

# Magazine

## “The Catholic Church’s Head Is Dead”

Jarrold Jacobs

No doubt, people in every country in this world are aware of the fact that Karol Wojtyla died on Saturday, April 2. (Karol Wojtyla became known as John Paul II in 1978.) He was the 264th Pope of the Roman Catholic Church. The Vatican City was filled with literally millions of people who filed past Karol’s dead body to get one last glimpse before the body was buried. On April 18, a “conclave” (secret meeting) took place in which 115 Roman cardinals voted on who would become the new Pope of the Roman Catholic Church, and new head of the Vatican City (the world’s smallest city-state, a nation completely surrounded by Rome.)

### The Pope

Catholics once considered the Pope a “vicar (representative) of Peter.” Now, he is called the “Vicar of Christ.” Imagine, a mere man being selected by mere men (117 to be exact) to be Christ’s representative!

Yet, this is the practice of the Catholic Church. When folks speak about the Pope of Rome, often he is simply referred to as “Pope.” What I find interesting is that his official title among the Catholics is: “Bishop of Rome, Vicar of Jesus Christ, Successor of the Prince of the Apostles, Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, Patriarch of the West, Primate of Italy, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Roman Province, Sovereign of the State of the Vatican City, Servant of the Servants of God”. What a mouthful! In addition to this title, the Pope goes by such descriptions as “the Holy Father,” “Highest Pontiff,” “Most

Blessed Father,” or “Our Most Holy Lord.” In reading such titles, I am reminded of Matthew 23:9; Job 32:21-22; and Romans 12:3, which tell us to be humble and not to give men flattering titles.

For a short time, the office of Pope was vacant, a condition known as *sede vacante*, or the vacant seat. Therefore, there is no “bishop,” no “vicar,” no “pontiff” over the Catholics; nor is there a “sovereign” over Vatican City at this time. Yet, the Catholic Church and Vatican City are still functioning. They are carrying on the duties they have set forth for themselves even in the absence of their “vicar,” their “pope.” This fact in itself is quite interesting, for if a church can function without its “head,” it tells us that the “head” is actually unnecessary! In addition to this, the fact that the Catholic Church can function without its head, and yet soon “vote” to get a new “head” teaches us ....

**Catholics once considered the Pope a “vicar (representative) of Peter.” Now, he is called the “Vicar of Christ.”**

### The Catholic Church Is Not the Church Found in the Bible!

How can I make such a statement? It is because when we compare the Catholic Church to the church found in the Bible, we see a marked difference, beginning with the description of the head of the New Testament church.

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## Randy Blackaby Added To Staff

Mike Willis

I am happy to announce the addition of Randy Blackaby to the staff of *Truth Magazine*. I first became acquainted with Randy while I was preaching at the Knollwood church in Xenia, Ohio (1976-1984). During that time, Randy served as a deacon for the Knollwood church and our families grew up together.



Randy currently preaches for the New Carlisle Church of Christ, northeast of Dayton, Ohio. He has worked there since July 2002. He spent the previous fourteen years working with the Courtland Ave. Church of Christ in Kokomo, Indiana.

Prior to his work in Kokomo he preached on an appointment basis for numerous congregations in Ohio, Indiana, and Kentucky while working as a newspaper reporter and later as managing editor of the *Xenia Daily Gazette* in his hometown of Xenia, Ohio. He was a member of the news team there that won the Pulitzer Prize in Journalism in 1975 for coverage of the tornado that destroyed about half of Xenia in 1974. His regular column was favorite reading among many subscribers to the *Gazette*, especially among us Christians.

Randy majored in English education at Wright State University. He was offered a job in journalism in 1971. During this period he was a member of the Knollwood Church of Christ in Beavercreek, Ohio. Influenced by a number of notable preachers at Knollwood during the heated controversy over institutionalism, he had his first opportunities to preach there. Encouraged to that end by the eldership, including his father, James R. Blackaby, and Harold G. Smith, he entered a training program specifically designed for him by the church there. Before leaving to preach full-time, he served as a deacon in that congregation.

The preachers who encouraged and helped train him there included Earl E. Robertson, Austin Mobley, Weldon Warnock, Ron Halbrook, and me. As I look back on my years at Knollwood, working with Randy and others, I appreciate his willingness to teach any class the elders assigned him to teach, to fill-in preach any opportunity he was given, and to do whatever else he was given opportunity to do. When Randy decided to give up his newspaper job to work full-time in preaching, I knew he was well prepared to do what he wanted to do.

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# Troubled Over Many Things

Connie W. Adams

Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered with much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, doest thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her (Luke 10:38-42).

Like Martha of Bethany, we are often worried and upset about many things which cause us to miss the big picture. Showing hospitality to guests is an important service, but the opportunity to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to his words rises above all such mundane concerns. Some of the “things” which trouble us are small in the balance of things. Some are serious. What do you do when the very foundations of your life seem to be crumbling, the walls are falling around you, and you see no immediate solution? We don’t all have the same troubles, but it is certain that we all have troubles. How we handle them can either make us stronger or break our spirits and destroy our resolve.

There are family troubles: adultery of a spouse, promiscuity with teenagers, discord in the family circle, divorce, addiction, sickness, death of a loved one. There are troubles in the work place: corporate takeovers or buyouts, labor cutbacks, unreasonable management, excessive demands on time, the fear that family is being neglected and you have to choose between your job and your wife and children. In the midst of these swirling worries it is all too easy for them to choke out the word of God and its influence in life so that we become “unfruitful” (Matt. 13:22). The purpose of this material (a series dealing with troubles) is to offer “help in time of trouble.” There are many self-help books available. Some of these may be useful, but the wisdom of men is often shortsighted. “It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps” (Jer. 10:23). The real help comes from the wisdom of God found in his word, the Bible. It is all-sufficient. “All things that pertain unto life and godliness” are found there (2 Pet. 1:3). Paul said of Christ “ye are complete in him” (Col. 2:10). So, let’s get started.

### It Helps To Know We Are Not Unique

When we have troubles, we have not been singled out from all the people  
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in the history of the world to have misery dumped on us. This is the underlying assumption when we ask, "Why me, Lord?" Long ago Job said, "Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble" (Job. 14:1). Hebrews 11 reports the transcending faith of worthies through the ages "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect" (Heb. 11:33-40). Think you have troubles? You have not been singled out. You are not being punished just because life hurts sometimes.

### **When You *Don't* Know Why, Remember What You *Do* Know**

Let's face it. We don't always know why. Just admit it and move on. But there are some things we *do* know.

**1. We are made in the image of God and have great worth (Gen. 1:27).** That fact should lift us from the mire of self-pity and the feeling that "I'm just no good anyhow."

**2. Learn from the prophet Habakkuk.** He looked around and saw violence and injustice and wondered why God allowed it. But while he saw no clear answer to this problem, there were certain foundation truths upon which he depended. In Habakkuk 2:4 he said, "The just shall live by his faith." In Habakkuk 2:20 he exclaimed, "But the Lord is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him." In 3:6 he said, "His ways are everlasting." The last verse of the book (v. 19) accepts the fact that "the Lord is my strength."

**3. Troubles endured with faith make us stronger.** "Tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience; and experience, hope" (Rom. 5: 3-4). One who has struggled up the mountain better appreciates the view from the top.

**4. Troubles provide a time to put our convictions to the test.** It was easier for Peter, when with the Lord and the other apostles, to make bold assertions about his fidelity under fire than it was around the fire in the courtyard while Jesus was on trial in the palace. It is easy for us to

feel confident (and a little smug) when we are gathered with Christians, singing and praying and studying the word, than it is at home, at work, at school, or on the ball field. Convictions are not worth much unless they can be tested in the crucible of life.

### **5. Troubles remind us that we are not self-sufficient.**

We need help! "The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13:6). "The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble" (Ps. 9:9). The Lord sees, knows, and cares. "For thou hast considered my trouble; thou hast known my soul in adversities"; "My times are in thy hand" (Ps. 31:7, 15). "He is their strength in the time of trouble" (Ps. 37:39). "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth" (Ps. 121: 1-2). "He is able to comfort them which are in any trouble" (2 Cor. 1:4). "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open to their prayers" (1 Pet. 3:12-15).

While it might be easier said than done, Job reflected supreme trust in the Lord when he said "though he slay me, yet will I trust him" (Job. 13:15).

### **6. When troubles come, we need to help ourselves, not wring our hands.**

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). Paul and Silas were in trouble in Philippi. They were in jail with their feet "fast in the stocks." They had all the ingredients for a royal pity party. But at midnight, they prayed and sang praises unto God (Acts 16:25). Their feet were fettered, but not their spirits. When the choice is to whine or sing and pray, which do you think will help the most?

No, we don't always know why. Job never did know about the issues under debate in an unseen world. Some people seem to have more troubles than others. It is easy to wonder why. Since we don't always know why, then hang on to what you do know. These truths are eternal. Keep your trust in God. He can see farther than you can. Our view is limited, finite. His is infinite. Don't lean on the finite when the infinite is available to see us through troubled times. When it comes to worrying and fretting about many things, are you more like Martha or Mary?

(Next time: The Trouble With Worry)

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# Church Ladies For Choice

Kenneth D. Sils

The season for political protest across the land has temporarily passed! During the Republican National Convention, one of the untold stories was the immensity of various protests over a wide range of issues with over 1000 of the protesters ending up in New York City jails. Although I don't know what most of the specific protests were about (although I could give a fairly accurate guess), there was one huge protest sign I saw on the Fox News which captured my attention: "Church Ladies For Choice."

What do you think about that sign? There were, it seemed, hundreds of women joyfully championing their pro-abortion slogans and montras in the name of "the church." As I sat there with my mouth wide opened, I thought I might see some lightening bolts descend from heaven or possibly the earth open up and swallow those ungodly reprobates with the full fury and wrath of our Creator as he did with Achan in Joshua chapter 7. God has spoken concerning the issue of abortion.

