



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

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

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UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION

By Bro. Wayne Cox

Preached at Central Baptist Church, Grenada, MS, 1966 Bible Conference



I want us to turn to the eighth chapter of Paul's epistle to the Romans, verse 29. May I say this in the very outset. I do not know of a doctrine that is detested, abhorred and disliked more than the doctrine of unconditional election, unless it be the doctrine of the

truth concerning the Lord's church. Those two

doctrines, the truth of the Lord's church and the doctrine of unconditional election, always infuriate those who are unstable and unsound. May I also say in the beginning that if it were not for God's elective purpose or elective grace, Heaven would be for rent, if I should be so bold as to make such a statement as that. Regardless of whether or not you accept what the Bible has to say about it, you will still have to contend with it. It's in the Word of God. The doctrine of unconditional election is written upon every page from Genesis to Revelation. I believe, therefore, that in order for us to understand the Bible teaching of this unpopular and certainly infuriating (See UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION, Next Page)

PLEBANIA, NOT PERPETUITY, PROCLAIMED BY SOME BAPTISTS

By Wayne Camp

From the WebSite: <http://phrontistery.info/church.html> comes the following definition of the word "plebania." "**plebania** mother-church having authority over several local churches."

From a Catholic WebSite comes the following:

"Any break in this succession destroys Apostolicity, because the break means the beginning of a new series which is not Apostolic. "How shall they preach unless they be sent?" (Romans 10:15). An authoritative mission to teach is absolutely necessary, a

man-given mission is not authoritative. Hence any concept of Apostolicity that excludes authoritative union with the Apostolic mission robs the ministry of its Divine character. Apostolicity, or Apostolic succession, then, means that the mission conferred by Jesus Christ upon the Apostles must pass from them to their legitimate successors, in an unbroken line, until the end of the world." Of course **THAT'S** from a Roman Catholic web site: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01648b.htm>

From a meeting of Episcopal Ministers comes (See PLEBANIA Cont. Rt. Col. Page 7)

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(UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION CONTINUED) doctrine, a proper premise must be established.

First of all, the premise that I wish to establish this evening is that election is not only unconditional but is eternal. In the text Paul said ***“for whom He did foreknow, He did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”***

The amazing thing about Romans 8:29 is that Arminians fail to see that this is a qualifying statement and, not only is it qualifying, but it is

very restrictive. Notice the expression ***“for whom He foreknew”***, now the word “foreknow” or “foreknowledge” means more than just prescience. Foreknowledge is definitely connected with an intimate relationship that exists between the One that foreknew them.

We must never get the idea that all things aren't known of God because all things are known to God. ***Known unto God are all His works from the beginning, not of the world, but of the ages (Acts 15:18).*** Every man that is in hell today, God, of course, knew of his existence. He knew all about him, but He certainly did not know him as the object of His saving, loving, gracious pleasure. So that we can boldly say that when Paul said, ***“for whom He did foreknow”***, some people try to limit the knowledge of God. May I raise this question, “If God did not know everything there was to know, then there was a time when God wasn't God.”

The Bible teaches that nothing escapes God; that nothing happens by accident or coincidence; but everything happens on purpose. Now Paul said in the Romans 11:5, after pointing out some things about the people whom He foreknew in the context, ***“Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace, and if by grace then it is no more of works.”***

Many people use Romans 11:5 concerning salvation, but it is concerning election. They talk about you can't mix works and grace for salvation. That isn't what he is talking about—he is talking about the elective purpose of GOD, ***“and if by grace,”*** what is by grace? Election! ***Then it is no more of works; otherwise, grace is no more grace, but if it be of works, then it is no more grace. Otherwise, work is no more work.*** Then I contend that election is of grace.

May I raise this question this evening, “Was there ever a time when there wasn't grace with God?” I want to ask that again. “Was there ever a time when there was not grace with God?” Actually, in reality, those are the public manifestations of grace—blessings such as love and mercy—those are divine attributes. But grace embraces every attribute of God.

In 1st John 4, we are told that God is love. Was there ever a time when God wasn't love? If

you can find a time when God did not love, if you can find a time when God did not have mercy, then you can find a time when there was no such thing as divine grace. But grace is just as eternal as God Himself. There is no beginning and there is no ending of grace. We will see the manifestation of God's grace throughout the endless ages of a never-ending eternity. But, notice again, election then is according to grace, and if election is according to grace, and if grace is as eternal as God Himself, then election, which is according to grace, must likewise be as old as God. I believe that the Bible teaches that election is not only unconditional but that election is everlasting, eternal.

