



Five New Testament Passages Revisited

Chris Reeves

It is good for us to remind ourselves of Bible basics from time to time. One good work of gospel preaching is that of reminding the brethren (2 Tim. 2:14). In 2 Peter 1:12-15 and 3:1, the Apostle Peter also writes of the importance of remembering truths we already know. Why is it important to remind ourselves of Bible basics? First, some people have never heard these things. Our young people especially and new converts need to be told about Bible basics. Second, as time passes, that which we know, we sometimes forget, and so we need to be reminded. Finally, some today want to change basic Bible teaching. We must bring ourselves back to the Bible basics in the midst of such change. We can remind ourselves of some Bible basics by revisiting five New Testament passages

WE CAN KNOW THE TRUTH (JOHN 8:32)

Some say the truth cannot be known on such doctrines as creation, marriage-divorce-remarriage, fellowship, modesty, etc. Yet, the Bible teaches that truth can be known. Jesus said, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). Will we believe

those who tell us we cannot know the truth, or will we believe Jesus? There are several other New Testament passages that teach we can know the truth (Eph. 3:4; 5:17; 1 Tim. 3:15; 4:3; 2 Pet. 1:12; 1 John 2:21; 4:6). Yes, there are difficult texts in the Bible (2 Pet. 3:16), but the truth can be known. It is time to revisit John 8:32.

WE MUST PREACH THE WHOLE TRUTH (ACTS 20:27)

Some say that we should “accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative.” Some suggest that we should do more “connecting” with the young people or the “un-churched.” Some claim that we have too much “negative” preaching on marriage-divorce-remarriage, fellowship, denominations, worldliness, etc. However, the Bible teaches that we should preach all of God’s word regardless of its content or its effect. Paul spoke to the Ephesian elders and said, “How I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly, and from house to house” (Acts 20:20). Again, Paul said to them, “For I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of
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The Bible Doctrine of Hell (3)

Mike Willis

We have been studying the biblical evidences of the final punishment of hell lasting throughout eternity. This article in this series continues to study biblical evidences of hell being everlasting torment, not annihilation.



• **John 3:36.** John writes, “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” “Everlasting life” and “the wrath of God abideth on him” are placed in juxtaposition to each other. The word “abideth” is from the present tense — the wrath of God is presently abiding on him and will continue to do so. Dr. Robert A. Morey writes, “When John said that the wrath of God ‘abides’ on the wicked, he used the word *meno* in the present indicative tense to state that the wrath of God was continually abiding on the wicked as an ongoing process” (*Death and the AfterLife* 155).

• **Where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.** Several verses are used to describe the eternal nature of the punishment of hell in which these two figures are used.

And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh (Isa. 66:24).

Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. (Mark 9:44, 46, 48).

The figure of the worm used by Isaiah and Jesus is drawn from their consuming dead bodies. When an animal dies, worms eat its flesh. When all of the flesh has been consumed, the worm dies. Job used the figure to describe man’s death, “Drought and heat consume the snow waters: so doth the grave those which have sinned. The womb shall forget him; *the worm shall feed sweetly on him*; he shall be no more remembered; and wickedness shall be broken as a tree” (Job 24:19-20). The significance of Jesus’ expression is that the worm does not die. Worms which eat decaying bodies ultimately consume the body and die. However, in hell the worm never dies because the body is never completely consumed, for the punishment never ends.

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Connie W. Adams

CONTENTMENT

Paul, a prisoner at the time, wrote “For I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content” (Phil. 4:11). The secret of his contentment was not because of his external circumstances, for they were far from ideal. No, it was in his ability to accept what he could not change and to actively use his situation for good. We would all be spiritually poorer had not Paul written Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon — all written during his two year confinement in Rome. We have no way of knowing how many lives were changed because of visits with Paul during that time, nor how many Romans soldiers, assigned to guard this man, learned the truth resulting in the gospel being known among the whole Praetorian Guard and in the very palace of Caesar.

I suppose we all have different ideas as to what constitutes contentment. Some years ago, a humorous columnist for the *Atlanta-Journal and Constitution* wrote a book entitled *All I Ever Wanted Was A Cadillac and a Piece of Cornbread*. I have managed to be content thus far without a Cadillac but I have to confess that having a bowl of pinto beans, a slice of onion, and a piece of good southern cornbread (not the sweet kind that tastes like pound cake) is pretty high on my list of things to make me content. Some of life’s greatest blessings are the small and simple things. What do you think?



MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2003

We thank God for every open door to preach the gospel. It is always a pleasure to meet some of our readers at gospel meetings where we are invited. In hopes of greeting some of you personally, here is our schedule for 2003. It is likely that some additional work will be added.

March	Chapel Hill, Tennessee (2-7) Shelbyville, Kentucky (16-21)
April	Jerry Whitson Rd., Cookeville, Tennessee (6-11) Lawrenceville, Georgia (20-25)
May	Payette, Idaho (4-9) Caldwell, Idaho (11-16) Blackfoot, Idaho (18-23)
June	West Knoxville, Tennessee (8-13)
July	Westview, Hartselle, Alabama (20-25)
August	West Avenue, San Antonio, Texas (10-13)
September	South Macomb, Roseville, Michigan (continued on next page)

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Rivermont, Chester, Virginia (21-26)
Columbus Rd., Bedford, Ohio (5-10)
Park Hill, Fort Smith, Arkansas (19-24)

November

Pontiac, Illinois (2-7)
Round Lake Beach, Illinois (9-14)



BACK TO BASICS

A new paper, dedicated to first principles began in January, 2003. It is entitled *Back to Basics* and is edited by Johnie Edwards, his son Johnie Paul Edwards and his grandson, John Isaac Edwards — three generations of faithful and able men. Johnie Edwards is a staff writer for *Truth Magazine*. His articles, like his sermons, are short and to the point, but filled with Scripture. These three brethren have conducted the Ellettsville, Indiana preacher training program for about ten years now and nearly 300 men have benefitted from this excellent summer training school. The first issue of *Back to Basics* is now in print. It is a 12-page paper, neat in appearance and scriptural in content. You may subscribe for \$12 a year. Bundles are available for churches and individuals to distribute. There is a great need for the basic and simple elements of the gospel, and we wish great success for this new effort. We have great confidence in the editors. The February issue will be a special on “The Basics of Bible Baptism.” You may order or inquire from Edwards Publishers, 4121 Woodyard Rd., Bloomington, IN 47404, edwardspublisher@aol.com.

HOME

It may be a cabin on a hill, a cold water flat in the

Bronx, a shotgun house in a one-horse town, a modest ranch house in a large suburb, or an imposing place in an upscale neighborhood, but if that is where you grew up, then that is where your mind turns when you think of home. Home! What a word that is. For many it evokes unpleasant memories of struggle, sacrifice, and sometimes abuse. But for many of us, the word recalls carefree days of growing up, taking for granted the meals on the table and the creature comforts around us. Childhood memories of parents, siblings, grandparents, cousins, friends, and neighbors all come rushing back at certain times in our lives. Song writers and performers have made a living from nostalgia about home.

What memories of home are being generated in our fast moving society? When our children think of home, what will they remember? The greatest blessing we can give them is to bring them up “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” That will brighten and sweeten all the other memories and will provide the principles by which life is to be lived.

One of the great secrets to learn in life is that home is where you live. This understanding would help many a college student, serviceman or woman, transplanted worker, or even preachers and their families. Where we live is the home that IS. Where we grew up is the home that WAS. What we all should be longing for is the home that AWAITS the children of God. Blessed hope!

Box 91346, Louisville, Kentucky 40291

Passing the Torch

by Mike Willis

This book will serve not only as a profitable work-



book but as an excellent fact-filled reference book. The first lesson discusses the principles that guided the Restoration Movement in the United States. Subsequent lessons discuss the issues about which brethren have debated and divided, beginning with the Missionary Society and ending with the controversy regarding fellowship as it relates to divorce and remarriage. 13 lessons. #80264

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Are There Saved People Outside the Church of Christ?

John Isaac Edwards

The Website of the Oak Hills church of Christ in San Antonio, Texas, where Max Lucado preaches, features a section devoted to “Frequently Asked Questions.” Question twelve is: “How does the Oak Hills Church of Christ relate to other churches and denominations?” The answer is as follows: “We have chosen to emphasize what we have in common with other Christian groups rather than debate about our differences. We try to be ‘Christians only’ and believe that no particular group is designated by God as ‘the only Christians.’”

This “Christians only/not the only Christians” mentality has allowed the Oak Hills church to accept into their membership folks who were baptized into denominational churches without their being baptized scripturally into the one body. In question four, “What do you teach about baptism? Would I have to be baptized again in order to be a member here?,” the statement is made, “Those who have already been baptized before coming to Oak Hills don’t need to be baptized again.” In another publication of the Oak Hills church, “Baptism: The Demonstration of Devotion,” the question is raised, “Does it matter where I was baptized?” The answer: “No. If you were baptized in a Baptist church or Pentecostal camp . . . that doesn’t matter.”

The Oak Hills church has gone so far as to recognize as members individuals who received water sprinkling instead of water baptism. “We have many potential members who were baptized by sprinkling, usually as infants. This paper will help you see why we baptize by immersion. It also explains why we don’t baptize infants. We urge you

to read the paper and consider adult baptism. If you choose not to be immersed at this time, we still welcome you as a member. We ask only that you respect our teaching position and not be divisive” (*Baptism: The Demonstration of Devotion*).