Paul told the Romans that God's wrath will be exacted on those who were, "being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil mindedness" (Rom. 1:29). You may be saying, "Where in that list does it say anything about abortion?" When Paul listed murder, he was also speaking of abortion because abortion is murder. Abortion is the taking of innocent, human life in which God grants that authority to no one. The proverb writer addresses seven things that God hates; one is "the shedding of innocent blood" (Prov. 6:17). How do we know that includes "fetuses" or babes in the wombs? Notice what Elizabeth said to Mary when both of them were pregnant, "For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the *babe leaped in my womb* for joy" (Luke 1:44). When women, along with their doctors, slaughter a babe in their womb, they commit murder, regardless of what any court in America decrees. What troubles me, even more than the sin of abortion, is that these ungodly women are championing it through the desecration of the church! They have no fear of defying God's rule and then, hijacking the church for their wicked schemes. Many denominational churches now openly embrace homosexuality, fornication, adultery, drunkenness,

lustful dancing and dressing with a host of other sinful lifestyles as acceptable among God's people while their preachers force their members to acquiesce with love and tolerance. This makes me wonder how many members of "Churches of Christ" have similar beliefs. How long will it be before members start challenging the congregations they are a part of to accept such wicked practices? Jesus said to the church in Thyatira, "Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce my servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts and I will give to each one of you according to your works" (Rev. 2:20-23).

As a church of Christ, we should preach and teach the gospel of Christ tactfully in love, with a patient and longsuffering attitude. However, no congregation should cater to the whims of a sinful society or any member who demands acceptance of evil. Our duty is to be a spiritual light in a dark world, even to the point where we expose the sinful works of darkness (Eph. 5:11). There is a choice for us: one for life, godliness, righteousness and obedience to the doctrine of Jesus. All church ladies (and men) should choose this choice.

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# The Larry Hafley - Thomas Ross Debate on Baptism

Ron Halbrook and David Halbrook

Mr. Ross' answer to this question included the slur that brother Hafley's position represents, "Campbellism, your denomination," rather than Scripture or the church of Christ. We were told that the Bethel Baptist Church is the church of Christ, but Larry pressed Thomas to explain why their sign says Baptist Church rather than Church of Christ. He also pressed him to name one thing we preach which originated with Alexander Campbell rather than the New Testament.

The Alameda, California Church of Christ hosted a debate on baptism March 28-29, 31-April 1, 2005 between Larry Hafley (evangelist, Pruett & Lobit St. Church of Christ, Baytown, Texas) and Thomas Ross (representing Bethel Baptist Church, El Sobrante, California). This debate was the result of the dedicated work of Guillermo Alvarez, evangelist at the Alameda church. Brother Alvarez was challenged by Mr. Ross, and offered to conduct a written discussion, but Mr. Ross insisted on an oral debate. Brother Alvarez was converted only about five years ago, and has been preaching about four years. Having no experience in public, oral debate, he contacted brother Hafley on behalf of the brethren at Alameda.

The disputants represented their positions well, with three rounds of twenty minute speeches for both men each night. The conduct and demeanor of the audience was superb, with a good mix of age groups. This was the first opportunity to attend such a Bible discussion for many who came. Not only was good done during the debate, but also blessings will flow in the future from the printed materials distributed (a wide range of tracts, Grover Steven's booklet on *Why I Left the Baptist Church*, and Larry Hafley's book on *The Christ, the Cross, and the Church*). Also, the entire debate is available free of charge in cassette, video, CD, or DVD format from the Pruett & Lobit St. Church of Christ in Baytown, Texas (order via [www.biblework.com](http://www.biblework.com) ).

## First Proposition: Baptism For the Remission of Sins

The first two nights, Larry Hafley affirmed and Thomas Ross denied the following proposition: "**The Scriptures teach that water baptism, to the penitent believer, is for (in order to) the remission of sins.**" After defining the terms, Larry clarified that baptism alone does not save and there is no power in the water. Water baptism is a condition which must be met by faith in order to receive forgiveness from alien sins, just as Naaman met the condition by faith by dipping in the Jordan River seven times.

Larry presented Thomas several questions which generated very pointed exchanges the first two nights.

**1. Is the sinner saved by a living faith or a dead faith?** Thomas correctly said a living faith. Larry pointed out that a living faith is an obedient faith. "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jas. 2:26). Faith plus works is a living faith, faith minus works is a dead faith. Baptism is a work of obedient faith.

**2. Which statement represents what you believe is the order of occurrence:** (a) He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. (b) He that believeth and is saved should be baptized later. A web site promoted by Mr. Ross indicated the believer should be baptized after being saved. Thomas confirmed that as his position,

but he also claimed the order in Mark 16:16 is true because “saved” means glorified in heaven, not forgiveness of past sins. Larry pointed out this interpretation of “saved” misses the parallel in Luke 24:47, referring to “remission of sins.” Further, he showed that Thomas’ interpretation makes baptism essential to our final salvation in heaven, which contradicts his posture of salvation “by grace only and faith only,” as his moderator put it in his opening remarks.

### **Slurs Hurlled against the Truth: Campbellism, Synagogue of Satan, Whore of Babylon**

Mr. Ross’ answer to this question included the slur that brother Hafley’s position represents, “Campbellism, your denomination,” rather than Scripture or the church of Christ. We were told that the Bethel Baptist Church is the church of Christ, but Larry pressed Thomas to explain why their sign says Baptist Church rather than Church of Christ. He also pressed him to name one thing we preach which originated with Alexander Campbell rather than the New Testament. The prejudicial slur of “Campbellism” was exposed by quoting Ferm’s *Encyclopedia of Religion*, which states that this pejorative term is used only by people who are “ignorant” or “vicious.”

Mr. Ross followed up by asserting that “Campbellism” was used out of courtesy, but that he could also call us what we really are, “the synagogue of Satan” and “the whore of Babylon,” but he insisted he would never refer to our brethren as “the church of Christ.” Larry pointed out that we call Thomas and his brethren Baptists because that is what they claim to be, but he resorts to prejudicial name calling rather than extending the same courtesy to us.

What an interesting turn of events! Some of our own soft, compromising brethren charge us with “name calling” when we identify Baptists and their doctrines correctly along with other false doctrines, just as they identify themselves, when we refute

false doctrines which destroy the souls of men. For this, we are considered “harsh” and “mean spirited.” Of course, such brethren could not openly and pointedly criticize Thomas and his Baptist brethren for their derisive, derogatory name calling lest they themselves be considered “harsh” and “mean spirited.”

**“For the Remission of Sins”:  
Matthew 26:28 and Acts 2:38**  
**3. In Matthew 26:28, did Jesus  
shed his blood in order that we  
might have the remission of our  
sins, or because of the remission of  
our sins?**

**4. In Acts 2:38, does the sinner  
repent for (because of) the remis-  
sion of sins?** Mr. Ross said as little as possible about Matthew 26:28 but finally acknowledged that Jesus shed his blood in order that we might have the remission of our sins. He labored more at length over Acts 2:38, alternating between claims that “for” is ambiguous in Greek and that it means men must repent “because of” the remission of sins.

Mr. Ross’ training in linguistics and religious studies, including a master’s degree, was puffed throughout the debate. In fact, he told Ron Halbrook in conversation that he felt well qualified to prepare his own translation of the Bible. Such a claim shows he is intoxicated by his own arrogance. Furthermore, he told Ron he was as qualified as the lexicographers to define Greek words and to make judgments about which passages should be listed under which variations in word meanings when a term had several. This is because lexicographers mix their own theologies with the definitions. Ron pointed out that generally they are quite professional and accurate in providing objective definitions in lexicons, but when they write books on theology they often contradict those definitions. While granting this, he would not yield his adamant claim that his judgment was more accurate than the lexicographers, though they

often spend their lives studying biblical languages, the same languages used in extra-biblical literature, and cognate languages.

This arrogance played a role in a number of arguments and positions he offered in the course of the debate, including the discussion of Acts 2:38. The Greek word *eis*, often translated “for,” has several definitions in the lexicons, which leads Thomas to argue it is ambiguous in Acts 2:38. He did not argue it is ambiguous in Matthew 26:28. Furthermore, he offered not one standard translation of the Bible which translates *eis* as “because of” in Acts 2:38 to counter Larry’s quotations from fifteen translations, including three by Baptist scholars, which say such things as, “for the forgiveness of your sins,” “that you may have your sins forgiven,” and, “in order to have your sins forgiven.” Thomas dismisses the work of hundreds of translators highly trained in biblical linguistics to make his own “scholarly” pronouncement that *eis* is ambiguous in Acts 2:38!

Larry quoted a number of lexicographers such as Thayer (“to obtain the forgiveness of sins”) and Baur, Arndt, and Gingrich (“for the forgiveness of sin, so that sins might be forgiven”), but Thomas dismissed all such standard works in favor of his own scholarly judgment, sticking to his story about ambiguity without citing any such standard works which translated *eis* in Acts 2:38 differently.

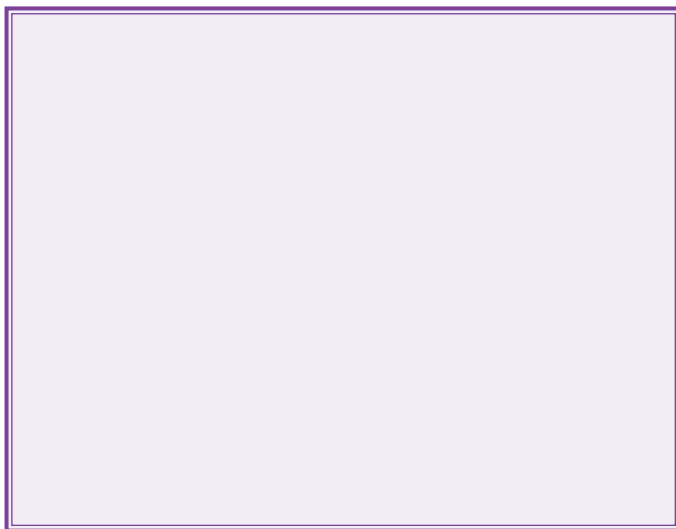
Mr. Ross’ other tactic was to confidently insist that *eis* in Matthew 3:11 and 12:41 must be translated “because of.” While agreeing that lexicons list passages where *eis* may be translated “because of,” Larry pointed out that some of Thomas’ conclusive examples are not so conclusive after all: 1. In Matthew 3:11, Mr. Ross insisted John baptized people “unto (*eis*) repentance,” meaning “because of” repentance, but Larry explained *eis* here means into a changed course of life resulting from their repentance.

2. In Matthew 12:41, the people repented *eis* (“at,” KJV) the preaching of Jonah, which Thomas insisted can mean only “because of” Jonah’s preaching, but Larry pointed to the alternative meaning “out of regard to the substance of his preaching” (Thayer), i.e., into the course of life required by his preaching.