I would like to raise two questions that the Arminians ask in their opposition to the doctrine of unconditional election. One is that they contend that election takes place when one believes in Christ. That is ridiculous. I have read this, that election only takes place when one believes. I have a book on systematic theology, but I have misplaced it, don't know where it is, which was written in 1865 by a man by the name of "Lee", and I shall never forget his statement concerning the elective purpose of God. He said that when men believe, that is when they are elected, and he said that men believe on their own volition, then men in the final analysis elected themselves, and God had nothing to do with it. You say that is ridiculous. I say the same thing, but every Arminian in the world believes that. In the final analysis those who take the position that election takes place at the point of faith are actually contending for this doctrine that man elected himself and God had nothing to do with it.

Then the other school of thought that is the most popular is that election is on foreseen faith. Let me go back to the first school of thought. They say that one is elected not before, but when he believes. Let us look at John 10:16, "**other sheep**", He is talking about the Gentiles, "**Other sheep,**" not other goats, but "**other sheep I have which are not of this fold**". This fold to which He refers were the sheep of the Jews, among the Jews. All right, "**other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them I must bring**", and this word "bring" is used 71 times in

the New Testament in the sense that it is used here—and believe it or not it means to drag. If you want to get technical about it, that's exactly what it means—to drag. Jesus said, "**I have other sheep which are not of this Jewish fold, them I must also bring that there may be one fold and one Shepherd.**" The sheep—I want you to get this—the sheep are the elect of God and they had not as yet been brought to the Shepherd. They were still sheep, however. So we find an elect, or we find elect ones who have not as yet come to experience the salvation of God, and yet they are still elected ones. Therefore, down goes the theory that election takes place when one believes. This is evident for in II Timothy 2:10 Paul says, "I endure all things for the elect's sake that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." He said that they may obtain salvation, they had not been saved. He said he endured all things for whose sake? For the elect's sake! "**That they might also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.**"

Paul was enduring some things for some people, and the people for whom he was enduring all things, unpleasant things, were the elect of God who had not as yet been saved. Election then, did not and does not, take place when one believes.

Let's consider election on foreseen faith. I've heard that one. That's the good one. That sounds good, that really sounds good, and that tickles the ears of people. According to this, God foresaw that a man would believe if given the opportunity and He sees that he has the opportunity and the man believes.

Let me ask you the question this evening. Is faith a good thing? Is faith a good thing or is it an evil thing? It is one or the other. If faith be a good thing, and it is, then Paul says in Romans 7:18 that in me there dwelleth no good thing. Now faith doesn't dwell in the natural man. In I Peter 1:2 Peter addresses those who are "**elect according to the foreknowledge of God.**" Thayer translates the word "foreknowledge" as in the pre-arrangement of God and the word according to Thayer, comes from a little Greek word that is translated in most places, "in." Therefore, he says election is in the pre-

arrangement of God. God pre-arranged it in the council halls of eternity. Election, my friend, is as old as God.

You know the Arminians look at Romans and they think they have you and I who believe in the doctrines of grace in a corner. Here is what they say, "The two texts militate against each other. They are incompatible." On the one hand you have election taking place before the world began which means in eternity while in the other place you have it in from the beginning. So they think they have got something there. That's their candy stick.

Now let's look at Ephesians 1:4 to find the answer to the question, "When did election take place?" Paul said, "**According as he has elected us or chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ.**" But notice, he said "**before the foundation of the world.**" In II Thessalonians 2:13, notice that Paul says this, "**We are bound to give thanks, brethren, always for you beloved of the Lord, for God hath from the beginning elected or chosen you unto salvation in sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth.**" I want you to notice that one says "**from before the foundation of the world,**" and the other one says "**from the beginning.**" Are these two texts incompatible? Do they militate one against the other, or do they harmonize? What is said in Ephesians 1:4 is a statement of fact, and Paul said that election took place in eternity. In fact he could not say as to when, but election is as old as God, the same expression in 2nd Thessalonians 2:13 is found in Genesis 1:1. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." In other words, God is telling the Thessalonians that from the beginning election, which is eternal, has been a fact, an accomplished fact. They don't militate one against the other.

Let's go just a step further. The elect are those given to Christ in the covenant of redemption. How old is the covenant of redemption? Is it something that God concocted as a by-product of His creative act or is the covenant of redemption as old as God? In the

Hebrews 13:20 the Apostle Paul said, "**Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.**" If a thing is everlasting, it had no beginning and it has no end. The covenant of redemption is, therefore, everlasting or eternal.