These statements well express the thinking of many today. Are there saved people outside the church of Christ? What saith the Scripture?

NO CHILDREN OUTSIDE THE FAMILY

The church of God is “the household of God” or family of God (Eph. 2:19). All of God’s children are in his family. Several things are implied by the term “family.”

1. A Father. God is the Father of the family as Ephesians 4:6 says, “One God and Father of all.” The Father’s will is to be obeyed in the family (Matt. 7:21).

2. Children. Those in Christ are the children of God (Eph. 1:3-6; Gal. 3:26-27), begotten by the gospel of Christ (1 Cor. 4:15; Jas. 1:18). If you were begotten by something other than the gospel, then you are not a child of God. You cannot add anything to the gospel or take anything away from the gospel and still have the gospel (Gal. 1:6-9)!

3. A family name. The name of Christ is the family name. Concerning Christ, Paul said, “Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named” (Eph. 3:15). Another name suggests another family. To be a part of another family

and wear another name is to be a part of an inferior family, for the name of Christ “is above every name” (Phil. 2:9).

4. An inheritance. Romans 8:17 teaches, “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.” The inheritance of God’s family is described as “an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you” (1 Pet. 1:4). If you are outside the church of Christ, then you do not have God as your Father.

NO SHEEP OUTSIDE THE FOLD

There is “one fold, and one shepherd” (John 10:16). The church of God is the flock of God, and Christ is the shepherd (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-4). One way of identifying the Lord’s sheep is that they follow the Lord’s voice (John 10:1-5). If one listens to and follows after the voice of another, then he must be without the fold. If you are outside the flock of God, then, with all due respect, you are not a sheep, but a goat (Matt. 25:32-33).

NO SOLDIERS OUTSIDE THE ARMY

To be a soldier, one must be in the army. A man may purchase a uniform from the army surplus store and go around wearing it, claiming to be a soldier in the U.S. Army. Regardless of his claim, and no matter how much others may believe he is a soldier, he is not a soldier for he did not submit to the terms of enlistment by the enlisting officer of the United States Army. The Lord’s people are soldiers (2 Tim. 2:3-4), marching beneath the blood-stained banner of Christ, the Captain (Heb. 2:10). If you have not submitted to the enlistment terms of Christ, revealed in the Testament of Christ, then you are not a soldier of Christ!

NO CITIZENS OUTSIDE THE KINGDOM

The church of Christ is the kingdom of God (Matt. 16:18-19; Heb. 12:23, 28). There are some things implied by the term “kingdom.”

- **A King.** Christ is the King of the kingdom (1 Tim. 6:14-15).
- **Law.** The “law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2) is the law of the kingdom.
- **Subjects.** Those who have bowed their knee to King Jesus and submitted to the law of the kingdom are the subjects or citizens of the kingdom. One cannot be a citizen and not submit to the law of the King! To obey another law or have your allegiance to another than Christ is to be in another kingdom!

“There is one body” (Eph 4:4), “which is the church” (Col. 1:24). Christ is the Head of the body (Col. 1:18), and the body is subject to its Head (Eph. 5:24). All of the members of Christ are in the body of Christ. The only way one gets into the body of Christ is through Bible baptism. 1 Corinthians 12:13 records, “For by one Spirit are we all

baptized into one body.” The importance of being in the one body is seen in that we are reconciled “unto God in one body” (Eph. 2:16) and “Christ is the saviour of the body” (Eph. 5:23). The only way you could be saved outside the church of Christ is if you could be saved without a Savior! Since Christ and the church go together as a head and body, what is found in one cannot be found outside the other. Salvation is “in Christ” (2 Tim. 2:10), and the same act that puts one in the body of Christ, the church, puts one “into Christ” (Gal. 3:27). One can be saved today outside Christ and his church no more than one could be saved outside the ark in the days of Noah!

If we can understand that there are many in the church of Christ who will not be saved (Matt. 13:41-43; 1 Pet. 4:17-18), why can we not understand that those outside the church of Christ will not be saved? May we not be ashamed of the one body and the one baptism, and always make our plea for the seven “ones” of Ephesians 4:4-6 that comprise the platform of Bible unity. The only way we can all stand together is when we all stand on this platform, and may God help us to so stand!

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When Christ Comes To Your House

Walton Weaver

There is a story of two simple folk who lived in a fisherman's cottage in a little village by the sea. When the man came home at the end of the day, his wife said to him, "The new preacher came here today, and he asked a question I couldn't answer." "What did he ask?" the husband queried. "He asked me," she said, "Does Jesus Christ live here?" "And what did you say?" the husband demanded. "I didn't know what to say," she answered. "Well couldn't you tell him that we are respectable people?" he asked. "But he didn't ask me that." "Well, why didn't you tell him we go to church when we feel like it?" he inquired. "But he didn't ask me that either," she replied. "Then you could have told him that we read the Bible — sometimes," he added. "But he didn't ask me that. What he asked was, 'Does Jesus Christ live here?'"

What would your answer be to this question? This is a question that should be put before every home. Every mother and father should answer it. What difference does it make when Jesus is in our homes? No doubt the qualities that characterized Jesus Christ will characterize the members of our household.

1. There will be a deep reverence for God. This is indicated in his closeness to God and in his desire to always do the will of the Father. Jesus often prayed unto the Father, and he was ever reminding his listeners that he came to do the Father's will (John 5:19, 30; 6:38; 8:29). He sought to honor God in everything that he did (John 8:49-50). His every thought, word, and act were motivated by this desire to please God. This kind of reverence for God will characterize the members of our family when Jesus lives in our house.

2. There will be an emphasis on spiritual things. When Jesus went into the home of Mary and Martha, he reprimanded Martha because she was "worried and bothered about so many things" (Luke 10:41). He praised Mary because she had "chosen the good part" (v. 42). It is so easy to become preoccupied with the ordinary things involved in making a living and keeping house. These are things that must be done, but when our doing of them leads

us to neglect the "necessary things," it is a sure sign that Jesus does not live in our house. When Jesus lives in our house, we will be "listening to the Lord's word, seated at His feet" (v. 39). Parents will see that the family members give him priority, teaching them by example and from the word of the Lord that some things must be laid aside momentarily (like a sport's event, a trip, watching TV, a new car) in order that there will be time and money for the "necessary things" (like public and private worship, visiting, teaching others, and being a cheerful and liberal giver of our money).

3. There will be love and peace. Jesus was a man who loved people (John 11:36; 13:23), even the whole world (Rom. 5:7-8). As the "prince of peace," he came to bring peace (Luke 2:14), and yet he also brought division. Some households become divided because some in the family become Christians, just as Jesus taught that this would be the inevitable result of his teaching (Matt. 10:34-39). But even in a case where there is division of this sort, it may still be possible for a reasonable amount of harmony to prevail, and certainly there must always be love. Peter gives specific instruction to wives who are married to unbelieving husbands, telling them how they are to live with them (1 Pet. 3:1-6). He shows that by being submissive and living exemplary lives before them they might hope to win them to Christ.

Of course, "If the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace" (1 Cor. 7:15). Love, coupled with "the things which make for peace" (Rom. 14:19), will bring strength and stability to our homes. There is no place for all the disorder, bickering, fussing, and fighting that we find in so many homes, even where the family members claim to be Christians. No home can be characterized by such confusion when Christ is living there.

4. There will be discipline. Christ lived a disciplined life. When he lives in our homes, there will be disciplined fathers and disciplined mothers. By this I mean there will

An Addendum to: “Godly Characteristics of Preachers”

Shannon Ramey

Brother Jacobs wrote a good article entitled “Godly Characteristics of Preachers.” Preaching about the preacher is much needed, as televangelists, priests, and community fellowship pastors often taint the preacher’s image with darkness, which is not of God (1 John 1:5). However, a few essential points occurred to me which were not in brother Jacob’s article.

The fruit of the Spirit should be exhibited in every Christian, and these traits are useful for preachers (Gal. 5:22-24). Imagine how trying fellowship would be if the preacher lacked patience or self control! Another thing essential to a good preacher is knowledge. 2 Timothy 3:7-9 reads, “Always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was” (NKJV). 2 Timothy 4:2 and 1 Peter 3: 15 tell Christians to always be ready to answer questions concerning their faith. Unfortunately, many people say, “I’ll get back to you on that.” A preacher should have a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures, and should encourage his congregation to seek the same readiness (1 Tim. 4:13). The preacher should also be a firm believer in all

of the Scripture and strong in faith (1 John 2:21-24, Jude 20-21, 2 Thess. 2:15).

Finally, the preacher must be a *man*, in the sense of gender. Our nation is all too willing to accept women as preachers, even the government approves because the military allows female chaplains. It may be an unpopular belief, but the woman is not permitted to preach, and allowing such a thing will cut off fellowship with God. 1 Corinthians 14:34-35 commands the “women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak.” Is not preaching making a speech? Read also 1 Timothy 2:11-12 to gain a better knowledge of this subject. The woman’s role is to train other women, to be a good keeper at home, and to submit to her husband (Tit. 2:3-5). I pray that the church of Christ never accepts a woman as its preacher.