**Other Key Passages: Mark 16:15-16;  
Acts 22:16; Galatians 3:26-27**

Larry used Mark 16:15-16 effectively. “He . . . shall be saved.” What he? “That believeth and is baptized.” “But he that believeth not shall be damned.” “He who eats and digests shall live, but he that eats not shall die.” Thomas repeated the old refrain, “Where does the Bible say, ‘He that is not baptized shall be damned?’” Such verbiage would be redundant and vain. If a man does not believe, he will not and cannot be scripturally baptized. It would be redundant and vain to say, “He who does not eat, and does not digest, shall be sick.” If he does not eat, he will not and cannot digest. Larry also pointed out that if the Bible said “he that believeth and is baptized will receive a million dollars,” Mr. Ross would be wet very quickly. Such “lighter” points were effective in communicating the simplicity of Mark 16:16 to the audience.

Thomas tried to dodge the force of Mark 16:16 by claiming that “saved” refers not to remission of past sins but to glorification in heaven. How does this help him? He says the idea is that the moment a man believes he receives remission of sins, and then he produces such good works as baptism as evidence of faith, and finally he will go to heaven as a result of his faith not baptism. Larry’s answer was that Thomas’ explanation of “saved” as referring to heaven only “helps him worse” because it has Jesus saying, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be glorified in heaven,” making entrance into heaven dependent upon both faith and baptism.



The conversion of Saul was offered by Larry to demonstrate that both faith and baptism are necessary for the remission of sins. When Christ appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus, he did not tell him his sins were forgiven but told him to “go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do” (Acts 9:6). God sent Ananias to tell him, “And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). Larry asked whether Mr. Ross had ever told anyone to do that. As to the claim that Saul was saved on the road to Damascus, the Lord did not know Saul was already saved, because he told him to wait in Damascus for someone to tell him what to do (Acts 9:6). Saul did not know he was already saved, because he spent three days in misery waiting without his sight and fasting (9:9). Ananias did not know Saul was already saved, because he told him to be baptized to wash away his sins.

To highlight Mr. Ross’ confusion and error on Acts 22:16, a chart was presented showing he reverses the order presented by the passage. The order stated by Ananias is: (1) Arise, (2) Be baptized, (3) Wash away sins, (4) Calling on the name of the Lord. The disorder given by Thomas is: (1) Call on the name of the Lord, (2) Wash away sins, (3) Be baptized, (4) Arise.

Larry’s affirmative submitted Galatians 3:26-27: “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” How or when did the Galatians become children of God by faith? “For” denotes the reason or explanation of how this occurred: They were baptized into Christ. Thomas repeatedly tried to explain away the force of such passages by the claim that baptism is merely a public testimony “before the congregation” that a man’s sins are already forgiven and to identify him with Christ. He was repeatedly asked to produce the passage which speaks of baptism as a public testimony before the congregation. This certainly could not be the meaning when the eunuch was baptized because there was no congregation present when he was baptized while traveling in a deserted place (Acts 8:26-40).

**Salvation by Grace Through Faith:  
Baptism of a Penitent Believer**

From his first affirmative speech, brother Hafley emphasized that we do not earn salvation but are saved by grace through faith when we are baptized. This was clear when Paul wrote Ephesians 2:8-9 because the Ephesians heard the gospel, believed in Christ, repented of their sins, and were “baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus” (Eph. 1:13; Rom. 10:17; Acts 19:5).

Larry then reminded Thomas that baptism in the name of Jesus Christ is “for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). Larry also pointed to Thayer’s definition of faith, which



denotes faith as being “a conviction, full of joyful trust. . . conjoined with obedience to Christ.” Thomas read and referred to Ephesians 2:8-10 several times, but he never attempted to refute this specific point which showed *how* God intended for man to be saved by grace through faith, not of works.

### Second Proposition: Salvation Through Faith Alone, Without Water Baptism

On the nights of March 31 and April 1, Mr. Thomas Ross affirmed the proposition, and Larry Hafley denied, **“The Scriptures teach that salvation is by grace through faith alone, before and without water baptism.”** Mr. Ross began by defining his proposition, stating that faith included the need to hear and was simultaneous with repentance. He stated that the Bible order for salvation is always repentance and then faith, saying that they are “two sides of the same coin.” Brother Hafley noted that if faith and repentance are simultaneous then there is no order at all, for you cannot put *one thing* in order. He went on to distinguish faith and repentance by calling Mr. Ross’ attention to Acts 2:36-38. After Mr. Ross stated that the faith present in verse 37 was not saving faith, brother Hafley asked why men without a saving faith would ask “what shall we do?” in response to Peter’s affirmation that Jesus was both Lord and Christ. Thomas’ reply was that in verse 37, they only had an intellectual faith which explains why their hearts were pricked. Larry countered by asking how a mere intellectual faith would be pricked at all. The response to Peter’s proclamation, as recorded in verse 37, indicated their faith that Jesus was both Lord and Christ. Yet according to Ross, this was not a saving faith. Further investigation into Ross’ order was called into question by the simple reading of passages such as Ezekiel 3:10; Acts 10:39; Romans 10:9; 1 Timothy 2:4.

In his first speech, Thomas also stated that salvation is deliverance from the power and penalty of past, present, and future sins, which are caused by our sinful nature. Mr. Ross affirmed that the only way to escape this sinful nature is by being born again, which occurs at the moment of “saving faith,” as he used 1 John 5:1. Brother Hafley noted that 1 John 4:7 and 2:29 include loving God and doing righteousness as equally essential to being born of God, thus it is not by faith only. Ross did little else in response to this besides repeating his belief that 1 John 5:1 teaches that we are born again when we believe.

### Saved By Faith Like Others of the Bible

While criticizing brother Hafley for his use of the Old Testament in showing what an obedient faith was, Mr. Ross himself pointed back to Abraham as a supposed example of salvation by faith alone. Mr. Ross stated that since neither Abraham, nor any others in the Old Testament, were ever commanded to be baptized, they were not examples fit for Larry to use in his arguments. Mr. Ross attempted to

separate all works from salvation by defining the point of salvation as occurring at a moment in which one accepts and trusts Jesus. He appealed to the saving faith of Abraham, as recorded in Genesis 15:6; James 2:23, and Romans 4:3, as salvation by faith without works. Brother Hafley aptly noted that before we read that *“Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness”* (Gen. 15:6), he had been obeying God’s commands for at least twenty years prior to the time when the above statement was made concerning him. Hebrews 11:8 reminds us of Abraham’s faith causing him to leave his home, at the Lord’s bidding. In Genesis 15:1, we learn that God is Abraham’s shield, and then 5 verses later we learn that *“Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.”* That this proves salvation by grace alone through faith alone is yet unsustainable. Brother Hafley often closed his replies to Thomas’ use of Romans 4:3 by showing that Abraham’s faith was imputed *eis* righteousness and then asking Mr. Ross whether it was imputed “because of” or “in order to” righteousness — going back to Thomas’ earlier declaration of the ambiguous nature of *eis* in Acts 2:38.

In several of his speeches, Mr. Ross took a significant amount of time to read cases where men and women were told that they were saved by their faith. Though none of these affirmed that any were saved by faith alone, Mr. Ross read through text after text, emphasizing such occasions as the woman who washed Jesus feet and blind Bartimaeus, both of whom were told, *“thy faith hath saved thee”* (Luke 7:50; 18:42). Brother Hafley never denied that these were saved by faith but called attention to the fact that these were saved by faith just as God delivered Jericho into the hands of the Jews. Brother Hafley pointed to Hebrews 11:30, where we read that the walls of Jericho fell by faith. Yet, they fell by faith *“after they were compassed about seven days.”* Mr. Ross’ best attempt to answer the parallel of Jericho was to state that this referred to physical deliverance and not to spiritual salvation. Larry’s reply was that Jericho exemplified salvation by faith, not salvation by faith only, as the book of Hebrews taught. Brother Hafley challenged Mr. Ross to inform the audience whether he believed that the Jews who believed and marched would receive Jericho or whether the Jews who believed would receive Jericho and should march. This again allowed bro. Hafley to affirm the simple truth of Mark 16:16. There is little doubt that Mr. Ross felt the force of this argument from Scripture.

### The New and Living Way (Heb. 10:20-22)

On a few occasions, brother Hafley referred to Hebrews 10:20-22, in reference to the “new and living way,” showing that today we are under the law of Christ. During Mr. Ross’ first speech, on the last night of the debate, he questioned the application of this passage to anything besides the sacrifice of Christ. He objected to Larry’s application based upon the definition of the word “new.” Mr. Ross read

Liddel & Scott's definition, showing that the Greek word *prospatos* meant "freshly slaughtered," and thus it only applied to Jesus' death, not to a new law. Larry pointed out that the translators of the Septuagint, used the same word found in Hebrews 10:20-22 throughout Ecclesiastes in the familiar phrase "there is nothing **new** under the sun." Thomas was challenged to consistently apply this definition ("newly slaughtered") to its repeated use in the book of Ecclesiastes. He chose not to respond to this challenge. Mr. Ross is unquestionably a well-educated man, and he was correct to define the word, at its root, as meaning "freshly slaughtered." But, contrary to Mr. Ross' application, many words have a literal meaning which over time, become a common meaning. This is true with words in every language, whether Hebrew, Greek, or English. Such is the case with the word "new" in Hebrews 10:20-22. Liddell & Scott agree with Thayer, that it apparently originated from the idea of something having been recently slaughtered but over time, it came to mean "univ., *recently or very lately made, new*" though Mr. Ross failed to publicly acknowledge such (Thayer, 550, #4372).

