



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

“To testify the gospel of the grace of God.” Acts 20:24

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SALVATION BY GRACE PERPETUATED THROUGH PRESERVATION AND PERSEVERANCE

By Wayne Camp

Part I: Preservation

“I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (II Tim. 1:12). “. . . him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (Jn. 6:37).

In this series of articles we have been discussing God's salvation that is wholly of grace. We have learned from the study of Romans 4:16 that grace is the only sure way of salvation. Paul declared: **“Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace: to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham.”** Paul includes both Jews and Gentiles in the seed. He tells his readers that the end reason that salvation is by grace is so that it will be **“sure to all the seed.”**

Two great aspects of the salvation that is by grace are the preservation and the perseverance of the saints. Since we cannot effectively and sufficiently deal with both aspects in one article I have chosen to divide it into two parts. In this article a study will be made of the saints' preservation. The Lord willing, we will consider the perseverance of the saints in the next issue of the **GPP**.

PREFATORY OBSERVATIONS

Before entering this study it seems well to make a few prefatory observations on the subject. When it is declared that all the saved are

preserved it is not meant to be construed that I believe that all church members are saved. In fact, it is quite evident from Scripture and experience that many professing Christians are just as lost as the worst reprobate. They are like those described by John when he wrote: **“They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us” (I Jn. 2:19).** Many come, make a profession of faith, and then fall by the way side. They did not lose their salvation for they were never saved. Their departure manifests their lost condition.

It should also be pointed out that many who preach are unsaved. The fact that one preaches in the name of Jesus, works miracles in the name of Jesus, casts out devils in the name of Jesus, and does many wonderful works in the name of Jesus does not mean that he is a born-again child of God. Jesus revealed that many such preachers would be cast into hell. **“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matt. 7:22-23).** These miracle-working ministers of Satan are on the airwaves and the TV channels peddling their perverted gospel and collecting millions. Others are out in

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small churches supporting the same doctrine that generates the momentum of the modern charismatic movement. Jesus will say: **"I NEVER KNEW YOU."** These were not known to him in time or eternity. They are none of his but are **"certain men . . . who were before of old ordained to this condemnation" (Jude. 4).**

False prophets parading as apostles of Christ are abundant. John wrote: **"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false**

prophets are gone out into the world" (I Jn. 4:1). Again he wrote: **"For many deceivers are entered into the world" (I Jn. 4:1).** Again he wrote: **"For many deceivers are entered into the world" (II Jn. 7).** Peter wrote: **"But there were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you . . . and many shall follow their pernicious ways" (II Pet. 2:1-2).** He further says that these false teachers are **"as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed"** and that they are like **"The dog"** which **"is turned to its own vomit again; and the sow that was washed"** which has returned **"to her wallowing in the mire" (II Pet. 2:12, 22).**

This proliferation of false teachers will continue until the return of Jesus Christ. Paul declared that these evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, **"deceiving and being deceived" (II Tim. 3:13).** **"Such are false apostles, deceitful workers transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed as an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as ministers of righteousness (II Cor. 11:13-15).** They come **"with all power, and signs and lying wonders and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish" (II Thes. 2:9-10).** They and their followers, while claiming to be saved, have **"not received the love of the truth"** and God **"shall send them a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (II Thes. 2:10-12).** It is clear from these verses that the majority of professing Christians do not know the meaning of nor have they ever experienced the God-wrought salvation that is wholly of grace. **ALL CHURCH MEMBERS ARE NOT SAVED!**

Let me point out also that when we teach the preservation of the saved we are not saying that children of God do not sin. Any who claim sinless perfection in the flesh are liars who deceive themselves and the truth is not in them (See Salvation by Grace cont. P. 5, Rt. Col.) (I Jn. 1:8). **"There is not a just man upon**

EDITORIAL

THE KIND OF OLD LANDMARKER I AM

(Sixth in a Series)

By Wayne Camp

I am the kind of *Old Landmarker* who believes that a church, to be a true New Testament type of ecclesia, must assemble together in one place. This does not mean a congregation must assemble in the same building every time it assembles. But, it does mean that to be truly local it cannot assemble in two or more places—one part of the body in Memphis, another part of the body in some place in Brazil, or Africa, or Thailand. A church is a body that assembles together, not apart. I have called at least five witnesses that have written things that affirm this position.

