

FOR HIS GLORY

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Repentance of sin does in no way contribute to the removal of that sin meritoriously. Our *sense of need* does not take away our guilt, nor help to take it away. But the blood, the blood, the blood alone, pure and unmixed, has forever washed the people of God, and made them whiter than snow! So, poor Heart, if your soul is as hard as a nether millstone. If your conscience seems to be seared by long habits of sin. If you cannot force tears from your eyes, and scarcely can get a groan from your heart—yet you are groaning today because you cannot groan, weeping because you cannot weep, and sorrowing because you cannot sorrow—hear then, this Gospel message! God the Father has set Christ forth to be your Propitiation—not your tender conscience, not your groans, not your sense of need, not your law-work, not your deep experience. He is enough without any of these—have faith in *His blood*, and you are saved!—CHS



**THERE IS NO NEED
TO FEAR DEATH!**
By Charles H. Spurgeon

“Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace.”

Luke 2:29.

Let us start with the great general principle which is full of comfort, namely, this, that EVERY BELIEVER MAY BE ASSURED OF ULTIMATELY DEPARTING IN PEACE. This is no privilege peculiar to Simeon. It is common to *all* the saints, since the grounds upon which this privilege rests are not monopolized by Simeon, but belong to us all. Observe, first, that *all the saints have seen God’s salvation*, therefore, they should all depart in peace. It is true, we cannot take up the Infant Christ into our arms, but He is “formed in us, the hope of Glory.”

It is true, we cannot look upon Him with these mortal eyes, but we have seen Him with those eyes immortal which death cannot dim—the eyes of our own spirit which have been opened by God’s Holy Spirit. A sight of Christ with the natural eye is not saving, for thousands saw Him, and then cried, “Crucify Him, crucify Him.” After all, it was in Simeon’s case the spiritual eye that saw, the eye of faith that truly beheld the Christ of God, for there were others in the Temple who saw the Baby.

There was the priest who performed the act of circumcision, and the other officials who gathered round the group. But I do not know that any of them saw God’s salvation. They saw the little innocent Child who was brought there by its parents, but they saw nothing remarkable in Him. Perhaps Simeon and Anna, alone, of all those who were in the Temple, saw with the inward eye, the real Anointed of God revealed as a feeble Infant. So, though you and I miss the outward sight of Christ, we need not regret it—it is but secondary as a privilege. If with the inner sight we have seen the Incarnate God, and accepted Him as our salvation, we are blessed with holy Simeon!

Abraham saw Christ’s day before it dawned, and even thus, after it has passed, we see it! And with faithful Abraham we are glad. We have looked unto Him, and we are lightened. We have beheld the Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world. In the “despised and rejected of men” we

(See “For to Me” on page 2)

**TO THE
SUFFERER**
By C. H. Spurgeon

The Lord said to Jacob, “Fear not to go down into Egypt, for I will there make of you a great nation” (Gen 46:3). The promise of a great blessing is the dismissal of all fear. Jacob’s house cannot be destroyed if God is going to multiply them into a great nation! If the apparent evil will work together for our good, why do we dread it? Beloved Sufferer, do not be afraid of the cancer which is preying upon you. It is a terrible disease; but if the Lord is going to make your long illness a saving blessing to your family, you may resign yourself to the lingering pain, and no longer shrink from it with horror.

Do not be afraid of that bereavement in the family. It will be a grievous loss to all concerned, but the righteous are taken away from evil to come, and out of their graves springs a blessing even as the grass grows on the hillock in the Churchyard! Many a keen affliction brings with it God’s sevenfold favor, though we cannot see it. As the Lord said to Jacob, “Fear not to go into Egypt, for I will there make of you a great nation,” so He says to us, “Fear not affliction, for so shall you receive the greater benediction”

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“For to Me, to Live Is Christ, and to Die Is Gain”

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have seen the Anointed Savior. In the crucified and buried One, who afterwards rose again, and ascended into Glory, we have seen salvation—full, free—finished! Why, therefore, should we think ourselves less favored than Simeon? From like causes, like results shall spring—we shall depart in peace—for we have seen God’s salvation!

Moreover, *Believers already enjoy peace as much as ever Simeon did.* No man can depart in peace who has not lived in peace. But he who has attained peace in life, shall possess peace in death, and an eternity of peace *after* death. “Being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Jesus has bequeathed us peace, saying, “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you.” “For He is our peace,” and, “the fruit of the Spirit is peace.” We are reconciled unto God by the death of His Son. Whatever peace flowed in the heart of Simeon, I am sure it was not of a more Divine Nature than that which dwells in the bosom of every true Believer. If sin is pardoned, the quarrel is ended. If the Atonement is made, then is peace established—a peace covenanted to endure forever!

We are now led in the paths of peace. We walk the King’s highway, of which it is written, “no lion shall be there.” We are led beside the still waters, and made to lie down in green pastures. We feel no slavish fear of God, though He is “a consuming fire” even to us. We tremble no longer to approach into His Presence, who deigns to be our Father. The precious blood upon the Mercy Seat has made it a safe place for us to resort at all times. Boldness has taken the place of trembling. The Throne of God is our rejoicing, though once it was our terror—

**“Once ’twas a seat of dreadful wrath,
And shot devouring flames.
Our God appeared ‘a consuming fire,’
And vengeance was His name.”**

Therefore, Brethren, having peace with God, we may be sure that we shall “depart in peace.” We need not fear that the God of all consolation, who has already enriched us in communion with Himself, and peace in Christ Jesus, will desert us at the last. He will help us to sing a sweet swan song, and our tabernacle shall be gently taken down, to be rebuilt more enduringly in the fair country beyond Jordan.

Furthermore, we may rest assured of the same peace as that which Simeon possessed, since we are, if true Believers, equally *God’s servants.* The text says, “Lord, now let *Your servant* depart in peace.” But, in this case, one servant cannot claim a privilege above the rest of the household. The same position towards God, the same reward from God. Simeon, a servant. You also, my Brothers and Sisters, a servant. He who says to Simeon, “depart in peace,” will say also the same to you!

The Lord is always very considerate towards His old servants, and takes care of them when their strength fails. The Amalekite of old had a servant who was an Egyptian, and when he fell sick, he left him. He would have perished if David had not had compassion on him. But our God is no Amalekite slave owner. Neither does He cast off His worn-out servants. “Even to your old age I am He. And even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear. Even I will carry, and will deliver you.”

David felt this, for he prayed to God, and said, “Now, also, when I am old and gray-headed, O God, forsake me not.” If you have been clothed in your Lord’s livery of Grace and taught to obey His will, He

will never leave you, nor forsake you. He will not sell you into the hands of your adversary, nor suffer your soul to perish. A true master counts it a part of his duty to protect his servants, and our great Lord and Prince will show Himself strong on behalf of the very least of all His followers, and will bring them, every one, into the rest which remains for His people.

Do you really serve God? Remember, “his servants you are to whom you obey.” Are you taught of the Spirit to obey the Commandments of love? Do you strive to walk in holiness? If so, do not fear death! It shall have no terrors to you. All the servants of God shall depart in peace. There is also another reflection which strengthens our conviction that all Believers shall depart in peace, namely this—that up till now *all things in their experience have been according to God’s Word.* Simeon’s basis of hope for a peaceful departure was “according to Your Word.” And, surely, no Scripture is of private interpretation, or to be reserved for one Believer to the exclusion of the rest!

The promises of God, which are, “Yes and amen in Christ Jesus,” are sure to *all* the seed—not to some of the children is the promise made—but all the Grace-born are heirs. There are not special promises hedged round, and set apart for Simeon and a few saints of old time—but with all who are in Christ, their federal Head, the Covenant is made—and stands “ordered in all things and sure.” If, then, Simeon, as a Believer in the Lord, had a promise that he should depart in peace, I also have a like promise if I am in Christ!