Now the elect are those given to Christ in the covenant of redemption. You say, "I don't believe that God gave anybody to Christ." Let's see. In John 6:37, the Lord Jesus said "**All that the Father hath given to Me, shall come to Me.**" He did not say that they might, or they ought; He said they would. No ifs, ands, or buts, or maybes about it. **They shall come to me and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.** All the demons in hell or out of hell cannot keep one of God's elect from coming to Christ. Once that elect one has been awakened, aroused, and quickened by the Spirit of God, he is brought to Christ by the Spirit of God, he falls upon the mercy of God knowing that salvation is in the person of Christ and in Him alone. He comes. Nothing can keep him from it. All that God has given to Christ, come. Seven times in the 17th chapter of John's gospel, Jesus, in His marvelous prayer, prayed for those whom God had given unto Him. He did not pray for the world—"**I pray not for the world.**" We're going to get to the world in just a minute. But the elect are the ones that God has given to Christ in the covenant of redemption. They are the ones whom God loves.

I want to raise this question this evening, "How long has God loved His people?" In John 17, verses 23 and 24, we read that Jesus said "**I in Thou and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know**"—watch it now—"**that Thou has sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.**" How much has God loved me? I'm talking about Wayne Cox. He loves me just as He loved His Son. How long has He loved His son? "**Father, I will that they also whom Thou has given Me be with Me where I am, that they may behold my glory which Thou hast given Me, for Thou lovest Me before the foundation of the world.**"

God has always loved Christ and He has

always loved Wayne Cox, for He loved me just as He loved His Son. There never was a time when God did not love His own, and He has loved His own with the same kind of love that He loved His own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. To deny that is to deny God's word. But Arminians use John 3:16 in trying to prove God loves everybody. That isn't true! You mean to tell me that God loves men in Hell? Do you mean to tell me that those who were in Hell at the time of Christ's death were loved by Him? If His love did not avail for them, it might not avail for you and me. In John 3:16, let's look at that. **"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."** Does He mean that He loves everybody in the world without exception? Is that what He's talking about? I want to show you the inconsistency of that. In John 3:16, He loves the world, now in John 17 Christ refused to pray for the world. We have Christ and God at swords point, God loving the world and Christ refusing to pray for them. And then at the same time admonishing his people, according to 1st John 2:15, that they not love the world either. You have God loving the world, and Christ refusing to pray for the world and admonishing his people also not to love the world. But did you ever notice in John 17, He said that these that God had given Him were not of the world. Now the word "world" does not mean all mankind without exception. In the 12th chapter of the Revelation in the ninth verse,

I want you to notice that the Bible says that Satan **deceiveth the whole world**. Now, if the world means all mankind without exception, then God and Jesus are going to have to have a conference and settle their differences, for Jesus said in Matthew 24:24 that there would be many false christs and they would deceive the very elect, if it were possible. But He is saying the elect of God cannot be deceived by Satan. And yet, John said the whole world was deceived by Satan. What world was He talking about? Now He certainly was not talking about the elect world. He was talking about the world of the non-elect. Now, let's go a step further. In John 3:16 again He loves the world and in John 17 Christ refuses to pray for the world, and in 1st

John admonishes His own people not to love the world, whom God loved, if God loves all of Adam's race. If I can find one person whom God did not love, then God did not love the whole world. In Romans 9:13, and that is not that He liked him a little less, it means He hates—it says **"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."** Now there is one man that God didn't love, and Psalm 5:5, **"Thou hatest all workers of iniquity."** He did not say the wickedness, but the wicked themselves. Incidentally, the word wicked is never used with reference to a child of God, or an elect of God. They may act wickedly, but the word is reserved only for the non-elect. The elect may act wickedly, they may act as mean as the Devil himself, but God does not employ the word in describing them. All right, to those whom He loves, He gives eternal life.

You know it took me about 20 years, brethren, to see this text in Revelation 3:19 and Hebrews 12:6. You notice that, I'm sure you have, I'm not introducing something you don't already know, Paul said, **"For whom the Lord loves He chasteneth"**. In Hebrews 12:6, it's qualified, it means He doesn't love everybody, **"For whom He loves."** And in Revelation 3:19 we read, **"as many as I love."** He didn't say He loves everybody.

