is also presented in the teaching of election in Romans 9:10-13. In Genesis 25:23, God, speaking to Rebekah, the mother of Jacob and Esau, said:

Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.

Malachi 1:1-3 says:

The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi. I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.

In Romans 11:7-8, Paul, speaking of God's grace and quoting from Isaiah 29:10, wrote:

. . . the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.

In John 12:37-40, quoting from Isaiah 53:1 and Isaiah 6:1, John wrote:

But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could

not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

I Peter 2:8 describes those "which stumble at the word" as "being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." II Peter 2:12 speaks of some who are "as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed." Jude, verse 4 speaks of false teachers "who were before of old ordained to this condemnation." Romans 9:22 speaks of some as being "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." Unwilling to submit to a totally sovereign God, many will reject the plain teaching of these simple verses and argue that God could not be just or fair to have mercy on some and not others. Romans 9:14 says:

What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

Romans 9:20-24 says:

Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?

Some, unwilling to accept these plain truths, will ask, "Did Christ not die for everyone?" The Bible doctrine known as Particular Redemption teaches that He did not.

Particular Redemption

Just as some would say that a glass is half empty, when it is actually half full, the doctrine of Particular Redemption is sometimes referred to as "Limited Atonement." The Lord's congregations in England were named "Particular Baptists" in the 17th century, because they faithfully upheld the true teaching of Particular Redemption. The General Baptists

in England rejected this doctrine and were called "General Baptist" because they believed in a general atonement.

Jesus, the one who did the redeeming, understood and taught that the redemption was particular. In John 17:1-2 Jesus, just hours before His death, prayed, saying:

Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

And in verse 9 He said:

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

The reason Jesus died was to pay for sins--not His own--but the sins of others. That being true, we are forced to conclude that either Jesus actually obtained salvation for those He died for, or that He only made a provision for man to obtain his own salvation. In John 6:39, Jesus said that it was the Father's will "that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Was Jesus a successful Saviour who accomplished what He came for, or was He a terrible failure, unable to accomplish "the Father's will"?

Romans 5:10 says, "...we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." Galatians 3:13 says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Hebrews 9:11-12, speaking of "Christ being come an high priest" says:

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.

Hebrews 10:14 says:

For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Hebrews 12:2 claims Jesus to be both "the author and finisher of our faith."

It is conclusive that the purpose of Jesus' death was the substitutionary payment for sins and that for those He died, He *hath redeemed* from the curse of the law and has *obtained eternal redemption* for them. If Jesus died for everyone, "having obtained eternal redemption" for them, then no one will go to hell to pay for his own sins because they are already paid for. Would God require someone to pay for his sins in hell if Jesus has already "obtained eternal redemption" for that person. Would God have sent His Son to die for "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction" (Romans 9:22), or those appointed unto disobedience (I Peter 2:8), or certain men "who were before of old ordained to . . . condemnation" (Jude 4)? Is Jesus' blood no more precious than that? Jesus did *obtain* eternal redemption for those who will be saved.

The reality of divine reprobation, or the hardening of those who reject God as He is, and reject Christ as He is, is certain. We need not trouble our minds about anyone going to hell because of divine reprobation. No one will go to hell for being "fitted to destruction" or being "appointed unto disobedience." They will go to hell because they will have rebelled and sinned against God and rejected His plan of salvation. Those who reject Christ as full and only payment for their sin will spend eternity in hell, regardless of their good works, evil deeds, or reprobation.

The truths of the doctrine of Particular Redemption being proven by these scriptures, we are forced to take one of two courses. We must either ignore these clear and indisputable scriptures and build our doctrine around other verses that *could be* interpreted to contradict these, or, we must lay aside all preconceived ideas and prejudice and seek the interpretation that agrees with the context and with the rest of the Bible. Those who insist that Jesus died to save every person that has ever or will ever be born, and that God is trying to save everyone, must admit that both have failed terribly. They might as well say, "Poor, poor, pitiful God." In Isaiah 46:9-11 God says:

Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.

There are some verses that *can* be made to disprove particular redemption *but* to do so is to make those verses contradict the rest of the Bible, and certainly those passages such as John 6, John 17, Romans 9, and the others previously discussed. The entire Old Testament describes God as nothing less than TOTALLY SOVEREIGN. It must surely be offensive to the Holy Spirit for someone to try to make one part of the inspired Word of God contradict another part.

These doctrines, because they show the spiritual depravity or inability and helplessness of man, are offensive to our human nature, and therefore, the human part of us resists and opposes such doctrine. I John 2:2 is often employed in disputing Particular Redemption, and as long as the verse is kept isolated from those which accompany it, and if the meaning of the word propitiation is changed or ignored, it may be done so quite convincingly. The chapter and verse divisions were not inspired in the original, but have been added in later times for convenience in reference and location. When we look beyond those divisions and study the verse within its context, it can be seen that there is no contradiction. I John 2:2 says:

And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

The entire epistle of I John was addressed to a congregation or congregations in a certain location or particular area. Those written to are described as "brethren" (I John 2:7), those whose "sins are forgiven" (verse 12), who "have known him that is from the beginning" (verse 13), who "have overcome the wicked one" (verse 13), and "you that believe on the name of the Son of God" (5:13). The purpose of the epistle is given as "that your joy may be full" (1:4), "that ye sin not" (2:1), and "that ye may know that ye have eternal life" (5:13). I John 2:2 declares that Jesus Christ is the propitiation or full payment for their sins and also for the sins of God's elect among all nations, rich or poor. On page 34 of *The Bible Doctrine of Election* C.D. Cole wrote:

There are passages like John 3:16 and I John 2:2 which seem to teach that Christ died for every individual. However, the word "world" rarely ever means every individual of the human race. The word "world" is sometimes used to distinguish between the saved and the lost (I John 5:19); between the Jew and the Gentile (Romans 11:11-15) and

between the few and the many (John 12:19). I believe John 3:16 and I John 2:2 teach that Christ died for Gentiles as well as Jews. He died for men as sinners and not as any class or kind of sinners. The Jews thought their Messiah, when He came, would deliver them and destroy the Gentiles. But John says that He is the propitiation or Mercy-seat for all believers regardless of class or color. In other words, Christ is no tribal Saviour. If we think of Christ's death as substitutionary, then I agree with Spurgeon, that He died for the elect only. If He died as the substitute for every individual, then every individual would be saved, else His death was in vain. Now I believe there is a sense in which Christ's death affects every person. By His death He bought the human race, not to save every individual, but in order to dispose of every individual. The right to judge this world is Christ's reward for His suffering. All judgement has been committed unto the Son. John 5:22. In the parable of the hid treasure, Christ is the man who bought the field (world) for the sake of the treasure (the elect) for the sake of those given Him by the Father.