Again, brother Jacobs wrote a good article and I have sought to make it better. Preachers and congregations should know what the preacher should be. I would suggest that all preachers be well acquainted with 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, epistles written to instruct young preachers. May each give his best effort for God.

be fathers who are fulfilling their role as fathers, and mothers who are meeting their responsibilities as mothers. This takes discipline, or living within certain guidelines and limits as prescribed by Scripture. There will be fathers who are providing for the physical (1 Tim. 5:7) and spiritual (Eph. 6:4) needs of the family, and mothers who “keep house” (1 Tim. 5:14) and are “workers at home” (Tit. 2:5). This requires self-discipline and a desire to be faithful in these roles as Christians. One must also have a strong desire to succeed in the rearing of their children.

There will also be disciplined children in the home where Christ lives. This requires that reasonable rules be set by parents. Parents cannot expect their children to be self-disciplined to the point that they will need no discipline from them. It is by discipline received from parents

that children learn to discipline themselves as they grow up. The limits that are set must be clearly understood, and there must be disciplinary consequences enforced when the limits are not respected. The “rod” must not be spared when the authority of either parent is defied. “He that spareth his rod hateth his son” (Prov. 13:24).

Other consequences may be used when the offence is less severe. If discipline is not practiced in the very early years, it is not likely to be successful when the children get older. When teenagers do not obey their parents, the parent may wonder, “Where did I go wrong?” The answer will likely lie in the fact that the parent started too late to practice discipline. The key to success is begin early and be consistent.

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“Blessed Are the Merciful . . .”

Jim McDonald

“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy” (Matt. 5:7). Mercy is defined as “outward manifestation of pity, sympathy, and compassion.” Mercy carries with it the thought of compassion and leniency. Mercy is one of the attributes of God: he is the “father of mercies”; he is “rich in mercy”; we are “saved by His mercy” (2 Cor. 1:3; Eph. 2:4; Tit. 3:5). God’s promise as found in Jeremiah 31:31 (and repeated in Hebrews 8:12) is “I will be merciful to their iniquities and their sins will I remember no more.” Since God is merciful and we are exhorted to imitate his character, it is little wonder that there are many passages written to incite us to be merciful. “Be ye merciful as your Father is merciful” (Luke 6:36). Peter urges, “Finally, be ye all like minded, compassionate, loving as brethren, tenderhearted, humble minded” (1 Pet. 3:8). Paul urges, “Put on therefore, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, long-suffering” (Col. 3:12).

We must have mercy on those lost in sin. Jesus said, “But go and learn what this means, I desire mercy and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners” (Matt. 9:13) We cannot rid the sinner of his guilt of sin (only God can do that), but we can forgive his sins against us. The greatest mercy one can show to sinners is not to ignore their state but rather show them that Christ is merciful and full of pity and will save those who genuinely come to him. Acquainting the sinner with Christ’s door of mercy is one of the greatest acts of mercy one may show

another (Jonah 3:10-4:2; Jude 22; Heb. 4:11; Gal. 6:1).

We must have compassion on men in their adversities. Paul urged “rejoice with them that rejoice and weep with them that weep” (Rom. 12:2). Jesus had compassion (mercy) upon the widow of Nain; he raised her son from the dead and returned him to her (Luke 7:11-15). Jesus had compassion on Martha and Mary. He gave their brother full of life back to them (John 11:35). Jesus taught how we “love our neighbors as ourselves” in his parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:23ff). Hebrew Christians had mercy on their brethren who were in bonds. They took joyfully the spoiling of their possessions to minister to their needs (Heb. 10:34). The man who has no compassion is not merciful and the love of God is not in him. “But whoso hath this world’s goods, and beholdest his brother in need and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” (1 John 3:17).

We are to have mercy on the penitent. Our forgiveness from God depends upon whether we forgive those who have wronged us. Jesus taught us to pray “and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (Matt. 6:12). The parable of the two debtors adds further illustration to this point (Matt. 18:23-35).

The blessing which comes to the merciful is that he shall obtain mercy. God’s throne, to which we make an appeal for help in time of need, is called the “throne of grace,” from which we obtain mercy (Heb. 4:15). Weak creatures that we are, we are always in need of God’s loving favor, compassion, and mercy, the reception of which is predicated upon our being merciful ourselves. Our constant need for mercy from God’s hand is incentive enough that, on the infrequent occasions which we are asked to extend mercy to others, we speedily, cheerfully, and thankfully are merciful!

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- Courage
- Sacrificed

In Acts 18:24-28, we read about a colorful preacher who lived in the apostolic age named Apollos. He was not an apostle, nor can we conclusively prove that he wrote any New Testament book, yet his contributions to the Lord's cause are immeasurable! Let us consider some of the outstanding qualities that the Holy Spirit, by the pen of Luke, reveals about Apollos.

1. He was a man of great speaking ability. Verse 24 says he was "an eloquent man" (*aner logios*). Ceslas Spicq, in his *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament* (II: 403-406) suggests that *logios* "is a term of honor that was current in the first century B.C." He adds, "The most widespread meaning of *logios* would seem to be eloquent, articulate, speaking well . . . mastery of the art of oratory."

English translations vary in the way they render the expression *aner logios*: James Moffatt says "a man of culture." J.B. Phillips reads "a gifted speaker." Eugene H. Peterson in *The Message* says quite colorfully he was "a terrific speaker." Each of these versions expresses the underlying contextual connotations of *logios* quite well.

The ability to speak well is indeed a gift from God. It should be cultivated and is a very useful quality in the preaching of the word. Paul's enemies at Corinth said "his letters are weighty and forceful, but in person he is unimpressive and his speaking amounts to

nothing" (2 Cor. 10:10, NIV). We read of no such accusation against Apollos! If one has the gift of oratory he should polish it, cultivate it, and use it to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Pet. 4:11)! This is not to say that those of lesser elocution cannot be effective in the proclamation of God's word; they have been, they are, and they can be, and the inability to speak well is no excuse not to do one's very best (cf. Exod. 4:10-14; Acts 4:13). Not everyone can be an Apollos, but each of us can become better than he is!

2. He was a man of great Bible knowledge. Verse 24 says he was "mighty in the scriptures" (KJV). "Mighty" translates *dunatos*, and in this context it likely means that Apollos was powerful or strong in the Scriptures in the sense of being competent or well-versed in God's word (cf. ESV, RSV). It is possible to be well-versed in the Scriptures in the sense of knowing *what* is written and *where* it is written, yet not teach it accurately! Not so with Apollos. He knew what had been written, and he taught it accurately. Apollos was no "top water minnow" flopping around in the shallows. He had depth. He was scholarly. He was erudite, well-read; a man of immense learning!

Spicq says in volume 2 of his *Theological Lexicon* (405, 406) that Apollos "had a complete mastery of the Holy Scriptures. He was a scholar . . . an eminent or quite distinguished man . . . prestigious young Alexan-

drian academician.” Competency and scholarship in Scripture do not come through sleep, laziness, and dabbling in *other folks’ business*, but through many hours of diligent, in depth, and tedious research (cf. Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 2:15; 2 Pet. 3:18). Someone once asked an older preacher, “Sir, what must I do in order to know as much as you know about the Bible?” The preacher responded, “Young man, open up your Bible, and diligently study it for the rest of your life.”

3. He was a man of great zeal. Verse 25 says “being fervent in spirit” (NASB-95). This translates the present active participle *zeon*. As the New Revised Standard Version says, “he spoke with burning enthusiasm.” Apollos was boiling over with zeal. He was hotter than a two dollar pistol dropped in burning gasoline on the fourth of July! He was bubbling up with spiritual fervor. I have often asked in local work and in gospel meetings, “If you don’t preach the truth like you believe it, how can you expect others to be enthused when they receive it?” Undoubtedly, Apollos’ boiling enthusiasm influenced other people (cf. 1 Cor. 1:12; 3:4-6). They took it too far, but he influenced them nevertheless.

God wants all of us to be enthusiastic about his work. It’s the greatest work in the world, and we should let the world know it! We should have burning enthusiasm in our singing. Paul says, “I will sing praise with the spirit, but I will sing praise with the mind also” (1 Cor. 14:15, NRSV). We should display zeal in our teaching. Peter and John were put in custody because “they were teaching the people and proclaiming that in Jesus there is a resurrection of the dead” (Acts 4:1-3). The rulers, elders, and scribes chastised them “not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered them, “Whether it is right in God’s sight to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; *for we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard*

(vv. 19, 20, emp. mine RD). That is zeal: “cannot keep from speaking.” All of us should be on fire for the Lord. There is a dying world around us, and we who have the word of life shouldn’t hesitate to spread it. If some people were as zealous to spread the gospel like they are to spread gossip, the gospel would be proclaimed to all creation under heaven in a few weeks (cf. Col. 1:23). We should be “on fire” with regard to our giving, “for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:7).

We should be zealous in praying, encouraging, consoling, and living. Enthusiastic people are influential people. They are motivators. They are earth shakers!

