



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

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

PUBLISHED AS A MISSION PROJECT OF PILGRIMS HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

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A Brief History and Report On the Hill Tribes Children’s Center

By Elder Bill Lee

It was in 1997, during my first trip to Thailand, that Bro. Anond first mentioned to me the need of a children’s center to be established, as a part of our mission work. My initial reaction to this suggestion was negative. I wanted no part of such an undertaking as this. I believed that all we should do was to go to as many places as we could and simply preach the gospel to as many as we could. At that time I had a great fear of our mission work losing its focus and becoming a social program. Needless to say that at that time I was completely ignorant of the actual needs that existed among the villages of northern Thailand. I was equally

ignorant of the fact that an important part of the mission work among the hilltribes would be to help those who really need help, even as we preach the gospel unto them.

As we made more trips to Thailand in the following years, we were able to see some things that Bro. Anond had been seeing all of his life. We all became more familiar with the culture and the lifestyle of the hilltribe people. Their ways are not our ways and their culture certainly is not ours. During these trips Bro. Anond never relented in his desire for a children’s center. And as we traveled with him from village to village, he helped us to understand more about the way of life of the Lahu, the Lisu, and other tribes in the mountains and jungles of northern Thailand. It was his persistence and his dedication to the children in the villages that led to the establishing of the children’s center.

One thing that initially caught our attention in the villages was the fact that there were very few older people among them. We would see a few in some of the villages, but not very many at all. Death seems to come early among the people of the



NEW STUDENT HOUSE

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EDITOR'S ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBERS AND E-MAIL ADDRESSES

The editor, Eld. Wayne Camp, may be reached at the address given above, or at his home address. His home address is: 2065 Tompkins Lane, Millington, TN 38053-5107.

Church Phone at Home: (901) 876-5015

Church Phone: (901) 357-0215.

E-mail address: RWCamp@cris.com

Visit our Home Page on the Internet

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You Are Welcome!

Hill Tribes. For the most part these people live very isolated lives in these mountains and jungles. Malaria, aids and other diseases claim the lives of many at an early age. Many times this leaves behind children who are left to fend for themselves. It is almost impossible for us to comprehend this, but it is not in their culture for someone else to take these children into their homes and care for them. There are a few cases where a grand parent or other family member will take these children, but this is the exception and not the rule. There will always be

someone who will share some daily food with these children, but no one to take them into their homes and actually care for them.

There are other children in the villages who have lost one or both of their parents, not to disease, but to prison. There are many hilltribe people who are being held in prison for a variety of charges. These charges might consist of cutting a tree from the jungle without a government permit, or migrating through the jungle from Burma to Thailand without proper papers, or being involved in illicit drug trade. I have actually met people in prison, serving a five-year term, for cutting a tree in the jungle. I met one lady in prison who tried to visit her sick mother in Burma without proper papers. She also is serving a five-year prison sentence.

While the majority of the children at the children's center are orphans, there are also children there simply out of need. Most of the people in the villages work today for the food they will eat tomorrow. This usually includes both the father and the mother working in the rice fields or on a tea farm. When there is the loss of one of the parents, for whatever reason, it makes it very difficult, if not impossible, for the remaining parent to make enough to feed the family. And here once again we must remember that things there are not as they are here. There are no government programs and there is no outside assistance. You work today for the food you will eat tomorrow. If you are unable to work today, you do not eat tomorrow. And these are the circumstances in which so many of the children live.

These are the things Bro. Anond kept seeing as he traveled from village to village. And these are the things that we became more and more aware of as we traveled with him. It became very evident that Bro. Anond was right and that I was wrong. It became very clear that we must do something to help these children. After all, what kind of witness would we have if we had gone to these people proclaiming the love and grace of our God, but yet not showing this love and grace in our actions? We must show our faith by our works. And so we began to make plans for a children's center.