Most agree that the same John, the apostle, wrote I, II, and III John and the gospel according to John. In a verse very similar to I John 2:2, speaking of when Caiaphas, the high priest, unwittingly "prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation" (Israel) in John 11:52, John wrote:

And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

The ones Jesus died for is "the children of God that were scattered abroad." John 1: 29 says:

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

If "the world" here refers to every single person in the world, why do people continue to go to hell, if the Lamb of God "taketh away" their sin? On pages 260-261 of *The Sovereignty of God*, A. W. Pink wrote:

. . . to insist that "the whole world" in I John 2:2 signifies the entire human race is to undermine the very foundations of our faith. If Christ is the propitiation for those that are lost equally as much as for those

that are saved, then what assurance have we that believers too may not be lost? If Christ is the propitiation for those now in hell, what guarantee have I that I may not end in hell? The blood-shedding of the incarnate Son of God is the only thing which can keep any one out of hell, and if many for whom that precious blood made propitiation are now in the awful place of the damned, then may not that blood prove inefficacious for me! Away with such a God dishonoring thought.

In Romans 11, continuing with the subject of election from previous chapters, speaking of Israel, God's chosen people, verse 1 says, ". . . Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. . . ." Verse 2 says, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. . . ." Verse 5 says, ". . . there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Verse 7 says, ". . . the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Verse 15, speaking to Gentiles, says, "For if the casting away of them [Israel] be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" "The world" in that verse does not mean every person in the world, because it excludes the nation of Israel.

The "world" in John 3:16 is limited to "whosoever believeth in him" (the elect). Galatians 3:8-9 says:

And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

"All nations" is qualified by "they which be of faith."

Some verses or phrases containing the words all, every, or any are sometimes enlisted in the rejection of election and particular redemption; but they, too, when studied in context, clearly show that it is "all" the elect that is being referred to. II Peter 3:9 says that the Lord is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." The word translated "any" in that verse is the Greek word *tis* (Strong's #5100), an indefinite pronoun which *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* defines as:

1. *a certain, a certain one*; used of persons and things concerning which the writer either cannot or will not speak more particularly. . . .

On page 152 of *Abandoned Truth*, Tom Ross says:

The all that come to repentance are the us-ward who are identified as the beloved in verse 8. The us-ward are the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" (I Pet. 1:2).

Hebrews 2:9 says:

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

When kept in context, it is seen that "every man" that Jesus tasted death for is, in verses 12 and 13, by quoting the words of Jesus that were prophesied of in Isaiah 8:18, qualified by, and limited to, Jesus' "brethren" and "the children which God hath given" Him. The Greek word translated "every" in Hebrews 2:9 is *pas* (Strong's #3956) which is also correctly translated "all" in I Timothy 4:10, and many other places. I Timothy 4:10 says:

For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

The "all men" that the "living God . . . is the Saviour of" is qualified by the phrase, "those that believe" and is limited with the adverb "specially," which *Webster's Dictionary* defines as "particular; beyond the usual; distinct; intimate; designed for a particular person or purpose." The "all men" there is the same "all" (Strong's #3956) in John 6:37 where Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." It is the same "all" (Strong's #3956) as that in John 12:32, where Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Notice, also that "men" is not in the original, but has been added in translation, as indicated by its appearing in italics in the KJV. Jesus *DID NOT* say, "I will *try to* draw all men *toward* me"--He said, "I . . . *will draw all unto* me." "All" and "all men" is used in other places when it clearly does not mean everyone everywhere, without exception. In John 3:26, there were some that said that "all men come to" Jesus, but it is clear that they did not mean every single person. Acts 2:44-45 says:

And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

Verse 45 does not mean that they parted their possessions and goods to every single person everywhere, but "as every man had need" (that they knew of). I Corinthians 15:22 says:

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

That verse does not tell us that "all" persons universally shall "be made alive," but that all that shall "be made alive" shall be made alive "in Christ."

In Matthew 10:22, Mark 13:13, and Luke 21:17, Jesus said, "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." Surely Jesus did not by "all men" mean that each and every individual person would hate them (or us) for His name's sake. Surely He was not telling them that they would hate each other *for His name's sake*.

II Peter 2:1 is a verse that, I believe, is often, and can easily be, misunderstood. It says:

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

That verse is interpreted by some as saying that Jesus redeemed the "false teachers" who "bring upon themselves swift destruction," and therefore proves that Jesus' redemption is universal and not particular. First, let us consider who is being called "Lord" in this verse. The word *Lord* or *Lord's* beginning with a capital *L* is found over 680 times in the King James translation of the New Testament. There are 45 occurrences with a lower case *L* as *lord*, *lords*, and *lord's*. Additionally, there are 3 occurrences of *LORD*, using all capital letters, clearly meaning God the Father. *Lord* with only a capital *L*, as in this verse, is sometimes used to refer to God the Father and sometimes to refer to God the Son. Distinction is often made by saying, "Lord God" or "Lord Jesus Christ" as in Jude 4.

In all but 11 occurrences, *Lord*, *Lord's*, and *lords*, regardless of capitalization, is translated from the Greek word *kurios* (Strong's #2962) which *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* defines as:

. . . he to whom a person or thing belongs, about which he has the power of deciding; master, lord; used a. univ. of the possessor and disposer of a thing, the owner. . . .

The word *Lord* in II Peter 2:1 is one of only four occurrences where *Lord* is translated from the Greek word *despotes* (Strong's #1203), defined in Thayer's Lexicon as "*a master, lord*," and in Strong's Concordance as "*(a husband); an absolute ruler ("despot")*": -- Lord, master." In each of these four occurrences, I believe, "Lord" is referring to the Lord God, the Father. The first of these four occurrences is found in Luke 2:29, spoken by Simeon. It had been revealed to Simeon by the Holy Ghost, "that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ" (Luke 2:26). When Jesus was six weeks old (Luke 2:22 and Leviticus 12), the parents brought Him to the temple and Simeon "came by the Spirit into the temple." Luke 2:28-29 says:

Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

Despotes clearly refers to God the Father in that verse.

The next occurrence of *despotes*, translated as "Lord," is in Acts 4:24 which says:

And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is:

Despotes, translated "Lord" in Acts 4:24 clearly refers to God the Father.

The next occurrence of *despotes* translated as Lord is in II Peter 2:1, the verse presently under discussion. The fourth and final occurrence is in Revelation 6:10, again, I believe, referring to God the Father. Revelation 6:10 says:

And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?

Notice that in each case where *despotes* is translated "Lord," it is spoken by Jewish persons, and is in reference to God the Father. *Despotes* is also found five other times in the New Testament, where it is translated "master's" (with a lower case M) in II Timothy 2:21 and "masters" (with a lower case M) in I Timothy 6:1, 2; Titus 2:9; and I Peter 2:18.