### **Baptism Not Included?**

On several occasions, Mr. Ross challenged the essential nature of baptism due to its absence from various passages of the New Testament. Often, he noted that baptism was absent from 1 Corinthians 15, wherein Paul reminds them of the gospel which he had preached to them. Since baptism is absent from 1 Corinthians 15, Thomas concluded that it is no part of the gospel. He repeatedly referred to Acts 26, wherein Agrippa replies "*almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.*" Thomas called attention to the fact that Agrippa had not heard about baptism, from what is recorded in this chapter, yet he still almost became a Christian. Therefore, he concluded, baptism is not necessary to

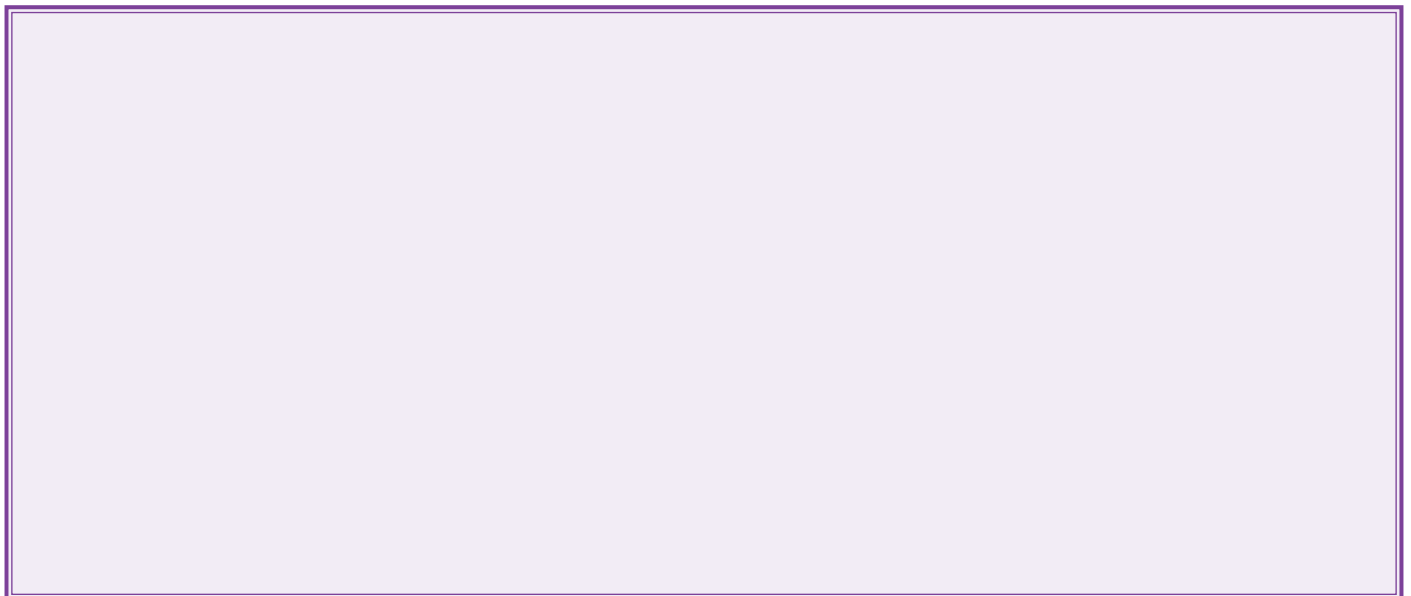
become a Christian. Mr. Ross wondered aloud, why the "gospel tract of God," the gospel of John, made no reference or inference to the necessity of baptism. This was *deja vu* for those familiar with the Hafley-Wilkin debate. Had Mr. Ross been familiar with brother Hafley's debate with Mr. Wilkin, he could have anticipated that he would be asked if the absence of a reference to God in the book of Esther, meant that God was not an essential part of the Old Testament. Mr. Ross was thus challenged, yet gave no attention to the book of Esther. Each time that Mr. Ross referred to the lack of baptism in some passage, brother Hafley reminded him that, according to Baptist theology, baptism puts one into the Baptist church thus, the Baptist church is equally absent in those passages and thus equally unessential. Mr. Ross admitted that the Baptist church is not necessary for salvation, nor a part of the gospel. From Mr. Ross' own admission, brother Hafley then concluded that the Baptist church is not the Lord's church, for we are saved by the gospel and in his one body, the church (Mark 16:15-16; 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 5:25-26).

### **Conclusion, by Ron Halbrook**

It has been a privilege to moderate for Jarrod Jacobs in a debate on baptism in February of this year, and now for Larry Hafley on the same subject a month later. Denominational preachers rarely agree to debates in our time, but brother Jacobs' opponent, Roger Holland, has agreed to a debate on security, and we are hopeful that Thomas Ross likewise will agree to a follow up discussion. There is a famine of the knowledge of God's word in our land, but debates cause the light of truth to shine brightly in exposing error and sin, and calling precious souls into the way of salvation.

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# Does Your Christianity Vacation When You Do?

Kurt Jones

The summer season is now upon us. It's time once again for backyard barbeques, going fishing, and the all important summer vacation. While these things are all fun and productive, we need to bear in mind that when we are away from work or school we are still Christians. Jesus tells us to let our light shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify the Father (Matt. 5:16). This is true, even when we are on vacation. If we wear the name of Christ, the example that we set should reflect Christ. We should conduct ourselves as Christians, in the clothes we wear, the places that we go, and our continued responsibility to assemble with the saints.

Oftentimes during the summer, the temptation to dress immodestly becomes more evident. With the heat, as well as the peer pressure that we experience due to the clothing, or lack of clothing, that our worldly friends might wear, some are tempted to dress immodestly. Paul in his first letter to Timothy instructs women to "adorn themselves modestly with shamefacedness and sobriety" (1 Tim. 2:9). We first understand that modesty is not simply just a way to dress, but it is also the attitude that one has concerning the manner in which he or she presents his or herself. It includes being bashful or shy (shamefacedness), as well as exhibiting self-control (sobriety). This principal, while addressed to women, would certainly apply to men as well. Men also should have a proper attitude concerning the way in which they present themselves to others. We, as Christians, should not dress ourselves as to provoke lustful thoughts in those who see us, but rather to bring glory to the Father.

Also, another problem arises when we consider the destination and what we will be doing when we are on vacation. Are we visiting a place where the temptation to drink, gamble, or be involved in some other form of ungodliness is especially high? Let us bear in mind that we are to abstain from every appearance of evil (1 Thess. 5:22). This would certainly include going to places like casinos and bars, as well as dance halls and nightclubs. While you may be able to handle the temptation not to drink, dance,

or gamble, what is the perception that you give to those around you? Paul instructed the church at Corinth to "Give no offense either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God" (1 Cor. 10:32). If your presence at a place such as the aforementioned were to cause someone else to be involved in sin, then you also have sinned. If we are attending such a place with friends or family members who are not members of the church what is the example that we portray to them? Jesus tells us to let our light so shine before me that they may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven (Matt. 5:16). If this is the case we should only attend places where those around us will be able to perceive that we are Christians.

We, as children of God, have a responsibility to "forsake not the assembling of yourselves together" (Heb. 10:25). We have been given the approved example to come together on the first day of the week to break bread (Acts 20:7). This is an example of the saints coming together to remember the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 11:24, 25). Christians are commanded to do this on the first day of the week. However, we have been given an example of how this should be done. We see that the disciples "came together" (Acts 7:20). At this time the disciples were assembled as a body. We also see that Paul instructs the church to "wait on one another" (1 Cor. 11:33). The partaking of the emblems is to be done in the assembly. Some, amongst our brethren, have subscribed to the idea that the partaking of the sacred emblems can be done separate and apart from the assembly of saints. Not so! Paul instructs Timothy to "hold fast the pattern of sound words" (2 Tim. 1:13). To say or do anything other than what the inspired word of God has said is to abandon the pattern of sound words!

Bear also in mind, that when we are on the roads of travel we need to insure that we do not put ourselves in fellowship with religious error. John, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, has written, "Whoever transgresses, and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ, does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ, has both the Father

# Ellettsville Church of Christ

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and the Son." (2 John 9). He later warns, "If anyone comes to you, and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house, nor greet him; For he who greets him shares in his evil deeds" (2 John 10,11). This should give us a stern warning to research the area in which we are planning to visit. Is there a sound body of Christians there? Have I looked into this congregation enough to put my self in fellowship with them? If so will I remain in fellowship with God?

While we are involved in the usual summer activities, we need to remember that we belong to God and that we have a responsibility to present our bodies as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1). We need to always remember that we are children of God and live this out in every aspect of our lives, where ever we may be.

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# Was There A Universal Flood?

John Henry Sr.

Some people believe that Noah, the Ark, and the Great Flood are nothing more than a legend, or a story handed down through generations. Yet, the biblical account of the deluge is a sane and sober narrative telling of the destruction of the whole human race because of sin and disobedience to God (Gen. 6:1-8). Therefore, we *must* believe this catastrophe really, truly did happen or we call into question the eternal existence, power and might of Jehovah (Heb. 11:6).

## Events Leading Up to the Flood

If one takes the time to read Genesis 6:1-8 he can clearly see that the cause of the Great Flood can be summed up in one word: SIN! Yet, what was the moral condition of the world prior to the Flood? There was *murder* (Gen. 4:23-24), *violation of marriage laws* (Gen. 6:1-4), *wickedness, immorality, and disobedience to God* (Gen. 6:5), and *worshipping other gods* (Josh. 24:14-16). At this point, God chose to destroy the world. God now tells Noah to build an ark of gopher wood; . . . The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits (Gen. 6:14-15). The Bible states that Noah did “according to all that God commanded him, so did he” (Gen. 6:22).

## The Ark

In Genesis 6:14-16 we find the pattern God gave Noah for the ark (300 cubits x 50 cubits x 30 cubits). The shape of the ark is obvious from the meaning of the word “ark.” Which means a box or chest. Thus, the ark was designed for stability in the waters of the Flood “rather than for movement through the waters” (*The Quest For Noah’s Ark*.42). The ark was an exceptionally stable structure, which made it almost impossible to capsize, even in the midst of the heavy rain and violent winds.

The cubit determines the size of the ark. Some say the cubit was 17.6 inches. Others contend that a cubit was from 18 inches, to a long cubit, which was said to be 20.65 inches. A cubit was from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger.

The short cubit = 437.5 Length x 72.9 Wide x 44 Feet High.

The 18 inch cubit = 450 Length x 75 Wide x 45 Feet High.

The 20.65 cubit = 516.62 Length x 86 Wide x 51.62 Feet High.

Men have calculated that the volume of the ark, using the 18 inch cubit, would be, 1,518,750 cubic ft. and that it could haul one-third more freight than ships built in the usual way. “Since the standard railroad stock car contains 2,670 cubit feet effective capacity, the Ark had a volumetric capacity equal to that of 569 standard stock cars” (*Ibid.*). The ark is said to be the largest ship ever built in any age by a man and obviously could have carried a tremendous number of animals. Yet, there are many skeptics who believe that the ark was too large of a project for early man to handle. But a survey of the ancient world tells us the very opposite is true. Look at all enormous works which man has attempted. The Great Pyramid for example, built long before Abraham, was 756 feet long at its base (one side) and contained over two million blocks of stone each weighing about two and one-half tons.

We must remember the ark was not made for sailing, but for carrying freight (animals and Noah’s family), in order to preserve two of each kind of animal, with which to repopulate the earth after the Flood. “The Scripture says the floodwaters rose at least fifteen cubits above the highest mountains (Gen. 7:20), evidently to point out that the Ark was floating freely wherever the waters might propel it. The height of the Ark was thirty cubits, so it seems probable that the fifteen cubit figure represents the draft of the Ark when loaded” (*Ibid.* 43).