WITNESS 1: James Robinson Graves

"The ecclesia of the New Testament could, and was required to assemble in one place."

WITNESS 2: Elton Wilson

"How local is the local church? IT IS LOCAL ENOUGH TO ASSEMBLE. How local is the local church? IT IS LOCAL ENOUGH TO OBSERVE THE LORD'S SUPPER."

WITNESS 3: H. Boyce Taylor

"Our first reason for contending that the word ekklesia never means any thing but an organized and an assembling church is that the Lord Jesus, who is the author of the Book of Revelation, uses the word ekklesia 20 times in Revelation and every time He uses it, He refers to a local organized and assembling church."

WITNESS 4: Eld. Milburn Cockrell

"In order to have a church, baptized saints must come together in one place at the same

time." "Twenty times the word church is used in the singular number, and it points to a church which meets in a certain place."

"Those who do not gather with the congregation are not a part of it. Having your name on a church roll does not make you a church member! You must assemble with the congregation to truly be a part of it in the New Testament sense."

WITNESS 5: ELDER CURTIS PUGH

"New Testament usage, secular usage and the Septuagint usage of the word "ecclesia" indicate it was only and always used of an organized, congregating body of people in a given locality."

I am now calling a sixth witness who will verify the position that I have been advocating in this series of articles. It occurred to me this past week that when one sets out to show the local nature of the church as opposed to the universal visible or universal invisible concept, he will inadvertently but of necessity prove that a New Testament type of ecclesia is an organized assembling group of people who regularly assemble in one locality. I have yet to find a Baptist writer who, in proving the local nature of the New Testament ecclesia, said that such an ecclesia could meet in two or more locations.

I ask the reader to go back and examine my first five witnesses and see the portions of their testimony that I have emphasized. Without exception they have declared that a New Testament type of ecclesia assembles in one locality. It is an organized, assembling body of baptized believers that regularly

assembles in one locality. My next witness will testify to the same truth.

WITNESS 6: ELDER BUEL H. KAZEE

Just one church in one locality sent some messengers to another church in another locality for the purpose of counsel on a problem in which they had a mutual interest. They all went back to their respective churches.

This witness, in his book *The Church and the Ordinances*, dedicates a good deal of space to the proposition that a New Testament type of ecclesia is a church that assembles in a given locality. He, as our previously called witnesses, necessarily confines the church to one locality. A church that assembles in two or more parts in two or more locations is not truly a local church. Therefore, this witness, and none that I have found, ever tries to refute the universal nature of the church by advocating a church is local in nature when it meets in more than one locality.

Now note a bit of what Bro. Kazee said in the paragraph above. ". . . one church in one locality sent some messengers to another church in another locality." In this paragraph, Bro. Kazee was discussing the problem that arose in Antioch over the matter of circumcision. The church at Antioch was an independent, organized assembling body which regularly assembled in the city of Antioch. It was this church with which Paul and Barnabas assembled a whole year. *Acts 11:26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.* They were not assembling with a part of the church of Jerusalem which met in Antioch. They were assembling with an

organized, assembling body that met in the one locality of Antioch. Well does one brother write, ". . . the church that was at Antioch . . . was a real, functioning "local" church" (*Three Witnesses for the Baptists*, Eld. Curtis Pugh, P. 109).

It was this church that truly set the pattern for New Testament mission work. This local, functioning church sent forth Paul and Barnabas to do the work to which God had called them. When they returned from their missionary journey (the only one on which both Paul and Barnabas went) they gathered the church together and gave them a report on what the Lord had done with them. *Acts 14:27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.*

Bro. Kazee continues,

The plural—"churches"—is used often in the New Testament to indicate the different local churches. Nowhere in the Acts do we find anything about the Lord working through a universal-invisible church. Acts 16:5 says, "And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily." The Corinthian letter is addressed "unto the church of God which is at Corinth." There is no doubt about the destination of that letter. In I Corinthians 4:17, Paul says: "As I teach everywhere in every church." In 7:17, he says: "And so I ordain in all churches." It would have been so easy for him to say "in the church," that is, the universal-invisible church.

Paul's concept of the church was one which could assemble in one place. In I Cor. 14:23, he says: "If therefore the whole church be come together into one place . . ."