From the very first we wanted the children's center to be more than a roof and food for the

children. Our desire was to provide a Christian environment for them. To have a place where these children would be brought up in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord. Our desire was to have the children's center staffed with competent, Christian people who would truly love and care for the children. We wanted a place where we could furnish an education for the children. I remember many years ago Bro. Anond saying that we need to raise up a generation of children who have been taught the Word of God. Bro. Anond knew then, even as I now know, that these children will eventually return to their own villages. And he knew that a generation of young adults with Christian ethics and character would make a world of difference in the future.

From the first we knew that this would be a tremendous undertaking. We began with only a few children. I don't remember the exact number now. But we rented two houses that were relatively close together, one for the boys and one for the girls. This was not a good arrangement from the start, but it seemed to be the best we could do. The girls' house was fairly nice, but the boys' house was not much more than a barn. The conditions were cramped and our budget was low. But at least the children had a place to live, food to eat, and someone to care for them. Even in these conditions, they were much better here than in their original circumstances in the villages.

But then two things happened that caused us to look for another place to locate the children's center. The first was, as Bro. Anond's ministry reached more and more villages, he discovered more and more children he felt compelled to help. The second reason we had for relocating was the owner of the property wanted to increase our rent. This happens many times simply because Americans are involved. People in other parts of the world seem to think all Americans are rich and are therefore an easy prey. But since we were already paying more than a fair rent for the property, we refused to pay more. We will not allow individuals or anyone else to take advantage of us in this or in any other work we are involved with in Thailand. Therefore we immediately began looking for another location for the children's center.

We really wanted to buy some land on which to build a children's center, but our funds were still low and it seemed we could not find suitable land. But we were able to find another location that we could rent. This new place gave us more room and allowed us to have two houses on the same property, one for the boys and one for the girls. A chapel was also built, and there was adequate room on the grounds for gardens, chickens and even pigs. The children were happy here and everything seemed to be going well. That is, until the owner of the land found a buyer and was going to sell the property. We had only a short time to find another location for the children's center and to vacate this property.

As there seemed to be a repeated process of having to move the children from one location to another, we dedicated ourselves to buying some land and building a permanent children's center. We made this need known through reports of the Thailand mission work, and churches as well as individuals responded. We were enabled to buy seventeen acres of land just outside of the city of Chiang Mai. On this land there is a mango orchard and plenty of room for several gardens, the chickens, the pigs and future growth, if the Lord wills.

Two dormitories have been built, as well as housing for those who care for the children. Between the two dormitories a chapel has been built where regular services are held each Friday night, as well as on Sunday. There is a fully equipped kitchen and a large dining area. And after a rough beginning, which included a couple of moves, the children now have a permanent home.

We now have sixty children at the children's center. They range in age from six to eighteen. Daniel, Bro. Anond's younger brother, oversees the operation of the children's center. Working with Daniel are his wife, Moi, a registered nurse, as well as five other full time workers. These are all Christian people dedicated to the well being of the children. As you can imagine, it is quiet an operation to care for sixty children. We provide for all of their needs: the housing, food, clothes, medical needs, personal items, education at a Thai school, recreational needs, etc. Everything that a child might need, we supply for the children. This includes a lot of

love and a lot of care.

Each day for the children begins and ends with Bible reading and prayer. Bro. Daniel conducts services each Friday night. On Sundays, the children are taught in Sunday school by both Daniel and Moi. Daniel also preaches in the chapel on Sundays. Pastors from the villages also regularly come to the children's center to teach the children.

During the week the children all go to school. This involves our providing transportation both to and from school, as well as uniforms, meals while they are at school, and a variety of school fees. Anyone who has ever had a child in school knows that there are always unexpected expenses involved. Well, multiply that by sixty! But the Lord, through His people and churches, has provided and we trust that He will continue to do so.

It has always been our goal to operate the children's center in the most effective and efficient manner possible. We seek to make the best use of the money the Lord provides for the operation of the children's center. Our emphasis is always on the children and not high salaries and offices for those who work at the children's center. There are several other children's centers operating in the Chiang Mai area that spend as much as fifty per cent of their total budget for salaries and office expenses. This clearly is not having the emphasis on the personal needs of the children.

