



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

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

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A CRITIQUE # 3

By

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An Examination of

Great Commission Credentials

and Other ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY Articles

There is not one single quote in the book which states ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY before modern times!

No writer before our own times believed ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY so far as Bro Fenison has demonstrated in *GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS*. I have called upon him and all other ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY men to produce just one quote from history which explicitly states you must have mother church to constitute a church and

the grand sum total of these references could be inscribed on the head of a pin with a crayon! [*LANDMARKISM UNDER FIRE*, p. 166].

Because there is no direct evidence that Graves ever believed ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY Bro Fenison and others are compelled to deal in generalities when quoting him. I give samples. Referring to *Old Landmarkism*. Bro Fenison says:

Only twice in this book does he refer directly to how churches are constituted, and in both (See Critique Continued on page 2)

"LIVING BY FAITH"

Romans 1:16 – 17

Sunday P.M. – July 13, 2008

Pastor Bill Lee

If you would, look in your Bibles to the Book of Romans, Chapter 1. "Living by Faith" – there might be more involved in this than we fully realize. This is the message I had planned to preach this week, and when Joel told me the title of the choir's special this evening, and it was "Living by Faith", I changed the title, but not my message. This is probably a better title than what I had to start with. Now, we see in Romans chapter 1 and verse 16. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the

Greek. (17) For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, "The just shall live by faith." That is our message: "The just shall live by faith".

Evidently, this is a very important message – a very important truth – set forth in the Word of God. This statement is recorded in the Scripture at least four times. And, if you will just notice the statement in verse 17, surely you can see the vital importance of it... because it deals with life. "**The just shall live by faith.**" A mistake here deals with life. A mistake here is a fatal (See Living By Faith Cont. Top of Page 6)

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instances he attributes it to a previous existing church rather than by "direct authority." In the first instance he explicitly claims that authority to constitute a church is given in the Great Commission to the church:

"If the church alone was commissioned to preserve and to preach the gospel, then it is certain that no other organization has the right to preach it – to trench upon the divine rights of the church. A Masonic Lodge, no more than a Young Men's Christian Association....have the least right to take the gospel in hand, select and

commission ministers to go forth and preach it, administer its ordinances and ORGANIZE CHURCHES." – *Ibid.*, p. 36.

In the second instance, Dr. Graves is referring to the origin of the Waldenses. Concerning the Waldenses, Graves believes that they received their original church constitutions from "the apostolic churches." He says:

"I believe are the successors of the apostolic churches, and from them received their constitution, their baptisms, and ordinances...." – *Ibid.*, p. 112.

Contrary to what Bro Fenison infers by these quotes, Graves does not here say how a church is constituted! And what Bro Fenison says is absolutely false. He says of Graves: . . In both instances he attributes it to a previous existing church rather than by 'direct authority.' *Ibid.*, p. 36.

Read both of these quotes above carefully and you will see this assertion by Bro Fenison is without the least shadow of support! It is pure invention! In the first quote Graves is not talking about how a church is constituted but about who has the authority to preach. And as for the emphasized words *organize churches*, there is nothing in the quote to say exactly how it is to be done. Bro Fenison merely assumes Graves means ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY!

Bro Fenison is greatly attracted to the phrase *and from them received their constitution*. But again, there is nothing here to tell how Graves thought a church was constituted. Especially note that the assertion that Graves *explicitly claims the authority to constitute a church is given in the great commission*. Yet there is not a word of this in Graves' statement. Nor is there any such statement in Old Landmarkism, or it would have been all over the cover of *GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS!* Nor is there a word in the Great Commission which says any such thing. We will deal with the claims of *GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS* and the Great Commission in a later article, the Lord willing.

Bro Fenison is very bold when he says:

Neither can one identify themselves with historical Landmarkism and believe in 'direct

authority'. *GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS.* 156.

Again:

It is undeniable that Dr. Graves, along with all major leaders among the Landmark movement... denied the so called doctrine of 'direct' or 'vertical' authority in the Great Commission. *GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS.* 118-119.