Note again that Bro. Kazee held that a local church is truly a local church, one that assembles in one place. He said, "Paul's concept of the church was one which could assemble in one

place." He then cites Paul's first epistle to the church at Corinth to prove his point. "If therefore the whole church be come together into one place . . ."

Bro. Kazeo further writes of Paul's concept of the church,

He believed also that a local, visible church was the kind of church which Jesus "hath purchased With his own blood." He says as much in Acts 20:17, 28. In verse 17, the account says: "And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the leaders of the church" (at Ephesus). In verse 28, he says: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." This is definitely "the church of God" at Ephesus and one "which he hath purchased with his own blood."

Any careful reading of the New Testament, and there are many more passages which parallel these we have given, will reveal that the Lord has in mind a local assembly when He speaks of a church which concerns us.

It seems to us that if there could be any place in the Scripture where the word *ekklesia* would be used in a purely abstract or spiritual sense, it would be in The Revelation. But John was instructed to write his vision in a book and "send it to the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea" (1:11). Then, verse 20 of this chapter says, "And the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches." At the close of this message to the *seven churches*, the voice says: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Here the Spirit speaks to each church, just as He did at Antioch (Acts 13:2), a definite message to each church. The Spirit communicates with *the churches*. Churches! churches! churches! Dear reader, let the Spirit speak to you through this word: God recognized His churches in different

places and communicated with them through the Spirit with separate and distinct messages for each one of them. This seems to be what the Lord has in mind when He speaks of "my *ekklesia*."

There can be no doubt about the position of this witness. He believed that a local church is an organized body of baptized believers that regularly assemble in one locality.

A church, in the New Testament sense of the word ecclesia, is an organized, congregating body of people in a given locality. And, that is the kind of Old Landmarker I Am! —Wayne Camp, Editor—

(SALVATION BY GRACE Continued From Page 2)

earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Eccl. 7:20).

Are the saved preserved? Is this preservation sure and certain? Is there even the most remote possibility that a blood-bought, born-again believer could so sin as to be cast off forever? Can Christ really save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him? Why is the preservation of the seed certain?

PRESERVATION IS SURE BECAUSE OF THE IRREVOCABLE NATURE OF THE GIFTS AND THE CALLING OF GOD

Paul declares that "***the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Rom. 11:29).*** The word translated repentance in this verse means "***irrevocable.***" The gifts and calling of God are irrevocable.

The Gifts of God Are Irrevocable

Most, if not all, of those things that pertain to our salvation are declared to be gifts of God. The gifts of God are irrevocable and without repentance. They are immutable and unalterable. God does not revoke them; nor does he re-call or withdraw them. They are not extended because of nor do they stand upon the works and will of man but upon the eternal, unchangeable and sovereign will and purpose of God.

Salvation is one of the gifts of God and is

irrevocable. **“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” (Eph. 2:8).** Where I grew up we called anyone who gave you something and then took it back an **“Indian giver.”** I do not know if this was a characteristic of Indians or not. I do know from the Scriptures that it is not a characteristic of God. God's gift of salvation is irrevocable.

Eternal life is a gift of God. **“The gift of God is eternal life” (Rom. 6:23).** **“I give unto them, (My sheep) eternal life” (Jn. 10:27).** There are two things here that assure the preservation of the sheep. First, the life that Christ gives is eternal, never ending life. Secondly, it is a gift of God and is therefore irrevocable.

Living water is given to those who come to Christ. **“But who drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (Jn. 4:14).** The one receiving this water of life that Jesus gives will never thirst again. He has everlasting life and this is another irrevocable gift of God that assures the preservation of those who drink at this fountain.

Saving faith is irrevocable because it is a gift of God. **“Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ . . . to believe on him” (Phil. 1:29).** God never recalls this gift of saving faith; therefore the saved are kept by the power of God.

Everything that pertains to life and godliness, according to the Apostle Peter, is a gift of God and is therefore irrevocable. **“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness” (II Pet. 1:3).** There is nothing that pertains to our salvation that is not a gift of God. Since all are gifts of God they are irrevocable; they will not be re-called; they are without repentance! The saved are preserved through those irrevocable gifts of God.