The first word, "But," of II Peter 2:1 unmistakably connects it with the two verses that immediately precede it. That being so, the false prophets referred to in the first part of this verse are those that "were" among the people "in old time" when the "prophecy of the scripture" came by "holy men of God" (such as Moses) who "spake moved by the Holy Ghost." The recipients of the epistle are being reminded (II Peter 1:15) of those false prophets like Korah (Numbers 16:1-35) and warned by "even as there shall be false teachers among you." The phrase, "the Lord that bought them" in the last half of II Peter 2:1 refers to a temporal deliverance by the Lord God and the verse makes an allusion to the deliverance of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt, and to Deuteronomy 32:6. On page 61 of *Cause of God and Truth*, John Gill commented:

The word buying regards temporal deliverance, and particularly the redemption of the people of Israel out of Egypt; who are therefore called the people the Lord had purchased. The phrase is borrowed from Deuteronomy 32:6. . . .

Deuteronomy 32:6 says:

Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?

We who have been blessed with the availability of the Bible, with religious freedom, and the presence of Jesus' congregations preaching the gospel, can be said to have been bought by God and delivered from conditions that could be worse, yet all that can save no one. We must

be bought by the blood of Jesus to possess eternal life. Although the Israelites were bought by God and delivered from Egypt, some "fell in one day three and twenty thousand," some "were destroyed of serpents," and some "were destroyed of the destroyer" (I Corinthians 10:6-12). Compare II Peter 2:1 with Jude 4-5 which says:

For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

We could continue on and on attempting to answer the objections to the doctrine of particular redemption but the believer who is willing to submit to the God of the Bible as the truly sovereign God that He is, and to the teaching and guidance of the Holy Ghost, can find the answers in God's Word. Those who still object will still object.

Irresistible Grace

Seeing that God has elected to save certain persons, that redemption was actually obtained for those particular persons by the death of Christ, and that God is able to carry out His plans and intentions according to the good pleasure of His will, we may conclude that all whom God has elected, and all for whom Christ has obtained redemption must be ultimately caused to receive salvation and that God's grace is irresistible. That is what the Bible teaches. God has *purposed* that His elect "should be holy and without blame before him," as Ephesians 1:4-11 says:

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath

purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

The unchanging God says, in Isaiah 46:9-11:

Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.

Romans 8:28-30 says:

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Jesus taught that the elect shall be saved in John 6:37:

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

Acts 17:30 tells us that God "commandeth all men every where to repent." A *general call* goes out from God to all men everywhere. Enough can be seen in creation alone that we are without excuse (Romans 1:20). But, God in His mercy goes much farther--through the inspiration of His Word, the Bible, the preservation of it, and the propagation of it in many languages, the *general call* is given. Through the preservation of Jesus' congregations throughout all ages, with the orders to "teach all nations" (Matthew 28:19), the *general call* is given. God has given man a conscience that can be made to feel guilty and condemned, and cause him to shake and tremble and lose sleep at the

thought and realization of his impending eternal punishment. Even with all this man will resist that call. Even under the preaching of Paul, Agrippa was only *almost persuaded* (Acts 26:28). "Almost is but to fail." As was shown earlier from the Bible, the reason man does not respond positively to the *general call* is that he is unable and unwilling. Some, in opposition to God's sovereignty, have questioned the sincerity and propriety of God in giving a general call to those He knows are unable to believe. Shall we also charge God with insincerity and wrong-doing in giving the ten commandments, knowing that no one could obey them, and knowing that the law would be broken the same day it was given? God forbid. On pages 151 and 152 of *The Sovereignty of God*, A.W. Pink wrote:

Now let it be clearly understood that, when we speak of the sinner's *inability*, we do not mean that *if* men *desired* to come to Christ they lack the necessary power to carry out their desire. No; the fact is that the sinner's inability or absence of power is itself *due to lack of willingness* to come to Christ, and this lack of willingness is the fruit of a depraved heart. It is of first importance that we distinguish between *natural* inability and moral and spiritual inability. For example, we read, "But Ahijah *could not see*; for his eyes were set by reason of his age" (I Kings 14:4); and again, "The men rowed hard to bring it to land; *but they could not*: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them" (Jonah 1:13). In both of these passages the words "could not" refer to *natural inability*. But when we read, "And when his brethren saw that their father loved him (Joseph) more than all his brethren, they hated him, *and could not* speak peaceably unto him" (Gen. 37:4), it is clearly *moral inability* that is in view. They did not lack the *natural* ability to "speak peaceably unto him", for they were not dumb. Why then was it that they "could not speak peaceably unto him"? The answer is given in the same verse: it was because "they *hated* him." Again; in 2 Pet. 2:14 we read of a certain class of wicked men "having eyes full of adultery, and that *cannot cease from sin*." Here again it is *moral inability* that is in view. Why is it that these men "cannot cease from sin"? The answer is, Because their eyes were full of adultery. So of Rom. 8:8--"They that are in the flesh cannot please God": here it is *spiritual inability*. Why is it that the natural man "cannot please God"? Because he is "*alienated from the life of God*" (Eph. 4:18). No man can choose that from which his heart is *averse*--"O generation of vipers *how*

can ye, being evil, speak good things?" (Matt. 12:34). "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him" (John 6:44). Here again it is moral and spiritual inability which is before us. Why is it the sinner cannot come to Christ unless he is "drawn"? The answer is, Because his wicked heart loves sin and hates Christ.

Later, on pages 154 and 155, Pink says:

We say again that the above distinction between the natural ability and the moral and spiritual inability of the sinner is of prime importance. By nature he possesses natural ability but *lacks* moral and spiritual ability. The fact that he *does not possess* the latter, does not *destroy* his responsibility, because his responsibility rests upon the fact that he *does* possess the former. Let me illustrate again. Here are two men guilty of theft: the first is an idiot, the second perfectly sane but the offspring of criminal parents. No just judge would sentence the former; but every right-minded judge would the latter. Even though the second of these thieves possessed a vitiated moral nature inherited from criminal parents, that would not *excuse* him, providing he was a normal *rational* being. Here then is *the ground of human accountability*--the possession of rationality plus the gift of conscience. It is because the sinner *is endowed* with these natural faculties that he is a *responsible* creature; because he *does not use* his natural powers for God's glory, constitutes his *guilt*.