4. Apollos was a man of accuracy. Verse 25 says “he spoke and taught accurately.” Accurately translates the adverb *akribos*. This tells us that he was a careful student and expositor of holy Scripture. He was an exact teacher and very thorough. Apollos was not characterized by doctrinal looseness. He was not merely a teacher, but he was an exact and precise teacher who relied on the power of Scripture! Today there are too many people, particularly preachers, who are doctrinally loose on such subjects as marriage, divorce, and remarriage, the meaning and application of Romans 14, the nature and work of Jesus and the Holy Spirit, the length of the days of the creation of God, and a myriad of other issues that are before the people of God. Teaching and preaching are very serious works, and we should not be characterized by imprecision and lack of thoroughness. Teachers should leave no stone unturned in their quest for biblical accuracy. James warns against unprepared, loose tongues, inadequately equipped, and unlearned teachers (Jas. 3:1-2). If you have the truth on your side, if you know it well, and if you handle it accurately (cf. 2 Tim. 2:15, NASB-95), there is nothing to fear not even fear itself!

5. He was a man who was sincere and honest. Verses 25 and 26 tell us that Priscilla and Aquila “took

him and explained to him the way of God more accurately.” This man of eloquence, enthusiasm, and precise knowledge had a limitation; “he only knew the immersion of John.” This man of outstanding ability was willing to be taught by Priscilla and Aquila. His great ability did not create a blind spot that filled him with pride so that he would not listen. He listened, he learned, and he grew! Let’s face it, there are preachers who are so swollen with selfish ambition and pride that they resemble overgrown, swollen bullfrogs croaking on a moonless night! They, being full of themselves, won’t allow people of lesser ability to challenge them to rethink positions that they hold on crucial issues. To the contrary, they set out on a campaign of destruction. Their noses are held so high that when it rains, they nearly drown! If they only knew that they don’t know what they think they know, they could learn a lot.

All of us can learn something about the truth and we should be willing to listen and learn. None of us has perfect knowledge about everything. Bible classes are an important part of the learning process. Our attendance and participation in the classes that are provided by the local congregation are extremely important. They provide opportunities to learn from one another. Inviting friends, family, employees, employers, neighbors, and community associates is important because it allows them to learn God’s truth.

6. Apollos was a courageous man. Verse 26 says “he began to speak boldly.” “To speak boldly” is the English rendering of the present infinitive, *parresiazesthai*. This tells us of Apollos’ frankness, openness, freedom of speech, and courage! He didn’t have to be forced to take a stand on the important issues of his day. He didn’t have to be “hog tied, pistol whipped, brow beaten, and cow-prodded” before he would clearly state his position and view on what he believed the Scriptures teach!

You may not like what he said, but he said it. He didn't have to get the approval of any college professor, fellow preacher, magazine editor, wealthy elder, or family member before he spoke out. He had convictions and he stated them in no uncertain terms. Paul was a bold proclaimer of truth (Acts 9:27, 28; 19:8; 26:26; Eph. 6:19, 20; Phil. 8). He and Apollos are examples of what God wants all Christians to be (cf. Phil. 1:14; Eph. 3:12; 2 Cor. 5:6). There is a spirit of timidity permeating the Lord's people in many places today. Many people who should speak don't, and many who don't won't! We should not be intimidated, and we shouldn't be afraid of human beings (Matt. 10:28). God's preachers should be bold to speak even when they are threatened to be fired, stigmatized, scandalized, and criticized. Even when "worse comes to worst" the Lord will stand by our side (cf. Acts 27:23-26; 2 Tim. 4:16, 18). Those who fall away in times of persecution will be cast into the lake that burns with fire and sulphur (Rev. 21:8).

7. He was a man who sacrificed. Verse 27 says "he greatly helped those who through grace had become believers." He not only helped the believers, but he *greatly* helped, that is, to a very large degree! He loved his brothers and sisters in the Lord. Apollos greatly helped the Lord's disciples on a spiritual level. He had the ability, the knowledge, the zeal, and the courage. What a powerful package! While most people are on the receiving end, Apollos was on the giving end; he gave himself, his energy, his talent, his mind, his voice, yea his life to the Lord! He helped promote the cause of Christ. It is not only preachers who should sacrifice themselves for God's service, all Christians should (cf. Rom. 12:1-2). He was encouraged by the brothers and he helped the brothers.

8. He was a man who debated. Verse 28 says "he powerfully refuted the Jews." "Powerfully" translates *eutonos* which means vehemently, forcefully. "Refuted" translates *diakatelegcheto*, meaning to confound completely, to totally refute, to defeat in debate, to vigorously beat down an opponent in debate, to maintain a discussion strenuously and thoroughly. *Diakatelegcheto* has a significant grammatical form. It is an imperfect indicative verb and implies that "he was refuting." It expresses the tenacity of Apollos. The Jews gave up, but Apollos did not! If Apollos were living today, can't you hear some of our brothers saying, "There goes that Apollos again. He's always debating someone. He wants to make a name for himself as a debater." The combination of the words *eutonos diakatelegcheto* in this context tells us that Apollos beat his opponents down to the extent that they had no defense, no retort, and no reply.

He left them with no place to run and hide. He not only skinned the cat, but he even dipped the cat in a mixture of alcohol and tobasco sauce! Apollos did not apologize to his opponents. Nor is there any evidence that "weak-kneed," squeamish, soft (wrong) hearted, "smily-smily,"

honey-dripping from the lips brothers showed up at any of Apollos' debates to apologize to his beaten down, pulverized, bloody- from-the-battle opponents! As long as a man uncompromisingly stands for the truth in the right way, and with the right motive of heart, mind, and soul, he has nothing for which to apologize. There is a place for debaters among God's people, and we do ourselves and the cause a grave disservice when we speak disparagingly and unjustly of the men who dedicate themselves to serve God in this way. I have never understood the logic of men and women who will debate with debaters about the fact that debaters shouldn't debate.

The text tells us more about Apollos' debates: they were *in public (demosia)*, in the open, before the people, for all to see and hear. There was none of this "let's go in the room" business. Or, "Let's talk in private. We don't want to let people know that we have differences in doctrine." His debates were *impartial*; he was a Jew and he debated with the Jews (vv. 24, 28)! He didn't reason within himself, "Well, the Jews are my people and we've got to stick together. We don't want those old doggish Gentiles to know that we are having 'family problems.' We need to stick together as a race." The Jews were in error and Apollos told them so, in public, in the open, not behind closed doors! His debates were *devastating*. Spiritually speaking, he left his opponents "blind, naked, and bleeding." It wasn't his fault. The Jews were the ones in error. They should have known better. A muley cow shouldn't hook with a Texas longhorn! A toothless hound shouldn't tangle with a wildcat!

His debates were based on the *Scriptures*, not opinion. God's word should be the standard by which we live. It is powerful (Jer. 23:28-29; Heb. 4:12). His debates presented *proof* that the Messiah was Jesus (cf. 1 Cor. 2:1-5). Unlike many men today, he did have something to prove and he proved it.

In short, Apollos was a combination of eloquence, power, knowledge, sincerity, enthusiasm, boldness, impartiality, and sharpness as a debater. He would have difficulty being accepted by some brothers today. Some wouldn't like his eloquence. Others wouldn't like his boldness. There would be others who would question his sincerity and enthusiasm. Finally, a large segment of today's brotherhood wouldn't like his debating mentality, technique, or tactics. I believe Apollos would just pray, shake it off, hold his head up, and continue doing what Luke says he did; helping the brothers by the great ability that God had given him. Thank God for Apollos!

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The Church of Christ

Joe R. Price

Aaron Erhardt

The church is the greatest institution on earth. It was conceived, designed, and purposed in the mind of God from eternity (Eph. 3:10-11). The church is spiritual in nature, fully equipped for the saving of souls.

The church is of the utmost importance. It was purchased with the precious blood of Jesus Christ (Acts 20:28) and consists of all the saved (Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23). Therefore, we must make sure that we are in the true church of the New Testament.

MARKS OF IDENTIFICATION

Founder: Jesus Christ promised to build his church. He said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). This is the one and only church that has a divine founder.

Church Name

Church of Christ
Catholic Church

Origin: The church that Jesus promised to build was established on the Day of Pentecost in Jerusalem (Acts 2). This is the one and only church that has a divine origin (Isa. 2:2-4).

theran Church
Presbyterian Church
Baptist Church
Methodist Church
Mormon Church

Date/Location

A.D. 33/Jerusalem
A.D. 606/Rome
A.D. 1530/Germany
A.D. 1536/Switzerland
A.D. 1608/Holland
A.D. 1739/England

L u -

Floating church members
make a sinking church.

In A Closed System

Paul K. Williams

A man who was once a member of the Lord's church but who is now in denominationalism wrote:

You cannot survive outside the churches of Christ, you cannot imagine yourself being saved outside the churches of Christ, and you cannot permit yourself to consider an interpretation of these scriptures that would go beyond the churches of Christ. You are (in) a closed system.

This is an old charge. In 1956 when I was seeking support to come to South Africa (and failed, partly because churches were splitting over institutionalism), the elders of a church which had given me \$400 on my travel fund wrote. They said they had learned that I followed the *Gospel Guardian* position. I wrote back that I do not follow any paper or man, but that I try to follow the Bible. I then told them what the Bible teaches about church cooperation — and they told me to send their money back!

Yes, I am in a closed system, but it is not the system I have been accused of. I am convinced that the Bible is the

word of God. I believe with all my heart that what it says must be followed without addition or subtraction. I am open to everything it says. I am closed to those things which are against it. It is just that simple.