The Calling of God Is Irrevocable

The calling of God is a holy calling that is extended as required by the covenant of Grace that was entered into by the three persons in the Holy Trinity before the foundation of the world. **“Who hath saved us, and called us with a**

holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (II Tim. 1:9).

This irrevocable call is a heavenly calling. The saved are **“partakers of the heavenly calling” (Heb. 3:1).** It always results in the justification of those who are called thusly. **“Whom he called, them he also justified” (Rom. 8:30).** Because this call is irrevocable and always results in the justification and glorification of those called Paul asks: **“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth” (Rom. 8:33).** A call that always results in justification and glorification certainly must be an irrevocable call and all called with this call are most definitely preserved.

PRESERVATION IS CERTAIN BECAUSE OF ITS SOURCE

Were the preservation of the saints dependent upon anything less than pure grace we would all surely perish. Our security and preservation is not dependent upon us nor our faithfulness or works. **“The Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil” (II Thes. 3:3).** We have the God who is always faithful guarding and assuring our spiritual well-being. He **“is able to keep you from falling,”** child of God, **“and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 24).**

Every child of God can have the assurance expressed by Paul when he wrote: **“I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (II Tim. 1:12).** When the called are granted the gifts of repentance and faith, they are enabled to commit their soul's security into the hands of Jesus Christ who is well able to keep it against the day of judgment.

Christ has never asked the Father for anything which fell outside the realm of God's will. He prayed for the safekeeping of all those given to him by the Father. **“Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me . . . I pray not that thou**

shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil” (Jn. 17:11, 15). Christ had the assurance that the Father always hears his prayers (Jn. 11:42) and we can be assured that we who are saved will be kept and preserved in answer to this prayer of Jesus.

God is not willing that any of the elect perish; therefore they are preserved. It is God's will that none of his elect be lost. Christ declared: **“This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day” (Jn. 6:39).** Christ always does the Father's will so he will raise up all those given to him by the Father.

The two epistles written by the Apostle Peter were written to the **“elect”** (I Pet. 1:2 II Pet. 3:1). Those toward whom God is longsuffering and **“not willing that any (of them) should perish”** are the elect. God has given all the “elect,” the “sheep” to Christ and Christ will save and preserve everyone of them because God is unwilling for them to perish (II Pet. 3:9).

God will complete what he has started in the saved. This gives us confidence and assurance that all children of God will be eternally preserved. **“Being confident of this very thing,”** wrote Paul, **“that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6).** Every child of God can be sure that that work of grace that originated with God will be continued, completed, and consummated by him who keeps us in this world.

God does not forsake his saints. **“For the Lord . . . forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved forever” (Psa. 37:28).** Their preservation is most certain because they **“are sanctified by God the Father and perserved in Jesus Christ” (Jude 1).** He upholds us with and in his hand (Psa. 37:24, 25; Jn. 10:28-30).

The saved are not preserved by their own power. If our preservation were dependent on us we would faint in a moment of weakness and plunge into the lake of fire forever. He who has chosen us, however, **“according to HIS ABUNDANT POWER hath begotten us again**

unto a lively hope” and we have an **“inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven”** and **“are kept by the power of God”** who assures that we will fill the reservation through his grace of preservation (I Pet. 1:2-5).

God and Christ hold their sheep in their mighty hands (Jn. 10:27-29); and every born-again believer has been sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption (Eph. 1:13). With the three Almighty Persons of the Eternal God-head securing the salvation of the saints, how could any be so deluded and deceived that they would believe that even one of them could be lost? Praise God! All the saved are preserved forever!

PRESERVATION IS ASSURED BY MANY NEGATIVE DECLARATIONS OF SCRIPTURE

Space will not permit us to submit every negative declaration that assures preservation. Only a small portion of those found in the Bible can be noted here.

Christ's sheep will **“never perish”** (Jn. 10:28). The believer **“shall not come into condemnation”** (Jn. 5:24). **“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,”** declared Paul (Rom. 8:1). The one who drinks of the water that Christ gives **“shall never thirst”** (Jn. 4:14). Jesus said, **“He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst” (Jn. 6:35).**

The believer **“shall never die”** spiritually (Jn. 11:26). Nothing can separate the elect from the love of God (Row. 8:35-39). **“None”** of those given to Christ will ever be lost (Jn. 17:12). There is no way that these Scriptures could be true and the doctrine of preservation be false. If the saints are not preserved these verses are lies.