What God has said in His Word, Simeon lays hold of, and none can tell him not to. But if with the same Grace-given faith I also grasp it for myself, who shall challenge *my* right? God will not violate His promise to one of His people any more than to another, and consequently, when our turn shall come to gather up our feet in the bed, and to resign our spirit, some precious passage in Sacred Writ shall be as a rod and a staff to us that we may fear no evil. These four considerations, gathered out of the text itself, may give fourfold certainty to the assurance that every Believer, at the hour of his departure, shall possess peace.—Sermon #1014, Volume 17—“NUNC DIMITTIS”

What Do You Really Think of Christ?

When you come to know somewhat of what He is, then go on to obey Christ. Is there anything that He has bid you do? Do it. Some Christians have never yet been baptized—how will they answer for willful neglect of a known duty? Others have been Christians for years and yet have never communed at the Lord’s Table. Jesus said, “If you love Me, keep My Commandments.” Do they keep His Commandments? It was His dying request, “This do in remembrance of Me,” and yet they will not fulfill it. Even such a tender request they slight—as though it were of no importance whatever—as if their Lord were a mere nobody whose wishes might well be overlooked.—CHS

“And Jesus Shall Put His Hand Upon Your Eyes”

(Continued from page 1)
tion.”

Brethren, fear not the night, but watch for its stars. Fear not the fall of the leaf, but look for the ripe fruit. You shall see more of God’s goodness as you see more of man’s evil. We read of the Apostles that they “feared as they entered into the cloud.” Yet in that cloud they saw their Lord transfigured! Therefore be not afraid lest you be found trembling at that which should cause you joy!

Then the Lord added that which is the richest comfort of all—“I will go down with you into Egypt.” What cause of fear can remain when we have the promise of the Lord’s Presence with us? The child is not afraid to go to bed in the dark if his mother will go with him into the chamber. The child does not need a candle if his mother will be at his side. Her eyes are bright lights to him. If God is with us we are not in the dark—His Presence causes even the night to be light about us. If we can have our Lord’s Presence, we have no choice of country or company.

Egypt, with Jehovah, is as Canaan. Even Hades and the land of death-shades have nothing to make us fear evil if the Comforter sustains us! “For You are with me,” is the joyful song of the pilgrim when he passes through the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Therefore let us dismiss our fears. We will go down into loneliness, poverty, sickness, sorrow—and the grave—if the Lord will be with us.

ness, poverty, sickness, sorrow—and the grave—if the Lord will be with us.

The Lord goes on to say, “And I will also surely bring you up again”—which meant that Jacob should not lose his inheritance in Canaan, nor be forever in banishment in a strange land. Jacob’s heart dwelt in the Canaan which the Lord had bestowed on him, and had entailed upon his seed by a covenant of salt. But Jacob’s going down into Egypt was not to alter that deed of gift. Jacob would not have accepted Egypt, with all its treasures, in exchange for the land that God had promised to himself and to his seed. But no such change was proposed—the chosen seed would leave Egypt in due course, and come back to its old quarters, and so the Lord said, “I will surely bring you up again.”

Go down as we may, the Lord will bring us up again! Dear Friend, you may lose husband, or wife, or father, or child, or property, or health, or even life. But you shall rise out of every loss, and you shall never lose your share in the sure mercies of David! “Who shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?” Esau might sell his heritage for a mess of pottage, but Jesus would not sell His portion for all Egypt’s glories. Nor shall He be called on to make the exchange. Blessed be God, we shall never be driven down so low that we cannot rise again, for the Lord says of every member of the chosen family, “I will surely bring you up again!”

One more fear Jacob had experienced, perhaps. He had some fear of dying. But that was all removed when the Lord said, “And Joseph shall put his hand upon your eyes.” “Oh,” the good old father thought, “Joseph is to close my eyes! Then death has lost its sting.” Did you ever think of dying in that light? Let me read it to you with a word changed,

and another name inserted—“And *Jesus* shall put His hand upon *your* eyes.” We may never die—the Lord may personally appear and then we shall not all sleep. But if He does not come, and we are called upon to die, Jesus will put His fingers on our eyes and we shall sleep in peace!

Death is a Covenant blessing to a child of God, for “so He gives His beloved sleep.” That last sleep comes from the finger of that hand which was nailed to the Cross for us. And Jesus, your Joseph whom you love, whose bloody coat you have seen with tears—He is yet alive, and He is King over all that land where you go—for the keys of death swing at His belt. He is the Prince of all realms, and He it is who shall put His hand upon your eyes and seal them for the moment in darkness, to open them for you, when you shall say, “I am satisfied, for behold I awake in Your likeness.”

By this time, every fear ought to be removed from us even as it was from Jacob. We may now set up our banners and go forward, put away the sackbut and sound the silver trumpet! Let the vanguard advance and follow the leader through the wilderness, or through the sea. If Jehovah leads the way, let no man’s heart tremble. Let the weakest among us be strong—for thus says the Lord, “Fear not to go down into Egypt.” Rejoice and be glad. All is well!—Sermon #2116, Volume 35—THE UNCHANGING GOD CHEERING JACOB IN HIS CHANGE OF DWELLING PLACE.

HOW DO YOU PRAY?

By Charles H. Spurgeon

“Therefore I, also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers.”
Ephesians 1:15, 16.

Is that the way that we pray? Do we make mention of people in our prayers? It is well to do so! It is a good plan to keep a list of persons for whom we ought to pray and to put it before us when we draw near to God, and go over the names.

I knew one man of God who has kept a debtor and creditor list with God for many years. He puts his requests down in the book and when they are answered he puts that down, and if they are not answered, he repeats them. It is a very wonderful book. I think that he told me that there is a name down there of a person for whom he has prayed who is not converted yet, and that out of several for whom he began to pray, he is the only one who is not converted—and that he is the only one that is alive!

The others were brought to Christ and died in the faith, but he, not yet brought to Christ, still lives—and my friend prays on with as great a confidence of the conversion of that man as I have that Christmas will come in due time! I wish that we did business with God in some such fashion as that, but our prayers are shadowy, unreal. God teach us how to pray!—Sermon #3525, Volume 62—GOD’S OVERTAKING MERCY.

A SHORT LESSON ON PSALM 73

“For we walk by faith, not by sight.”
2 Corinthians 5:8

We apprehend the dimension of the unseen world through the means of faith. We know, by faith, that our lives are governed by a spiritual Being, although unseen, undetected, unappreciated, and not comprehended by the natural person.

For the Christian to fall prey to being a sight-walker is to forfeit peace and joy because the sight-walker is deceived and quickly and easily filled with envious desires and thoughts of unfairness about his own life. Appearances are deceiving, but never more than when the spiritual dimension in which the Christian lives and hopes is not taken into account.

The saint seems to be low and lowly regarded while the sinner appears to be highly regarded and at ease. “What have my attempts at living every day in holiness gained for me?” we all ask at some point in our lives. We have been paid a salary of adversity and scourging while the evil-minded are at envious ease with their wealth, swimming in luxury, unconcerned by problems that afflict us every day.

They seem to experience little or no bad debts or health, and the first glance is that they are immune from most serious difficulty. They attract money like a magnet attracts iron filings! They experience good health and prosperity while upon us is laid sickness and poverty. We reel from God’s daily chastening. There seems to be no justice—its confusing and galling if we judge (walk) by *sight*.

To continue: they brag about their power and conquests and future. They demand special treatment socially and judicially, and generally get it (just note lately how many celebrities and politicians have misbehaved, and with what they have been charged and what little punishment is meted out). Their pride is as fanciful and pretentious as their jewelry, cars, women and houses. And their lives are filled with pride and contempt for those who do not have the trappings of this world’s wealth.

They promote evils such as homosexuality, destruction of family and marriage, child abuse, bestiality and unbridled use of drugs to anesthetize their senses from the smell, sight and sound of the unwashed masses. They rail against heavenly concepts and encourage and indulge grossly sinful behavior as detailed in Romans 1. They slander God’s Character and Laws by ridiculing His children as being intellectually challenged.