We operate on a monthly budget of \$2,333.66 for the children's center. This is an average of \$38.89 per child. Some of these other children's centers average as much as \$125 per child, but as much as fifty per cent of their budget goes for salaries and office expense, and not for the children. If we operated in the same wasteful manner as they, we would need a monthly budget of \$7,500 to care for the same sixty children.

Another major difference in our children's center and some others in Thailand is that we never have and never will charge for a child to live there. This may sound ridiculous, and it is ridiculous, but there are children's centers, supposedly operating as mission projects, that actually have a fee that must be paid in order for a child to live there. But yet they are always

reporting about the needy and hungry children they are helping. This is hypocrisy of the worse sort.

When we had the grand opening of our new Hill Tribes Children's Center, the Thai government sent several government officials to this event. Also present were many officials from the Thai schools our children attend. I made it clear to all present, government officials, school officials, as well as the children, that we would never charge a child to live at the children's center. This is a promise that I, Bro. Camp, and all involved in this work intend to keep.

The government officials also did speak during this ceremony. They thanked us for what we were doing in this work at the children's center. They spoke of the great need in Thailand for places like our children's center. They also did speak to the children and reminded them of the great opportunity they now had because of the children's center. Although all of the officials were Buddhist, representing a Buddhist government, they were all very respectful of this work being done through Christians, who simply cared for the welfare of the children.

The officials from the schools the children attend also did speak at this time. And I was thankful to hear how highly they did speak of our children. It seems that our children are always in the top per cent of their classes. We were told that our children always come to school prepared and eager to learn, and their grades reflect this. Many of the children participate in sports at school. And as in their academics, they also excel in sports. The school officials could not have spoken more highly of our children. We credit this to Daniel, Moi, and all of the officials at the children's center, coupled with the dedication of the children. All who work at the children's center teach the children daily to do their best in all that they do.

The children's center has come a long way from its meager beginning. Today it is not a fancy place. The dormitories, the chapel, the kitchen, are all plain concrete buildings. There are bamboo houses for the workers at the children's center. These are the same type

houses you find in the villages and it is the type the workers are comfortable living in.

All of the children have chores to do when they get in from school. Everyone contributes in some way or the other. There is always plenty to be done and they all help to get it done. But there is also time for recreation. They have an area for a soccer field and a basketball court. They are learning how to play baseball. They enjoy playing the different games that Bro. Anond brought back from the United States. After supper, when chores and homework have all been done, they enjoy watching T.V. Then their days end with devotionals and prayer.

The children are safe, they are happy, and they are well cared for. We never want to use the children to excite pity for them back in the United States. They do not need pity or for anyone to feel sorry for them. They simply need our continued help and care. I realize that it is a common ploy of unscrupulous missionaries to use children to work up emotions in people back in the United States in order to raise money. May God forbid us from ever using these children in such a manner. If you could spend some time with these children you would find them to be happy, healthy, energetic children. They all know that many are sacrificing in order for them to be at the children's center. And they all appreciate the opportunities they have been given, and they seek to take full advantage of these opportunities.

I do not know what lies in the future for the children's center. There are many more children that need the same help as these sixty children are receiving. I have been asked several times why we do not have more children, if there are others with similar needs. My answer has always been the same. We have a responsibility to these sixty children. At the present our budget for the children center is stretched to limit. The dormitories are full. If we accept more children it will require the building of more dormitories. It would involve adding more workers and supervision at the children's center, which would involve more housing for them. It would involve more expense for food, clothing, medical needs, as well as the many school expenses. There are many responsibilities that are involved in children being at the children's

center. My prayer is that in the future we will be able to expand. We have plenty of room on these seventeen acres for expansion. But we must be sure to do all that we do in a responsible manner. I do not want us to be spread so thin that we cannot adequately take care of all of the children that we have. Our God has led us this far and I am confident that He will lead us in the future.

Bouquets and Brickbats

FLORIDA: I sure enjoyed reading the last issue [August 1, 2004] with Bro Lee's message and the article about the Bro. going to Burma called to preach and counting the cost.