PRESERVATION IS ASSURED BY POSITIVE DECLARATIONS FROM THE WORD OF GOD

While there are many, many positive declarations those set forth and assure the preservation of the saints of God we must limit

our discussion to only a few.

By Jesus Christ's **"one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified"** (Heb. 10:12). They are **"sanctified once for all"** (Heb. 10:10). Christ, by the sacrifice and offering of his own blood has **"obtained eternal redemption for us"** (Heb. 9:12).

The child of God **"has everlasting life"** (Jn. 3:36). He is **"hid with Christ in God"** (Col. 3:1-3). In the mind and purpose of God, everyone whom he has chosen is already glorified though experientially we may yet anticipate glorification (Rom. 8:29-30).

"All things work together for good" for the called. They are **"predestinated to be conformed to the image"** of God's Son (Rom. 8:29-30). Surely, none will be so grandiloquent as to say that those who are already glorified in the mind and purpose of God could be lost! Such nonsensical error can only have its source in the heart of Satanically inspired and controlled persons.

PRESERVATION IS CERTAIN BECAUSE CHILDREN OF GOD ARE SAVED BY GRACE

Our salvation from beginning to full glorification is by grace, not works. Therefore, nothing one does or can do can affect his preservation in the relationship he has with God (Eph. 2:8-10). Salvation in its entirety is based on the blessed mercy of God. It is **"not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us"** (Titus 3:5). God's eternal purpose of election stands on grace, not works (Rom. 9:11-13; 11:6).

CONCLUSION

God's salvation is sure and certain to all the seed. Our entire hope is assured by Divine grace—saving and preserving grace. That which God has commenced he will assuredly consummate. He is able to keep you from falling and surely present every saint **"faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy"** (Jude 24).

THAILAND MISSIONS

By Wayne Camp

This has been a most difficult article to write. Here at Pilgrims Hope Baptist Church we are rejoicing and thanking God for those who have joined with us in our effort to raise the funds to purchase a vehicle for Bro. Anond Phoothaptim in Thailand. Readers of this paper and the recipients of our letters have responded wonderfully.

As I write this on February 19, 2001, we have \$12,560 in the bank that has been designated for the vehicle and related expenses. I have just learned today that insurance is available and is reasonable so I hope to insure the vehicle for one year while I am there. I also want to thank those who indicated that if there was a surplus of funds, theirs could be used in other phases of the work, as I deem prudent. We hope, also, to set up a fuel/maintenance fund if the funds are available.

In addition to the funds mentioned above, the Central Baptist Church of Grenada, MS, and Pastor Bill Lee have sent \$3,500 to be used in whatever manner I need to use it while there or to disburse for needs before I leave.

After I return from Thailand, I will give a report on the purchase of the vehicle and related expenses. I will also publish a list of contributors with those who have requested anonymity being listed as Anonymous.

I am scheduled to leave Memphis on March 12, 2001, at 9:10 in the morning and will return on April 5, 2001, at 4:00.

The work is going well and plans are being made for my time there. I had hoped to go into Burma and have a meeting with the pastors and leaders of the churches that are located there. However, at this time there is fighting going on along the borders between Thailand and Burma. The borders are closed and we will be unable to enter the country and the folks up there cannot come into Thailand to meet with us.

Please keep these churches in Burma in your prayers. They are in need of medicine and had been very desirous that we come there and visit, preach and teach for at least two days. It does not appear that will be possible. Of course,

there is plenty of preaching and teaching to do in Thailand so the time will be well-spent.

This morning I received a letter from Bro. Anond Phoothaptim in which he said the churches and he are looking for the day when I will visit them again. Please pray for me that I will stay well so that nothing will hinder the plans for the trip.

Bro. Anond tells me that all is going well. It is warming up and will be rather warm in Chiang Mai. It will still be cool in the mountains. Since we have been mainly corresponding about the trip, I do not have a lot of news concerning the work there. A week or so ago, he was working with another group of people in another village and thought a new church could soon be established there.

He tells me there is a good deal of sickness in the churches right now and there is a need for medicine. We hope to have enough funds to get a new supply of medicine to the churches while there. In October when Brother and Sister Bill Lee, Brother Jack Green and I were there, we took about \$100 worth of medicine to each church and what was not administered by Sister Lee while there was left with instructions for its use. Last year the Raleigh Springs Baptist Church and Pastor Jack Duplechain sent \$1000 with Bro. Lee for medicine and we used it all while there.