When have you seen on TV, in the movies or in public discourse or writing, that a Christian is one to be admired and their principles recommended to be followed)? They may give some credence to a deistic god impotent, but ascribe more wisdom and power to their own ability. They just do not believe that God is Omnipotent; they do not believe He has power sufficient to bring them to justice, and that is because they cannot get beyond normal sight.

Does a cursory view of the worldling’s success and high living give some concern, even to the point of jealousy, to the righteous? Yes, of course it has, and does, and will. There has always been a tension for the Believer between sight and faith. But if the redeemed should speak out according to what he sees, and complain, he would betray his belief and surely offend his brethren!

The better part of wisdom here for the saint who gets momentarily caught up in this sin of leaning too much to sight, and who

becomes envious and disillusioned with his lot, is to exercise caution and say nothing to others about his personal envy and perception of unfairness. He should place his hand over his mouth, be still, and pray to see his circumstances and the apparent “favor” of the wicked with the eyes of faith.

Now I ask that you stop here and read Psalm 73. When you have completed reading that Psalm, finish reading this letter.

Why should a spiritual man envy these folks, when, despite all their worldly possessions and power, they soon will be brought into the eternal terrors of Hell? They will suddenly and at once be separated from their worldly influence and those things that provided temporal diversions from thinking about eternal realities. Their acts of hoarding and evil self-centeredness are the very fuel with which they are tormented in everlasting flames. They are assigned punishment that equals their pride and rejection of the Savior—and the enormity of their taking lightly the call of the Gospel is evidenced in their discomfort by the statement of Dives (Dives = rich man, Luke 16) who preceded them.

He called for a drop of water, or that amount left on one’s finger after dipping it in water (in the final sense, it is a very small amount of water) to be applied to his tongue so that he might be relieved from his enormous torment. As John Gerstner says—he would give the world, if he could, to be relieved of pain by just one drop’s worth of water, or to be relieved of just one day of his sentence in Hell.

One drop of water is accounted immeasurable relief. Think of it! (Do you not see why Paul prayed, pleaded, argued and begged people to be saved from the coming judgment? Is that same heart not in you? If you see clearly the horrors of Hell, you cannot, with a clear conscience neglect your part in practicing and proclaiming the Gospel).

The speed and severity of their fall is accentuated by the height that they attained in this present evil system. They had it all but in a second they are engulfed in terror and pain. All their years of earthly glory are consumed in that first minute in hellfire. They have had an eternal reversal of fortune. Fifty or even a hundred years of fleshly rip-roaring times is not a good trade for an eternity with Christ!

The faith-walker sees the eternal value of God in both Heaven and earth, “*Whom have I in Heaven but You? And there is nothing on earth that I desire other than You. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever*” (Psa 73:25, 26).

The faith-walker weighs the things he momentarily envied in the ungodly and rejects them. He turns from the temporary pleasures of earth to real treasures in Heaven, and sees with the eyes of faith that God—having and knowing God—is the most excellent way!

He draws near to the only One who can satisfy his soul and give him peace, rest, wholeness and safety, “*Indeed, those who are far from You will perish; You put an end to those who are false to You. But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord God my refuge, to tell of all Your works*” (Psa 73:27, 28). “*And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent*” (John 17:3 NASB). Amen.—Dr. Jim Sullivan

CALVINISM: ITS PLACE IN BAPTIST HISTORY (1)

By DANIEL E. PARKS, PASTOR

Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, PO Box 305, Frederiksted, Virgin Islands, 00841

Protestant denominations are those which have separated from the Roman Catholic Church. Some did so directly in the Reformation of the 1500's. Others have done so indirectly, by separating from other Protestants.

The Roman Catholic Church came into being at about the beginning of the Dark Ages—and these two events are inseparably linked! The spiritual heirs of the Apostles denounced the Roman Church as Anti-Christ and a manifestation of the “Babylonian whore” of Revelation 17. They therefore did not submit to the authority of Rome’s pontiff, nor recognize its baptism as Scriptural Baptism. Consequently, they baptized all who converted from Romanism to the true faith.

The Roman Church responded to these heirs of the Apostles by calling their baptism *re*-baptism, and by contemptuously branding them as *Anabaptists*, or *Re-baptizers*. Rome furthermore mercilessly persecuted them and even waged crusades against them. Many thousands—if not millions—of these Anabaptists were martyred by Roman Catholic authorities.

Foremost among these ancient heirs of the Apostles were the Waldensians. Their history is at great length chronicled in *The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piedmont* (the source for the quotations in this article), written by Samuel Morland in 1658 following the Bloody Massacre of 1655. This massacre of Waldensians by Roman Catholics in the Piedmont region of Italy is one of the most horrendous events in Church History.

The doctrine of the Waldensians regarding the salvation of sinners was what we today call Calvinism. For example:

1) The Waldensian *Confession of Faith* of 1120—400 years before the Protestant Reformation—expresses their belief, “That *Christ...died* for the salvation of all those that believe....” (p. 33). This is the doctrine of Limited Atonement and/or Particular Redemption, the third of Calvinism’s five points, and that which is denied most vehemently by Arminianism. Arminians postulate, instead, their doctrine of Universal Atonement: that Christ died for the salvation of all mankind, both those who believe and those who do not.

2) The Waldensian *Confession of Faith* of 1508 was published nine years before the Protestant Reformation was commenced, and amplified in 1535. It also manifests the Waldensians’ belief in what is today called Calvinism.

Its fourth and seventh articles express the Waldensians’ belief in the Calvinist doctrine of Total Depravity: “...there is nothing in man whereby one may help another before God, seeing all are equally void of the righteousness of God, and obnoxious to His wrath by sin” (p. 46); “...there is no man that can indeed perform the works commanded by God” (p. 49).

Its sixth article expresses the Waldensians’ belief in the Calvinist doctrine of Irresistible Grace and the bestowal of faith by the Holy Spirit: “...no man can have this Faith by any power, will and pleasure of his own: it is indeed the gift of God, who when, and where it pleases Him, works it in man by His Spirit” (p. 48).

3) The Waldensian *Confession of Faith* of 1532 was published four years before John Calvin first expressed his theological views in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. It also manifests the Waldensians’ belief in what is today called Calvinism and their denial of the doctrine of Romanism and Arminianism.

Its fourth article expresses the Waldensians’ belief in the Calvinist doctrine of Total Depravity: “Whoever upholds Free Will denies absolutely *Predestination*, and the *Grace of God*” (p. 40).

Its second article expresses the Waldensians’ belief in the Calvinist doctrine of Unconditional Election: “All those that have been, and shall be saved, have been elected of God, before the Foundation of the World” (p. 40).

Its third article expresses the Waldensians’ belief in the Calvinist doctrine of Irresistible Grace: “It is impossible that those that are appointed to salvation, should not be saved” (p. 40).

4) *A Declaration of the Waldenses* of 1603 was published 39 years after the death of John Calvin and 15 years before the Synod of Dort formulated the Five Points of Calvinism. The Waldensians herein unequivocally declared that the Reformed faith, Calvinism, was identical with the doctrine of salvation they had received from the Apostles:

“We declare that being very confident and certain, that the Doctrine and Religion taught and followed by the Reformed Churches of *France, Switzerland, Germany, England, Scotland, Geneve, Denmark, Swedeland, Holland*, and other Kingdoms, Nations, and Dominions, of which we hitherto have made open profession...is the only true Doctrine and Religion ordained and approved of God, which alone can render us acceptable to God, and bring us to salvation. We are resolved to stand to it to the hazard of our Lives, Honors, and Estates, and to continue in it the remnant of our Days...And in the meanwhile in the midst of our calamities and exile we request the Reformed Churches to hold and acknowledge us, as true Members of theirs, being ready to sign with our own Blood (if God calls us to it) the Confession of Faith by them made and published, which we acknowledge every way agreeing with the Doctrine taught and registered by the holy Apostles, and therefore truly Apostolic, promising to live and die in it...” (p. 42).