Consider John 6:33. God doesn't offer life to anybody. He doesn't offer life to be banded about by sinful and corrupt men. When the word "give" is used, it pre-supposes a recipient. He said that He was the Bread of God that came down from Heaven and giveth life unto the world.

I ask you tonight, "Does all the **world have eternal life?**" **Giveth** life unto the world, what world? The elect world of God. Now Jesus tells us what that world is in John 17:2-3. **"As Thou has given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him."** He said, **"I am the True Bread and I give life unto the world."** What world is that? The world of those **whom Thou has given Me**.

Let's go a step further here. Men believe, not in order to be elected, but because they have been elected. You know, I had a great preacher friend of mine many years that said he had Greek scholar after Greek scholar all over the

world trying to do something with Acts 13:48. It has troubled me no little. He said it was still troubling him. I say that, not facetiously, but I say that tenderly, because I loved him, in spite of the fact of what he believed. He said and I quote, "it troubled me none the less and I wish I had left it severely alone."

Well, I'll tell you beloved, nothing in the word of God is to be left severely alone. Talk about election being a dangerous doctrine, Jesus taught it more than any other doctrine in the Bible. If the doctrine of election be a dangerous doctrine, then Jesus taught a dangerous doctrine. I'll tell you why it is dangerous it is dangerous to the carnal mind. In Acts 13:48 the Apostle Paul had turned from the Jews and preached to the Gentiles, and the some tell us the verse says "as many as believed were ordained to eternal life." That isn't what it says! It says, "**As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.**" As I said the other day and infuriated some people, in John 10:26-27, you know a lot of people would like for that to be torn out of the Bible. Christ said, "**but ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep**", and verse 27 "**My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me.**" He didn't say they ought to, they should, they might, He said they would! But He said the non-elect would not believe in Him. "**Ye believe not because ye are not of My sheep**". Now they ask, how do they believe in Christ? As many as were ordained to eternal life believed. No more and no less.

Now listen, I believe in an unconditional election. I read an article one time, written by a good friend of mine, he said, "I believe in a conditional election, that took place in eternity past, unto a conditional salvation in time." I do not believe in a conditional salvation. Somebody said what about repentance and faith. Well, I'm just getting to that.

Repentance and faith, man must repent, yes, and man must believe, yes. But how is it that men repent, and how is it that men believe? Why repentance is in the grace of God. Men believe because of the grace of God. Acts 18:27 says Apollos had been properly instructed and he went where some people were, and he comforted them who had believed through

grace. Let's notice in Acts 5:31, repentance is given. In 2 Timothy 2:25 repentance is granted. In Acts 11:18 repentance is granted. In Philippians 1:29 faith is a gift, and in Ephesians 2:8 faith is a gift. So then, repentance and faith are not conditions on man's part, but they are gifts from God. Election is not salvation, mind you, but election is unto salvation, according to 2 Thessalonians 2:13. You say, what are the means that God employs in bringing the elect to a saving knowledge of Christ? The gospel of the Son of God, and the quickening power of the Spirit of God. In John 6:44, Jesus said, "**No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him.**" And that word "draw" there carries with it the idea of being quickened. I maintain that's exactly what He's talking about. That no man cometh to Christ until God quickens that man and He uses the gospel and the work of the Holy Spirit to do such. The thing that this world needs more than anything else is the truth of God's word, and we need to preach the gospel as never before.

I don't know who the elect are, but God has commanded me to preach the gospel to every creature. To those who are lost and hell-deserving sinners, I am to tell them how the Saviour came and how the Saviour died, how He suffered a cruel and inhuman death on Calvary's cross, pouring out, or shedding His blood for a lost and dying world. I am to tell them salvation is only in the person of Christ, that atonement was only made by the blood of the Son of God, that men can never be saved apart from Jesus Christ.

Election is the greatest inducement in the world to evangelism. Paul was seemingly frightened when he was going into Corinth and God said to him, "**Fear not for I have much people there.**"

Every time I preach the gospel of the Son of God, every time that I try to magnify the name of our Lord and hold up the banner of the cross of Jesus Christ and proclaim the gospel of the Son of God to men, I feel that there might be someone of God's elect in the audience whom God might be pleased at that time to quicken and bring them out of darkness into light and from death into life. I'll tell you tonight, beloved, election is a precious doctrine. And once we get

on the other side, we are going to sing the praises of God. One of the things I can't grasp, my finite mind cannot grasp the infinite love for a child of God, why God ever loved me. I'm unlovable, and so are you unlovable. There is nothing in you that would commend you to anyone, much less a thrice-Holy God. There is nothing in me that would commend me to God. God loved me when nobody else loved me, and loved me before I was, and numbered every one of my members in His Book, until even the hairs of my head are recorded. God has watched every step that I have ever taken, and He will bring me home. And every one for whom Christ died, bless your hearts, will reach home safely because God, from all eternity, has loved the elect and all the demons in hell and out of hell cannot defeat the purpose of God.