Can you image the scorn, the laughing, and the unbelief of the people in Noah’s generation: “Look at that fool” or “Noah has a screw loose in his head.” Yet, in building the ark, Noah showed the world that he believed in what he preached (2 Pet. 2:5). The ark also stood as a constant reminder to the people of what Noah preached about the judgment of God to come. The sad thing is that they gave no heed to his warnings. Can you image how surprised the people must have been when the rain started? Do you think

they were laughing then? They probably realized at that point that Noah was right, that he wasn't a fool or some kind of dreamer. How quickly their scorn would have turned to horror as the heavy rains began. The people would not accept God on his terms, but they could not resist him in his wrath. Yet, there are many today, who like those of the antediluvian world, do not believe in the Flood. How sad will be their fate.

### The Chronology of the Flood

The Bible says that after Noah got everything in the ark as God instructed him, God shut the door (Gen. 7:16). Then, in seven days it began to rain upon the earth and lasted forty days and forty nights. The waters rose above the earth, and the ark was borne upon the surface of the waters. The waters continued to rise until the tops of the highest mountains were covered (Gen. 7:19-20). And continued to rise fifteen cubits above the mountains, and all life which breathes upon the earth perished, both men, and cattle, and birds—everything (7:21-23). The water is said to have stayed at this level for 150 days (Gen. 7:24). As the water rose, people along with the animals sought for higher ground—until there was none left. Noah and his family remained in the Ark a total of 371 days; from the day God shut them in, until the day they stepped out on dry land (7:1-8:19). When Noah and his family stepped out of the ark and saw the new world purified from its former sins, don't you think they realized how terrible sin is in the sight of God and how terrible it is to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb. 10:31). The waters of the flood saved Noah and at the same time destroyed the wicked (1 Pet. 3:20-21).

### A Chart Showing the Chronology of the Flood

Number of days rain fell (7:12)	40
Number of days water continued to rise (7:24 — deduct the number the days of rain)	110
Days required for the waters to abate	74
Days before Noah sent out the raven (8:6-7)	40
Days before sending out the dove the first time (8:8, 10 — note “other seven days”)	7
Days before sending out dove the second time (8:10)	7
Days before sending out the dove the third time (8:12)	7
Number of days from interval between sending out last dove and 8:13 (See 7:11 and 8:13)	29
Days from removal of covering to exit from ark (8:13-14)	56
<b>Total Number of Days</b>	<b>371</b>

Note: This chart is taken from *The Genesis Flood 3*.

### The Flood

One of the most important biblical arguments for a universal Flood is said to be the statement found in Genesis 7:19-20:

And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered (Gen. 7:19-20, KJV).

You do not need to be a scientist to see what is being implied in these passages of Scripture. If only one of the high mountains were completely submerged with water, the Flood would have had to have been universal; for water seeking its own level, would have been consistent throughout the world. Yet, the Bible declares to us “All the high mountains under ALL the heavens were covered.” Thus, these expressions convey to the mind an absolute universal Flood and disposes of the question of the universality of the Flood.

Scientists say that in order for a global flood of this size and magnitude to have happened, there would have to have been huge amounts of sediment deposits left in the earth. In India, about 60,000 feet deep, they have found animal and plant deposits from all over the earth. Scientists say that here everything was dumped into one huge graveyard as if the earth opened up and swallowed everything.

On Mt. Everest they have found fossils of animals. In the Himalayas, the world's highest range of mountains, they have found skeletons of whales. On Mt. Ararat they have discovered salt clusters at 7,000 feet elevation, which indicate a gradual drying up of seawater, and prove that the mountains were covered with Ocean Water at one time. Also, they have found fish bones, clamshells, and seashells at 10,000 feet elevations.

In three separate places, an Actual Layer of Mud, deposited by the Flood, has been found. At Ur, which was 12 miles from the traditional site of the Garden of Eden; at Fara, 60 miles up the river North of Eden, which was the traditional home of Noah; and at Kish, which was a suburb of Babylon, 100 miles still further up the river; and, possibly, a fourth place, 300 miles up the river at Nineveh.

God tells us that after the flood there were seasons. “While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease” (Gen. 8:22 KJV). Before the Flood some have speculated that the whole earth was tropical as indicated by flowers under the ice at most northern parts of the earth, but because of the great forces of nature (earthquakes, wind, water, volcanoes, tidal waves etc.), the earth was tilted 22 ½ degrees on its axis. Therefore, areas that were once tropical, have become seasonal, while some have become arctic.

This accounts for many animals being found in the arctic regions frozen with undigested food in their mouths.

We now call upon the Apostle Peter's testimony that tells us of the extent of the Flood:

Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men (2 Pet 3:3-7, KJV).

Peter makes the argument against these scoffers that in maintaining "all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation," they fail to notice that the world was created by the word of God, and that he has already destroyed it once at the Flood and will use his word to destroy it again when the appropriate time comes.

The word "world" as used by Peter means "*the world as mankind . . . the men of the ancient world*" (Arndt and Gingrich 447). "Overflowed" carries the idea of "*to overwhelm with water; to submerge, deluge*" (Thayer 332). Clearly, one can see that Peter is talking about the men of the ancient world as it was prior to God's judgment in which he overwhelmed the world with water to cause a universal flood. The world, Peter says, was once submerged with water, therefore the scoffer's argument is false because they let the fact of the flood escape their notice. The same is true today, when a person overlooks the deluge, he is willingly ignorant of the universal flood God brought upon the ungodly.

Jesus claimed the flood in Noah's day was historically correct. Let's look at Luke 17:26-30 (see also Matt. 24:37):

And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

In teaching those in the times of Christ, the Lord refers to Noah and what happened to all those who disobeyed the message of righteousness that Noah was preaching: they

were destroyed. Judgment came from the hand of God on the wicked of the antediluvian world and it shall also come again on the wicked at the end of time. If a universal flood did not happen, then the Lord's warnings are useless. Jesus, the Son of God, declared that there was a universal flood. Who dare say that Jesus was a liar by not accepting his account of the flood?

The covenant that God makes with Noah after the great deluge is further proof of a universal flood. After the flood God made a covenant with Noah and all descendants after him until time stands no more. God promised to never destroy the earth again with a flood of this magnitude (Gen. 9:8-17). As a symbol of this covenant between God and mankind, God placed the bow in the sky. Whenever God sees the bow He remembers His covenant with mankind. But, if the flood destroyed only a part of the human race, then those who escaped the flood and their descendants would not be included in this Covenant of the Rainbow. Considering that when it rains we see the token of the covenant, the rainbow, we conclude that God will never destroy all flesh from off the face of the earth as he once did.

Peter tells us who was saved from the floodwaters. Peter says, "When once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water" (1 Pet. 3:20, KJV). Peter also declares that God, "spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly" (2 Pet. 2:5, KJV).

The Scriptures clearly teach that only *eight* people were saved from the judgment of God, which came upon the ungodly in Noah's day. God did not spare any person from his judgment, except Noah and his family, a total of eight people. The world perished in the Flood because of their wickedness and their failure to listen to God's righteousness and repent. This could only have happened if there was a universal flood.

# Starting Over

Ray Warfel, Jr.

Do you ever need to start a project over? Endeavors of value go through a process of trial, failure, and starting over. A person's spiritual life does too.

A child is born sinless (Ezek. 18:20), but later chooses to sin (Isa 7:15). That perfect life is now ruined unless that person accepts God's plan to start over. Peter outlines this plan, saying, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins" (Acts 2:38).

What if, after having done this, that person sins again? Is heaven irrevocably forfeited? No. The apostle John said, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9). If a Christian falls he need not stay down but get up, and start over by repenting, confessing that wrong to the Lord.

What if several people of this kind met to worship God, being part of no denomination, could they be the true New Testament church though twenty centuries removed from it? Yes. If they do what New Testament Christians did then they will be what New Testament Christians were. The same seed, the word of God (Luke 8:11), that transversed land to produce the church in the first century, can also transcend time to produce the church in the twenty-first century. A wheat seed that is planted here will produce the same crop that a wheat seed planted in another place thousands of years from now will produce.

Let all denominations throw off what divides them, and start over. Do just as the church of the first century was commanded, and thereby become the true church.

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## The Power of a Universal Flood

People who minimize the effect of the great flood fail to comprehend the great forces of nature that were at work to bring about a universal Flood which destroyed the world. The Scriptures teach that "in the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. . . . And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark" (Gen. 7:11-12, 21-23, KJV).

In these passages of Scripture we can see the power of God calling the great forces of nature into action. These forces (earthquakes, wind, water, volcanoes, tidal waves etc.), when combined, "are capable of producing an agent for destruction and transportation so enormous that it is beyond human calculation" (*The Flood* 329). Think about the local floods for just a moment, how they can destroy an area beyond all recognition. But even the greatest historical floods must be multiplied ten thousand times ten thousand to even begin to give us a picture of the disaster which swept over the first world.

Look at the disaster that some historical floods have created. An eyewitness of the Dayton flood of 1913 wrote: "No boat could live a moment in the rushing current which took houses, bridges, railway tracks, telegraph poles, everything in its overwhelming sweep. I saw the levee, which protected the entire west side and which was described as strongly built of gravel with an average height of twenty feet and thirty-five feet broad at the base, suddenly melt into the river. The great Pennsylvania four-track right of way, part of the finest roadbed in America, melted away like salt. The track on the west side looked like a handful of tangled string thrown into a puddle. One could only get an idea of the strength of the raging flood when the great bridge, weighing hundreds of thousands of pounds, floated downstream hundreds of feet before sinking out of sight" (*The Flood* 330).

Another eyewitness, describing the same flood as it affected Peru, Indiana, wrote: "We saw the Broadway Bridge go out and the wreckage rush down with the flood against the interurban bridge, a concrete structure. The wreckage was hurled with such force against the concrete pier that it snapped like a match and was lost to view in the swirl of water" (*Ibid.*).



We have shown what the power of local river floods can do. They have changed the geography of a certain area, while altering the face of the earth. Now, what must have been the destructive magnitude of a universal flood in Noah's day?