Really?

Where did Graves make any such statement?

Why did Bro Fenison not give us quotes to prove these assertions? Certainly if Graves taught *Direct Authority*, these statements by Bro Fenison are plain misrepresentations! I believe I can prove that is the case! Also see *GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS.* pp. v, vi, 79, 123, 146, 195 where Bro Fenison makes similar unfounded and unsupported claims concerning Graves and Landmarkism in reference to *Direct Authority*.

But now rather than deal with generalities, assumptions, suppositions and the like (of which *GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS* overflows) I will give Graves words where he states *Direct Authority* for church constitution.

GRAVES TAUGHT DIRECT AUTHORITY EXPLICITLY

Graves taught (contrary to Bro Fenison's claim) that a church receives its authority **directly** from Christ. One such sentence in Graves own words has more weight than a thousand pages in the style of *GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS!* Here is one reference among many:

Sec[tion]. 1.—Each particular Church is independent of every other body, civil or ecclesiastical, and receiving its authority directly from Christ.... [*Great Carrollton Debate.* 995-6].

This is a statement on the subject of what a church is and from whence it receives its authority in constitution, that is, how a group of saints in gospel order become a church. Here Graves excludes authority being given from *any other church* in the constitution of a new church as far as power, authority, or mother-hood, whether civil or ecclesiastical is concerned! In

this quote Graves absolutely eliminates any flickering hope of ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY! This means no local church, no association, no universal church whether visible or invisible nor any other body or ordained minister is essential to constitute a church of Christ! [Cf. Crowell's statement, p. 5, *GRACE PROCLAMATOR AND PROMULGATOR* 4-1-08, to which Graves seems to refer]. And Graves tells us why this is. Because a church receives its authority by a means entirely exclusive of **every other body of any kind!**

Then how does a church receive its initial authority for constitution? Graves' answer is so clear that only ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY men can misunderstand!

Receiving its authority directly from Christ!

There are at least two theories as to the source of authority in the constitution of a church according to Graves.

1. This authority may come from some earthly entity, e.g., a presbytery, an ordained man, a church, a group of churches, an association, a hierarchy, or some other earthly authority. Incidentally, Bro Fenison admits ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY is *earthly authority!* "...established an earthly authority..." [*GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS.* 123].

2. This authority may come directly from Christ without any other intermediary.

Graves maintains position # 2 is correct.

First he gives the negative. This authority, he says, **does not come indirectly, obliquely or contingently!** This means the authority to constitute a church does not come via the circuitous, earthly, mother-church route! [*GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS.* 123]. It does not come through an ordained man or men! It does not come through a group of churches. In fact Graves absolutely excludes any ecclesiastical organization as a possible source of this essential authority to constitute a church!

But Graves does not stop with the negative but for the benefit of short-sighted ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY brethren who cannot see facts when they are before

them he states the positive! Graves uses the very terms to express his position which Bro Fenison claims he denies—**direct!**

If this were not sufficient, I will go further and prove Bro Fenison is opposed to Graves on a number of issues concerning church constitution and church matters. Now for the proof.

FENISON VERSUS GRAVES

FENISON VERSUS GRAVES ON *DIRECT AUTHORITY*

Fenison:

...Graves.... denied... direct'... authority... [GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS. 123].

Graves:

"...receiving its authority directly from Christ... [GREAT IRON WHEEL. 552].

What does *direct* mean? *Direct* means *straight!* In a direct line! This demands the authority for church constitution, according to Graves, comes exclusively from Christ **directly** to those who desire to compose a new church when they covenant together according to Mt. 18:20! Graves excludes ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY, denying it any place in church constitution!

FENISON VERSUS GRAVES ON MT. 18:20

Fenison:

Matthew 18:20 was not given by Christ as a rule to constitute churches. [GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS. 21].

Graves:

Christ said, where two or three are gathered in my name [authority], there am I in the midst of them. [NEW GREAT IRON WHEEL. 135. The bracketed word is Graves'].