The Waldensians therefore praised God for having “enjoyed to this day the free exercise of the Reformed Religion” (p. 41).

5) The Waldensian *Confession of Faith* of 1655 even more emphatically manifests their Calvinism. Its ninth article expresses the Waldensians’ belief in the Calvinist doctrine of Total Depravity: “That man by his transgression...is thereby...under the Jurisdiction of him who has the power of Death, that is, the Devil; in so much that our free will is become a Servant and a Slave to Sin; and thus all men (both *Jews* and *Gentiles*) are by nature the Children of wrath, being all dead in their trespasses and sins, and consequently incapable of the least good motion, or inclination to anything which concerns their salvation; yes incapable to think one good thought without God’s special Grace, all their imaginations being wholly evil, and that continually” (pp. 63f).

Its eleventh article expresses the Waldensians’ belief in the Calvinist doctrine of Unconditional Election: “That God saves from that corruption and condemnation those whom He has chosen from the

(See *Calvinism* on page 12)

PRAY FOR GRACE TO BE HOLY

Letters to Mike Gendron Of Proclaiming the Gospel:

ptg@pro-gospel.org ~ www.pro-gospel.org

PO Box 940871, Plano, TX 75094

R. G., Huntsville, TX, writes:

I received your newsletter with the article, *The only Hope for a World Spinning Out of Control!* Very sound, Brother. In the letters to the editor, I read a couple of rebukes with some very strong hatred towards you and Pastor John MacArthur. It is obvious that if these individuals could get away with it, they would probably burn you at the stake! It amazes me how so many Catholics strongly defend their religion, but are very unfamiliar with their own dogmas. How can one defend their faith while, at the same time, being ignorant of what they are defending? One of my fellow prisoners said, "If you don't join the Catholic Church, you will never be saved." My only response was, "the church did not die on the cross for our sins." He had no response.

Edgar, Internet writes:

First of all Mike Gendron, I am a very devout Catholic, but respect other religions. I hope you will respect my opinions. Now let me tell you this—you say that Catholics obey men and follow traditions against the Word of God. Let me inform you that you are wrong. Hebrews 13:17 says, "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account." When did it become okay to disobey the church's leaders, and set up rival churches? Please answer this question with Scripture, like you show your followers. You must try to save Satanists who are in great danger. As for Catholics, we rely on the everlasting mercy and love of Jesus Christ.

Brother Mike answers:

If you will look at the context of the passage that you quoted, you will see, in verse seven, that the church leaders we are to obey as they rule over us are "those who have spoken the Word of God to you" and whose "faith and conduct" follow their teaching. This criteria disqualifies the Roman Catholic clergy, as it did the Pharisees and Sadducees who nullified the Word of God with their tradition (Matt 15:6). Both groups of religious leaders chose to supplant the authority of God's Word with an authority of their own. Because of this, Jesus condemned them and told His disciples to beware of them and their doctrine (Matt 16:6-12; 23:13). Jesus went on to say that they made their converts "sons of Hell" (Matt 23:15). Your church leaders deny the sufficiency, necessity, efficacy, and completion of Jesus Christ's work of redemption. They should not be obeyed but re-proved and corrected (2 Tim 3:15-16). Anyone who obeys them instead of God's Word will have the same fate as those who obeyed the scribes and Pharisees (Matt 23:13). As for setting up rival churches, Jesus established only one Apostolic Church which includes all those who have obeyed Christ's first command to "repent and believe the Gospel" (Mark 1:15). Rival churches include Catholic and Protestant apostates who preach another gospel and another Jesus and who have departed from the true faith.

C.R., Slidell, LA, writes:

Just today I sent a link of your web site to all of my Catholic relatives, along with a note urging them to seek the Truth in the Word of God by researching what their church teaches, and the information on your web site. I know I am up against much opposition. My husband's family is Italian Roman Catholic. Upon learning of the e-mail to our (his) family members, he became very upset and told me he was embarrassed for what I did. He often says to me, "Thank God *you* have all the answers, and all the millions of Catholics in this world are wrong." He continues to believe that I'm "bashing," even though I try to explain I'm only sharing God's Truth. He feels I should not force my views on them. I told him they are not my views, but God's, and I will never stop sharing the Gospel. I was saved in a friend's kitchen one day as she shared the Gospel with me. I want to learn as much as I can about Catholicism to equip myself to better serve in this ministry.

A. S., Ocala, FL, writes:

Received the video *Another Jesus, Another Gospel* in the mail today, and couldn't wait to preview it for my class *Meet the Catholics*. A real eye opener! You've done a great job of comparing Catholic Tradition with Biblical Truth. Lots of wonderful Scriptures to share with the class. Many will soon realize there are so many profound differences between Roman Catholic doctrine and Biblical Christianity. Thanks for the great resources.

P. & M. S., Colorado Springs, CO, write:

We are blessed by your continued faithfulness to the Lord, and to His calling to minister the only hope of life to those dead in sin. Your newsletter continues to bring the light of the true Gospel to those in spiritual darkness within the RCC. It is heartbreaking to see how many people are trusting in such a horrendous man-made system.

STUDY OF EPHESIANS**THE GROWING CHURCH — 2****Ephesians 4:15b**

A third area in which the Church must be growing is in holiness of life. In this area the mind, the emotions, the will, and the actual doing are all involved. If growth in knowledge, and a joy and appreciation of the Gospel are genuine, the result should be a changed life. As we will see in the weeks to come, the second half of this chapter and the remainder of the Epistle have numerous commands to holy living, commands that get right down to where we live, and are intensely practical.

The last thing our verse tells us is absolutely critical for putting into the right perspective everything we have been saying up to this point, for notice that this growth in all things which the Church should be engaged is said to be a growth “*unto Him who is the Head—Christ.*” We cannot emphasize this too much. This is the key to how the Church grows. It is Jesus Christ who initiates the growth, who causes the growth, and who sustains the growth!

Consider this by going all the way back to the question of how a person gets into the body of Christ. How does a person become a member of the Church in the New Testament sense? You will find that the same answer is always given. A person becomes a member of the body of Christ when he or she is born-again, and comes to rely upon the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior from sin.

This, to me, can be a danger of church membership. Being a church member is a good thing, but there is always that chance that someone will be admitted into the membership of the church who does not really have the life of Christ within him. Yet, because he knows the right answers, and can give a credible profession of faith, he is admitted into the church, and may develop a false confidence about it. Even if the person does not have that growth in understanding or feelings or holiness of life, he may think that he must be all right because he was admitted into the membership of the church. What counts is not what denomination you belong to, or what church you are a member of, but **DO YOU BELONG TO JESUS CHRIST?** Can you say, “I am connected to the Head, and I am growing up in all things unto Him?”

What we are saying is that the whole thing starts with Jesus Christ. And what Paul is telling us here at the end of verse 15, is that it only continues by Christ! It is sad to see how many Christian people live lives of anxiety and misery because they are relying upon their own energies and abilities to live the Christian life. And taking that approach, they inevitably fail, time and time again! Jesus’ own teaching on this matter makes it clear that the individual Christian’s growth, and the growth of the Church altogether is the result of life which comes from Him, and flows through each Believer. This is the teaching which is found in John 15, where Jesus says to His people, “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing” (John 15:4-5).

But let us come even more pointedly to the focus of the text. We have been speaking of the need for the life of Christ to be in the indi-

vidual Christian. But that is not the focus of the context here. The focus here is on the *Church*. And it is the Church, in particular, in our day which needs to learn the same lesson. What is a healthy, thriving church? Many would answer that question by saying that the healthy church is one which is full of activity. It is one which has clubs and concerts, and meetings and programs for all ages. Now, there is nothing wrong with any of these things, in and of themselves, yet, what is often overlooked is that there is a big difference between activity and *life*. What our passage is saying is that the Church must grow up in all things unto Christ! This is talking about the life of Christ flowing in the members of the Church. But that is not the same thing as activity. Activity may be produced by a machine. But only that which is alive can bear fruit. Unbelievers are quite capable of having meetings and conferences, and activities. But it is only those who are living in constant communion with the Lord Jesus Christ, those who are alive in Him, who will bear fruit for Him!