Yes, the general call is valid, and it is sincere--and it is *always resisted*. Man is helpless and hopeless except for the grace of God. By His marvelous grace, God gives an *effectual call* to His elect. The *effectual call*, being part of God's doing that which He has purposed to do (save His elect), is irresistible. Failing to recognize a distinction between the general call and the effectual call, we may mistakenly perceive that man is able to resist God's effort to do what He has purposed--but that does not change reality. It is not at all uncommon for man to have an exaggerated opinion of himself. Popular opinion does not change the words or plans of the unchanging God. Even though we may have thought that it was within our power to successfully and ultimately resist God and cause Him to fail to accomplish what He had purposed to do, and even though we may have been convinced that we could have refused the last opportunity to receive Jesus as Saviour, that does not

give us license to re-invent God. On page 45 of *Abandoned Truth* Tom Ross wrote:

Preachers in our day have made the free will of man into a god. This supposed free will that man possesses is powerful enough to overcome and thwart the will and purpose of God.

The unregenerated person always resists God as long as he is left in his natural condition. When given a new nature, a new will-er, a person gladly and freely wills to receive Jesus as Lord and Saviour. In John 3, Nicodemus was puzzled at the requirement that "a man be born again." In verse 4, Nicodemus asked how that a person who had been born (a natural birth) could be born a second time (another natural birth). In verse 5, Jesus explained that "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (underlining added). In verses 6 and 7, Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Man, when given a new nature by means of a new birth, no longer resists, but is enabled to see things differently and gladly receives salvation. God elected, Jesus purchased, and the Holy Spirit enables. It must surely be grievous and offensive to the Holy Spirit when we give man the credit for that which is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is by the Holy Spirit that we are "born again" and given the ability to understand and the willingness to receive Jesus as Saviour. We are "sealed" and kept "in Christ" by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is continually active in the persevering and preservation of those "born again." Ephesians 1:13-14, speaking of Christ, says:

. . . in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

In Matthew 12:32, Jesus said:

And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

It is a very, very serious thing to claim that before being "born again" the natural man has the ability to choose God and that it is by man's

choice that salvation is obtained. It is a very, very serious thing to claim that our perseverance in the faith is in our own hands--that we are able to keep ourselves saved or able to get ourselves lost. And, God the Holy Ghost should never be spoken of as "it" nor described as "just a kind of feeling that comes over you." To do so is blasphemous.

On page 167 of *Abandoned Truth*, Tom Ross wrote:

If God could be resisted in the effectual call by the sinner what would prevent the sinner from resisting God in the day of judgement? We could just as well conclude that if God can be resisted in the call to salvation, the sinner could just as easily resist God's summons of wrath and doom at the Great White Throne of Judgement. God's power is equally exerted and manifested in both salvation as well as judgement. Furthermore if man can resist the power of God in salvation we must conclude that men are more powerful than God and have the ability to thwart the purposes of God.

On page 165 of the same book, Tom Ross says:

When a person truly understands that God is responsible for the effectual call, all the gimmicks, gadgets, and psychological trickery that men have resorted to in our day will be regarded as futile. Special days do not bring men to Christ, God does. Long invitations, "altar calls", and emotional appeals do not bring men to Christ, God does. It is for this reason that Paul stated in I Corinthians 2:4-5: "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." One of the reasons why false professions are abundant and church memberships are loaded with lost people is because men have resorted to false and unscriptural methods of evangelism attempting to help God out. We are to preach with all our might but we must depend upon God to draw wayward sinners to Christ. By so doing we exalt God's way of salvation and truly understand what Jesus meant in John 6:44 which states: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."

It is *NOT* the responsibility of Jesus' congregations to "make disciples." Our job is to glorify God, defend and uphold the truth, and go "into all

the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). We must faithfully do our part and trust God to do His part. God is not glorified by our giving man credit for God's work. If salvation is obtained in part by man's works then his salvation must be held on to or preserved by man's works. Since salvation is wholly by God's grace we can be assured that we will be kept saved wholly by God's grace. That, too, is what the Bible teaches.

Perseverance and Preservation of All Blood Bought Believers

Would God go this far in saving His elect, in doing that which He has purposed, and then leave the continuation of it to chance, or for man to undo? Philippians 1:6 says:

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

God, who saves those He has chosen, promises to, is able to, and does preserve or keep each one of them saved--and He can and will preserve throughout all eternity. The blood bought believer, having received a new nature by the new birth, will delight in the law of God. The new creature will desire to know and do God's will, and by the enabling of the Holy Spirit, will persevere. I John 5:4 says that "whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world." Verses 11 and 12 say:

And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

Notice the present tense. God *hath* given to us eternal life and he that *hath* the Son of God *hath* possession of that eternal life right now, and we can know that we possess eternal life--not by how we feel, but by the Word of God. Verse 13 says:

These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

In John 5:24, Jesus said:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is past from death unto life.

In the next chapter, in John 6:38-40, Jesus said:

For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

In John 10:26-29, Jesus taught Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Particular Redemption, Effectual Calling, Preservation, *AND* Perseverance ("My sheep hear my voice . . . and they follow me"). In those verses, Jesus said:

But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

The blood bought believer will persevere because he is being preserved. God the Father who elected us, God the Son who redeemed us, and God the Holy Spirit by whom we received the new birth and are "sealed" all continue to work together, doing the preserving and persevering. I John 5:4 says:

For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

And, that faith which is the victory is "not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8).

Being still chained to the old nature, a Christian may fail as David did and as Peter did, but it will not be with joy and it will not be with continuation. Both those men repented, as any true Christian will,

because of the possession of the new nature that is received in the new birth, which has the ability and desire to be guided and corrected by God.

Many make a *profession* of faith in Christ and later return to and continue a sinful and ungodly life. Some will say, "See there, he was saved and then got lost again." Others may say, "No, he is only backslidden," but the scriptural conclusion is that the individual has never experienced the new birth. Like "the sow that was washed," in II Peter 2:22, returns "to her wallowing in the mire," there was only a temporary, outward change. Sincere faith may be placed in an *imaginary* or false "Jesus," but if that is the case, the preservation will also be false.

The Elected Means

In Isaiah 55:8-11, God said:

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

On page 18 of *The Bible Doctrine of Election*, C.D. Cole wrote:

Election is the very foundation of hope in missionary endeavour. If we had to depend upon the natural disposition or will of a dead sinner, who hates God, to respond to our gospel, we might well despair. But when we realize that it is the Spirit that quickeneth, we can go forth with the gospel of the grace of God in the hope that God will cause some, by nature turned away, to be turned unto Him and to believe to the saving of the soul. Election does not determine the extent of missions but the results of it. We are to preach to every creature because God has commanded, and because it pleases Him to save sinners by the foolishness of preaching. We believe that God

elected means of salvation as well as persons to salvation. He did not choose to save sinners apart from the gospel ministry. Rom. 1:16.

Election gives a saneness to evangelism that is greatly needed today. It recognizes that sinners "believe through grace" (Acts 18:27) and that while Paul may plant and Apollos may water, God gives the increase. Arminianism has had its day among Baptists and what has it done? It has given us man-power, but robbed us of God's power. It has increased machinery but has decreased spirituality. It has filled our churches with Ishmaels instead of Isaacs by its ministry of "sob stuff" and with the methods of the "counting house".