We are surrounded by evidence of the power of a great flood. Many areas that had been covered with water in the antediluvian world were elevated to become dry land or even mountain ranges. "At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away. They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them" (Ps. 104:7-8). In the original Hebrew, "The mountains ascended and the valleys descended." Some of the continents and islands after the flood became ocean beds. We know this because on "the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up." According to this the ocean floors were fractured and uplifted to pour waters over the continents, while at the same time "the windows of heaven were opened." The Scriptures tell us that this breaking up of "the fountains of the great deep" continued for a period of five months. It was not until after the 150 days had passed that "the fountains of the deep . . . were stopped" (Gen. 8:2). This biblical information supports the idea of a geographically universal flood and shows the great forces that were at work to accomplish God's judgment on the world

#### Further Evidence For A Universal Flood

I would like to now consider some other testimonies that I believe will strengthen one's faith in a universal flood. First let us consider the Ark itself. "Over the centuries Mount Ararat, observed by passing travelers on horseback, mules, and camel caravans to and from inner Asia have reported that they had observed a great ship near the top of the mountain or had spoken with local people who said they had not only seen it but had visited it. These natives had even taken bits of pitch from the covering of the Ark from which they made amulets for protection against sickness, disaster, against being poisoned, or for success in love" (*The Lost Ship Of Noah 2*). We sometimes forget that the ark came to rest on Mt. Ararat. The Ark of Ararat would be one survivor of the great flood, with a religious and moral message for all generations. Something so huge as the ark cannot just vanish from a mountaintop. Ararat has been climbed many times. The expeditions have not yet found any signs of a huge ship on the mountain, other than ship like shadows under the glaciers or beams of worked wood in or under the ice near the summit. It has come to be believed that the Ark has slipped down the mountain and fallen into a giant crevasse. It is also believed that the Ark is deeply frozen into one of the glaciers, which flow down Ararat. It has been documented over the past 200 years that many people have actually seen the Ark on Ararat, in which they say, "The greater portion of the Ark extends back into the glacial ice." (*Ibid.* 3). Pilots have claimed to have seen

a ship like object on Ararat with part of it "retreating into and under the ice, or a shadow which appears to follow the lines of a ship with the approximate dimensions of the Ark as detailed in Genesis" (*Ibid.* 4).

In 1883 the Turkish authorities reported the discovery of the Ark. "The Turkish commissioners, including an attaché of the British Embassy at Istanbul (then Constantinople) were assessing the damages and changes when they reportedly came upon a huge wooden boat-like structure. It was painted brown, made of heavy timbers, some of which were broken, and the end of it emerged from the bottom of an overhanging glacier. The commissioners estimated the height of the object to be fifty feet, its length the equivalent of 300 cubits, and reported that they actually entered the ship-like structure. They were able to penetrate three large compartments but the other sections were filled with solid ice. After reassessing their situation they prudently decided to abandon the investigation of their find because of the possibility that the huge glacial overhang might collapse on the ship and on themselves as well" (*Ibid.* 16-17).

This report concerning the Ark first appeared in the press of Constantinople and soon thereafter in the *Levant Herald* and the British *Prophetic Messenger*" (*Ibid.* 17). Why was interest in this discovery not awakened by archaeologist and scientists? Well, the American press took care of that. The *New York Herald*, *Chicago Tribune*, and the *New York World* more or less reported that this was nothing more than a hoax, made fun of, and then the entire incident was finally forgotten.

There have been too many sightings of the ark reported in history for it to be just some kind of a hoax. And better yet, the Scriptures teach, "The ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat" (Gen 8:4).

Second, we call into account the Nations of the World to show the universality of the story of the Flood. The story of the Great Flood has existed in legends for more than 3,000 years. According to Werner Keller, *The Bible as History*, a historian by the name of Aaron Smith, is said to have tallied all the flood stories that he could find. He came across 80,000 works in 72 languages. Even the Indians knew about Noah, the Ark, and the Great Flood long before America was discovered. There are said to be over 600 variations of this legend among the ancient nations and tribes and this story has been told throughout the ages in all quarters of the globe. We can trace prior traditions of the Deluge back to earlier races of the Middle East: Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, Egyptians, Hittites, Hurrians, Greeks, Hindus, Chinese, Peruvians, Brazilians, and other ancient peoples who were familiar with the same tradition of a Great Deluge that destroyed all mankind, except one family, and who had recorded it at a much earlier period in history than Moses'

account. This information was not known until the latter part of the nineteenth century, when references to the Flood were found in the ancient cuneiform (clay) tablets.

There have been fragments of three clay tablets dating from 660 B.C. which belonged to the Library of King Asurbanipal, found in the ruins of the royal palace in Nineveh. These clay tablets contain the story of the Great Flood and were discovered by George Smith. Smith's translation is now called the Gilgamesh epic, because "it concerned a Gilgamesh, a Sumerian hero figure and demigod common to Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian mythologies, who journeys to the Other Worlds in search of the secret of eternal life" (*The Lost Ship Of Noah* 101).

Consider some of these ancient traditions of the flood. "The Egyptians had a legend that the gods at one time purified the earth by a great Flood, from which only a few shepherds escaped. Greek tradition: Deucalion, warned that the gods were going to bring a flood upon the earth, for its great wickedness, built an ark, which rested on Mt Parnassus. A dove was sent out twice. Hindu tradition: Manu, warned, built a ship, in which he alone escaped from a Deluge which destroyed all creatures. Chinese tradition: Fa-He, founder of Chinese civilization, is represented as having escaped from a Flood sent because man had rebelled against heaven, and his wife, 3 sons and 3 daughters. England: Druids has a legend that the world had been re-peopled from a righteous patriarch who had been saved in a strong ship from a Flood sent to destroy man for his wickedness. Mexicans: One man and one woman were saved in a box that floated on the flood waters. American Indians: Various legends in which 1, 3, 8, persons were saved in a Boat above the waters on a high mountain" (*Halley's Bible Handbook* 75).

The historian Josephus tells about how God sent the flood on the wicked. He says, "When God gave the signal, and it began to rain, the water poured down forty entire days, till it became fifteen cubits higher than the earth, which was the reason why there was no greater number preserved, since they had no place to fly to. . . . After this the ark rested on the top of a certain mountain in Armenia . . . both he and his family went out, when he also sacrificed to God, and feasted with his companions. However, the Armenians call this place The Place of Descent; for the ark being saved in that place, its remains are shewn there by the inhabitants to this day" (*Antiquities of the Jews*, Book I, chapter 3, section 5, 28).

There is ample evidence to show that there was a common memory of a phenomenon that affected all areas of the planet and was remembered by all nations, tribes, and peoples of the earth who did not know of each other's existence. When the Spanish first came to the New World they found the civilized Indian nations as well as the forest tribes already familiar with the story of the flood

## Conclusion

There has, and probably will be, as long as the world stands, discussions centered on the universality of the flood and its extent. But I believe that the evidence presented herein, both biblical and archaeological, speaks for itself regarding the story of Noah, the Ark, and the Great Flood.

The Bible claims these facts: (1) All land animals died (7:21). (2) Every human being (all in whose nostrils was the breath of life) perished, except Noah, and those on the ark with him (7:22-23). (3) "All the high hills that were under the whole heaven" were covered, 15 cubits above the highest mountain (7:19-21). (4) The flood prevailed upon the earth 150 days and the abatement of the waters took another 221 days (8:13-14). (5) God made an unconditional covenant with Noah after the flood (Gen. 9:8-17). (6) Jesus and Peter both gave testimony of a universal flood in the times of Noah (Luke 17:26-30; 1 Pet. 3:20; 2 Pet. 2:5; 3:3-7).

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# Why Euthanasia is Sinful

Randy Blackaby

Recently, the entire nation was focused intensely on euthanasia as a young, brain-damaged woman named Terry Schiavo was allowed to die (killed) by starvation and thirst in Tampa, Florida. Polls show the nation is deeply divided on this case, in particular, and euthanasia in general.

Terry Schiavo was not “brain dead” but brain damaged. She did not require mechanical respiration, but did need feeding assistance. This made the case exceptional as legal decisions continue to become more and more permissive relative to ending human life.

Euthanasia initially simply referred to an easy and painless death. The word is derived from two Greek words (*eu* = well; *thanatos* = death), according to a 1964 edition of Webster’s Dictionary. But newer dictionaries define it as “the painless killing of a patient suffering from an incurable and painful disease or in an irreversible coma.” The *Oxford American College Dictionary* adds that this is a practice legal in most countries.

“Assisted suicide” is one component of euthanasia. Dr. Jack Kevorkian is imprisoned for killing several patients whom he said wanted to die. Oregon has approved a law that allows assisted suicide, though that law is under federal review.

Many, including members of the church, have written “living wills,” directing that no extraordinary measures, especially mechanical respiration, be taken should they be on the brink of death due to age, extreme disease or disability. Their wish is simply to be allowed to die “naturally,” if that is God’s will.

Technological advances allow doctors to keep a body partly functioning almost perpetually. This raises a number of questions for Christians. Is it ever right to “pull the plug” or withhold medical care from one for whom we may have the responsibility to make decisions? Is it ever right to withhold food or water from such a patient? Can

we kill a person whose life is extremely limited by critical health? Can we help them kill themselves?

Not a few Christians have been faced with these questions.

## Saul: A Case Study

The death of King Saul is recorded in 2 Samuel 1:1-16. Already informed by an extraordinary message from Samuel that he was to die the next day (1 Sam. 28:19), when Saul was critically wounded in a battle he asked his armor-bearer to kill him so he wouldn’t be abused by the enemy. The armor-bearer refused. Saul then committed suicide (1 Sam. 31:4-5).

But, in 2 Samuel 1 we read of an Amalekite claiming to have assisted Saul in dying. He apparently was lying. But, he appears to have expected approval, if not reward, from David. However, after mourning Saul’s death, David said, “How was it you were not afraid to put forth your hand to destroy the Lord’s anointed?” He then had the man executed for his crime.

Now it must be understood that part of the crime David punished was striking God’s anointed king. But the reported murder of the wounded man also was part of what David saw as repugnant.

## Different Forms of Euthanasia

Euthanasia comes in different forms. Some of the forms are not even actual euthanasia by newer definitions of the word that involve active taking of life.

I recently saw this categorization of euthanasia:

**1. Voluntary, passive euthanasia:** This involves allowing nature (God) to take its (his) course. There is no physician involvement or other active help in bringing about the patient’s death. This action or inaction is done





with the patient's consent. This is what many Christians have requested in their living wills.

**2. Voluntary, active euthanasia:** This is quite different from the first form. Here, doctors or others actively cause the patient's death, with the patient's approval. This is what Kevorkian did and what Oregon law would permit.

**3. Involuntary, passive euthanasia:** This form is similar to the first but is done without the patient's consent, usually because the patient is unable to express his/her desires. The patient is simply allowed to die naturally, without extraordinary means such as artificial respiration being used.

**4. Involuntary, active euthanasia:** This is like the second form in that doctors or others actively bring about the death of a patient by a lethal injection of drugs or the like. However, in this case, the patient has no knowledge of what is being done and has not consented.