Again Graves expands on this subject and it is a veritable tsunami to ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY!

Wherever there are three or more baptized members of a regular Baptist church or churches covenanted together to hold and teach, and are governed by the New Testament,= [Graves. Quoted by Jarrel. *Baptist Church Perpetuity*, p.1].

Graves has more:

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I.

Section 1.—A Church of Christ is a company of believers immersed upon a profession of an evangelical faith, voluntarily associated, on terms of perfect equality, in a covenant or agreement, implied or expressed, to receive the New Testament as their only rule of faith and practice, and to be governed by its teachings in all things. [GREAT IRON WHEEL. P. 552].

And again:

It is true that two or three baptized individuals can organize a Church, provided they adopt the apostolic model of government, and covenant to be governed by the sole authority of Jesus Christ. [Graves. *Great Carrollton Debate*. 975].

FENISON VERSUS GRAVES: IS AN ORDAINED MAN ESSENTIAL FOR CONSTITUTION

Fenison:

The authority denoted by letters of dismissal, gathering under the direction of church authorized, church ordained men, validates the action of covenanting themselves to be a New Testament Church. [GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS. 141].

Graves:

>Wherever there are three or more baptized members of a regular Baptist church or churches covenanted together to hold and teach, and are governed by the New Testament,= etc., >there is a Church of Christ, even though there was not a presbytery of ministers in a thousand miles of them to organize them into a church. There is not the slightest need of a council of presbyters to organize a Baptist church. [Jarrel, *Baptist Church Perpetuity*, p.1].

FENISON VERSUS GRAVES ON ECCLESIASTICAL—DIVINELY INVESTED AUTHORITY

Fenison:

In regard to origin they are the product of a preceding church of like faith and order. [GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS. 36].

Old Landmarkism requires first the existence

of a true gospel church and the exercise of its authority or there can be no constitutions of new churches. [GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS. 96].

Graves:

Therefore, each assembly was a complete Church, and being complete in itself, it was independent of all other like bodies in other localities, and being each independent it was divinely invested with all the powers and prerogatives of a Church of Christ. [NEW GREAT IRON WHEEL. 125].

Fenison Versus Graves On Delegated Authority

Fenison:

Old Landmarkism denied ‘direct’ authority and demanded that the Great Commission established an earthly authority [GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS. 123].

Which demands delegation by this *earthly authority*.

Graves:

This power, with all her [the church’s—JC] other prerogatives, is delegated to her, and it is her bounden duty to exercise it; she cannot delegate her prerogatives.

‘Quod delegatur non delegatum est’ is a legal maxim as old as the civil code. What is delegated can not be delegated. [OLD LANDMARKISM. 48].

FENISON VERSUS GRAVES ON CHURCH DEPENDENT OR INDEPENDENT IN CONSTITUTION

Fenison:

...it is the “ye” that are reproduced as the direct historical product of link to link organic succession ...The Great Commission “ye” stands forever as a denial to the so called doctrine of direct authority and spontaneous church constitution. [GREAT COMMISSION CREDENTIALS. 144].

That is, every church according to Bro

Fenison’s position is dependent upon another church for its constitution.

Graves:

Therefore, each assembly was a complete Church, and being complete in itself, it was independent of all other like bodies in other localities, and being each independent it was divinely invested with all the powers and prerogatives of a Church of Christ. [NEW GREAT IRON WHEEL. 125].

Each particular Church is independent of every other body, civil or ecclesiastical, and receiving its authority directly from Christ, it is accountable to him alone. [GREAT IRON WHEEL. 552].

Of course the reader is able to see that Bro Fenison is diametrically opposed to Graves as these several quotes prove beyond question! How then can Bro Fenison make such blatantly false claims? It must be because he knows he is preaching to the choir and they will never question nor investigate!