Do you personally have this life? Do you have a personal relationship with God? Have you been born-again by the Holy Spirit of God? Have you been made to see yourself as a sinner before a holy God who needs forgiveness, and have you come seeking that forgiveness through faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ?

If you have not, let me invite you even now to realize that what you need is not religion, but a living relationship with the living Christ! And the only way you can have this, is to realize that you cannot do anything to earn such a relationship. The Bible says that we are sinful, and cannot do anything to earn God’s favor. What we need is someone to earn God’s favor for us! And the only One who can do that is Jesus Christ. When He died on the Cross, He died so that sinners might be saved. If you try to earn your own salvation, you will only guarantee that you will never have it, for nothing that we can do can satisfy the perfect standards of God! Instead, we must come in humility, admitting that we do not deserve God’s favor. We must admit that as sinners we deserve His wrath and punishment. And we must see that God Himself has opened the way for us to come to Him through the perfect Person and work of Jesus Christ.

For those of you who have so come to Him, have you made it your constant prayer for Him, the Head of the Church, to breathe new life into His Church by the power of the Holy Spirit? Have you been asking Him to breathe new life into people who do not know Him, and who are spiritually dead? Have you asked Him to bring revival to the Church and to make us all realize that we are dependent upon Him for everything? Let us pray that the Church will glorify God, will grow up in all things unto Him, and will have an impact upon the world.--PF

**PRAY DAILY FOR THE ELECT
IN NORTH DAKOTA.**

UNDERSTANDING ROMAN CATHOLICISM

By Rick Jones

Mary: Saved from Birth?

Catholicism asserts that Mary never sinned and therefore was redeemed (saved) from the moment of her birth:

“By the grace of God Mary remained free of every personal sin her whole life long.” (Page 124, #493)

“Espousing the divine will for salvation whole-heartedly, without a single sin to restrain her, she gave herself entirely to the person and to the work of her Son...” (Page 124, #494)

“Mary is the most excellent fruit of redemption (SC 103): from the first instant of her conception, she was totally preserved from the stain of original sin and she remained pure from all personal sin throughout her life.” (Page 128 #508. See also Page 191, #722)

If you are wondering if this doctrine is taught in God’s Word, it isn’t. The Catholic Catechism admits that it is another church tradition:

“Through the centuries the Church has become ever more aware that Mary, ‘full of grace’ through God, was redeemed from the moment of her conception.” (Page 123, #491)

But the Bible identifies Jesus as the Sinless One, not Mary:

“For He has made Him (Jesus) to be sin for us, who *knew no sin*; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Cor 5:21).

Aside from the Lord Jesus, the Bible is quite clear that *nobody* else has ever been sinless:

“For *all have sinned* and come short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23).

“As it is written, There is none righteous, *no, not one*” (Rom 3:10).

“They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; *there is none that does good, no, not one*” (Rom 3:12).

Notice, none of these verses say, “all have sinned, except Mary.”

“But the Scripture has concluded *all/under sin...*” (Gal 3:22).

Mary knew she needed a Savior

In Luke’s gospel, Mary herself admits that she was a sinner. Otherwise she would never have concluded that she needed a Savior:

“And Mary said, My soul does magnify the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God **my Savior.**” (Luke 1:46-47).

Yet the Catholic church demands that members worship Mary:

“The Church’s devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to Christian worship.” (Page 253, #971)

Did Jesus exalt Mary?

Here’s how Jesus referred to His mother when Mary asked to see Him one day:

“Who is My mother? And who are My brethren? And He stretched forth His hand toward His disciples, and said, Behold My mother and My brethren! For whoever shall do the will of My Father which is in Heaven, the same is My brother, and sister, and mother” (Matt 12:48-50).

Jesus did not say, “Usher in this blessed woman.” Rather, He replied that anyone who obeys God’s Word is equal with Mary. Jesus refused to exalt

her.

When Others Exalted Mary

When a woman came to Jesus and attempted to exalt Mary, look how the Lord responded:

“... a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto Him, Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You. But He said, More than that, blessed are they who hear the Word of God, and keep it” (Luke 11:27-28).

Jesus announces that those who hear and obey the Word of God are blessed above Mary! Perhaps the Lord inserted these verses for those today who choose to ignore the Word of God so they can follow church traditions.

A Pattern

True to the pattern we have seen throughout this book, Jesus is again robbed of glory and honor that He alone deserves. Rather than recognizing Him as the only Sinless One, Catholicism contradicts Scripture and insists that Mary was also sinless. Why?

Conclusion

Was Mary sinless from birth? Catholic tradition wants you to believe she was, but God’s Word says she wasn’t. Who will you believe?

“For there is not a just man upon earth, that does good, and sins not” (Eccl 7:20).

“Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that *all have sinned*” (Rom 5:12).

Pray there are millions of our Master’s elect
in the Roman Catholic church,
and that His Holy Spirit will quicken
Them, and burden them to follow
His command of
2 Corinthians 6:17-18—
“Therefore come out from among them,
and be you separate,
says the Lord,
and touch not the unclean *thing*;
and I will receive you,
and will be a Father unto you, and
you shall be my sons and daughters,
says the Lord Almighty.”

The Gospel—What Is It?

By John Haldane (1768-1851)

THE GOSPEL is the good news of pardon to the guilty, and it enters into no calculations in regard to the different degrees of guilt in those whom it addresses. It reveals an Atonement sufficient for all, and every sinner of the human race is commanded to receive it as a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save the chief of sinners.

The Gospel does not teach us how to lay a foundation for ourselves, but informs us of the sure foundation which God has laid in Zion upon which all are *equally* invited and commanded to build their hopes, without any apprehensions of being upbraided for their past conduct by their gracious Creator.

The Gospel is very generally misunderstood by those who profess to believe. They view it as a scheme for making up their deficiencies through the merits of Christ. But this is “another gospel.” The Gospel of Christ is addressed to those who are far from righteousness; who are poor and blind, and naked; who have no money to purchase salvation, no merit to recommend them to the favor of God.

Christ came, not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. If we are not sinners, we have nothing to do with the Gospel. And if we are sinners, let us not reject the counsel of God against ourselves by vainly supposing that anything about us gives us a peculiar claim to His favor, or by imagining that our sins are too great to be forgiven.

The righteousness of God is altogether irrespective of our obedience. The thief upon the cross was saved by faith in Jesus, and none shall enter Heaven in any other way.

Let us not then suppose that we either have, or shall hereafter obtain something which may entitle us to the favor of God. “Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.” Let us, therefore, come to God with the publican’s prayer, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” And let us look for this mercy through the Atonement of Christ.

Although the Scriptures are so clear and express on this subject, it is a stumbling block and foolishness to the great body of those who hear the Gospel. It offends their pride to be put upon a level with the outcasts of society! Surely, they think, some difference will be made. But they err, not knowing the Scriptures—not understanding the malignity of sin nor the Grace of God.

They view it as a kind of bargain which God proposes to make with His creatures, that on certain conditions He will accept them. While in fact it is the message of reconciliation—equally addressed to all mankind—declaring that a full atonement for sin has been made upon the Cross, and inviting every sinner of Adam’s race instantly to approach God as his Friend and Father through Christ.

When Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, it was a remedy equally adapted for all who had been bitten. Whether the bite had just been received, or whether the poison had infected the blood—by looking to the serpent, the patient was healed!

And in reference to this emblem, Christ, indiscriminately addressing all mankind, says, “Look unto Me and be you saved, all the ends of the earth. For I am God, and there is none else—a just God and a Savior; there is none beside Me” (Isa 45:21, 22).

In announcing the publication of the Gospel, the Lord declared by His Prophet: “The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the

haughtiness of man shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day” (Isa 2:11).