WWW: Thank you so much. This has helped me so much. It has answered a lot of questions. God bless you and may God continue to bless you and your website that many will get what they need. I will direct this site to many of my sisters and brothers in Christ. Once again thank you!

EDITOR'S NOTE: See article in the September 1, 2004, issue of the paper. Article: ***Who Causes and Controls the Storms?***

MISSISSIPPI: I would like to have my name and address removed from your mailing list of the publication ***The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator*** for the reason that it does not follow the true teachings of the Bible and God's word.

TEXAS: Your article on call to preach is precise. You and I have met at Landmark Baptist Church, Fort Worth, Dr Green Pastor. The article got on my toes too. I am presently getting some training at a local University in business and education subjects so that I may be more qualified and credentialed and flexible to go anywhere God takes me in bi-vocational ministry.

My schooling thus far has been all theology, more or less, which is great except many of our SG churches are remote and financially challenged, so that I must have State recognized credentials to gain employment, such as in a public school, in the vicinity of a

church that God may be pleased to send me to pastor.

But I have met ministerial persons who qualify where they will go to a great extent. Meanwhile I see secularly educated Christians take off to pastor quickly, particularly among the Southern Baptists. Secularly trained, but theologically challenged? I'd be guessing the answer to that one.

So, I have felt led by the Lord to gain similar secular training to be readily available to whatever work God takes me into. All my ministry opportunities thus far have been bi-vocational. It seems to be the trend God intends me to work out. I am keeping my spiritual ears on and open for pastoral need somewhere within an hour or so circumference here for now.

Nevertheless, thanks for the article. I needed the reminder! And keep me on the GP&P list. I read them, but don't always reply.

TENNESSEE: We just finished reading your article, "Who Causes and Controls the Storms." It was so good. What an unexpected blessing! I just love it when we get those!!! Truly enjoyed the article. Thanks for all of your time and effort on the paper.

TEXAS: I always enjoy the paper, and pray for you all the time in Thailand. We praise the Lord for what He is doing there, and using you to accomplish.

One question: in the recent article on Baptism by Sprinkling, did you mean to say that Parkhurst is Presbyterian like Thayer, or did you mean that Parkhurst gives a definition like Thayer. I ask that because Thayer was not Presbyterian. My edition of Thayer is from Zondervan, and they have no special introduction to the book. But the following is supposed to be a quote from the publisher's introduction to the Baker edition:

"A word of caution is necessary. Thayer was a Unitarian, and the errors of this sect occasionally come through in the explanatory notes. The reader should be alert for both subtle and blatant denials of such doctrines as the Trinity (Thayer regarded Christ as a mere man and the Holy Spirit as an impersonal force emanating from God), the inherent and total

depravity of fallen human nature, the eternal punishment of the wicked, and Biblical inerrancy." (Joseph Henry Thayer: A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, Publishers Introduction, page VII, Baker Book House).

I have also read from other sources that he was Arian, which is the Unitarian view of the deity of Christ.

I will be praying that the conference time when Bro. Paul is with you in Thailand is greatly blessed, as well as your classes this coming semester!

[Editor's Note: This brother is correct about Thayer being Unitarian. I appreciate his calling it to my attention.]

Short Takes on Controversial Subjects CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON ON ENTERTAINMENT EVANGELISM

[Editor's Note: God works in mysterious ways. On the same day that I opened a paper and read this article by Spurgeon I received a solicitation from the representative of a group who travels about entertaining churches. I thought I would share Spurgeon's short message on the subject.]

The Devil has seldom done a cleverer thing than hinting to the Church that part of their mission is to provide entertainment for the people, with a view to winning them . . . My first contention is that providing amusement for the people is nowhere spoken of in the Scriptures as a function of the Church. If it is a Christian work, why did not Christ speak of it?