Bro Fenison proves he is not a competent judge of what Graves believed. He misreads Graves! He misstates his position. He misquotes him! He misrepresents Graves in a most scandalous manner! And he does this on almost every single page! ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY men ought to be outraged that anyone would dare to so misrepresent Graves, or any other man, as Bro Fenison has done! Do these men care nothing for the truth?

Somehow Graves’ statement of his position carries more weight with me than what Bro Fenison supposes Graves believed!

ESSENTIAL MOTHER DAUGHTER AUTHORITY is stripped, denuded, and rejected by Graves and proven to be no part of Landmarkism!

In another article we will take up Bro Fenison’s misrepresentation of other authors referred to in his book.

(Living By Faith Continued From Page 1)
mistake—“*The just shall live by faith.*” To the believer, to the child of God, faith is of utmost importance in our lives. If our faith is weak, every part of us is weak. Our worship will be weak, our faithfulness will be weak, and our service unto God will be weak. If our faith is weak every part of us is weak. But, if our faith is strong, every part of us will also be strong. “***The just shall live by faith.***”

Before we begin, I want you to look at two Scriptures with me – Please turn to Acts Chapter 16 – I am just going to read two verses here, and then go to the Book of Hebrews. Acts Chapter 16, deals with the Apostle Paul and Silas when they were in that Philippian jail—and you know the account of the events there that night. In verse 30 we are told of the jailor. The jailer “**brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” And they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”**” I want you to focus your attention on that word believe. We are dealing with faith. “**What must I do to be saved?” “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.”**”

If you will, just keep those statements in mind and go with me to the Book of Hebrews, and in Chapter 11. I want to read one statement here, verse 6; “**But without faith it is impossible to please him:**” This, in and of itself, should be a deathblow to Arminianism or any system of works. Without faith, it is impossible to please Him, “**for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.**” Salvation is experienced through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Please understand that faith is not the meritorious cause of salvation, but faith is the access that we have to salvation. I am not going to go into it now, for it is not my message this evening, but I will say this – no one naturally has faith! It is the gift of God. Once an individual understands this, the matter of salvation will be set in Bible order. But keep in mind, “**Without faith it is impossible to please Him.**” Before God gave you faith, and it does not matter how religious you were, nothing you did pleased God. Even the plowing of the wicked is an abomination unto God. “**Without faith it is impossible to please Him.**” No

matter what the sinner may do, he does **nothing** to please God. Brother Camp made that very clear this morning in his message; it is not by any works of righteousness we have done! “**Without faith, it is impossible to please Him.**” Until God gives faith, the sinner is under condemnation, and the wrath of God literally abides upon him. Reformation will not help the sinner; turning over a new leaf will not help the sinner; and the sinner’s familiarity with the Gospel will not help him at all! He may have heard that “Old, Old Story” for years and years, and yet be in his sins –as dead as he could possibly be. None of these things will help him as far as the matter of salvation is concerned. The sinner may read the Bible every day, and may pray every day, **but “without faith it is impossible to please Him”**.

Our text speaks of “Living by Faith”. And I want you to know that the life we call eternal life, is experienced in and through faith – and by no other way! It is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and certainly is not faith in any system of works. No one has ever been saved by being brought to tears over their sins. We don’t see it any more, or I have not seen it for years, but, as I have mentioned to you on several occasions – some churches, in the past, had “mourners benches”, They thought if they could get the sinner worked up by the message, and at the end entice them down to the bench, and somehow get them to cry and mourn, they would be saved. Let me tell you, as plainly as I can, God has never saved anyone just because they shed tears. God has never saved anyone because they had a fear of hell. That is a concept that is prevalent in many places today...just preach on hell enough and get people afraid enough of going to hell...that they will surely come to Christ. God has never saved anyone because they were afraid of hell. It is faith! We live by faith. We have life by faith.