When I return I will have more news for you. Let me apologize for the poor quality of the most of the pictures in the last issue. I will try to do better on future pictures. As time allows, I am putting some pictures of the work on the Internet. If you have Internet access, you can see the ones posted at this URL: http://gpp.camps-computer.com/graceproclamator/pp0101pasak_pictures.htm. After you have viewed those on that page, look for a link after the last picture that will take you to another.

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Have you heard that doctrine is not important? I have pointed out the importance of doctrine. The importance of true biblical doctrine is better understood when we see the dangers of false doctrine. Jesus warned of the doctrines and commandments of men. **Matthew 15:9 But in**

vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. It is evident that those who teach false doctrines, the doctrines of men, worship in vain. Their worship is empty, meaningless and unacceptable to God and Christ, however sincere it may be. It is important that we teach true, biblical doctrine.

Legalistic teachers come up with what Paul calls “touch not; taste not; handle not” doctrines which lead to destruction. They result in will worship which is aimed at making a show in the flesh. **Colossians 2:21-23 (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.**

In 1 Timothy 4:1 Paul warns of the “doctrines of devils (demons) which are inspired by evil, seducing spirits. It concerns me deeply that so many are caught up in such doctrines today. Doctrine, true to the Bible doctrine, is very scarce, and very important! **“Buy the truth, and sell it not” (Prov. 23:23)** at any price. It is too precious!

Have you heard that the gate is wide and the way broad that leads to destruction and that many go in thereat? **Matthew 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.** The way that is easy, the way that is popular, the way that many follow is often the wrong way. We live in a time when success is often judged by numbers. The large mega-church is doing the most for God, we are told. The great in-gatherings of professors are true works of God we are to understand. But, with God, and with true effectiveness, the exact opposite may be true.

I think of that great multitude that came and wanted to make Jesus their king (John 6). Jesus had fed them with a little boy’s lunch and they liked that. **John 6:26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.**

Repentance is a lost note in much of the preaching one hears today because men are offended if you tell them they need to repent. This magnifies their sinfulness. But, it is still true. **Luke**

13:3 Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Paul was careful in his preaching of the whole counsel of God to include **“Repentance toward God”** as well as **“faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ.”** Church rolls are being filled with unsaved people because those who are more concerned with nickels and noses than with real salvation have made the gate wide and the way broad.

Have you heard that men, from the very first one saved, have always been saved in exactly the same way? Peter, a Jew, said of the salvation of the Gentiles, **“And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith”** (Acts 15:9). Consider also this testimony from Paul. **Romans 3:22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference.**

When Peter was preaching to the Gentiles he pointed out that all that prophets preached salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. **Acts 10:43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.** Add to these witnesses the fact that Jesus is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. **Revelation 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.** If salvation had ever been any other way, there would have been no need of Christ being the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Moreover in heaven all the saved will sing, **Thou art worthy . . . for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.** The blood of the Lamb has redeemed every last one! All will sing the same song.

Have you heard that if Christ's death were not fully sufficient to save his people from their sins, he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world? **Hebrews 9:26 For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.** Again, there has never been but one way of salvation. If men had been saved by keeping the law or in some other way than through Christ, before his death, this verse would make no sense. Even if his once-for-

all-time sacrifice had not been sufficient for eternal salvation and redemption, he would not have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world.

The second truth that this verse establishes is that one who is truly saved is saved eternally and will never be lost. For one to be saved more than one time, Christ must suffer more than one time. Either his blood is sufficient to save eternally or it is not. God's word answers, **“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified”** (Hebrews 10:14). Again, **Hebrews 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.** Once his all-sufficient sacrifice was made, Christ need never suffer again, for those whom he saves he saves to the uttermost! He appeared once to put away sin and it is accomplished!