I am converted to the Lord, not to the churches of Christ. I am following Christ, not churches. When brethren do or believe things which I cannot find in the Bible, I do not follow them. I follow Christ. I do not do this perfectly every time, and I am always open to correction. I am not yet perfect, but I desire to be (Phil. 3:12).

I preach so that others may follow Christ and him only. I urge them not to follow the traditions of men. I try to get them to close their minds to error and immorality and be open to everything Jesus says.

Yes, we must be in a closed system if we are to be saved. Not closed to reason. Not closed to truth. Not closed to change. But closed to everything which is not approved by God in his word.

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A.D. 1830/America

Creed Book: The gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). It completely furnishes us unto all good works (2 Tim. 3:16-17). It is the one and only standard of divine authority.

BEWARE OF COUNTERFEITS

There are many counterfeit churches in the world today. They are imposters that deceive people into thinking they are from God, when they have been established by mere men (Matt. 15:13). Therefore, we must make sure that we are in the true church of the New Testament. (HINT: the names Boniface III, Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Smythe, John Wesley, and Joseph Smith are not found in the Bible).

PROCLAIM IT, DON'T SHAME IT

Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Manners and Customs

by Howard F. Vos

Rather than blurring all the lands and cultures of the Bible into a single, inaccurate "Bible Time," this volume distinguishes the ways life differed from period to period and place to place. Hardback. #16479.

\$19.97

What Causes Us To Be Good?

Harold Fite

Considerable time and money is expended in trying to determine why people turn bad. I want to focus on the other side of the coin: what causes people to be good? What is it that makes good people? What made Barnabas a good man? (Acts 11:24).

“Good” is a common every day word we use in describing people, events, words, and objects. Like other words in our language, “good” has been undergoing a change in meaning for the past four decades. It has been twisted, perverted, tortured and robbed of its true meaning. It has been redefined to conform to one’s point of view and lifestyle.

Mario Cuomo described a state Supreme Court judge as a “good man,” after the judge was convicted and sent to prison for threatening to kidnap his ex-lover’s daughter. Hillary Clinton described her philandering husband as a “good husband and father.” The mother of rock singer Mick Jagger’s latest illegitimate child, told Europe’s *Hello* magazine, that even though Jagger has yet to meet his four-month-old son, he is “a very loving father.”

Last September a northwest Arkansas man was convicted of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment. He kidnapped a woman, bound and beat her, strangled her with a phone cord, poured chemicals on her body, wrapped her in a blanket weighed down with rocks, and dumped her in a lake. As he was led from the courtroom, a teary-eyed woman said, “Lance is a good guy and I love him.”

In one of Cal Thomas’ columns a few years ago, he said:

If there is no standard for “good,” then the word has only the meaning assigned to it at a given moment. How can the Scouts of New Jersey be taught to perform good deeds and to have good behavior if “good” has no definition? Why is it good for the Boy Scouts to be forced into accepting people who behave in ways judged to be bad by the organization’s leadership and by most Scout parents, and bad to reject applications for membership from practicing homosexuals? Why shouldn’t it be bad to engage in same-

sex behavior and good not to engage in it? All “lifestyles” are now created equal by the courts, and if bad exists, it is in the mind of the beholder.

“Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil” (Isa. 5:20). If someone should say to you “you’re bad” don’t jump to conclusions. He may be saying, “you’re good.” “Goodness” has to do with a high degree of characteristic qualities which are admirable in themselves. The two common Greek adjectives, *kalos* and *agathos* are defined as good. According to Vine’s, “*Agathos* describes that which, being good in its character or constitution, is beneficial in its effect. The neuter of the adjective with the definite article signifies that which is good, lit. ‘the good,’ as being morally honorable, pleasing to God, and therefore beneficial.”

Kalos is usually translated “good,” sometimes “honest,” having to do with that which is handsome, gracious, fair to look upon. Vine says, “Originally referred to beauty of the form. To anyone lovely, or something which was beautiful. Always the idea of loveliness, attractiveness, graciousness. That which delights the heart and gives pleasure to the eye.”

God is perfect goodness. He is abundant in goodness (Exod. 34:6). Great is thy goodness (Ps. 31:19). “None is good save one, even God” (Mark 10:18). He is the fountainhead from whom all goodness flows. All things therefore, emanating from God are good. “Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow cast by turning” (Jas. 1:17). All that God created was very good (Gen. 1:31). It is that goodness of God that leads to repentance (Rom. 2:4). He who seeks the supreme good, seek him.

How good is God, His mercies manifold,
Run through the years a strand of gleaming gold,
Each morning new, each night like arms unfold,
And yet alas, how often we forget.
We praise the Lord for His goodness (Ps. 107:8).

Since God is good, his word is good. Law is the expres-

Simple Common Sense

Lewis Willis

I wonder if something like this ever happened at your house:

PARENT: "I want you to go clean up your room."

CHILD: "I don't know how. How do you want me to do it?"

PARENT: "Clean your room just like I cleaned up mine."

CHILD: "Do you mean I have to pick up everything?"

PARENT: "Yes, everything."

I rather suspect this scene has been played out more often than many of us could imagine. This just happens to be the age-old lesson of parental authority over a child, and the manner in which that authority is communicated. However, though we have used similar instructions in raising our children, I doubt that many of us realize that we have been using the same means as God uses, through the Scriptures, to instruct his children. Notice that paragraph again.

PARENT: "I want you to go clean up your room."

sion of his will and reveals the nature of the lawgiver. "So the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous and good" (Rom. 7:12). In the form of moral requirements, his law is absolute, and these are imposed upon man. By obeying the good word, revealed by the good God, one becomes good and strives to be conformed to the image of Christ. He will be performing good deeds — rich in good works, a good soldier and servant (2 Tim. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:6).

We are exhorted not to allow ourselves to be fashioned according to this world, and challenged to prove "what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2).

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(COMMAND)

CHILD: "I don't know how. How do you want me to do it?"

PARENT: "Clean your room just like I cleaned up mine." (EXAMPLE)

CHILD: "Do you mean I have to pick up everything?"

PARENT: "Yes, everything." (NECESSARY INFERENCE)

Did you ever stop to think that you and your children are using Hermeneutics (the science of interpretation and understanding) in your communications? As you can easily see, that's exactly what you are doing. Furthermore, it is appropriate to do so, because we are following God's example. Not only that, the procedure is just good, common sense. As long as parents issue the proper *commands*, illustrating them with suitable *examples*, their children will be able to draw the *necessary inferences* or conclusions regarding the instructions given them.

A problem develops if you issue a *command*, but you do not follow it with the proper *example*. If you tell your child "You must obey the law," but he sees you violating the law, you are undermining the lesson you are seeking to teach. Your child will not be able to draw the *necessary inference* from your teaching.

I saw a good illustration of this on ABC's *Good Morning America* (11-4-93). William Bennett, former Secretary of Education under George Bush, being interviewed about his new book, said that the young people of America had lost their way. While Secretary, several judges told him they had asked young offenders if their parents had ever taught them the difference between right and wrong. These young people responded, "No." Bennett said that parents must teach (*command*) their children what is right and live it before them (*example*). Only then will they be able to make the proper choices (*necessary inference*). When parents do as they should, they will give their children a basis for arriving at the proper interpretation of their words, and the children will be able to make the right interpretation.

As I said before, parents use hermeneutics, even if they

Important Lessons From the Genealogies of Jesus

truths about our Savior, link Old Testament history and prophecy with the Messiah and even dispel some false notions about the Son of God.

The two genealogies aren't exactly alike. Matthew's account (1:1-17) is written from a largely Jewish perspective, connecting Jesus with the promises made to Abraham and David (Gen. 12:1-3; Gal. 3:16; Isa. 11:1-2; Acts 13:21-23; John 7:42).

Matthew leaves a few kings out to divide the family tree into three lists of fourteen patriarchs, fourteen kings, and fourteen generations from the Babylonian captivity

to Jesus.

Luke's account (3:23-38) appears more for a Gentile reader. His purpose was to connect Jesus with the first man, Adam, and even with God. Jesus is not only the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham but also of God's declaration to Satan in the Garden that Eve's offspring would deliver a deadly blow to the tempter's head (Gen. 3:14-15).

Luke's genealogy also is in reverse order to Matthew's. He begins with Jesus and works his way backwards to Adam, who is called the "son of God." God miraculously created Adam's fleshly body without normal reproductive

do not realize it. Jesus used *commands* when he taught the ruler not to commit adultery, kill, etc. (Luke 18:18ff). He cited the *examples* of David and the priests when teaching about the Sabbath (Matt. 12:3, 5). He expected a *necessary inference* to be drawn when he spoke of life after death (Matt. 22:32). Also, the Apostles used the same hermeneutic when they settled the question about Gentiles being circumcised in keeping the Law. James cited the *command* from the words of the prophets (Acts 15:15). The work of Paul and Barnabas constituted the *example* (Acts 15:12). Peter drew the *necessary inference* that the Gentiles were saved, just as were the Jews (Acts 15:11). F. LaGard Smith recently wrote that any hermeneutic is human in origin and doomed to inadequacy (*The Cultural Church* 149-150). If Jesus and the Apostles do not make *command*, *example*, and *inference* the divine hermeneutic, what would be required to make it divine?