Let’s look back in our text again, Romans 1: 16 and 17. Paul speaks about the Gospel, and he said in verse 17, “**Therein** (and the reference is to the Gospel) **is the righteousness of God revealed.**” Let me tell you, until the righteousness of God is revealed to a sinner, they will never come to Christ. It is not anything that we do; it is not anything that we are afraid

of; it is not through tears. I was thinking this afternoon at the retirement home, as the men sang "Rock of Ages", (and I mentioned this song not long ago, but you remember the second verse in the hymn) by Augustus M. Toplady, He had a handle on salvation by Grace, and he wrote these words:

*"Could my tears forever flow, could my zeal
no languor know. These for sin could not atone,
Thou must save and Thou alone.*

*In my hand no price I bring, Simply to Thy
cross I cling."*

In churches throughout the United States, the hymn **Rock of Ages** is sung, and the majority of the singers do not believe the words they are singing. "**The just shall live by faith.**" Again, I am going to say it is not by being sorry. There is a difference in being sorry, and having Godly sorrow. A lot of difference! God does not save people because they are sorry for what they have done, and again, He does not save them because of tears, and He does not save them because of prayer. That is a new concept in the last generation or so..."The Sinner's Prayer". Just get them to pray ..."repeat these words". As you know, these words are as foreign to the Scripture as daylight is to dark. It totally disregards what God has to say about Salvation. As Brother Camp pointed out this morning, it completely ignores the finished work of Jesus Christ. "**Other foundation can no man lay**". The Gospel message has always been the same – "**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.**" In Romans 3 and verse 20 – "**Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.**" Notice; "shall no flesh" ...it does not matter who they are nor where they are, "**by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified.**" In verse 28 – "**Therefore we conclude that a man is justified—how? "by faith"!**" Without the deeds of the law...not faith plus the deeds of the law, but faith **without** the deeds of the law. If you will, look in Chapter 5, and in verse 1; "**Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.**" You will never have peace with God until you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no peace without faith in the Lord

Jesus Christ. For the believer, there is peace. For the unbeliever, there is no peace, and if that unbeliever remains an unbeliever until they die, they will have an eternity without peace. They will never know peace! So far, I have dealt with experience – the initial experience of Salvation, and I just wanted you to have an insight that we do live by Faith. I know it is the Spirit who quickeneth, but we experience life by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. "**Believe on Him and thou shalt be saved**". But, what about after this? What about after that initial experience of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ? What do we do then? Well, we keep on believing. That is what we do. We keep coming to Christ. If you have only believed in Christ one time, I really doubt you did it that one time. We believe, and we keep on believing. We live by Faith. We come to Christ for life and salvation, but we continue coming to Christ. That is what we do after the initial experience of salvation. We continue coming to Christ. No one who has stopped believing has ever been truly saved; for we continually believe and we continually come to Christ...and the "**just shall live by Faith.**" But it is just a matter of fact that sometimes Christians live by sight and not by faith. Sometimes I do, and sometimes you do. It is a downfall and a failure. When we sing the song the Choir was singing a while ago, *Living by Faith*, we should really take it to heart. There are some people, and I do not doubt that they are true Christians, I really believe they are, but it seems as if they live by a system of activity and works! They have to get caught up in activity and works all the time, or they are just not satisfied. They are not happy. Understand, we should be zealous of good works. We should be busy about the Father's business. But never let your zeal, nor your works, nor your service, whatever it may be, be the foundation of your life. It is Faith. We live by Faith. The Bible says in our text, "**The just shall live by faith.**"

Go back with me to the Book of Psalms, to Psalms and in Chapter 37. I want to read this to you so that we can just see it in print, see it in God's word, and we need to all strive to keep the priority where it should be. Psalms Chapter 37 and in verse 3, "**Trust in the LORD, and do good;**" Notice faith is first, and it must always