He died to save sinners, not to try! As the angel said, according to Matthew 1:21, ***"and they shall call His name Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins."*** He didn't say He'd try or He might, He said He shall save them. And that word "shall", when used in that sense means, a determination nothing can stop. God said that nobody can defeat, that the devil and his angels cannot defeat, that I'll save mine own, and He'll bring them into the haven of rest, one of these glorious days without the loss of a single one. Everyone for whom He died, everyone for whom He gave His precious blood on Calvary's cross shall reach home at last. I know that I'm one of His, He set His seal upon me in eternity past, called me by the gospel and the work of the Holy Spirit of God. I'm a recipient of His divine grace, mercy, and love and have come to the realization of sins forgiven. Salvation is of God, in the person of Jesus Christ. I tell you beloved, when you see these great truths, how that Christ died for sinners, the only thing a poor lost benighted sinner can do is to fall upon the mercy of God and hold out empty hands, nothing in them, and take advantage of the grace made available to him through the gospel of the Son of God. He falls upon God's mercy, he can go nowhere else. He looks into the face of the Son of God, and sees Him as having died for him. I must accept this that Jesus died for me. Paul said in Galatians 2:20, ***"He died for me."*** I know it. Do you believe that?

(PLEBANIA Continued From Page 1)
the following information:

On Sunday, the seventeenth day of September, nineteen hundred and ninety-five, seven bishops in inter-communion shared each of their lines of Apostolic Succession by mutual subconditione consecration through the communal proclamation of the Nicene Creed, the Invocation of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands and anointing with Holy Chrism, with the intent to impart, subconditione, the grace of Episcopal Consecration.

In this service, The Right Reverend Michael D. Owen received two lines of Apostolic Succession not previously held, one of those being a direct Roman Catholic line through the Catholic and Apostolic Church of Brazil, which was passed on through the Most Reverend R. Augustin Sicard. The other being a direct Anglican line being traced through the Continuing Anglican Church (Anglican Church U.S.A.), the Protestant Episcopal Church, to the See of Canterbury. This line was passed on through the Right Reverend Heron Sam.

In addition to the above, The Right Reverend Michael D. Owen's Orthodox lines of Apostolic Succession were strengthened by the laying on of hands by the Most Reverend Phillip F. Lisuzzo.

On 4th of February, 1996 The Right Reverend Michael D. Owen was the Chief Consecrator for Wayne Boosahda.

(Of course this came from an Episcopal Web Site: <http://www.theceec.org/Russuccession.htm>

See also, <http://netministries.org/see/churches.exe/ch24046>

From a recent speech by the supreme leader of the Roman Catholic Church: "Christ 'established here on earth' only one church," the document said. The other communities "cannot be called 'churches' in the proper sense" because they do not have apostolic succession—the ability to trace their bishops back to Christ's original apostles."

When I read these four pieces of information, I could not help but think of an article that was published a few years ago called, "Mother

Churches and Daughter Churches." In that article the author took the same basic position of the Catholics and Episcopalians. He claimed authority of so-called mother churches over daughter churches. He argued for plebaniaism.

He wrote, "So, then, the Jerusalem Church, not the apostles and elders alone, sent letters of instruction to these other Churches! This was quite a high-handed thing to do if these Churches all had the relationship of "sisters," but if we understand that the Jerusalem Church was viewed not as a sister, not even a "big sister," but rather as *having motherly authority over those younger Churches which came out of her*, her actions were right and proper (Emp. Mine, RWC). **THAT STATEMENT IS PURE ROMISH PLEBANIAISM. IT DID NOT COME FROM A CATHOLIC OR EPISCOPAL WEBSITE, BUT FROM THE PEN OF A SOVEREIGN GRACE BAPTIST PUBLISHED IN A SOVEREIGN GRACE BAPTIST PAPER.** According to the article, Jerusalem had authority over every church descending from her. Since she was the first church and all true churches have, in some sense, descended from her, if she were still in existence, she would have authority over all true churches on earth today, according to the article.