Have you heard that Christ's suffering and death were sufficient to save all his people from all their sins? **Matthew 1:21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.** Notice that there is no qualification placed on the sins from which Christ saves his people. Someone might be tempted to argue that he saves from past sins only. And, they might invoke the testimony of Paul to support that position. **Romans 3:25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.** However, Paul says again, **“And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses(Acts 13:39).** Paul here declares that all that believe are justified from all things from which they and we could not be justified by the law. Since law justifies no flesh, it is apparent that our justification is by faith and it is from all things. John also bears witness to the complete sin-cleansing power of the blood of Christ. **1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.** Other evidence could be added but these are sufficient to convince true believers. No amount of evidence would convince others.

Have you heard that that the death penalty is anti-God? If so, you have been misinformed. God himself pronounced the death sentence for

murderers in his covenant with Noah. **Genesis 9:6 Whoso shreddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.** Note especially how this death penalty is to be administered. **"By man shall his blood be shed."** God does not kill him directly. He has ordained that men do it.

Surely no one will refute the fact that God ordained the death penalty under the Law of Moses. While Israel was in the wilderness, a man was found breaking the Sabbath by picking up sticks. Moses asked the Lord what to do to him. **"And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp"** (Numbers 15:35). Who administered the death penalty in this case? **"All the congregation."**

Of the civil magistrate, Paul wrote, **Romans 13:4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.** Who administers the death penalty? The civil authorities do it. Before the law, under the law, and in the New Testament, the death penalty has God's approval.

Those who seek to stop it in Tennessee and elsewhere fight against God himself!! I pray that all those who identify themselves as Christians would bow to God's authority and the authority of his inspired word.

Have you heard that the Scriptures teach that one should be a vegetarian? There is at least one sign around Memphis that advocates that the Scriptures teach that one should be a vegetarian. Not so. **Acts 10:12-13 Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. 13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.** The Lord himself commanded Peter to kill some of these animals and fowls and eat them. Some of these were unclean under Jewish law so Peter, being an Israelite protested. **Acts 10:14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.** The Lord rebuked him for this. **Acts 10:15 And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.**

In the Law, God said to Moses, **Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, These are the beasts which ye shall eat among all the beasts that are on the earth.** If a person or group of persons desire to be vegetarians that is their business. It would be better for them if they would not twist and wrest the Scriptures to try and prove their position. God will doubtless judge severely any who distort the truth to make it teach what they want it to teach. Their ignorance, or deliberate perverting of Scripture, reveals their condition. **Isaiah 8:20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.**

Have you heard how Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures? The gospel is not a simple statement that Christ died, was buried, and raised again. That is too much of a simplification to set forth the gospel. **1 Corinthians 15:3 For I delivered unto you . . . how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.** Note that Paul did not merely say, "How that Christ died." He said, **"How that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures."** The Old Testament revealed many things about the death of Christ that must be fulfilled when he did die. An alleged gospel that does not take into consideration the Scriptural teachings concerning the death of Christ is like a nut shell with no kernel in it, a blasted nut, an empty shell.

According to the Scriptures Christ died as it was foreordained that he die. He was delivered by the determinate counsel of God. **Acts 2:23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.** What happened at the cross was no surprise to God. It was, in fact, exactly what he had foreordained before the foundation of the world. Those who crucified did exactly what God had determined before time. **Acts 4:28 For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.** Jesus himself said that his going would be as it was determined. **Luke 22:22 And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined**

God determined it all to save his people from their sins.

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JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS
By the Editor

We are all guilty of jumping to conclusions at times. I recently wrote to a fellow who sends me e-mail at times the following paragraph:

"Let me say, I am a strong proponent of seat belts. After my wife totaled out a car and should have been severely injured but, instead was still sitting in her seat after her car went up into the air and ended us suspended by the bumpers across a deep ditch, I was even more convinced of their worth."

He wrote back literally bashing me for supporting government mandated seatbelts and not giving God the credit for my wife being safe in this wreck. Note that I said nothing about the government mandating seatbelts. I simply said that I am a strong proponent of seatbelts and that after this wreck I was even more convinced of their worth.

He falsely concluded that I did not give God the glory, but I distinctly remember while standing beside the car that I was thanking God for her protection and thanking God for using the instrument of the seat belts to protect her.

I asked him if he is opposed to government-mandated brakes, government-mandated lights, and government-mandated safe tires on cars and trucks. I have not heard from him at the time this is being written.

I know one brother who is very anti-government. But, I happen to know he draws social security and uses Medicare and goes to a VA hospital when he needs care.

Consistency, thou art a jewel!!!!

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