Some are suggesting a "new hermeneutic," which is nothing more than a subtle way of saying we cannot understand the Bible alike while using the methods we have used in the past. Smith urges "extreme caution" with that approach, while proposing that we use a new formulation or modification of the divine hermeneutic. He wants us to use *purpose*, *principle* and *precedent* as a guide for understanding the Bible (149). However, if I cannot understand

the *command*, how does it help to try to understand the *purpose* of the command?

Using the proposed modification of the divine hermeneutic, our original discussion would go like this:

- PARENT: "I want you to go clean up your room." (COMMAND)
CHILD: "You'll have to wait until I figure out the PURPOSE of your command."
PARENT: "Clean your room just like I cleaned up mine." (EXAMPLE)
CHILD: "Don't get excited. I'm trying to understand the PRINCIPLE involved here."
PARENT: "Why haven't you cleaned up your room?"
CHILD: "I have to figure out the PRECEDENT followed in this house."

I don't how far your child would get with this; he wouldn't get far in my house. Can we not see the wisdom and workability of God's way?

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processes and yet Adam was fully human. Likewise, God created Jesus' fleshly body without normal reproductive processes and he was fully human.

These genealogies show that Jesus was heir to the throne of Israel.

Many people are troubled by the fact that while Jesus had no earthly father (Mary was a virgin), both genealogies list Joseph, Mary's husband (Matt. 1:16; Luke 3:23).

Joseph was Jesus' *legal* father, though certainly not his biological one. This is not as unusual under Jewish custom and law as some might think. If a man died under the old law without having a son, his brother could take his wife, impregnate her, and raise children to receive the dead brother's inheritance. The living brother would be the biological father, but the dead brother would be the *legal* father and the children would inherit the dead man's land and possessions in Israel (Gen. 25:5-10). So, a man didn't have to be a child's biological father to be his legal parent.

Because Romans 1:3 says Jesus came of the seed of David, many have seen this as a dilemma and sought answers, however. Some have theorized that Mary was of the same family lineage and that Jesus is genetically connected to David through his mother. This is an interesting theory but short on biblical evidence. And, it would run counter to the Jewish custom of basing a genealogy on paternity.

Interestingly, there are no recorded challenges to Jesus' royal bloodline by the Jews or other enemies during the first century.

Also interesting are the four women mentioned in the genealogies, in spite of the paternal nature of these lists. Each of these women is unusual.

Tamar, the daughter-in-law of Judah, is the young woman who presented herself to her father-in-law disguised as a prostitute after her husband died without giving her a child and her brother-in-law refused to produce a child for her under the law cited earlier. *Rahab* was the Canaanite harlot of Jericho who saved the spies, showed faith in God, was proselytized as a Gentile into Israel and was the mother of Boaz, the husband of Ruth. *Ruth* was a Moabitess but great-grandmother of King David. And *Bathsheba* was the adulterous wife of Uriah the Hittite, but also mother of King Solomon. Each is a part of Jesus' family tree. People tend to hide the "black sheep" in their families, but Scripture goes out of the way to declare their place. Have you ever wondered why?

Perhaps to prove that Jesus is not who he is because of "bloodline." He didn't inherit sin-free genes or a "pure" bloodline. It may foreshadow Jesus' role as a "friend of sinners" or even as "kinsman" to sinners (Rom. 8:3). Each of these women became mothers in the lineage of Jesus by special providence. Jesus' lineage, like ours, is composed of good and bad people, sinful and repentant ones.

Finally, let's notice that the genealogy of Jesus shows him precluded from ever being a king *in Judah*. Jesus' kingship, like his priesthood, is different. In Luke 3:27 one of his ancestors named is Shealtiel. Now, notice in Jeremiah 22:28-30 that no descendant of Coniah would rule in Judah again. Coniah also is called Jeconiah or Jehoiachin. And, who was he? We learn in 1 Chronicles 3:17-18 that he was the father of Shealtiel. Thus, if the descendants of Coniah would never occupy the throne of Judah and Shealtiel was a descendant of Coniah and an ancestor of Jesus, then Jesus could never reign in Jerusalem (Judah). And that destroys all the premillennial speculation of an *earthly* reign of Christ. He presently reigns in heaven.

We see that Jesus was the fruit or fulfillment of all God had promised:

- He was the Son of David — the true king
- He was the Son of Abraham — the true Jew
- He was the Son of Adam — the true man
- He was the Son of God — the divine man, the beginning of a new spiritual race. "In him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4).

As repentant harlots and heathens like the four women in his lineage were allowed into his family physically, today the same is true spiritually. When sinful men and women show repentance and obedient faith, they become Jesus' brethren, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

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Principles That Pertain to Social Drinking

Ray Warfel, Jr.

The Bible says after the worldwide flood, “Noah began farming and planted a vineyard And he drank of the wine and

became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent” (Gen. 9:20, 21). The making and consuming of alcohol is not new, nor are questions of whether it is permitted by God. In this article some biblical principles that pertain to social drinking, or drinking with moderation, will be presented.

DRUNKENNESS IS NOT ALL THAT IS CONDEMNED

God states in very clear terms that drunkenness is sin. Consider four passages from the hand of the apostle Paul. In writing to the Romans, he commanded them to “behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness . . . But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts” (Rom. 13:13-14). Some desire to get drunk, but this is a lust that must be abstained from. Further, Paul warns the Corinthians not to be fooled by the countless excuses crafted to justify sin. He said, “Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived . . . drunkards . . . shall (not) inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 6:9-10). In a similar way he wrote to the churches of Galatia saying, “Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are . . . drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:19-21). Some are waiting for the verse stating “Thou shall not drink alcohol” to be found. This phrase never will be found because such does not exist in Scripture, however, hear one that does, “And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph. 5:18).

The point is to be drunk is to sin. When reading this passage one would do well to keep in mind two others: first,

a statement to the prophet Isaiah, and second, the fig leaf fashion show in the garden of Eden. God told his prophet, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways declares 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” (Isa. 55:8-9). What man deems to be right and wrong is not eternally and entirely consistent with what God does. This point is brilliantly illustrated by Adam and Eve when “the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked” (Gen. 3:7a). To cover their nakedness “they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings” (Gen. 3:7b). Their thoughts and ways however did not measure up to God’s standard of modesty for “the Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them (Gen. 3:21). When God says “do not get drunk with wine,” the state’s legal limit is not his standard.

Building on Paul’s position, Peter condemns three activities related to drinking. He says, “For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of . . . drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties” (1 Pet. 4:3). The gutter wino, the frat party, and the beer at a fourth of July barbecue illustrate these behaviors well. Social drinking is sinful even though one remains sober enough to drive home.

SOBERNESS IS EXPECTED

In contrast to drunkenness, soberness is expected. The Bible teaches this in the Thessalonian letter where it is written, “so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert

and sober. For those who sleep do their sleeping at night, and those who get drunk get drunk at night. But since we are of the day, let us be sober” (1 Thess. 5:6-8). Two verses in 1 Peter also mention this principle. “The end of all things is at hand; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober spirit for the purpose of prayer” (1 Pet. 4:7). “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). When one compromises his soberness with alcohol, he opens a door of opportunity to Satan. He may not be thoroughly intoxicated, but in a fight with a foe as cunning and opportunistic as Satan, when is haphazard vigilance wise or even acceptable? Do not be deceived the question over social drinking has never been “how much can one drink?” It has always been whose standard will be heard: God’s call for soberness and vigilance, or Satan’s lies that a little won’t hurt and it doesn’t really matter anyway?

SOCIAL DRINKING IS NOT AUTHORIZED

Christians must remember they are no longer their own, and on that basis they must have their master’s permission for all they would do. Paul said, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me” (Gal. 2:20), and “for you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body” (1 Cor. 6:20). He also said, “Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Col. 3:17).

The answer to social drinking is the same for numerous other queries: Where does the Bible say I can? Where has the Lord given his OK to social drinking? Where is the authority? Men are looking for a “thou shall not” when they ought to be searching for a “thou shall.” Permission to drink socially, moderately, or otherwise is not found in the Book. Some passages are presented as this authority but a study of these will prove otherwise. Three of the most prominent are noted here.

JOHN 2:1-11

It has been suggested that Jesus made water into wine therefore social drinking is permitted. If this were true, it would not only prove that drinking in moderation is acceptable but the making of alcohol in abundance is also. Jesus converted one hundred thirty gallons of water into wine as the Bible says but not alcohol. One must understand that in the Bible the word “wine” does not always mean alcohol as it does today. In the Bible, wine can mean either fresh or fermented juice and therefore, the context must determine which. Is it not quite a stretch to place the sinless Savior himself in the position of providing the very means for drunkenness and sin to those he came to save?

1 TIMOTHY 5:23

The Scriptures read, “no longer drink water exclusively, but use a little wine, for the sake of your stomach and your

frequent ailments” (1 Tim 5:23). This verse is sometimes presented as authority for social or moderate drinking because the apostle Paul commanded Timothy to drink a little wine. This verse gives no such authority. First of all, how does one know the apostle meant fermented wine? The word “wine” does not always imply that. Second, Timothy was drinking nothing but water. He drank neither fresh or fermented juice. If it were right to drink alcohol why did Timothy abstain from all with such strictness? One needs also to keep in mind that even if fermented wine was meant it still only authorizes drinking for medicinal reasons not social occasions.