THE EARLY BAPTISTS REJECTED PLEBANIAISM

According to Baptist historians, one of the earliest errors to creep into the early churches was the larger churches and their pastors assuming they could exercise authority over smaller and younger churches.

Of this error J. M. Carroll writes,

The first of these changes from New Testament teachings embraced both policy and doctrine. In the first two centuries the individual churches rapidly multiplied and some of the earlier ones, such as Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, etc., grew to be

very large; Jerusalem, for instance, had many thousand members (Acts 2:41; 4:4, 5:14), possibly 25,000 or even 50,000 or more. A close student of the book of Acts and Epistles will see that Paul had a mighty task even in his day in keeping some of the churches straight. See Peter's and Paul's prophecies concerning the future (II Pet. 2:12; Acts 20:29-31. See also Rev., second and third chapters).

These great churches necessarily had many preachers or elders. (Acts 20:17.) *Some of the bishops or pastors began to assume authority not given them in the New Testament. They began to claim authority over other and smaller churches. [Emp. Mine, RWC].* They, with their many elders, began to lord it over God's heritage (III John 9). Here was the beginning of an error which has grown and multiplied into many other seriously hurtful errors. Here was the beginning of different orders in the ministry running up finally to what is practiced now by others as well as Catholics. Here began what resulted in an entire change from the original democratic policy and government of the early churches. This irregularity began in a small way, even before the close of the second century. This was possibly the first serious departure from the New Testament church order [*The Trail of Blood, P. 12*].

John T. Christian also mentions this error. He wrote,

There was, however, a constant tendency towards centralization. As the pastor assumed rights which were not granted to him by the Scriptures, some of the metropolitan pastors exercised an undue authority over some of the smaller churches. Then the churches in some of the cities sought the patronage and protection of the

pastors of the larger cities. Finally Rome, the political center of the world, became the religious center as well. In time the pastor in Rome became the universal pope. All of this was of slow growth and required centuries for its consummation [*A History of the Baptists, Vol. 1, P. 28*].

After discussing the trend toward this unwarranted exercise of authority by some, G. H. Orchard wrote, "During the first three centuries, Christian congregations, all over the East, subsisted in separate independent bodies, unsupported by government, and consequently without any secular power over one another" [*A Concise History of the Baptists, P. 36*].

S. H. Ford wrote concerning the absolute independence of the early churches and said, "The first thing that strikes the reader of this paragraph (one which he had just quoted) is that the churches, even in the times of Eusebius, were separate and independent . . ." [*The Origin of the Baptists, P. 92*].

J. B. Moody deplored this race for the exercise of authority over other churches in these words,

These delegates were generally the pastors of churches, and in two or three centuries they succeeded in wrenching authority from some of the churches, and thus arose an unscriptural congregational episcopacy. But not satisfied with authority over their church, they sought and fought to extend their authority over several churches contiguous to them. When they succeeded in this, they sought and fought to conquer more churches, and to conquer them the more [*My Church, P. 7*].

Francis Wayland wrote,

"If my conscience is to be bound by my fellow men, it matters not whether these men be a conclave of bishops and cardinals, or

whether they be my brethren whom I meet every day, and with whom I sit down around the same communion table. My brethren will, I doubt not, use their usurped authority more mildly, but this alters not the fact that the authority is usurped, nor does it offer any guarantee that it may not, in the end, be as oppressive as the other" (*Terms of Communion At The Lord's Table, R.B.C. Howell, p. 31, 1987 reprint by Baptist Heritage Press.*)

As indicated by Carroll and Christian, this trend eventually led to the hierarchical system of what evolved into the Roman Catholic Church with its tiered priests, bishops, cardinals and pope that is rightly deplored by most Baptists. To one degree or another, her Protestant daughters have retained this system.

This exercise of authority by one church and pastor over other churches and pastors was totally rejected by true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. Most Baptists were true to the doctrine of equality of the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ until the formation of the various conventions and some associations. In the SBC the equality of churches was denied. Thus they have a system whereby each church is entitled to a minimum number of delegates. But, a church gains the right to more delegates as it grows in its membership and in its contributions to the Cooperative program. Thus, a small church may have three delegates while the larger church down the road might have ten delegates. This allows the larger churches to have more say in the business of the Convention which is tantamount to lording it over the smaller churches.