While the Gospel is a proclamation of pardon addressed to sinners without exception—an unlimited invitation to the guilty to take shelter in the blood of Atonement—it is the power of God unto salvation only to those who believe. But it is vain to talk of being justified by Christ’s righteousness unless our hearts are purified by faith.

We may profess faith in Christ while we are the slaves of sin. We may deceive ourselves and affirm that we are trusting in His righteousness while we are living after the flesh. But every branch in the vine that bears not fruit shall be cast into the fire. We cannot impose on God—and if, with the Scriptures in our hands, we impose on ourselves—we are inexcusable.

If we believe Christ’s Gospel, it will effectually work in our hearts (1 Thess 2:13), and teach us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. And if what we believe does not produce this effect, it is not the true Grace of God in which we stand.

Every doctrine, the belief of which does not produce this effect, is a delusion, and the comfort which we derive from it is merely sporting ourselves “with our own deceiving.” They who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts.—Adapted from a tract published by CHAPEL LIBRARY, 2603 W Wright St., Pensacola, FL 32505 Phone: (850) 438-6666 • Fax: (850) 438-0227 *A Ministry of Mt. Zion Bible Church.*

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**HAVE YOU PRAYED
TODAY FOR YOUR
PASTOR OR CHAPLAIN?**

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS?

There once was a man named George Thomas, a pastor in a Small New England town. One Easter Sunday morning he came to the Church carrying a rusty, bent, old bird cage, and set it by the pulpit. Several eyebrows were raised and, as if in response, Pastor Thomas began to speak.

“I was walking through town yesterday when I saw a young boy coming toward me swinging this bird cage. On the bottom of the cage were three little wild birds, shivering with cold and fright. I stopped the lad and asked, “What you got there, Son?”

“Just some old birds,” came the reply.

“What are you gonna do with them?” I asked.

“Take ‘em home and have fun with ‘em,” he answered. “I’m gonna tease ‘em and pull out their feathers to make ‘em fight. I’m gonna have a real good time.”

“But you’ll get tired of those birds sooner or later. What will you do then?”

“Oh, I got some cats,” said the little boy. “They like birds. I’ll take ‘em to them.”

The pastor was silent for a moment. “How much do you want for those birds, Son?” “Huh?!!!! Why, you don’t want them birds, Mister. They’re just plain old field birds. They don’t sing—they ain’t even pretty!”

“How much?” the pastor asked again.

The boy sized up the pastor as if he were crazy and said, “\$10?” The pastor reached in his pocket and took out a ten dollar bill. He placed it in the boy’s hand. In a flash, the boy was gone.

The pastor picked up the cage and gently carried it to the end of

the alley where there was a tree and a grassy spot. Setting the cage down, he opened the door, and by softly tapping the bars, persuaded the birds out, setting them free.

Well, that explained the empty bird cage on the pulpit, and then the pastor began to tell this story. One day Satan and Jesus were having a conversation.

Satan had just come from the Garden of Eden, and he was gloating and boasting. “Yes, sir, I just caught the world full of people down there. Set me a trap, used bait I knew they couldn’t resist. Got ‘em all!”

“What are you going to do with them?” Jesus asked.

Satan replied, “Oh, I’m gonna have fun! I’m gonna teach them how to marry and divorce each other, how to hate and abuse each other, how to drink and smoke and curse. I’m gonna teach them how to invent guns and bombs and kill each other. I’m really gonna have fun!”

“And what will you do when you get done with them?” Jesus asked. “Oh, I’ll kill ‘em,” Satan glared proudly. “How much do you want for them?” Jesus asked. “Oh, You don’t want those people. They ain’t no good. Why, You’ll take them and they’ll just hate You. They’ll spit on You, curse You and kill You!! You don’t want those people!!” “How much?” Jesus asked again.

Satan looked at Jesus and sneered, “All your tears, and all your blood.” Jesus said, “DONE!” Then He paid the price.

The pastor picked up the cage. He opened the door and he walked from the pulpit.

Isn’t it odd how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world’s going to Hell? Isn’t it funny how we believe what the newspapers say, but question what the Bible says? Isn’t it strange how everyone wants to go to Heaven provided they do not have to believe, think, say, or do anything the Bible says? Isn’t it funny how someone can say, “I believe in God,” but still follow Satan (who, by the way, also “believes” in God)?

Isn’t it funny how you can send a thousand jokes through e-mail, and they spread like wildfire, but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing? Isn’t it funny how the lewd, crude, vulgar and obscene pass freely through cyberspace, but the public discussion of Jesus is suppressed in the school and workplace? Isn’t it funny how someone can be so fired up for Christ on Sunday, but be an invisible Christian the rest of the week? Isn’t it funny how when you go to forward this message, you will not send it to many on your address list because you’re not sure what they believe, or what they will think of you for sending it to them? Isn’t it funny how I can be more worried about what other people think of me than what God thinks of me?—An actual e-mail received by the editor in 2001.

SO WHAT IS A CALVINIST, ANYWAY?

If anyone should ask us what we would choose for our motto, as preachers of the Gospel, we think we should reply, “God only is our salvation.” The late lamented Mr. Denham has put at the foot of his portrait a most admirable text, “Salvation is of the Lord.” Now that is just an epitome of Calvinism—it is the sum and the substance of it! If anyone should ask you what you mean by a Calvinist, you may reply, “he is one who says, *salvation is of the Lord*. I cannot find in Scripture any other doctrine than this. It is the essence of the Bible. “He only is my rock and my salvation.”

Tell me anything that departs from this, and it will be a heresy. Tell me a heresy, and I shall find its essence here—that it has departed from this great, this fundamental, this rocky Truth—“God is my rock, and my salvation.” What is the heresy of Rome but the addition of something to the perfect merits of Jesus Christ—the bringing in of the works of the flesh to assist in our justification? And what is that heresy of Arminianism but the secret addition of something to the complete work of the Redeemer? You will find that every heresy, if brought to the touchstone, will discover itself here—it departs from this—“He only is my rock, and my salvation.”—**CHS**—*Sermon #80, Volume 2*—GOD ALONE IS THE SALVATION OF HIS PEOPLE,

**PRAY FOR GRACE TO DO ALL
YOU DO FOR THE
HONOR AND GLORY
OF OUR LORD,
JESUS CHRIST!**

REFLECTIONS

Gems gleaned by Jim Robinette
<http://www.actionuganda.net/>

“Reflections” is a Christian meditation sent by Action Uganda Ministries, and is meant to instruct, encourage and edify.

It is our duty to make use of this gift [prayer] of the Spirit. Have you an ability to always pray, freely given you by the Holy Spirit? Why do you not pray always in private, in families, as occasions offer? Prayer is that singular duty in which every Grace is acted, every sin opposed, every blessing obtained; the whole of our obedience is concerned in it, and much of our present and future blessedness depends upon it. What difficulties and discouragements rise up against it; what aversions there are in corrupted nature to it; what distractions often attend it, is well known to the people of God.

But to help us under our various infirmities; to give us freedom and confidence in coming to the Throne of God; to enable us as children to cry, “Abba, Father,” the Holy Spirit is given to us. Who, then, can express the sin and folly of neglecting prayer? How does it grieve the Spirit, and injure our own souls! Can we go from day to day in the neglect of opportunities and occasions of prayer? How shall we answer this contempt of the Spirit’s gracious aid?

Do carnal persons habitually live without prayer? Alas, they know not how to pray; but for those who have received this gift of the Spirit, enabling them to pray, and making it pleasant to the inner man—how great an aggravation is it to their sin! I press this duty of prayer the more, because the temptations and dangers of the present day particularly call for it. If we were to talk less, and pray more, things would be better than they are in this world.

It is the duty of those who have received this gift, to cherish it, to stir it up, and improve it; it is freely bestowed, but it is carefully to be preserved. It is a Gospel-talent given to be traded with, and thereby increased. And this is to be done

(1). By a constant consideration and observation of ourselves, our own hearts and our spiritual state and condition. Our state in general, by reason of the depth and deceitfulness of our hearts, and the various changes in our frames (mental outlook or mood), together with the temptations that assault us, will find us matter of examination all our days.