"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." That is clear enough. So it would have been if He had added, "and provide amusement for those who do not relish the gospel." No such words, however, are to be found. It did not seem to occur to Him. Then again, **"He gave some apostles, some prophets, some pastors and teachers, for the work of the ministry."** Where do entertainers come in? The Holy Spirit is silent concerning them. Were the prophets persecuted because they amused the people or because they refused? The concert has no martyr roll.

Again, providing amusement is in direct antagonism to the teaching and life of Christ and all His apostles. What was the attitude of the Church to the world? **"Ye are the salt,"** not sugar candy—something the world will spit out, not swallow. Short and sharp was the utterance: **"Let the dead bury their dead."** He was in awful earnestness! Let us be faithful. Preach the Word."

PILGRIMS HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH VOTES TO DISBAND

By Wayne Camp, Pastor

This is a headline that I have dreaded having to write for months but one that I felt would eventually be written. It appears that we have a sale for our building though that is not absolutely certain. It seemed necessary that we make plans for our future either as an autonomous body or as members of a sister church or churches. This vote to disband will become effective two months after the church building is sold. Three men, including the pastor, and probably the wives of the three men will remain members until all business matters are taken care of as ordered by the church in advance. **Please note that these actions of the church will not take effect until the building is sold; they are not immediately effective.**

DISBANDING NOT PRECIPITATED BY INTERNAL STRIFE

Let me assure the readers this decision was not precipitated or brought on by internal strife in the congregation. I have been pastor for 17 years and they have been very harmonious years. The folks in this congregation love unity and fellowship and were very careful not to do anything to destroy that. In fact, I would say that they went the extra mile to avoid strife.

SECURITY CONCERNS

For a number of years the neighborhood where our building is located had gradually become more and more of a security risk. One Wednesday night an apparent drug deal next door caused a shooting. At least three members have had cars stolen during services and on one night five cars were broken into and one of them was stolen. For the last two or three years we have had a guard on duty during our services. Several of our people were fearful of driving into the neighborhood even though the guard would be on duty at the church building.

REASONS FOR DISBANDING

When our building burned in December,

1992, some of us began to look for land on which to build or an existing church building that we could buy. Of course, it would have been foolish to buy land or a building that would present the same security problems that we have here. Since 1993 when we rebuilt I have kept my eyes open for suitable land in a suitable location in a safer neighborhood. In Shelby County where we would need to locate land that would be available and suitable is very expensive. Even with the sale of our building and other advantageous considerations we were concerned about going into debt to build because of the age and health of several of our members.

I am not afraid of building programs. During my ministry I have led in four major building programs and, after counting the cost and the ability of the congregations to pay for the building program, we completed the buildings and they were all paid for. But, one must consider all circumstances, count the cost, and not proceed on blind faith. ***Luke 14:28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?***

When the church built in the current location, a good number of the members at the time lived in or near the Frayser community where the building was built. That is no longer the case. Several of our members are closer to a sister church than they are to our building. If we were to build again in Shelby County we would be even closer than we are now to a sister church. I believe our disbanding will help to make our sister churches stronger.

CHURCHES, LIKE PEOPLE, SOMETIMES FINISH THEIR COURSE ON THIS EARTH

Churches, like individuals, sometimes finish their course on this earth. ***2 Timothy 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.*** In our recent effort to raise money for a school building we have had two sizable contributions from funds

set up by churches that disbanded. ***“Their works do follow them.”***

Dear Reader, has it ever occurred to you that not one of the churches of the New Testament period is in existence today? But, they live on and on through those churches that have descended from them. Their works follow them. The church at Smyrna was a very wonderful church but it no longer exists. The church at Philadelphia was a church with an open door but it no longer exists today. Jesus made not one complaint against these two great churches but they passed out of existence. The church in Rome was a church whose faith was spoken of throughout the known world but it no longer exists today. ***Romans 1:8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.*** The church in Thessalonica was known everywhere for the great faith of its members but that great church no longer exists. ***1 Thessalonians 1:8 For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.*** These two churches with such great faith no longer exist. In fact, none of those early churches exist today as functioning assemblies of scripturally baptized believers but several of them live on as their works follow them through churches descended directly and indirectly from them. They also live on by their example.