be first. That is the foundation of our life. The just do not live by being busy; we live by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Sometimes, and I have noticed this over the years, some Christians live their life by "feelings". They govern their lives by their feelings. Now it is certain, as Christians we do have feelings. But, we are not to live our lives by our feelings. We live our lives by faith. Feelings are as changeable -- or more so – than the weather. I do not know how many times I have had people, as far as I could know they were Christian people, try to justify missing a church service, missing the worship of God, by saying; "Well, so and so was going on, and I just felt like I needed to be there." or "I had family come in and I just felt like I should stay with them." Or "Someone died and I felt like I should go to the funeral home." And there is a whole list of similar things. It is always, "I felt like I should do that". I cannot remember someone telling me that "something came up in my life that was trying to lead me from the worship of God, and I felt like I should go to church." It is always "I felt like I ought to go the other way". Feelings! We do not live by feelings. We should not govern our lives by feelings! "**The just shall live by faith.**" Consider this, also. That we must not let circumstances govern our lives. Too many times circumstances dictate what we are going to do or not do. It is very easy to allow circumstances to control your life. It does not matter what the circumstance may be, do not let circumstances rule your life. Our faith is greater than any circumstance. Sometimes people who have been faithful in service of the Lord have an illness or something else come into their life that may interrupt their service. And then, all of a sudden, they just feel useless because a circumstance has interrupted what they had normally been doing. They get depressed; they get discouraged. Let me tell you, do not let circumstances do that to you. You live by faith! Know that there is a sovereign God who is ruling over all. Have faith in God! Trust Him! Do not rely on circumstances to dictate your life. Our text says, and I will read it again...in Romans Chapter 1 and verse 17, "**The just shall live by faith.**", not by feelings, not by circumstances, but by faith! There are many things that come into our lives, and if we allow

them to, they will disrupt our worship of God. They will discourage you, if you allow them. But the only way they can do that is if you allow it to happen. That is the only way. "**The just shall live by faith.**" If you will, look in First John, Chapter 5, verse 4..."**For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world;**" How in the world do you overcome the world, and in all of its problems and all of its interruptions, all of its changes, all of its circumstances? How do you overcome the world? The same verse tells us, "**and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith,**" This is what overcomes circumstances. This is what overcomes the many interruptions that try to get in between you and your serving God faithfully. "**the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,**"...(1 John 2:16) that is what is in the world, and I guarantee you everything that tries to draw you away from the worship of God and the service of God will fall under one of those three categories. But notice, it is faith that overcometh the world. "**Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?**" Notice, it is "**he that believeth!**" Again, the non-believer cannot over come the world, but it is he that believeth! When we read the statement, '**the just shall live by faith**', and when we sing that hymn, **Living by Faith**, as I said at the outset, there is probably more here than we really realize.

Go back with me to the Book of Habakkuk. Habakkuk was the first one to record these words, "**The just shall live by faith.**" That is the reason I wanted to go back to this. Habakkuk 2: 1 "**I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.** (2) **And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it.**" I am going to stop there and tell you this, a lot of times when you hear preachers preach on that, they turn it around, as they do a lot of the Scriptures. They will preach that "he that readeth may run", but that is not what it says. What is written is; "**that he may run that readeth**". (3) **For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it**

shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.” (4) Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.”

This is the first time this statement is recorded in the Scripture. Go over to chapter 3 of the same book. “***The just shall live by faith.***” is what Habakkuk said. Listen to what he said in verses 17 and 18. “***Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.***” That is living by faith! When everything else is cut off, when all the circumstances of life have gone against you, you don’t live your life by those circumstances, “The just shall live by faith.” Look at verse 19. “***The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds’ feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places.***” And then notice this “***to the chief singer on my stringed instruments.***” Habakkuk told us this is a song. In spite of everything that seemed to be going contrary to the saints of God, Habakkuk was singing a hymn. He was singing a song! This is poetry! In the middle of all these terrible outward circumstances, Habakkuk says that this is a song. Isn’t it good to have faith to sing when everything is going backward, and your life seems to be falling apart? I am going to read verse 17 and verse 18 again. “***Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.***” In Job 13:15, Job said, “***Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.***” In reading Psalm 23 we find David saying, “***Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.***”

I appreciated talking with Brother Camp prior to his surgery, and he said, “I am not worried at all”. That is a wonderful thing, isn’t it? I’ll tell you when they take your heart out and go to playing

with it, and doing like they did to his, he was going through the shadow of death. But to fear no evil, that is living by faith.