To assist us in this, is a part of the work of the Spirit; and if we neglect our duty towards Him herein, how can we expect that He should continue to aid us? He who prays without a due consideration of the beginnings of temptation, the deceitful acts of indwelling sin, the risings of particular corruptions, with the occasions that give them advantage, must pray at random, “fighting uncertainly as one that beats the air.” But he who attends to this self-search and judgment, will always have in readiness the due matter of prayer, will be able to fill his mouth with arguments, and will thrive not only in the gift, but in the power and life of this duty.

(2). Constant searching of the Scripture. This is the glass wherein we may take the best view of ourselves, because it represents both what we are, and what we ought to be; what we are in ourselves, what we are by the Grace of God; what are our frames, actions and ways, and what is their defect in His sight. And a better instruction of what to pray for, or how to pray, cannot be given us. And who is there, who almost at any time reading the Scripture with reverence of God, and subjection of conscience to Him, has not had some particular matter of prayer or praise effectually suggested to him? And Christians would find no small advantage by constantly turning what they read into prayer or praise; for hereby the instructions of the Word would be more confirmed in their minds, and their hearts would be more engaged in the practice of them.

(3) Meditation on the glorious excellencies of God. The examples of prayer which we have in the Scripture, generally begin with some expressions of the names or titles of God, to which the remembrance of some mighty acts of His power is usually added. God has revealed His name unto us for this very purpose, that we might call upon Him by the name which He acknowledges and takes to Himself. Hereby holy reverence and godly fear are excited.

We are encouraged to come with boldness to the Throne of Grace. It is a Throne of Grace that God in Christ is represented to us upon; but yet it is still a Throne, whereon majesty and Glory reside: and God is always to be considered by us as on a Throne. Hereby also faith and confidence are excited; for prayer is our taking ourselves to God as our Shield, our Rock, and our Reward. Therefore frequent meditation on the holy excellencies of the Divine Nature, must necessarily be a useful preparation for prayer.

(4) Meditation on the mediation and intercession of Christ. To this end He is proposed to us as abiding continually in the discharge of His priestly office, (Heb 4:15, 19.) And this is not only an encouragement to, and in, our supplications, but a means to increase and strengthen the Grace and gift of prayer itself, for the mind is thereby ready to exercise itself about the effectual interposition of the Lord Christ at the Throne of Grace in our behalf. This has a principal place in the prayers of Believers, and hereby we may test whether our faith is evangelical or not.—Adapted from *The Holy Spirit, His Gifts and Power* by John Owen (1616-1683). Published by Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, MI. 1954. Pages 334-337.

—CALVINISM—

(Continued from page 5)

foundation of the world, not for any disposition, faith or holiness that He foresaw in them, but of His mercy in *Jesus Christ* His Son; passing by all the rest, according to the irreprehensible Reason of His free will and Justice” (p. 64).

Its fourteenth article expresses the Waldensians’ belief in the Calvinist doctrine of Limited Atonement: “That God so loved the world, that is to say, those whom He has chosen out of the world, that He gave His own Son to save us by His most perfect obedience, (especially that obedience which He expressed in His Suffering the cursed Death of the Cross) and also by His Victory over the Devil, Sin, and Death” (p. 65).

Its eighteenth article expresses the Waldensians’ belief in the Calvinist doctrine of Irresistible Grace: “That...faith is the gracious and efficacious work of the Holy Spirit which enlightens our Souls, and persuades them to lean and rest upon the mercy of God, and so thereby to apply unto themselves the merits of *Jesus Christ*” (p. 65).

Its twenty-third article expresses the Waldensians’ belief in the Calvinist doctrine of the Preservation and Perseverance of the Saints: “That those who are already in the possession of eternal life by their faith and good works, ought to be considered as Saints, and as glorified persons...” (p. 66).

This lesson teaches us that the doctrines which we today call Calvinism were embraced by the Waldensians long before the time of its namesake, John Calvin. And these forefathers of today’s Baptists declared that this doctrine was embraced by them ever since it was delivered to them by the Apostles. Calvinism is therefore the Gospel!

Do We have to Pray For God’s Promises?

By A. W. Pink

When commanding His servant Elijah to appear again before Ahab, the Lord had expressly promised Elijah, “And I will send rain upon the earth” (1 Kings 18:1). Why, then, should Elijah be found earnestly begging Him for rain in verse 42? To natural reason, a Divine assurance of anything seems to render asking for it *unnecessary*: would not God make good His word and send the rain irrespective of further prayer? Not so did Elijah reason—nor should we. So far from God’s promises being designed to exempt us from making application to the Throne of Grace for the blessings guaranteed, they are designed to instruct us what things to ask for, and to encourage us to ask for them believingly, that we may have their fulfillment *to ourselves*. God’s thoughts and ways are ever the opposite of ours—and infinitely superior. In Ezekiel 36:24-36 is found a whole string of promises, yet in immediate connection therewith we read, “I will yet for this *be inquired of* by the house of Israel, *to do it* for them” (v. 37).

By asking for those thing which God has promised, we declare Him as the Giver and are taught our dependence upon Him: faith is called into exercise and we appreciate His mercies all the more when they are received. God will do what He undertakes, but He requires us to sue for all which we would have Him do for us. Even to His own beloved Son God says, “*Ask of Me*, and I shall give You the heathen for Your inheritance” (Psa. 2:8): His reward must be claimed. Even though Elijah heard (by faith), “a sound of abundance of rain,” nevertheless he must pray for it (Zech. 10:1). God has appointed that if we would receive, we must ask; that if we would find, we must seek; that if we would have the door of blessing opened, we must knock; and if we fail so to do we shall prove the truth of those words, “you have not, because you ask not” (James 4:2). God’s promises, then, are given us to incite prayer, to become the mold in which our petitions should be cast, to intimate the extent to which we may expect an answer.

“OFFICE OF PRIEST” IS BLASPHEMY!

By C. H. Spurgeon

I would not say a thing too stern or too severe, but I do most thoroughly believe that an assumption of the “office of priest” is so base an usurpation of the priestly office of Christ, that I could as well conceive of a man being saved who called himself God, as conceive of a man being saved who called himself a “priest.” If he really means what he says, he has so trenced upon the priestly prerogative of Christ, that it seems to me he has touched the very crown jewels, and is guilty of a blasphemy, which, unless it is repented of, shall surely bring damnation on his head! Shake your garments, you ministers of Christ, from all priestly assumption! Come out from among them—touch not the unclean thing! There are no “priests” now, to minister among men! Jesus Christ—and He only—is the Priest of His Church, and He has made all of us priests and kings unto our God, and we shall reign forever and ever! If I should have any person here so weak as to depend for his salvation upon the offerings of another man, I bid him to forego his deception; I care not who your “priest” may be—he may belong to the Anglican or to the Romish Church—yes, and to any church under Heaven; if he claims to be anything of a priest more than you can claim yourself—away with him! He imposes upon you! He speaks to you that which God abhors, and that which the Church of Christ should abhor, and would detest, were she truly alive to her Master’s Glory. None but Jesus, none but Jesus! All other priests, and offerings we disdain; cast dirt upon their garments—they are not—and they cannot be priests! They usurp the special dignity of Jesus!—Sermon #341, Volume 6—THE HIGH PRIEST STANDING BETWEEN THE DEAD AND THE LIVING—by God’s Grace, read/download all 63 volumes of CHS sermons free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org

ZEBULON GEMS

ZEBULON BAPTIST CHURCH—Tom Harding, Pastor

6088 Zebulon Highway, Pikeville, KY 41501~ E-Mail: taharding@Mikrotec.com ~ Web-Sites: www.henrytmahan.com/zebulongrace.htm www.zebulongrace.com/zebulon.htm