1 TIMOTHY 3:8

A third verse found among the qualifications for deacons is used to defend drinking in moderation. Paul wrote, “deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain” (1 Tim 3:8). Again with this verse, as with the others already noted, the use of the word “wine” does not absolutely and immediately imply alcohol. The people of that land and culture had a custom of holding great drinking parties in which the wine was watered down so much that, even if fermented, one could drink a great quantity and not become intoxicated. Paul quite possibly was instructing these Christians to have no part in this sober binge drinking. On the other hand, if Paul is speaking of alcohol, his condemnation of excess does not authorize moderation. As an example, consider the parent who tell his child to “stop this constant lying.” By condemning the excess, the parent is not authorizing the child to lie occasionally. The same is true of Paul’s statement.

CONCLUSION

Social drinking is sinful whether in excess or moderation, in a bar or with just a few friends, to drown one’s problems or just to calm the nerves.

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“Passages Revisited” continued from front page

God” (Acts 20:27). Will we follow the example of modern preachers today and stay away from certain subjects, or will we follow the example of the Apostle Paul and preach all of God’s word? Like Jeremiah, we must use all of God’s word to “break down” and to “build” (Jer. 1:10). Like Jonah, we must preach what God wants preached, “the preaching that I bid thee” (Jonah 3:2). We must preach God’s word so that we can build true faith in those who hear. Faith does not come by hearing numerous quotes from contemporary authors, pop-psychology, cute story-telling, entertainment, or stand-up comedy. Faith comes by hearing God’s word (Rom. 10:17). We must “preach the word” (2 Tim. 4:2-4). It is time to revisit Acts 20:27.

WE MUST CONTEND EARNESTLY FOR THE FAITH (JUDE 3)

Some say there is too much controversy going on today; too much fussing and fighting; too much debating; too much name-calling; too much strife; too much biting and devouring. They say that we should just all get along. On the other hand, the Bible teaches that we should confront error with the truth, even when that error is propagated by our fellow-brethren. Jude writes, “Beloved, while I was giving all diligence to write unto you of our common salvation, I was constrained to write unto you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3). Will we just go along and get along as some suggest, or will we do as Jude says and contend for the faith? Like Paul, we must be “set for the defense of the gospel” (Phil. 1:16), and we must be “striving for the faith of the gospel” (Phil. 1:27). We must “fight the good fight of the faith” (1 Tim. 6:12). It is time to revisit Jude 3.

WE MUST NOT FELLOWSHIP ERROR (2 JOHN 9-11)

Some say we can fellowship a person who teaches error as long as we don’t fellowship what he teaches, or fellowship those affected by his teaching. They say we can fellowship someone who teaches error as long as the teacher is honest and has a good attitude about what he teaches. The Bible says differently. The Apostle John gives us the proper criteria for fellowship. He says, “Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the teaching, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house, and give him no greeting: for he that giveth him greeting partaketh in his evil works” (2 John 9-11). Is the criteria for fellowship a person’s honesty and attitude as some today suggest, or is it a person’s teaching? John says “teaching” three times! Who will you believe? We must not fellowship the teacher of error, period (Eph. 5:11). Note the three groups of people who were rebuked by Jesus in the churches at Pergamum and Thyatira: (1) the false teachers, (2) the ones affected

by the false teaching, and (3) the local church who did not follow the false teaching, but who fellowshipped the false teachers (Rev. 2:12-24). It is time to revisit 2 John 9-11.

WE MUST NOT BE LIKE THE WORLD (ROM. 12:1-2)

Problems over doctrine in the church today often come from church members being affected by the world. In many cases, some Christians just want to be like the world, and so, local churches soon fill up with worldliness. For example, some Christians today engage in drinking alcohol, lewd and lustful dancing, gambling, immodest apparel, unlawful divorce and remarriage, etc. Rather than confront this worldliness, some Christians choose to ignore it. Either brethren stop preaching against such things, they reinterpret Bible verses to accommodate the worldly lifestyles, or they criticize the godly brethren who speak out against such worldliness. The result is that God’s word is changed to fit a worldly lifestyle in the church. But, the Bible teaches that we must not be like the world around us. The Apostle Paul wrote, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service. And be not fashioned according to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, and ye may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:1-2). Will we overlook worldliness among us as some are doing, or will we follow Paul’s words and not be like the world? Jesus warned against the consequences of worldliness (Matt. 13:22; John 15:19; 17:14-19), Paul gave examples of worldliness (2 Tim. 4:10), Peter encouraged abstaining from worldliness (1 Pet. 1:14; 2:11), and John warned against loving worldliness (1 John 2:15-17). It is time to revisit Romans 12:1-2.

Brethren, it is time to go back and revisit these timeless truths. If we do not remind ourselves of these Bible basics and practice them they will soon go by the wayside.

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“Hell (3)” continued from page 2

A similar comparison is involved in the “unquenchable fire.” When something is burned, the burning consumes what it burns. Eventually the fuel is exhausted and the fire dies out. Both figures are drawn from what occurs in the city dump. Dead bodies are thrown there for worms to consume and there trash is burned. But this fire is unique in that the burning never ceases. It is unquenchable fire (see Matt. 3:12; Luke 3:17). “Unquenchable” does not mean that it cannot be withstood (which is also true of God’s judgment), but that it cannot be extinguished.

• *Eternal or everlasting fire.* Though not tied to the figure of the dump, the phrase “eternal fire” or “everlasting fire” is used to describe the punishment of the wicked. In Jude 7, the text says, “Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, 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.” The punishment of the cities of the plain by fire is used as an example to show that God will punish the wicked. However, the punishment of Sodom and Gomorrah did not end when the smoke of their temporal destruction ceased. They also will suffer the “vengeance of eternal fire” as Jude states. The lessons drawn from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah are that it was overthrown in a moment (Lam. 4:6) and that it was complete (in contrast to cities that were overthrown and later rebuilt, Jer. 50:40; Zeph. 2:9). Undoubtedly that their destruction came by fire typifies the future eternal destruction in hell fire. However, the citizens of Sodom and Gomorrah still must face the punishment that results from the final judgment. Jesus said, “Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city” (Matt. 10:15; 11:23, 24; Mark 6:11; Luke 10:12). This is the “eternal fire” of Sodom’s punishment mentioned in Jude 7 that awaits all of the wicked. To argue that eternal fire is a limited punishment because the temporal fire that destroyed the cities did not burn forever misses Jude’s point, for verse 7 does not state that the “eternal fire” struck Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19 but that the inhabitants of that city who were destroyed by temporal fire still must face the eternal fire of God’s judgment.

Elsewhere Jesus speaks of “everlasting fire.” “Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire” (Matt. 18:8). “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41). The pain and agony that results from burning is easily understood, for most of us have been burned to some degree at one time or another. The significance of this burning is that it is “everlasting,” that

is never-ending, ceaseless.

It is also called the fire that is not quenched. Jesus said,

And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea. And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into *the fire that never shall be quenched*: Where their worm dieth not, and *the fire is not quenched*. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into *the fire that never shall be quenched*: Where their worm dieth not, and *the fire is not quenched*. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: Where their worm dieth not, and *the fire is not quenched* (Mark 9:42-48).

The context of this passage is eternal life and judgment. The point is not to teach self-mutilation but to emphasize that eternal life is worth whatever sacrifices one must make to obtain it and eternal damnation is so horrible that avoiding it is worth whatever sacrifices one must make. The punishment of hell is so bad Jesus said it is better to enter life maimed than to pass into hell with all of one’s bodily parts intact (note the implications for the resurrected body of the wicked). This is true because the fire “never shall be quenched.” This is but another way of saying it lasts forever. “Unquenchable fire” does not mean a fire which no one can withstand (which is also a true statement, for no one can prevent God’s judgment). Rather, the word *asbestos* means “unquenched (Ovid, *inextinctus*), unquenchable” (Thayer 79), “inextinguishable” (Arndt and Gingrich 114). If annihilation is true, then the fires of hell eventually will be quenched, when the last wicked person shall have suffered the full extent of his torment. However, Jesus said this fire is “never quenched,” never extinguished. Therefore, the torment is endless.

• *The smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever.* John wrote, “The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And *the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever*: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name” (Rev. 14:10-11). The figure is tied to that burning of unquenchable (inextinguishable) fire. The smoke of the torment goes up “for ever and ever” because the burning never ends. In all earthly fires, the smoke ascends so long as the burning continues. In earthly burnings, what is burning is consumed and the last embers are extinguished, at which time the

smoke ceases to rise. However, for the wicked, the smoke never ceases; the smoke of their torment “ascendeth up for ever and ever.” “For ever and ever” (αἰῶνας αἰῶν) also appears in Revelation 4:9 — “And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever (eis tous αἰῶνας τῆν αἰῶν)” (Rev. 4:9). If “forever and ever” does not describe an endless future, what does it mean when it is used to describe God’s eternal nature? One also should notice that what goes up forever and ever is the smoke of their “torment.” The word *basanismos* means “torment, torture” and the phrase “smoke of their torment” means “the smoke of the fire by which they are tormented” (Thayer 96).