Most of the first Baptist churches started in these United States of America no longer exist. Others have gone into apostasy. Some have simply held on until they were down to one or two members and did die. Others have disbanded and their members joined other churches. Still others have merged with sister churches.

Pilgrims Hope will live on as its members serve the Lord in sister churches in this area and make them stronger. It will live on through the churches and pastors in Thailand and possibly other nations in that part of the world.

I have just read an article about Memphian Ed McAteer who championed many Christian causes during his life. His pastor, Eld. Adrian Rogers, said of him, ***“We are going to miss***

him, but his influence will go on and on until it touches the shore of eternity.” I believe that can be said of Pilgrims Hope Baptist Church. Her influence will go on and on until it touches the shore of eternity. She has helped many churches in building programs. She has supported missions and during the last two years in a manner not many churches have had the opportunity to do. Even after disbanding this help will go on through steps she has and is taking. Only in eternity will the true effects of her existence be revealed.

THE GRACE PROCLAIMATOR AND PROMULGATOR

The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator will continue to be published. Pilgrims Hope Baptist Church has voted to transfer title of the paper to the Central Baptist Church of Grenada, MS, when we disband. On October 10, 2004, the Central Baptist Church voted to accept the paper and to continue its publication. Bro. Bill Lee and I will serve as co-editors of the paper. The format and editorial policies will continue as they have been for nearly 20 years.

I will be writing letters to those who have sent contributions for the support of the paper. I am praying that those who have sent offerings for the paper in the past will continue to do so. In the future, if you desire to support the paper with an offering please send it to:

Central Baptist Church
PO Box 876
Grenada, MS 38901

MY CONTINUED MINISTRY

One of the concerns the members of Pilgrims Hope have had is the fact that I will cease to be pastor once the disbanding is effective. Let me say that even if I were not going to Thailand to teach in the Sovereign Grace Independent School of Theology I believe I would have recommended the course we are taking.

On Sunday evening, October 10, 2004, the Central Baptist Church voted “in principle” to endorse me as a missionary working out of their

church once Pilgrims Hope is disbanded and my wife and I move our membership to Central. I will continue to go to Thailand and teach the Bible School there for as long as my health will allow. Eventually I plan to be over there for six months each year.

During the time I am back in the USA I want to visit supporting churches and other churches interested in the work. I also will be available for other preaching engagements and other mission projects. One of my main goals is to prepare a complete curriculum for the school with detailed outlines for all classes so that the school can be carried on by Bro. Anond and Bro. Daniel and possibly some other teaches from among the students after I am no longer able to go over.

If you have been sending support for the Thailand work to our address you may continue to do so for the time being. Or you may want to start sending it to Central Baptist Church.

Central Baptist Church
PO Box 876
Grenada, MS 38901

MY FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Several pastors have indicated that if I go into the mission work full time, as I will be doing, that they would be willing to lead their churches to assist in my support. At the present time I will continue to draw my salary from Pilgrims hope and will do so until the building sells and the disbanding becomes effective. When the sale is complete, Pilgrims Hope has voted to send a fund to Central to pay my salary for two more years. Any support received before that is used up will be put into that fund and used to extend the support for as long as I am able to continue the work. It is also now more urgent than ever that you continue to support Thailand missions. It is amazing to me how God has always supplied the needs of the work in Thailand. I am sure he will continue to do so.

We have just reached and slightly exceeded our goal in raising the funds to build the new school building and for that we thank all of you. Construction should start very soon. Any further funds will be used for furnishings for the building. These items were not included in the \$35,000 that we were seeking to raise.

PLEASE PRAY FOR US

We earnestly desire your prayers. Pray for us that Satan will not work among our people as we wait for the sale of the building to be completed. Pray for the members as they seek membership in a sister church. Pray for my wife and me as we enter into a new phase in our lives and ministry. I must confess, I have never felt the need of the prayers of my brothers and sisters in Christ as much as I feel that need now.