The lips of truth shall be established forever: but a lying tongue is but for a moment. Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counselors of peace is joy. There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief. Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they who deal truly are His delight.—Proverbs 12:19-22

THE SERVANT OF THE LORD

2 Timothy 2: 24-25

The servant of the Lord, especially the minister of the Word, ought not to strive and contend about words to no profit. He ought to strive for the faith of the Gospel. To be quarrelsome and contentious over mere words, customs, and doctrines, to show his intelligence, mastery, and piety, is to defeat the very purpose of his office. He is to be kind, mild-tempered, and gentle to all men preserving the bond of peace. He must be a skilled and suitable teacher, patient, and willing to bear reproach. Let the minister learn to correct with courtesy and gentleness those who oppose the Word of God, and in turn “oppose themselves,” for any man who opposes truth does so to his own ruin and unhappiness. We must be firm in the truth but tender in the spirit with our opponents in the hope that God will grant to them repentance, and an understanding of the Word. Don’t build a wall so high between you and an opponent that he is prevented from repenting, and returning without embarrassment and humiliation. It is only by God’s Grace that we stand.—**Pastor Henry T. Mahan**

TRUE SAVING FAITH

The faith of the natural man, the unregenerate man, is reasonable, logical, and often very influential (Matthew 7:21-23); but the faith of the Christian is a gift of God, a miracle, and **always** produces a radical change in those who possess it. A man cannot possibly possess saving faith, whose thinking and attitude has not been radically changed concerning God and righteousness, man and sin, and Christ and Grace (2 Corinthians 5:14-17). The difference between the two kinds of faith, natural and spiritual, biblical and spurious, is the difference between shadows and substance, words and reality. Natural faith believes, but saving faith **knows**. Natural faith merely acknowledges what saving faith **experiences**. The difference is great. The difference is life or death!—**Pastor Maurice Montgomery**

OPPOSITION TO DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY IS ESSENTIALLY ATHEISM

Men have no objection to a god who is really no God; I mean, by this, a god who shall be the subject of their caprice, who shall be a lackey to their will, who shall be under their control—they have no objection to such a being as that. But a God who speaks, and it is done, who commands, and it stands fast; a God who has no respect for their persons, but does as He wills among the armies of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of this lower world—such a God as this they cannot endure.—**C. H. Spurgeon**

—TRUE DOCTRINE—

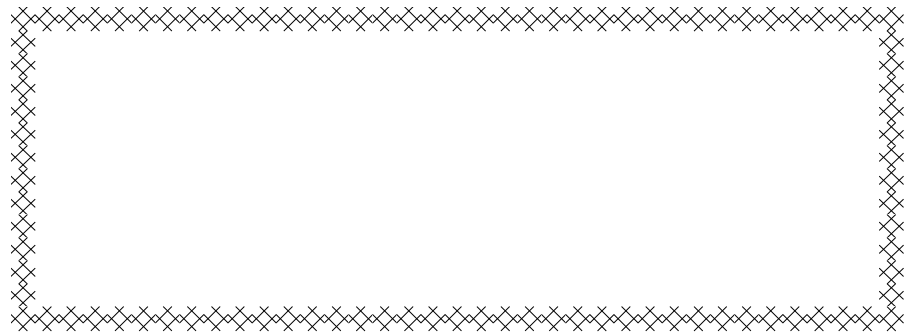
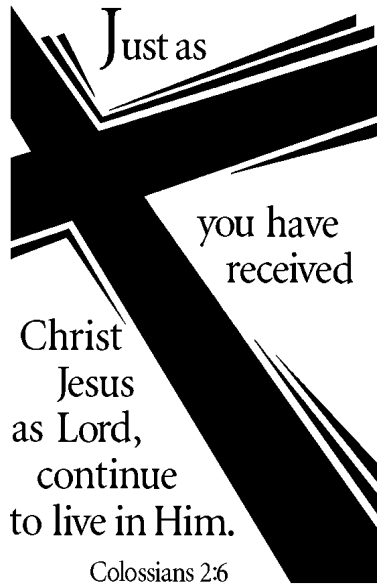
On true doctrine rests the worship of the true and living God. From error in doctrine springs the worship of a false god. There is a tendency among many religious people to undervalue true doctrine, to exalt morality at the expense of the Character of God, and the teachings of our Lord, and to deny the importance of a sound creed. I do not doubt that a sound creed has often covered an unsound life. But when I hear it said, “Such-and-such do not believe the Doctrines of Grace and Substitution, but they love the Lord and are saved,” I wonder and ask, “What then was the Bible written for?” Is it not an infallible expression of the mind of God? Is it not a standard of the Truth of God? Are we to believe what appeals to us, and deny the rest? God forbid! God’s Word declares the oneness of truth, and condemns EVERY DEPARTURE FROM THE TRUTH AS A DIRECT ATTACK ON GOD HIMSELF! Do not tell me that a man’s heart is right with God when his head contains a creed of error and denies the Person and work of the Redeemer!—**HORATIUS BONAR, 1808-1889**

IT’S FREE! TAKE IT OR DIE IN YOUR SIN!

There was a learned Romanist who once ventured to say that if salvation could only be had on terms of Free Grace, he would not have it. Do you know what happened? Why, he did not have it—that was all. And that is what will happen to you—if you will not have salvation as a free gift of Divine Grace, without any merit wherewith to purchase it—then you must go without it, and perish in your sin, for the terms of Free Grace will never be altered to suit the pride of the human heart.—**CHS**

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In This Issue...

...and, Lord willing, every issue, our only purpose is to honor Jesus Christ.

BEWARE OF THAT OLD BLACK BULL...

By Charles Haddon Spurgeon

What can we do practically to carry out this plan? [Be of a church that, above all else, honors its King, Lord Jesus.] Brothers and Sisters, before I answer that question, let me say there are some things we must take care of, or else we cannot carry it out at all. We must watch lest the church be adulterated by additions which are not an increase to her strength. We must be very careful that no thought of strife, no symptom of envy, no feeling of jealousy creep in. Up to now you have been as one man—undivided and indivisible. This is absolutely necessary in the church for the carrying out of any of her purposes! Divided we should utterly fail! I remember a somewhat ludicrous incident which occurred to a church in which there were great quarreling and bickering. The minister and the deacons, and his people, were all at arm's length and daggers drawn. It was determined at last, that the matter should come to a settlement, and it was by mutual consent given up to the judgment of a good Christian farmer, who lived in the neighborhood. He was to hear the case, and write an answer to be read at the next Church Meeting. Our friend, the farmer, sat down to write his letter—at the same time he had a letter from a steward or tenant asking advice about his farm—and by a mistake, or rather by a blessed Providence, as God would have it, he put the wrong letters into the envelopes, so that the letter which was intended for the church went to the steward, and that which was intended for the steward went to the church! At the Church Meeting, when they were all assembled, this letter was read to the church; it ran thus—"Dear Friend, mind you see to the hedges well. Keep them up as best you can, and take special care of the old black bull." Now that was a most extraordinary letter to write to a church! It had been sent by mistake, but the minister, thinking it was a *bona fide* piece of advice, said he could not understand it. Some Brother got up and said it was plain enough—it was meant that they must be very watchful as to whom they should receive into the church. They must keep their hedges up, and see there were no gaps. "And," he said, "by the 'old black bull,' I have no doubt he means that spirit of Satan that would get in, and trouble, and divide us." So understanding it in that sense, they made up their differences, repaired their hedges, and were careful of "the old black bull." Every church must do the same, for before we can do anything for Christ, we must first be right at home! We must have peace within our borders; we must be filled with the finest wheat, or else He will not send forth His Word, and make it to run very swiftly. This, I hope, will be well seen to.—*Sermon #393, Volume 7—THE CHURCH—CONSERVATIVE AND AGGRESSIVE—read/download, by God's Grace, all 63 volumes of CH Spurgeon sermons, and over 400 Spanish translations free of charge at www.spurgeongems.org*