The saint who truly lives by faith, I can assure you, will die full of life. If you live by faith, you will die by faith. You will die in faith, and you will die being full of life. That is something the unregenerate can never understand. I have seen it, and I have watched it many times. A person may be ill, may have been ill for years, the body may be destroyed by disease, but they will die full of life living by faith, believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Not just initially, but they die still believing. Still believing and still living by faith.

Fight For Them!!!

By Bro. M. J. Seymour, Sr.

It is written: “...remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses.” (Neh. 4:14)

When the enemies of Israel conspired to stop the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, Israel was faced with a crossroads. They could either give in to the opposition, or they could

FALL MEETING

Central Baptist Church
Grenada, Mississippi

SEPTEMBER 5, 6, 7

Bro. Jim McDowell
Elk Grove, California

Service times:

Friday Evening	7:00
Saturday Morning ...	11:00
Saturday Evening	7:00
Sunday Morning	11:00
Sunday Evening	5:00

Bro. Bill Lee, Pastor

stand and fight. Nehemiah said: "...we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night." Israel made the choice to trust the sovereign power of the Eternal God. As faithful servant they were determined to obey God, stand and fight. Nehemiah's exhortation to "remember the Lord" was made to re-focus their eyes upon the greatness and awesomeness of the Almighty. The Apostle Paul instructs us: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31) This is exactly what Nehemiah was relaying to the rebuilders of Jerusalem. God not only rules the heavens; He also rules all the earth beneath the heavens. God is sovereign over all His creation. The saints must ever remember who is the God of their salvation.

Then, Nehemiah lays before them more reasons to stand and to fight: "...your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses." In other words, stand and fight for the people of your nation, your families, and the land of God's promise. It is as if he is saying, "Here are the reasons God expects you to stand and fight in full obedience and in steadfast faithfulness." It became more than just an abstract thought. Here is the raw reality of the matter. If you will not stand and fight against the enemies of God, then you will lose all that you hold dear to the claws and jaws of the Wicked One.

The truth that prevailed 2500 years ago is still the truth that prevails in this generation. The enemies of God still seek to hinder and destroy the work of the LORD. It has never changed and will never change. It is crucial for every believer to remember who is the God of our holy calling and who is the Captain of our great salvation. If, for some reason, this isn't enough to get us into the battle, maybe we should consider the fate of our parents, our siblings, our sons, our daughters, and our spouses. Are they worthy of our commitment to the cause of Christ Jesus? FIGHT FOR THEM!! SATAN WILL!

CAN THEY BEAT BACK THIS MONSTER TO HIS FILTHY DEN?

(J. C. Philpot, "[THE SAVIOR OF ISRAEL](#)" 1847)

"Hold me up, and I shall be safe!" Psalm 119:117

The Lord's people are a tempted people. Satan is ever waiting at their gate, constantly suggesting every hateful and improper thought—perpetually inflaming the rebellion and enmity of their carnal mind—and continually plaguing, harassing, and besieging them in a thousand ways!

Can they repel him?

Can they beat back this leviathan? They cannot—they feel they cannot. They know that nothing but the voice of Jesus, inwardly speaking with power to their souls, can beat back the lion of the bottomless pit! One whisper, one soft word from the lips of His gracious Majesty, can and will put every temptation to flight!

Do not be afraid, for I have ransomed you. I have called you by name—you are Mine! When you go through deep waters and great trouble—I will be with you! When you go through rivers of difficulty—you will not drown! When you walk through the fire of oppression—you will not be burned up—the flames will not consume you. For I am the Lord, your God, the Holy One of Israel—your Savior!" Isaiah 43:1-3