There is a big difference between the first and third approaches, which simply avoid keeping a body functioning with machinery and the second and fourth, which take the life of the patient, instead of leaving the time of death in God's hands.

Starving a person to death or poisoning him is much different than not placing him on a ventilator, or even turning the ventilator off when that is all that is keeping the body functioning.

### Principles to Consider

Matters of life and death belong to God. God created life, Genesis says. Only God should determine when life is to be taken (Deut. 32:39; 1 Sam. 2:6). God has told us not to murder (Exod. 20:13; Rom. 13:8-10). This applies to all innocent life, including babies born and unborn, the aged and the ill.

We also need to learn from Scripture that life's value is not just in our health and ability. The case of Job reflects this. He was so miserable that he wished he had never been born. He wanted to die. But there is no hint that he ever considered suicide, assisted or otherwise.

And, while his case appeared hopeless, he eventually recovered and the greatest lessons of his life were learned through the suffering he endured. What would have happened to God's plan to "educate" Job if his four friends had decided to kill him?

The Bible teaches us that there is value in life's trials. No one should ever enjoy watching another suffer. We often ache to relieve their suffering. I can remember watching a

close friend die in total misery and being tempted to overdose him to end it. But that wasn't my prerogative.

### Why Active Euthanasia Is Wrong

We cannot properly value human life and purposely kill someone. Much of the current debate over euthanasia, as well as abortion, comes down to worldly ideas about what lives are valuable and which are not. But each life has a soul, an eternal component. The value of a life isn't merely in what that life can do, produce or provide for self and others.

God breathed into the first man the breath of life and he became a living soul. Death occurs when the spirit and the body separate (Jas. 2:26). That needs to be left in God's hands.

The Bible throughout emphasizes the importance of the godly caring for the less fortunate and the weak. This is because God values them. The Old Testament demanded care for widows and orphans. Jesus illustrated the same concern in his care for the sick and the poor and instructed his disciples to make them a priority (Luke 14:13-14).

Both covenants demand honor to aged parents. This involves obedience and respect but also caring for them when they are aged and ill (Mark 7:6-11). We can't just do away with them when they become a burden.

### Conclusion

Hebrews 9:27 indicates each of us has an appointment with death. If we have obeyed the gospel, that appointment should not be greatly feared. On the other hand, actively taking the life of an aged or ill person disrespects God's role in determining when the appointed time has come.

Active euthanasia fails to consider that only God knows when a person is ready or should die. Think of the blood on our hands should we take a person's life when God may have been giving him time to repent or learn a lesson from suffering. Hezekiah was about to die and God gave him additional fifteen years, as the result of prayer (2 Kings 20:1-11). We don't know what God has planned in individual cases.

We need to let God determine when life ends.

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# Brotherly Kindness

Lewis Willis

I thought I had done all I needed to do before leaving on vacation, but I remembered I had not written an article for this week's paper. I have written many articles over the years, and consequently, I felt "dry" when thinking of a subject for an article. I mentioned this to Joyce, and she said, "Why don't you write an article on brotherly kindness?" So, here is the article she suggested.

## Defined

Vine defines kindness as "good, goodness of heart, pleasant, gracious, gentleness" (II, 292). Brotherly kindness places this basic goodness in the context of the family relationship; in this case, God's family! Brotherly kindness is closely akin to brotherly love. In fact, the expression could be translated "love of the brethren." Someone has suggested that one might consider *love* as the *cause*, and *kindness* as the *effect*. To be sure, where love is found, it will express itself in kindness.

## God's Kindness

One of the great messages of the Bible is God's kindness expressed toward man. The subject is often addressed:

How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings (Ps. 36:7).

But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord (Jer. 9:24).

That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:7).

But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared (Tit. 3:4).

## Enjoined on Christians

Given that so much is said about the kindnesses of God to man, we are not at all surprised to learn that God requires Christians to be a people characterized as loving and full of brotherly kindness:

Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another (Rom. 12:10).

Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up (1 Cor. 13:4).

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you (Eph. 4:32).

Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering (Col. 3:12).

And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity (2 Pet. 1:7).

## The Fruits of Kindness

There are certain virtues that cannot exist without some form of expression. Love is one of those virtues; it must express or show itself in some overt way. In like manner, kindness must also show itself in some action or thought. Notice some of the manifestations of brotherly kindness.

**Through conversation:** Our kindness toward each other, especially toward brethren, will be observable in our speech. Of the godly woman it is said: "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness" (Prov. 31:26). Paul wrote: "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (Col. 4:6). Kind and gracious words are wholesome and helpful. Do we not all benefit when we speak to, and of, one another with kindness?

**Through sympathy:** One of the requirements of the Christian's life is: "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Rom. 12:15). Few find it difficult to rejoice with one another at times of happiness. Often, however, we find it more than we can bear to go out of our way to support those who weep.

Weeping is a part of life, just as is rejoicing. Maturity demands of Christians that we learn to share the sorrow of

# For This Cause

Steven F. Deaton

“Pilate therefore said to Him, ‘Are You a king then?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice’” (John 18:37). The advent of Christ was not a mistake, happenstance, or coincidence. He came into the world for a point and purpose.

Jesus came to be King. Old Testament prophecies stated that one would come from the line of David; one who would rule over his own kingdom (2 Sam. 7:12-16; Ps. 132:11). Peter made the connection between the prophecies of a king and Jesus of Nazareth, whom God made both “Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:29-36). Therefore, the Bible refers to Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tim. 6:15).

Notice, Jesus told Pilate he came into the world for the purpose of being King. Some believe Jesus failed in

his mission. They say his kingdom will be established at some point in the future and last for 1000 years. Do not be disheartened, these people are wrong. The Lord of lords did not falter or fail. He is now king of righteousness and king of peace (Heb. 6:19-7:2). He now rules and reigns at the right hand of God and will do so until his return (1 Cor. 15:23-28). For this cause he came into the world.

Jesus also came to bear witness to the truth. Being the Word of God he was the embodiment of truth (John 1:1, 14, 17). He said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). Jesus taught the word of God, which is truth that convicts and saves (John 7:16; 17:17; 15:22; 8:32). It would seem automatic that all men would come to the truth for salvation, but many will not (John 3:19-21).

There are a few precious souls that seek for and accept the truth, who are “of the truth” and hear his voice. They

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each other. This is a growth process, but it is necessary. The example of Christ fits well just here: “And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick” (Matt. 14:14). Are we compassionate, kind, and sympathetic respecting those around us who have to deal with sorrow?

**Through assisting the needy:** Yes, even in our world of plenty, there are those in need. Sometimes these needy ones are brethren. We are commanded to assist them in bearing their burdens (Gal. 6:2). If a brother or sister is in need, we are not to turn them away (Jas. 2:15-16). Are there any of God’s family here who are in need? Are there any who need this expression of kindness? Be alert! Don’t wait for them to ask for assistance.

**Through restoring the erring:** What could possibly be more kind than to reach out to brothers or sisters who have lost their way spiritually? We should show interest in one another, with kindness restoring one another to the grace and forgiveness of the Lord (Jas. 5:19-20). Paul said this should be done, “. . . in the spirit of meekness; considering

thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Gal. 6:1). Do you reach out to those in trouble with the Lord?

**Through practice of the Golden Rule:** The “rule” does not say be as kind to others as they are to you. Note the words of the Master: “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets” (Matt. 7:12).

## Conclusion

Brethren, every day some family member, friend, or brother or sister in the Lord has to deal with some problem or trouble. Sickness, sadness, loneliness, and sorrow weigh heavily on someone every day. Why not reach out to others? There is no greater joy than to know you have lifted up someone in distress. God takes note of these gracious and kind deeds. “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister” (Heb. 6:10). Do what you can, all you can for others!

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are ones who “will to do His will” (John 7:17). They come to the light that their deeds may be exposed (John 3:19-21). Most others, however, shun the truth, hate it and the one who brings it (cf. John 15:18-25). Even so, we must be like our Lord and “bear witness” to the truth.

Jesus was and is the King of truth. For this cause he was born into the world. Let us support him in this cause.

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## “Catholic Church” continued from front page

### They Are Wrong About Who Is The Head of the Church . . .

Please take note of the fact that when we read about the church found in the pages of the New Testament, we see a church whose head is not a man, but Jesus Christ (Col. 1:18). Jesus said “*all authority ... in heaven and earth*” belonged to him (Matt. 28:18). Yet, when a man wears a title like “Most Holy Father,” or “Successor of the Prince of the Apostles,” does this sound like this man respects Christ’s sovereign, supreme authority?

Furthermore, consider the fact that Christ being called the head of the church (Col. 1:18; Eph. 1:22-23) means that there is no room for any other “head”! The New Testament illustrates the Lord’s plan by telling us that the church is Christ’s body, and Christ is the head (Col. 1:18, 24; 1 Cor. 12:12, 14; Eph. 5:23). Knowing what the Bible teaches, how can men then say, “Karol Wajtyla was the head of the church, too!” (or Pius, or John XXIII, etc.)? If people in this world, including our Catholic friends, respect what the Bible says, how can 117 men get together and “vote” for a new “head”? Think about it: If the church (body) has more than one head, it is a monstrosity. Yet, for the church (body) to have no head means it is dead!

### They Are Wrong About Peter Being the First Pope . . .

In examining the Catholic Church, we know it is not the church that is found in the New Testament, because this church claims that the apostle Peter was the first Pope of the Catholic Church, and that Karol Wajtyla was the 264th successor to Peter. Historically speaking, there is no mention of anyone with the title, “Pope” until around 606 A.D. Before this time, (including the first century, A.D.) there was no such title ever given to a man! In reading the New Testament, we find no special emphasis placed upon Peter. We find Peter was considered equal with the apostles. Furthermore, Peter was married (Matt. 8:14-15; 1 Cor. 9:5), Peter sinned (Matt. 26:69-75; Luke 5:8; Gal. 2:11-14), and Peter made it clear that he was not worthy

of being worshiped by any man (Acts 10:25-26). Contrast these biblical facts with the expectation that one “kiss the ring” of the unmarried Pope, that a person calls him “Holy Father,” and the “Vicar of Christ”! Such facts as these make it clear that the Catholic Church and its organization does not bear any resemblance to the church found in the Scriptures!

### They Are Wrong About Who Is A Saint . . .

During the funeral on April 8, the Associated Press said the people were chanting, “Santo Santo,” while Reuters news reported people were chanting “Santo subito.” In other words, “Make him a saint!” or, “Make him a saint immediately!”