Please pray for Bro. Bill Lee and me as we become more closely associated in this great work of Thailand missions, The Sovereign Grace Independent Baptist School of Theology, and the publication of *The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator*.

THE GREAT LINE OF DEMARCATION

By Wayne Camp

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” (in. 3:18)

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” (Jn. 3:36).

The human race is divided and categorized in many ways. They are divided by gender—male and female. They are considered educationally as literate or illiterate. They are classified as smokers and non-smokers, drinkers and non-drinkers. They are divided into white-collar workers and blue-collar workers. There are racial divisions—white, black, other. There are ethnic divisions—Japhetic, Semitic, Hametic. There are classes—lower, middle, upper. On and on we could name the divisions of mankind. The greatest line of demarcation is that found in our texts. The greatest line of demarcation to be found in all the world is that which separates believers and unbelievers. The two verses are very clear about the matter. One is not left to wonder at their meaning. They clearly declare that the believer is not condemned and has eternal life. Just as clearly one sees that the unbeliever is condemned already and shall not

see life and is under the abiding wrath of God.

THE DIFFERENCES SUGGESTED

Though not all are declared in these two verses there are several differences suggested in these two Scriptures.

JUSTIFIED OR CONDEMNED

These verses clearly set forth the fact that all men are either justified or condemned. The opposite of condemnation is justification. To stand "not condemned" is to stand justified.

The believer is justified before God. He is **"justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts 13:39)**. The law could not justify any sinner before God. Paul wrote: **Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Jesus Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified (Gal. 2:16)**. If ever the sinner is justified he must be justified by faith.

The believer in Christ is fully justified before God. **Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1)**. Here it is very clear that the believer is justified. The purpose of the law is clearly set forth by Paul when he says: **The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, THAT WE MIGHT BE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH (Gal. 3:24)**. The believer is not condemned; the believer is justified!

The unbeliever is condemned. He is condemned already (V-18). It is not a matter of the future; it is present. If you are in a state of unbelief on Christ you are under condemnation. Christ is the light of life. **And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light (Jn. 3:19)**. You are condemned because you have not believed on Jesus Christ. Your unbelief may be because of ignorance, pride, the love of sin, or something else. Regardless of the

cause, if you have not believed on Christ you are condemned now!

Let the reader also notice that sinners are not condemned because they have overtly, knowingly, and willingly REJECTED Christ. Men must hear of Christ in order to reject him. One can be an unbeliever even if he has never heard the name of Christ. **How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? (Rom. 10:14)**. Jesus spoke of some who could not believe because God had blinded their eyes and hardened their heart; **that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them, (Jn. 12:38-40)**.

The man who cannot believe on Christ because he has never heard is just as condemned as the man who cannot believe because he is too blind and too hardhearted to be able to believe. The verse does not say that the sinner is condemned by willful rejection of Christ; he is condemned because he has not believed in Christ, regardless of the reason. God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world for the world was already condemned (Jn. 3:17). We were all by nature the children of wrath (Eph. 2:3). Only the quickening power of God in which he imparts repentance and faith can deliver us from that natural state of condemnation. The rejection of Christ may aggravate and magnify your condemnation but it is not the cause of that condemnation. You are condemned already if you have never believed in Christ.

EVERLASTING LIFE OR EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION

Another difference suggested in our texts is the difference between everlasting life and everlasting destruction. The believer has everlasting life and his believing is evidence of that life. He that believeth on the son hath everlasting life. **John 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.** The believer has life that will endure

forever. He cannot come into condemnation in the future. His glorious destiny is settled. Christ has given him eternal life.