Romans 1:16 tells us that the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation." The gospel must be "according to the scriptures" (I Corinthians 15:3) and it must be "the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24) or else it is *another gospel*. Galatians 1:6-9 says:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

Romans 10:17 says:

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

I Corinthians 1:21 says that "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." God has not only chosen to save His elect "by the foolishness of preaching" but has also chosen Jesus' true congregations as the agency for the preaching. In Mark 16:15, Jesus commanded *His congregations* to "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

The Elected Message

I John 3:2 says that we shall see God "as he is." Every person, believer or unbeliever, will sooner or later face God *as He is*. In John 4:24, Jesus

said that they that worship God *must* worship "in spirit and in truth." Faith, prayer, and worship that is directed toward God as He is imagined to be or wished to be, if it is not *as He is* is false faith, false prayer, and false worship. Doctrine and teaching that is contrary to *as He is* is false doctrine and false teaching. God *is* sovereign. We must recognize and teach of God *as He is*.

The doctrines of sovereign grace must be guarded, defended, and taught. Many have abandoned them to compromise with false prophets and counterfeit "Christianity". I believe that much evil has been perpetrated against the doctrines of sovereign grace by so called "gospel singing". Many popular songs sneak their way in upon us with a catchy tune and "religious" sounding words, while denying or perverting the true gospel. I Corinthians 15:33 says:

Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.

Too many Baptists have been listening to the radio when they should have been studying the Bible.

Now study Romans 1:18-32 and consider the seriousness of one's having a Bible that describes God and His sovereignty, yet rejecting the doctrines of God's Sovereign Grace. To not regard God as He is is to glorify Him "not as God." Romans 1:21 says:

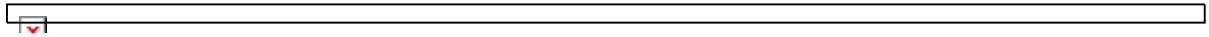
Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

For illustration, suppose a woman thinks that she loves a man but after learning more about him and finding out what he is really like, she says, "I don't love him any more--I thought things would be different." I think we would have to agree that she never loved him in the first place, but only thought she did. It was an imaginary love. It was a false love. What shall we say of those who claim to love God but reject the Bible's description of Him?

Rejection of the doctrines of Sovereign Grace logically leads to:

- A. Doubt of Jesus' ability to preserve His kind of congregation throughout all ages.
- B. Doubt of God's Bible as totally infallible and unchanging.
- C. Doubt of God's role in creation.
- D. Doubt of God's ability to judge and destroy.
- E. Doubt of God's existence.

[Return to CONTENTS](#)



CHAPTER FIFTEEN

HOW THOU OUGHTEST TO BEHAVE THYSELF IN THE HOUSE OF GOD

In I Timothy 3:15, Paul states the purpose of the epistle of I Timothy as:

. . . that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

By reading I Timothy it is clear that it is not only talking about "how thou oughtest to behave thyself" while meeting is going on, but also how each member of the Lord's congregations, each person that is a member of one of His bodies, "oughtest to behave thyself" twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Jesus' congregations continue to exist daily and continue to operate daily. The New Testament gives thorough instructions on "how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God." There are general instructions that are for each and every member and there are some that are specific to the pastors, the deacons, their wives, men, women, children, husbands, wives, widows, mothers, fathers, elder men, younger men, elder women, younger women, the rich, the poor, masters, and servants. Some instructions

are for all the time and some are for "when ye come together" (I Corinthians 11:18).

Ephesians 5:15-21 says:

See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be ye not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

When "submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" is practiced it is done "as unto the Lord" (Ephesians 5:22), "as unto Christ" (Ephesians 6:5), "as the servants of Christ" (v. 6), and "as to the Lord" (v.7). "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" *does not* mean that husbands should be hen-pecked, that children should be the bosses, that employers ("masters" Ephesians 6:5) should tolerate insubordination of employees ("servants" Eph. 6:5), nor that Jesus' congregations should allow their teaching and practice to be dictated by or adjusted to suit the world (or worldly members). Submission *or* insubordination that is contrary to *that which God has ordained* and instructed is rebellion "as unto the Lord."

Angels, as well as people, were created by God, and were and are supposed to praise Him (Psalm 148:1-5).

That angels have sinned and been cast down is seen in II Peter 2:4 which says that ". . . God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell. . . ." The nature of their sin is given as that they "kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation," in Jude verse 6. We see here that their sin was that of rebellion, following the desire to do things their own way rather than following God's plan.

Satan, an angel himself, was the originator and the leader of rebellion. Ezekiel 28:12-18 is seen as a double reference, being not only an address to an earthly king, but also making reference to Satan in his

unfallen condition and to his fall, showing the source and origin of the king's attitude and arrogance (verse 2).

Another double reference concerning Satan's fall is found in Isaiah 14:12-15 which says:

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Here, again, we see Satan's desire, his intention, and his determination to go around God and His authority and to do things his own way. He was the original "pro-choice" advocate. He is the founder of counterfeit "Christianity" whose followers reject the instruction of God's Word and choose to do things their own way. In II Thessalonians 2:4 Paul describes "that man of sin" that is to be revealed (v.3):

Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

It is apparent that Satan is the originator of rebellion against God and all that is of God. The angels mentioned in II Peter 2:4 and Jude 6 have followed his example.

God created Adam and Eve and had a plan for them. He told them what was expected of them. Satan, who had fallen when he said, "I will be like the most High" tempted Eve with the promise that she would become "as gods" (Genesis 3:5). Here we see the similarity between Eve's sin and that of the fallen angels described in Jude 6 and of Satan's described in Isaiah 14:12-14. Satan still operates in the same manner. He first implies that God is being too strict, as he did in Genesis 3:1. Next, he implies that the path to knowledge is other than God's Word, as he did in Genesis 3:5. Eve had no business submitting herself to the teaching of that false prophet, Satan. A member of one of Jesus' congregations has no business submitting himself to the teaching and

preaching, nor the "gospel singing," of those who proclaim a perverted "gospel", a salvation by works, and blaspheme God's sovereign grace. It is *NOT entertainment*--it is *blasphemy* and we should not participate nor show approval of it.