Historically, other Baptists, including associations, have rejected this inequality fostered by the convention system. For instance, in the American Baptist Association, each church is entitled to three messengers regardless of its financial support of associational activities. No difference is made based on membership. Church A may have 1,000 members and give a hundred thousand dollars to the various associational endeavors and is entitled to three messengers when the

annual messenger body convenes. Church B may have ten members and give nothing to the associational activities and is entitled to three messengers when the messengers meet.

Among independent Baptists, there has existed a policy of equality among the churches. Bro. J. M. Holliday wrote, "Every New Testament Baptist church is local, sovereign and autonomous: acting under the headship of Jesus Christ, practicing the principles laid down in the Word of God, empowered by the Holy Spirit" [*The Baptist Heritage*, P. 11].

AN ANSWER TO A PUZZLE

There is something that has always puzzled me. I have often wondered why the Lord has permitted apostate Rome to continue to exist century after centuries as the old harlot has. On the other hand, all those early true churches have died out. While perpetuating his churches, the Lord has allowed individual churches to die out in one manner or another. ***There is not a single church of the New Testament period still alive today!*** I have been to Jerusalem, Ephesus, Antioch, Philippi, Pergamos, Thyatira, Smyrna, and several other places where churches named in Scripture were located but none exist today. Even here in the United States, most of the churches that were started in our early history no longer exist as a true church. They have either apostatized or died in one manner or another. Thus, those who love to push the necessity of a pedigree that extends back can rarely go link by link more than two or three churches. Then they must resort to associational links and even that desperate attempt often hits the wall.

I believe the article on "Mother Churches and Daughter Churches" gave me the key to the puzzle. Why does God permit the continued existence of the Roman Harlot? Why has he permitted all those early true churches to die, even though he has promised and maintained the perpetual existence of his churches? If Jerusalem were still alive today, and if she did have authority over all the churches descending from her, according to this article, she would have authority over all other true churches on

earth. If she had authority over Antioch, and over those formed under the leadership of the missionaries sent forth from Antioch, as claimed by the author of Mother Churches and Daughter Churches, why not all churches in the world today? After all, in one manner or another, every true church in the world today has descended from the Jerusalem church and would, according to the article, be under the authority of Jerusalem. And, her pastor, if he were inclined to believe older churches could exercise authority over younger and smaller churches, would, among Baptists, be almost an equivalent to the Catholic pope. We would have a Baptist hierarchical system older than that of the Roman Catholic Church. May God be pleased to deliver the true churches of the Lord Jesus Christ from further encroachments of **PLEBANIAISM!**

C. H. SPURGEON ON PREMILLENNIALISM [1891]

We have often received questions from people about C. H. Spurgeon's views on prophecy. Was he postmill, premill, amill or preterist?

Some sources, especially among the "Reformed" brethren, have attempted to cast Spurgeon into some prophetic category other than Premillennialism. Also, at least one writer, Peter Ruckman, has, in three different writings, represented Spurgeon as postmill, premill, and amill—all three! Quite a trick, if you have the gift of sleight of hand.

I was recently rummaging thru the 1891 volume of Spurgeon's magazine, *The Sword and the Trowel*, and came upon another instance of Spurgeon's premillennial views. This was in the form of a book review of George C. Needham's book entitled, *Primitive Paths in Prophecy*, appearing in the October, 1891 issue on page 581.

Here is that review:

Here are nine Prophetic Addresses, given at the Brooklyn Conference of the Baptist Society

for Bible Study, under the presidency of our good friend, Dr. [A. J.] Gordon, of Boston, U. S. A. The treatment throughout is Scriptural, vigorous and practical; and does honour to the body from which it emanates. Very heartily should we rejoice to see this hand volume circulating largely among the churches in this country. One quotation will prove that *dispensational* truth is no novelty among Baptists.

"John Bunyan's Millenarianism is well known, and generally conceded; he maintaining the early patristic view, that the seventh millennial will be the Sabbath of the world, to be ushered in by the advent of Christ (Works V, p. 286; VI, p. 301).

"One of Bunyan's contemporaries, Benjamin Keach, an illustrious predecessor of Spurgeon in the pastorate, has left a very full confession of his views on this point. He was brought to trial Oct. 8th, 1664, on two charges of Anabaptism and Millenarianism. As he stood before Lord Chief Justice Hide, the representative of the State Church [i. e. Church of England], he was summoned first to answer for his 'damnable doctrine' concerning baptism; which, being disposed of, the second article of indictment was taken up, viz., that he held '*that the saints shall reign with Christ a thousand years.*' The judge pronounced this '*an old heresy, which was cast out of the church a thousand years ago, and was likewise condemned by the Council of Constance five years after, and hath lain dead ever since, till now this rascal hath revived it.*' . . . He was condemned, and sent to the pillory. . . .