On the other hand, the unbeliever faces everlasting destruction if he remains an unbeliever. His everlasting destruction is as certain as the eternal bliss of the believer. He shall not see life (Jn. 3:36). He will not come to Christ for life (Jn. 5:40). When the Lord is revealed from heaven he will in flaming fire take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (II Thes. 1:7-8). These unbelievers shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power (II Thes. 1:9). The smoke of their torment (Unbelievers) will ascend up forever and ever. They will have no rest day or night. There will be weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. ***He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*** In awesome and solemn justice, in unsullied holiness, God warns the unbeliever: ***Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver (Psa. 50:22). Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord . . . It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Heb. 10:30-31).***

PRESERVATION AND PERISHING

These verses suggest to us the difference between preservation and perishing. The believer is preserved in Jesus Christ (Jude 1). He is held in the hand of Jesus Christ and in the hand of God the Father and none can pluck him out of their hands (Jn. 10:27-30). He is sealed by the Holy Spirit and that seal is the assurance that what God has begun in him he ***will perform until the day of Jesus Christ*** (Eph. 1:13; 4:30; Phil 1:6). Let him make his bed in hell and God is there. If he takes the wings of the morning and dwells in the uttermost part of the sea ***even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right***

hand shall hold me (Psa. 139:7-10). And though ***he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand (Psa. 37:24). The Lord forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever (Psa. 37:28). 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).***

On the other hand, the one who perseveres in unbelief will surely perish. Jesus said in part: ***That whosoever believeth in him should not perish.*** The opposite inference is that the unbeliever WILL perish. He is condemned and under the abiding wrath of God. He has no way of escaping perishing forever if he perseveres in unbelief.

NEVER THIRSTING AND FOREVER THIRSTING

These two texts also suggest to us that there is the difference in never thirsting and forever thirsting. Jesus declared: ***He that believeth on me shall never thirst (Jn. 6:35).*** Again he said: ***Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst Jn. 4:14).*** Partaking of Christ by faith is to drink of the water of life and the water that Christ gives to the believer shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (Jn. 4:14).

In contrast, the unbeliever shall have his part in the lake of fire. As did the rich man, the unbeliever will cry out for water but will receive none—not even a drop to cool his tormented tongue (Lu. 16:19-31). The unbeliever, regardless of whom he is or how hard and long he pleads, will not be granted even one drop to cool his tormented and parched tongue. He will thirst forever and forever.

NEVER CAST OUT AND FOREVER CAST OUT

This is another striking difference between believers and unbelievers that is suggested in our texts. The believer will never be cast out. ***Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast***

out, declared our Saviour. Of the child of God, David wrote: **Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand (Psa. 37:24)**. The unbeliever, the one who never comes to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, will be forever cast out. **And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:15)**. **But the . . . unbelieving . . . shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death (Rev. 21:8)**.

What an awesome difference! The believer will for no reason ever be cast out. Even if he stumbles he will not be utterly cast down. He is

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held in the hand of Christ. He is held in the hand of God and no one is able to pluck him out (Jn. 10:27-29). The unbeliever has no such security. He has no such standing. He is held in the grips of judgment and has nothing but hell to fall to unless sovereign, free grace intervenes and God grants repentance and faith.

REDEMPTION AND BONDAGE

Another drastic difference between the believer and the unbeliever is redemption and bondage.

The believer has been fully redeemed. When Christ went to the cross he redeemed everyone that would ever believe. The Father looked upon that scene and saw his seed and saw the travail of his soul and was satisfied. The Son makes all who know him free (Jn. 8:36). He has redeemed us, bought us out of the slave market of sin with his own precious blood as was foreordained before the foundation of the world (I Pet. 1:18-20).

Dear Reader, have you been redeemed or do you remain in the clutches and fetters of sin. The unbeliever is in bondage and will remain so unless God grants him repentance and faith. **His own iniquities**, wrote Solomon, **shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins (Prov. 5:22)**. The unbeliever is in the bond of iniquity and cannot cease from sin (Acts 8:23; II Pet. 2:14). They shall utterly perish in their own corruption (II Pet. 2:12). Jesus declared: **If ye believe not that I am he (the Son of God), ye shall die in your sins (Jn. 8:24)**. Think not that you will be free from your sins after death for God says: **He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still (Rev. 22:11)**. Your only hope of deliverance from your awful bondage in sin is the Lord Jesus Christ.

May you never hear these awful words, **Depart from me, I never knew you, ye that work iniquity (See Matt. 7:21-23)**.

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