• **Until the last penny is paid.** Jesus said, “That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of *hell fire*. Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast *into prison*. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, *till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing*” (Matt. 5:22-26; cf. Luke 12:58-59). Note that “hell fire” is the prison into which one is cast until the last penny is paid. How is the last penny to be paid? John H. Gerstner correctly explained Jesus’ words, “That judge was God; that prison was hell; and until you have paid the ‘very last cent’ meant ‘never’” (*Repent or Perish 2*).

• **Punished with everlasting destruction.** Paul wrote, “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with *everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord*, and from the glory of his power” (2 Thess. 1:6-9). Paul’s comments are in the context of the final judgment when the righteous receive rest and the wicked are destroyed. The wicked will face the vengeance of the Lord when they “shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord.”

The punishment is “destruction.” The word *olethros* means “ruin, destruction, death.” That it does not mean annihilation is evident from its use in 1 Corinthians 5:5 where Paul describes the punishment of withdrawal of fellowship from the Corinthian fornicator; he said, “To deliver such an one unto Satan for the *destruction* of the flesh, that the spirit

may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” The flesh is not annihilated. Thayer defines the word in 2 Thessalonians 1:9 to mean “the loss of a life of blessedness after death, future misery” (443). The destruction is further defined as “from the presence of the Lord.” The sense of this is correctly interpreted by Scot McKnight who wrote,

Eternal separation from God is the essence of God’s punishment on the wicked, as eternal fellowship with God is the essence of God’s final deliverance of the faithful. But separation from God’s presence must be defined as nonfellowship, not annihilation. In other words, it could be argued that since God is omnipresent, then banishment from his presence means extinction. It is more likely, however, that Paul has in mind an irreversible verdict of eternal nonfellowship with God. A person exists but remains excluded from God’s good presence (quoted in *Two Views of Hell 152*).

Heaven is described as participating in God’s fellowship. Those who enjoy heaven enter the marriage supper of the Lamb, but those who are unprepared are excluded (Matt. 25:1-13). In Jesus’ parable, those who do not participate are not annihilated but excluded from participation.

And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh. (Matt. 25:10-13).

The same figure is used when heaven is compared to eating with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but the wicked are excluded from the banquet and suffering torment; they are not annihilated. Jesus said, “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 out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matt. 8:11-12). Note that those separated from God are gnashing their teeth. The final separation from God is endless. The sense is not that the wicked are annihilated, but that they continue to exist but are forever separated from the beneficence of God, resulting in so much pain that they are gnashing their teeth.

• **The blackness of darkness forever.** In describing the punishment of the false teachers who were wreaking havoc of charity when they feasted with you, feeding themselves on the church, Jude writes, “These are spots in your feasts without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, *to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever*” (Jude 12-13). Peter’s statement is very similar, “These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; *to whom the*

mist of darkness is reserved for ever” (2 Pet. 2:17). The blackness of darkness reminds one of Jesus’ words “outer darkness.”

But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 8:12).

Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 22:13).

And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 25:30).

The significant statement is that this darkness (this separation from God, who is the source of the light which illumines heaven, Rev. 21:23) lasts “for ever” (aiḗna). The blackness of darkness is not a place of unconscious existence or annihilation but a place where “weeping and gnashing of teeth” occurs.

• **Destruction and perdition.** Paul wrote, “But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men *in destruction and perdition*” (1 Tim. 6:9). The interesting note about this verse is that perdition follows destruction. Thayer says that perdition means “with the included idea of misery” (70-1). Those who argue that the punishment of hell is destruction define destruction as annihilation, cessation of existence. In what sense can perdition follow destruction? If perdition follows destruction then destruction cannot mean “annihilation.” To fit brother Fudge’s model, this passage should say perdition (first) and then destruction.

• **Matthew 26:24.** Jesus said about Judas, “The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born” (Matt. 26:24). This passage is devastating for those who hold the position that annihilation is the end of man’s existence. I.M. Haldeman replied to Charles Taze Russell as follows:

If death means the extinction of being, why should life be worse for him [Judas] than any other wicked traitor? No matter how great his guilt, death would end it all. . . .

Never to have been born means never to have come into existence.

If death means going out of existence, then never to have been born and to die are equivalent conditions; they mean the same thing — non-existence.

Why, then, did the Lord say it would have been good not to come into existence? Why did he not say (seeing the man was born and there was no use in wasting regrets over his birth) — why did he not say, “It will be good for that man

when he dies, for when he dies he will then be just as if he had never been born — non-existent?”

If death means non-existence, this is what he *ought* to have said.

To say anything else — if death means non-existence — was utterly meaningless.

But if death does not mean the end of existence; if death means an eternity of condition; if in this conditioned eternity of being Judas is to suffer for his deed of betrayal, then it is comprehensible why the Son of God should say it would have been good for that man if he had never been born — if he had never come into existence.

On no other basis is the “Woe to that man” of any intelligent force (quoted in *The Four Major Cults* 371).

Additional evidence is available to show that the Bible describes hell in terms of eternal punishment, not annihilation. However, this evidence is conclusive. The doctrine that man is annihilated, whether taught by the Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Seventh Day Adventists, Edward Fudge, or Homer Hailey, is contrary to God’s revelation that everlasting torment awaits the wicked.

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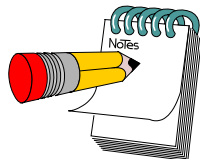
Preachers Needed

Rosenberg, Texas: The new work that began in Rosenberg, Texas in February 2001 (see Truth Magazine dated February 21, 2002) is in need of a full-time preacher who is interested in doing personal work. They are a small congregation of fourteen members who are standing where the Lord stands in all aspects of his word. They can support at this time \$1,000.00 per month. If you are interested, please contact Kenneth Martin, 3620 Ave. R, Rosenberg, Texas 77471 or call 281-232-2974 or e-mail kdbfmartin@nstci.com or Kvaughn@lcisd.org.

Paris, Tennessee: The Kentucky Lake Road Church of Christ is looking for a full-time preacher. They are located ten miles from Paris, Tennessee, 42 miles from Kentucky Lake in the Paris Landing community. Attendance is in the 25-35 range. During summer months, Lake Area visitors swell their Sunday attendance to 50 to 70. Some additional support would be required. For details call 731-642-7450 evenings and 800-748-8816 day, ask for Noel. Noel Hatman, 1408 Clifty St., Paris, TN 38242.

McMinnville, Tennessee: The West End church in McMinnville is seeking a full-time evangelist. They can provide limited financial support. They are a congregation of 25 members. They are located about 70 miles southeast of Nashville, Tennessee. If interested, please contact Don Henry at 931-668-5012 or Paul Fredericks at 931-686-3222.

Quips & Quotes



New Churches Established

Orangeburg, South Carolina: A new church has begun meeting in Orangeburg, South Carolina. They are small in number being four Christians and seven total. Currently, they are meeting in a home at 54 Padgett Court off US 301 south of Orangeburg. They meet at 10 AM for Bible Study and 11 AM for worship. Their mailing address is: Church of Christ, 54 Padgett Rd., Orangeburg, SC 29115. For directions call either (803) 539-9785 or (803) 939-0672. If you live in the area or have relatives in the area, call or e-mail Fred E. England at englandf@juno.com.

Berea, Kentucky: A group of Christians known as the West Side Church of Christ has begun meeting in the conference room located in The Holiday Inn Express on I-75 and 595 in Berea, Kentucky (exit #77). Due to the fast growth in the area, many people are moving to Berea to work at the new factories that have located here. We are offering them a place to attend and a place to belong where the simple gospel will be proclaimed and obeyed. If any are traveling in this area during the Lord's day, we have Bible Study at 10:00 a.m., worship at 11:00, evening worship at 6:00. Also Wednesday evening at 7:00. If you wish more information, call Bob Casey at 859-369-4165.

E-Mail Magazine

Eric B. Swisher and Brian Mason are writing a monthly "e-mail magazine" dedicated to Bible subjects. The name of this magazine is "Walking in the Light." Their web site is www.walkinginthelight.us. They ask us to mention this to our readers who might be interested in reading it.

Catholic Group Seeks Lay Role in Clergy Review

"As U.S. Catholic bishops prepare to take back some of the authority lost since the clergy sexual abuse scandal erupted this year, members of a fledgling organization of Indiana Catholics

say they remain committed to seeking shared leadership with church officials.

"Representatives of Voice of the Faithful in Indiana are continuing to audit five Catholic dioceses in the state. The group has about 150 members statewide and is affiliated with the national organization of the same name, based in Boston.

"They're checking out church Web sites, gathering written diocesan policies on abuse and looking for evidence that bishops are listening to the concerns of lay people.

"Nearly 200 bishops are to vote today in Washington on revised policies that some say are a step back for victims of abuse and others wanting to end secrecy surrounding abuse cases" (The Indianapolis Star [November 13, 2002], A9).

Clergy Ratings at Lowest Point Ever

"The Roman Catholic sex abuse scandal has sent the public's view of clergy to its lowest point ever, 12 points below last year's rating, according to a new Gallup poll.

"Asked to rate the honesty and ethics of 21 professions, just 52 percent of Americans gave high marks to clergy, down from 64 percent last year. Confidence in clergy reached its peak, at 67 percent, in 1985. Catholics gave lower honesty ratings to their clergy than did Protestants. Just 50 percent of Catholics gave high ratings to their clergy, compared to 57 percent of Protestants. Both ratings are down from five years ago" (Christianity Today [February 2003], 21).

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