Next, we read about Adam's sin. The promise to become "as gods" is not mentioned in regard to Adam's sin and in fact, I Timothy 2:14 states that "Adam was not deceived." Adam was not deceived; he knew what he was doing. He knew that if he did not follow the error of his wife that there would be a major difference and disunity between them. Adam chose to try to keep peace in the family. God placed Adam as head of Eve, and Adam chose to improperly submit himself to his wife rather than obey God. In rebelling against God's order Adam was rebelling against God. Ephesians 5:22-25 says:

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

If the approval and blessing of God is desired in the family or in a congregation, His order must be accepted. What kind of success would a ball team have if each member tried to play the same role or position? If a husband is to be the best husband he can be, he can do no better than study and follow the example of Christ. If a wife is to be the best wife she can be, she can do no better than to study and mirror the New Testament teachings concerning Jesus' congregations. If a father is to be the best father he can be, it is essential that he learn about God, the Heavenly Father as He is represented in the Bible and make God's way his way. Not only can husbands and wives learn from the Bible teachings concerning Jesus' congregations, Jesus' congregations can learn much from the Bible instructions to husbands and wives and by considering the marriage relationship as an example. How would you feel if your wife were unfaithful? How does Jesus feel when His congregations "get the Christmas spirit"? Or when they play around with false religion? How does it look when a wife shows disrespect and disregard for her husband? How does it look when one of the Lord's congregations shows disrespect and disregard for her head by ignoring

His teachings and doing as she pleases? What would you think about a wife who would make no attempt to come home but one night out of four? What do you think of a member of one of Jesus' congregations who will attend Sunday morning preaching but make no attempt to attend Sunday School, Sunday night, nor Wednesday night?

I believe God instituted the marriage relationship as an example to teach us "concerning Christ and the church" (Ephesians 5:32). Ephesians 5 should leave no doubt about that.

Each member of every one of Jesus' congregations has the responsibility to teach according to the ability that God grants and *in proper order*. Each member is, within his or her God given order and method, charged to "edify one another" (I Thessalonians 5:11) and "preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). Our most effective teaching may be by example. Since actions can speak louder than words, the example of submitting ourselves one to another in God's order is of extreme importance.

Colossians 3:16-23 says:

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;

In Titus chapter 2 a similar list of admonition is given with the counsel of verse 7:

In *all things* shewing thyself a pattern of *good works*: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, [emphasis added]

We should "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (Titus 2:10). I sometimes hear that verse misinterpreted as meaning that we are to adorn ourselves with the doctrine of God. Adorn means "to decorate; to deck or ornament; to set off to advantage" (*Webster's Dictionary*). It is "the doctrine of God our Saviour" that is to be adorned (decorated or decked), not ones self. We are to adorn "the doctrine of God our Saviour" with "good works" (Titus 2:7), and *holiness* (I Peter 1:15 and II Peter 3:11) *in all things*. I Peter 1:15-16 says:

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.

II Peter 3:11 says:

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness[?]

Being "holy in all manner of conversation" includes what we say, what we do, *AND* how we look! Each person should serve faithfully in the role that God has assigned. Men should be men, women should be women, Jesus' congregations should be Jesus' kind of congregations. Men should look like men, women should look like women, Christians should look like Christians "as unto the Lord."

Besides the responsibility to "edify one another" and "preach the gospel to every creature" the members of Jesus' congregations have another ministry that is mostly ignored. We have a responsibility for teaching and setting a proper example for the angels. It was shown earlier, from Psalm 148:1-5, that the angels were created by God and are commanded to praise Him. It was also seen that some angels have fallen by the sin of rebellion.

First, let us consider some verses that show how angels are of service to us. Hebrews 1:14, speaking of angels, says:

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

It was angels that announced the birth of our Saviour. In Matthew 18:10, Jesus said:

Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

When Jesus was being tempted in the wilderness, "angels came and ministered unto him" (Matthew 4:11). The night Jesus was betrayed, "there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him" (Luke 22:43).

In Luke 16:22, Jesus said that when Lazarus the beggar died, he "was carried by the angels." In Matthew 13:39, explaining the parable of the tares, Jesus said, ". . . The reapers are the angels."

It was "the angel of the Lord" that opened the prison doors for the apostles in Acts 5:19. It was an angel that directed Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:26:

And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

The three men who were sent from Cornelius to Peter in Acts 10 told Peter, in verse 22, that Cornelius "was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee." And in Acts 12:6-11:

And when Herod would have brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and the keepers before the door kept the prison. And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him. And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that

the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

And, in verse 23, when Herod allowed the people to praise him as a god:

And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.

An angel came to Paul during the storm at sea (Acts 27:23) and assured him that their lives would be spared.

Revelation 1:1 says, of the book of Revelation, that Jesus Christ "sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John."

Remember what Hebrews 1:14 says about angels:

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

Hebrews 12:22 says:

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,

Hebrews 13:2 says:

Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Why was even backslidden Lot willing to turn his two virgin daughters over to the homosexuals in the streets of Sodom in order to protect the angels who visited him? I believe Lot recognized the danger of offending or influencing the angels with the rebellion against God's natural order as practiced by the Sodomites. We should take care not to be party to any behaviour that may influence an angel to rebel against God's order and keep not their first estate or leave their own habitation, as those in Jude 6. I Corinthians 6:3 says:

Know ye not that we shall judge angels? . . .

Think of the awkwardness of judging an angel for following your own example.

I Corinthians 11:3 teaches about God's order in proper headship:

But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

The verses that follow give some instruction concerning when "ye come together" (verse 17). Many teach that some of these verses only applied to one particular congregation at one particular period of time. The second verse of the book of I Corinthians says that it is "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth" *AND* "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord." The next verse in I Corinthians 11, verse 4, says:

Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonoureth his head.

Very few, it seems, have any problem accepting that verse as simply meaning what it says. For almost two-thousand years now, men who wear hats have taken them off at the door of the meeting house and left them off until going out. Why, then, is there so much contention with verse 5 which is a counterpart to verse 4? Why is there so much maneuvering around to try to neutralize verse 5? Should we not consider verse 5 to simply mean what it says, just like verse 4? Verse 5 says:

But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.

Illustration is made by likening and comparing the shame of the appearance of a woman with her head uncovered in the assembly of one of Jesus' congregations with the shame of a woman appearing in public with her head shaven. It "is even all one as if she were shaven." Verse 6 says:

For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn: but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered.

Going back to the man's head, verse 7 says:

For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man.

Verses 8 and 9 further explain:

For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man.

Verse 10 says:

For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels.

"For this cause" (because of God's ordained order that man "is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man") ought the woman to have hair on her head in public and an artificial covering on her head when she assembles with the Lord's congregation-- "because of the angels." We should be careful to not offend nor give example that may cause angels to keep not their first estate. We have the responsibility to glorify God in word and example both to people and angels. Verse 13 says:

Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered?

Nature is again used to further illustrate the principal of the matter in verses 14 and 15:

Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.

Every day and everywhere a man should have a man's hair style and a woman should have a woman's hair style. Likewise, when one of Jesus' congregations assemble together to pray or to learn from God's Word, a man's head should have no artificial covering and a woman's head should have an artificial covering. Popular styles may change, but God's style *DOES NOT*. There should be a distinct difference in the style and manner of dress for men and women for all the same reasons.