WE ARE ALL AS AN UNCLEAN THING

By C. H. Spurgeon

We are all as an unclean thing."—Isaiah 64:6. THE believer is a new creature, he belongs to a holy generation and a peculiar people—the Spirit of God is in him, and in all respects he is far removed from the natural man; but for all that the Christian is a sinner still. He is so from the imperfection of his nature, and will continue so to the end of his earthly life. The black fingers of sin leave smuts upon our fairest robes. Sin mars our repentance, ere the great Potter has finished it, upon the wheel. Selfishness defiles our tears, and unbelief tampers with our faith. The best thing we ever did apart from the merit of Jesus only swelled the number of our sins; for when we have been most pure in our own sight, yet, like the

heavens, we are not pure in God's sight; and as He charged His angels with folly, much more must He charge us with it, even in our most angelic frames of mind. The song which thrills to heaven, and seeks to emulate seraphic strains, hath human discords in it. The prayer which moves the arm of God is still a bruised and battered prayer, and only moves that arm because the sinless One, the great Mediator, has stepped in to take away the sin of our supplication. The most golden faith or the purest degree of sanctification to which a Christian ever attained on earth, has still so much alloy in it as to be only worthy of the flames, in itself considered. Every night we look in the glass we see a sinner, and had need confess, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Oh, how precious the blood of Christ to such hearts as ours! How priceless a gift is His perfect righteousness! And how bright the hope of perfect holiness hereafter! Even now, though sin dwells in us, *its power is broken*. It has no dominion; it is a broken-backed snake; we are in bitter conflict with it, but it is with a vanquished foe that we have to deal. Yet a little while and we shall enter victoriously into the city where nothing defileth. We are all as an unclean thing."—Isaiah 64:6.

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THE REVELATION OF THE FATHER

By Bill Lee

In Matthew 11:27, Jesus made of the Father. He said; "**...no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him**". While there are several things in this verse which are of great interest to us, let me point out only two. First, Jesus said, "**neither knoweth any man the Father**". Second, Jesus states the only ones who will ever know the Father are the ones to whom the Father is revealed by the Son.

I will state once again, these words are very profound words. In Job 11:7, Zophar the Naamathite, raised this question: "**Canst thou by searching find out God?**" I think maybe Jesus answered this question with His words recorded in Matthew 11:27. The Apostle Paul stated in I Corinthians 1:21, "**For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God...**".

The conclusion of the matter is that no individual naturally knows God. It is also clear

that no individual can find out God by searching. Paul stated in Romans 3:1, "***there is none that seeketh after God***". But the matter goes even beyond this. For even if they did seek after God, they would not find Him, for He is not known by searching. He is found of them that sought Him not! God is not discovered through the intellect, or by education, for the world by wisdom knew not God. Men are ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth, II Timothy 3:7.

We must go back to the words of Jesus as recorded in Matthew 11:27; "***neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whosoever he will reveal him***". Philip seemed to have understood this, even though his understanding was limited concerning the person of Jesus Christ. Philip, in speaking to Jesus, said; "***Lord, show us the Father***", John 14:8. Jesus' response, I'm sure, was not what Philip expected. Jesus said to Philip, verse 9, "***Have I been so long time with you, and yet thou hast not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?***"

From this point Jesus proceeds to instruct Philip by asking; "***Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?***", verse 10. This is followed by, "***Believest me that I am in the Father and the Father in me***", verse 11. Jesus is teaching Philip and us as well, that He is the revelation of the Father. He is the image of the invisible God, Colossians 1:15. In the person of Jesus Christ "***dwellmeth all the fullness of the godhead bodily***", Colossians 2:9. Jesus' words were the words of the Father, John 14:24, and His works were the works of the Father, John 14:31. Jesus is the way to the Father, John 14:6, and to love a most profound statement concerning our knowledge Jesus is to love the Father, John 14:21. The lesson is clear and plain, if you want to see the Father, fasten your attention upon the Son.

13th ANNUAL BIBLE CONFERNCE

BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH

Choctaw, OK

OCTOBER 16-18, 2008

SPEAKERS

Doug Anderson
Jeremiah Blasi
Paul Brown
Wayne Camp
Roger Dohrer
Jack Duplechain
Lawrence Justice

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Royce Smith, Pastor

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