In contrast, the New Testament says that anyone who is a Christian is a saint! When one believes in Christ, repents of his sins, confesses his faith in Christ, and is baptized for the remission of sins, he becomes a Christian, i.e., a saint (John 8:24; Luke 13:3; Rom. 10:10; Acts 2:38, 11:26)! This fact is made clear when we open the New Testament and read about saints in places such as Philippi (Phil. 1:1), Corinth (1 Cor. 1:2), Jerusalem (Acts 9:13; Rom. 15:25-26), Lydda (Acts 9:32), Ephesus (Eph. 1:1), Colossae (Col. 1:2), and Rome (Rom. 1:7). In fact, Paul said there were saints in Caesar’s household (Phil. 4:22)! Clearly, our reading of the Scriptures makes clear that those called “saints” in the New Testament were simply Christians.

One does not have to wait for some years until they can confirm the “miracles” that have been performed, and then “vote,” on a person to determine whether or not he or she is a saint (this is the Catholic practice). The Bible says that once one has been saved from his sins, he is a “saint.” It is as simple as that!

### They Are Wrong In Worship . . .

It has been apparent for some time that the Catholic Church encourages folks to do things contrary to the gospel of Christ. For instance, the Catholic Church teaches that certain men are to be “priests,” while others are distinguished as “laity” or lay-men. The New Testament makes no such distinction, declaring that all Christians are priests (1 Pet. 2:5, 9).

In addition to this, the Catholics use mechanical instruments in worship. This is contrary to such passages as Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19; and Hebrews 2:12. They have resurrected the lighting of lamps, burning of incense, and other practices of the Old Law in spite of the fact that the worship and practices of the Old Testament were nailed to the cross (Col. 2:14; Heb. 8:8-13).

Besides these things, we can add the fact that the Catholic Church encourages partaking of the Lord’s supper during weddings, funerals, and often during the week, rather than



respecting God's will that the Lord's supper is to be eaten only upon the first day of the week (Acts 2:42, 20:7)!

Probably the greatest affront to the Lord is when Catholics encourage prayer to Mary and to their self-appointed "saints" (per their definition) rather than praying to God through his Son, Jesus the Christ (1 Tim. 2:5).

### Conclusion

Yes, the Catholic Church's head has died, but they will have voted in another "head" very soon (the 265th head to be exact). What is sad is that this church, though filled with many good, moral folks, does not bear the slightest resemblance to the church that is found in the New Testament! Therefore, let us look for opportunities to talk to our Catholic friends to teach them the truth.

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2920 New Hartford Rd., Owensboro, Kentucky 42303

**"Blackaby"** continued from page 2

He comes from a family of devoted Christians. He is the son of James and Audie Blackaby. His brother, Kerry, now serves as a deacon at Knollwood. His father passed away in April of 2003.

In 1975, he married Karen L. Sellers, the daughter of Frank and Louise Sellers, another family of devoted Christians. They have four sons, Joshua, Josiah, Ezra, and Amos. Three of the four are Christians and three also have married and live in Ohio, Indiana and Kentucky. Randy and Karen are grandparents of two granddaughters.

Brother Blackaby, now 53, has used his journalistic skills in his preaching. In Kokomo, he wrote Bible question and answer columns for one paper, op-ed columns on moral issues in the headlines for two others, as well as producing an advertiser-supported feature that focused on a short passage of Scripture each week.

While in Kokomo, he served as a panelist on a television program produced by the Fort Wayne congregation and its preacher, Ron Roberts.

He recently began to write a question and answer column called *Exploring the Book* in three weekly papers in New Carlisle, Enon, and Tipp City, Ohio.

Having "filled in" for preachers at Knollwood, when that congregation had a radio "call-in" program, brother Blackaby was able to initiate a similar hour-long program, called *Bible Forum*, on WIOU-AM and WZWZ-FM in Kokomo. The program generated a sizable audience for a small market and occasionally featured "mini-debates" with members of the Church of God, Zion Tabernacle, and Christian Church on issues like instrumental music in worship, tongue-speaking and modern-day miracles. For a short time after moving to Ohio, he preached 15-minute lessons on a small area station.

When a member of the Kokomo congregation was incarcerated in state prison, brother Blackaby began a Bible correspondence course with him and encouraged him to ask other prisoners to take the course. The effort spread from the prison facility near Greencastle to most other prisons in Indiana and eventually to prisons all over the U.S. More than 100 were enrolled at one time. It eventually had to be reduced to an Indiana-only effort. Before leaving Kokomo, he had trained for and made arrangements to work with prisoners at the newly constructed Miami Correctional Facility near Peru, Indiana.

While at Kokomo, brother Blackaby was asked by brother Steve Wallace in Ramstein, Germany (another preacher who came from the Knollwood congregation), to join an effort to evangelize the Baltic nation of Lithu-

ania, just northeast of Poland, shortly after it declared independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. Beginning in 1994, he worked in Kaunas and Vilnius with a team of other brethren from both the U.S. and Europe during five trips through 2000. Congregations today exist in both those cities and have regular preachers.

Asked by the congregation to do so, he wrote workbooks on the whole Bible for a four-year study program in Kokomo, as well as study guides on faith and grace, baptism, the Lord's Supper, premillennialism and several other subjects.

He has written a workbook on Galatians for the *Bible Text Book Series*. Final editing is being completed on another on the life and work of Moses, for our *Great Bible Characters* series. And, he has just begun research and writing for another book on the Bible's teaching on money and material possessions.

Last year, Brother Blackaby was appointed an elder, along with Hobert Kendrick and Brian Miller, at New Carlisle.

The three elders, along with several other members, conduct an "Early Risers" Bible study at 6:30 a.m. Thursdays at a local restaurant. Besides a few members of other area congregations, one or more non-members regularly attend the study.

He has done gospel meeting work in the Midwest and in Germany.

His wife regularly teaches children's classes at New Carlisle and assisted in the writing of vacation Bible school material for the congregation in 2003. She also taught in Kokomo, including a ladies Bible class.

We welcome Randy to our staff and know that those readers who already enjoy reading his occasional articles will look forward to reading more of them.

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## Quips & Quotes

### Ruling: Bible Can't Be Used to Reach Verdict

"Denver — Colorado's highest court, in a sharply divided ruling, upheld a lower court's decision on Monday throwing out the sentence of a man who was given the death penalty after jurors consulted their Bible in reaching a verdict. The Bible, the court said, constituted an improper outside influence and a reliance on what the court called a 'higher authority.'

"The judicial system works very hard to emphasize the rarefied, solemn and sequestered nature of jury deliberations,' the majority panel of the Colorado Supreme Court said in a 3-2 decision. 'Jurors must deliberate in that atmosphere without the aid or distraction of extraneous texts.'"

"The ruling involved the conviction of Robert Harlan, found guilty in 1995 of raping and murdering a witness near Denver. After Harlan's conviction, the judge in the case — as Colorado law requires — sent the jury off to deliberate about the death penalty with an instruction to think beyond the narrow confines of the law. Each juror, the judge told the panel, must make an 'individual moral assessment,' on deciding whether Harlan should live or die.

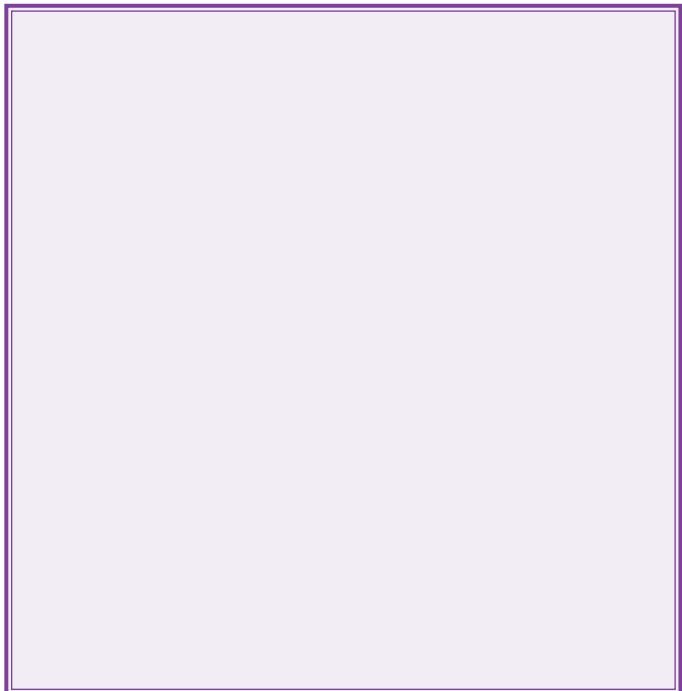
"The jurors voted unanimously for death. The new ruling changes that sentence to life in prison without parole" (*The Indianapolis Star* [March 19, 2005], A12).

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### Supreme Court Nullifies Gay Marriage Licenses

"Portland, Ore. — The Oregon Supreme Court on Thursday nullified nearly 3,000 marriage licenses issued to gay couples a year ago by Portland's Multnomah County, saying a county cannot go against state matrimonial law.

"The court said state law bans gay marriage. It also noted Oregon voters approved a constitutional amendment in November that even more explicitly prohibits the practice (*The Indianapolis Star* [April 15, 2005], A5).



## Second Annual Truth Magazine Lectures

# The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible

July 11-14-2005

Bowling Green, Kentucky — Convention Center

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
8:00 - 8:50	What About Islam and the Qu'ran? Kyle Pope	Is the Biblical Text Reliable? John Smith	Are There Lost Books of The Bible? Mark Mayberry
9:00 - 9:50	The Glorious Church Rody Gumpad	Evidences: Prophecy: Kevin Maxey	Evidences: Unity of Bible Steve Wallace
10:00 - 10:50	Addictive Behaviors Pornography: Steve Wolfgang	Addictive Behaviors Substances of Abuse: Art Adams	Addictive Behaviors Gambling: Joe Price
11:00 - 11:50	Creation: Dan King	Genesis 3: Paul Blake	Genesis 6-8, The Flood: Tom O'Neal
<b>Lunch Break</b>			
<b>Ladies Classes</b>			
10:00 - 10:50	Helping Christians Addicted to Pornography: Bette Wolfgang	Teaching Children to Respect Authority: Sherilyn Mayberry	Creating Peace At Home Violet McDaniel
<b>Auditorium</b>			
2:00 - 4:00	Open Forum		Elders & Work of the Church
<b>Singing 7:00 - 7:30</b>			
What Does the Bible Claim For Itself? Donnie V. Rader	Is the Bible Adequate to the Modern World? Walton Weaver	Oh How Love I Thy Law: Johnie Edwards <i>(After Wednesday evening Bible Study)</i>	First Century Morals for the Twenty-first Century: Andy Alexander



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