The subject is concluded with verse 16 which says:

But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

Any custom of contention against the plain teaching of the Word of God has no place in "the churches of God."

In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, (Titus 2:7)

. . . adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. (Titus 2:10)

Hebrews 10:23 says:

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

"Forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" has become the style in most places in recent years, a time when "so much the more" it should not be. It is the fault of the congregation. We can not blame it on the Devil. We can not blame it on "so much going on." What has happened? Check the old minutes and record books. Common procedure in most Baptist congregations used to be that, two or three would be appointed to visit the careless member and "invite them to fill their seat at the next meeting or give just cause for not doing so." If reconciliation was not made, the member was excluded. Such is the responsibility of Jesus' congregations. It is part of "teaching them to observe all things." It has become stylish to consider one hour almost every week as regular attendance. Someone may argue, "they didn't used to assemble as often." They stayed longer. Remember the verse above said, "so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

When a person is joined to a congregation, it is an indication of the person's approval and acceptance of the faith and practice, and submission to its teaching. The member should assemble himself as faithfully as is practical. What would happen if an employee accepted a five days a week job, but only showed up on Fridays?

The Bible is a complete and thorough guide for "how thou oughtest to behave thyself." The topics discussed here represent only a small fraction of the rich instruction God has blessed us with in His Word. In Luke 12:48 Jesus said, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." I Corinthians 4:2 says:

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

II John 5-6 says:

And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

In John 14:15 Jesus said:

If ye love me, keep my commandments.

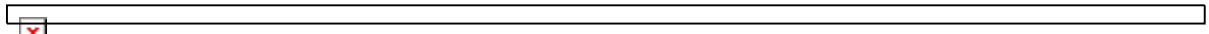
In verse 21 He said:

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

So much more could be written about going "fully after the LORD," but let us conclude with notice of the advice given by Mary to the servants at the wedding in Cana, regarding Jesus' instructions, in John 2:5:

Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

[Return to CONTENTS](#)



CHAPTER SIXTEEN

WHAT IF ?

This chapter reminds me of the little note that is sometimes included with a mail solicitation saying, "Read this if you have read about our offer but are not convinced." Someone may "just sort of skip through and read the last chapter." Because of the seriousness and eternal consequence of the matters that have been discussed here, it is of extreme importance that serious consideration be given. I realize that many strongly oppose the views that have been presented in the previous pages. There are many today who argue that doctrinal differences do not matter. Does right and wrong matter in math? Does right and wrong matter in accounting? Does right and wrong matter in highway traffic? Does right and wrong matter in the selection of medicine, or the selection of a repair part? Does it matter which end of a gun is pointed toward you when the trigger is pulled?

Those who oppose the beliefs that have been presented here may ask the question, "What if you are wrong?" I believe in salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone, that baptism does not save, but is a work in which we declare our salvation in type, and that good works are a *result* of salvation--not a means of obtaining it. To those who say that salvation is *obtained* in part by baptism and/or good works, let me ask, "If I possess the faith, baptism, and good works, am I OK anyway?" But what if I am right? What if faith that is in a "Christ" that must be supplemented by man's good works or merit is a false faith? How will you stand? Ephesians 2:8-10 says:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: *Not of works*, lest any man should boast. For we are *his workmanship*, created in Christ Jesus *unto good works*, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. [emphasis added]

I have written quite a bit about baptism. What if I am wrong? Would such a baptism as has been described not be almost universally accepted as valid even among those who hate and reject such doctrine? What if I am right? Does God's Word approve of your baptism?

What I have written about Jesus' *ecclesia* is similarly very narrow. What if I am wrong? What if there really is such a thing as a "universal church"? Would it include me? What if I am right? Are you a member of Jesus' kind of *ecclesia*?

The doctrines of God's sovereign grace as presented in chapter fourteen are rejected and hated by many. What if I am wrong? What if I am giving God the glory for man's works? What if I am right? Those who reject those doctrines are giving the glory to man instead of God.

My beliefs regarding the holidays are certainly not popular. What if I am wrong? Man is offended by my desire to follow "fully after the LORD" and by my avoiding the practice of something that is not according to God's Word. What if I am right? Are you offending God by whoring after false gods?

The beliefs presented in chapter fifteen concerning Christian behavior are often assailed as being stupid, hypocritical, and fanatical. "The LORD looketh on the heart" (I Samuel 16:7). What if I am wrong? What if I am right? Wouldn't you "rather be safe than sorry"?

[Return to CONTENTS](#)



Works Cited or Consulted

Allix, Peter. *Some Remarks upon the Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of Piedmont*. 1690. and *Remarks upon the Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of the Albigenses*. 1692. Rpt. as *The Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of Piedmont and of The Albigenses*. CHRA, 1989.

Backus, Isaac. *A History of New England With Particular Reference to the Denomination of Christians called Baptists*. 2 vols. Newton, Mass. 1871.

Bede. *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*. 731. Quoted in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1957.

Benedict, David. *A General History of the Baptist Denomination*. 2 vols. 1813. CHRA, 1985.

Benedict, David. *History of the Donatists*. 1875. CHRA, 1985.

Berry, George Ricker. *Interlinear Greek- English New Testament: With a Greek- English Lexicon and New Testament Synonyms*. 1897. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994.

Bible. Authorized King James Version.

Bible. *Textus Receptus* of The New Testament. "The Greek Text Underlying the English Authorised Version of 1611." London: Trinitarian Bible Society, Tyndale House.

Bible. N.T. English. Tyndale. "The New Testament/ translated from the Greek by William Tyndale in 1534; in a modern spelling edition and with an introduction by David Daniell." New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

Bright Lights in Dark Times. Oak Park, IL: Bible Truth Publishers, n.d., Quoted by Hisel, Berlin. *Baptist History Notebook*.

Brown, J. Newton. *Memorials of Baptist Martyrs*. 1854. Watertown, WI: Baptist Heritage Press, 1989.

Burrage, Henry S. *A History of the Baptists in New England*. 1894. Quoted by Conrad N. Glover. *The First Baptist Church in America* by Graves and Adlam.

Burton, Ernest DeWitt. *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek*. 1893. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1994.

Burton, Larry L. and Berlin Hisel. *A Brief History of the First Baptist Church of Harrison, Ohio*.

Carroll, J.M. *The Trail of Blood*. 1931. Lexington, KY: Ashland Avenue Baptist Church, 1993.

Christian, John T. *A History of the Baptists*. 2 vols. 1922. Texarkana: Bogard Press.

Cole, C.D. *The Bible Doctrine of Election*. Lexington, KY: Bryan Station Baptist Church.