"Dr. John Gill, the commentator and theologian, has drawn out the pre-millennial scheme more fully, and set forth the Scriptural arguments for it more cogently, perhaps, than any Baptist writer who has treated the subject. . . . Couple his testimony with that of Charles H. Spurgeon, who said, in a recent sermon, that '*there can be no millennium without the presence of the visible Christ, any more than there can be summer without the sun. He must come first, and then will the golden age*

begin.'

Thus, we have an illustrious trio of Baptist witnesses in a single pastoral succession -- **Keach, Gill, and Spurgeon.**" Baptist history is thus pleasantly blended with prophetic exposition, making a most interesting volume. [End of review].

In our time when some of our "Reformed" Baptist brethren are seemingly more influenced by the views of the **Presbyterian baby baptizers**, who apparently are predominantly **Amill**, Spurgeon's premill view is another reason why we do not care to identify ourselves as "Reformed." Permission granted to copy and use this article. Pilgrim Website: >www.pilgrimpublications.com<

ENDURANCE OF CONTRADICTION

By John MacDuff

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

"Who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself."—Heb. 12:3.

What endurance was this! Perfect truth in the midst of error; perfect love in the midst of ingratitude and coldness; perfect rectitude in the midst of perjury, violence, fraud; perfect constancy in the midst of ridicule and desertion; perfect innocence, confronting every debased form of depravity and guilt; perfect patience, encountering every species of gross provocation—"***oppressed and afflicted, He opened not His mouth!***" "***For my love***" (in return for my love,) "***they are my adversaries; but***" (see His endurance!—the only species of revenge of which His sinless nature was capable) "***I give myself unto prayer!***" (***Ps. 109:4.***)

Reader! "***let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus!***" The greatest test of an earthly soldier's courage is *patient endurance!* The noblest trait of the spiritual soldier is the same. "***Having done all to stand,***" "***He endured, as seeing Him who is invisible!***" Beware of the angry recrimination, the hasty ebullition of temper. Amid unkind insinuations—when motives are

misrepresented, and reputation assailed; when good deeds are ridiculed, kind intentions coldly thwarted and repulsed, chilling reproach manifested where you expected nothing but friendship—what a triumph over natural impulse to manifest a spirit of meek endurance!—like a rainbow, radiant with the hues of heaven, resting peacefully amid the storms of derision and “the floods of ungodly men.” What an opportunity of magnifying the “sustaining grace of God!” ***“It is a small thing for me to be judged of you, or of man’s judgment; He that judges me is the Lord.” “The Lord is on my side. I will not fear what man can do unto me.” “Blessed is the man that endures.” “He that endures to the end, the same shall be saved.”***

If faithful to our God, we must expect to encounter contradiction in the same form which Jesus did—***“the contradiction of sinners.”*** It has been well said, “There is no cross of nails and wood erected now for the Christian, but there is one of words and looks which is never taken down.” If believers are set as lights in the earth, lamps in the ***“city of destruction,”*** we know that ***“he that does evil hates the light.”*** ***“Marvel not my brethren, if the world hates you!”***

Weary and faint ones, exposed to the shafts of calumny and scorn because of your fidelity to your God—encountering, it may be, the coldness and estrangement of those dear to you, who cannot, perhaps, sympathize in the holiness of your walk and the loftiness of your aims, ***“consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest you be weary and faint in your minds!”*** What is your “contradiction” to His? Soon your cross, whatever it be, will have an end. ***“The seat of the scorner”*** has no place in yonder glorious heaven, where all will be peace—no jarring note to disturb its blissful harmonies! Look forward to the great coronation-day of the Church triumphant—the day of your divine Lord’s appearing, when motives and aims, now misunderstood, will be vindicated, wrongs redressed, calumnies and aspersions wiped away. Meanwhile, ***“rejoice that you are counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.”***

SPECIAL SERVICES

Central Baptist Church

327 Second Street
Grenada, MS 38902

SEPTEMBER 7-9, 2007

SPEAKER FOR THESE SERVICES

MISSIONARY ANDRES GALAVIZ

MISSIONARY IN MEXICO

Schedule of Services

Friday Evening 7:00

Saturday Morning 10:30

Saturday Evening 7:00

Sunday Regular Service Times (See P. 2)

Pastor: Eld Bill Lee

Phone: 662-226-2715

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