Crosby, Thomas. *The History of the English Baptists*. 4 vols. Rpt. in 2 vols. CHRA, 1978.

Cross, Joseph. *Sermons and Memoirs of Christmas Evans*. 1856. Fwd. Warren W. Wiersbe. Grand Rapids: Kregal Publications, 1986.

Davis, J. *History of the Welsh Baptists*. 1835.

Dermout, J.J. and A. Ypeij. *History of the Dutch Reformed Church*. 1819. Quoted by Christian, John T. *A History of the Baptists*.

Dowling, John. *The History of Romanism*. 1846. Quoted by Hisel, Berlin. *Baptist History Notebook*.

Durant, Will. *The Story of Civilization*. 1935. 9 vols. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954.

Edwards, Morgan. *Materials Toward a History of the Baptists of Pennsylvania*. Quoted by Benedict David. *A General History of the Baptist Denomination*.

Encyclopedia Britannica. 23 vols. Chicago, 1957.

Eusebius. *The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus Bishop of Cesarea, in Palestine*. Translated from the original by Cruse, Christian Fredrick. Sixth printing, Aug. 1973. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

Evans, B. *The Early English Baptists*. 2 vols. London, 1862. Greenwood, SC: Attic Press, 1977.

Gaustad, Edwin S. *Baptist Piety: The Last Will and Testimony of Obadiah Holmes*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1994.

Gieseler, John. *A Compendium of Ecclesiastical History*. 5 vols. 1846.

Gill, John. *Cause of God and Truth*. Streamwood IL: Primitive Baptist Library, 1978. Quoted by Ross, Tom. Abandoned Truth.

Goadby, J.J. *Bye-Paths in Baptist History*. London, 1871. Watertown, WI: Baptist Heritage Publications, 1987.

Graves, J.R. and S. Adlam. *The First Baptist Church in America*. 1887. Texarkana: Baptist Sunday School Committee, 1939.

Graves, J.R. *Old Landmarkism: What Is It?*. 1880. Texarkana: Bogard Press.

Henry, Matthew. *Commentary On the Whole Bible*. 1714. Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.

Hisel, Berlin. *Baptist History Notebook*.

Hislop, Alexander. *The Two Babylons*. England, 1916. Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1959.

History of the Christian Religion and Church. 5 vols. 9th edition. Boston: Crocker and Brewster.

Hort, F.J.A. *The Christian Ecclesia*. Quoted by Overbey, Edward Hugh. *The Meaning of Ecclesia in the New Testament*.

Ironside, H.A. *Lectures on the Revelation*. 1920. Neptune, New Jersey: Loizeaux Brothers, 1985.

Jarrell, W.A. *Baptist Church Perpetuity or History*. 1894. Ashland, KY: Baptist Examiner.

Jones, William. *The History of the Christian Church*. London, 1812. 2 vols. CHRA, 1983.

Josephus, Flavius. *The Works of Josephus*. Translated by Whiston, William. Hendrickson Publishers, 1993.

Kazee, Buell H. *The Church and the Ordinances*. 1965. Little Rock: Challenge Press.

Kenworthy, James. *History of the Baptist Church at Hill Cliffe*. CHRA, 1987.

Little, Lewis Peyton. *Imprisoned Preachers and Religious Liberty in Virginia*. 1938. CHRA, 1987.

- McConkie, Bruce R. *Mormon Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966.
- Moody, J.B. *My Church*. Greenwood, SC: Attic Press, 1974.
- Morland, Samuel. *The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont*. London, 1658. CHRA, 1982.
- Mitchell, A.W. *The Waldenses: Sketches of the Evangelical Christians of the Valleys of Piedmont*. Quoted by Hisel, Berlin. Baptist History Notebook.
- Nevins, William Manlius. *Alien Baptism and the Baptists*. Little Rock: Challenge Press, 1977.
- Newman, Alfred H. *A Manual of Church History*. 2 vols. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press.
- Orchard, G.H. *A Concise History of Baptists*. 1855. Texarkana: Bogard Press, 1987.
- Overbey, Edward Hugh. *The Meaning of Ecclesia in the New Testament*. Little Rock: Challenge Press, 1974.
- Perrin, Jean Paul. *History of the Ancient Christians: Inhabiting the Valleys of the Alps*. 1618. CHRA, 1991.
- Pink, Arthur W. *The Divine Inspiration of the Bible*. Swengel, PA: Reiner Publications.
- Pink, Arthur W. *The Sovereignty of God*. 1930. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1995.
- Pink, A.W. "Xmas." *Berea Baptist Banner*. Mantachie, MS, 5 Dec. 1995.
- Ray, D.B. *The Baptist Succession*. 1912. CHRA, 1984.
- Robinson, Robert. *Ecclesiastical Researches*. 1792. CHRA, 1984.
- Ross, Tom. *Abandoned Truth: The Doctrines of Grace*. South Point, OH, 1991.

Spencer, J. H. *A History of Kentucky Baptists*. 2 vols. 1885. CHRA, 1984.

Spurgeon, Charles H. *12 Christmas Sermons*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994.

Spurgeon, Charles H. *The Treasury of David*. in 2 vols. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1985.

Stanley, John. *The Church in the Hop Garden*. London, 1935. Rpt. N.p.: The Anabaptist Witness, n.d.

Summers, Ray. *Essentials of New Testament Greek*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1950.

Strong, James. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible: With Brief Dictionaries of the Hebrew and Greek Words of the Original*.

Thayer, Joseph H. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. Seventh printing. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982.

Thomas, Joshua. *The American Baptist Heritage in Wales*. Transcribed by CHRA, "contains materials selected from a massive handwritten manuscript, *The History of the Baptist Churches in Wales*, by Joshua Thomas (1719-1797)." CHRA, 1976.

van Braght, Thielman J. *The Bloody Theater or Martyrs Mirror of the Defenseless Christians*. 1660. "Translated from the original Dutch or Holland language from the Edition of 1660 by Joseph F. Sohm." Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1994.

Vance, Laurence M. *A Brief History of English Bible Translations*. Pensacola: Vance Publications, 1993.

Van Gorden, Kurt. *Mormonism*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995.

Vine, W.E. *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*.

Walker, Clarence. *Sanctification as Taught in God's Word*. Lexington, KY: Ashland Avenue Baptist Publications, 1952.

Webster's Encyclopedia of Dictionaries. Ottenheimer Publishers, 1978.

Wilson, Greg. "What Would They Think?" *The Landmark Baptist Contender*. Nov. 1994. Homestead, FL: Landmark Independent Baptist Church.

World Book Encyclopedia. 22 vols. Chicago, 1985.

[Return to CONTENTS](#)



u>

This book is available from:
Bryan Station Baptist Church
3175 Briar Hill Road
Lexington, KY 40516