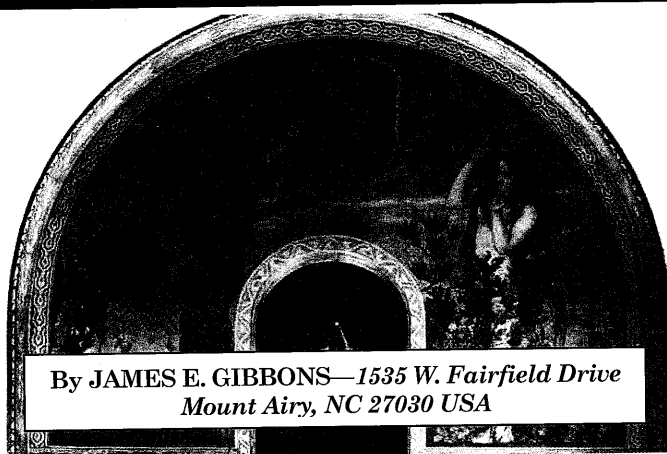


# The Sword AND Staff

*“Preach the Word” (II Timothy 4:2) • “Feed the Flock” (I Peter 5:2)*

## SOME THINGS SATAN WOULD HAVE YOU BELIEVE



By JAMES E. GIBBONS—1535 W. Fairfield Drive  
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### The Devil and Demonic Beings

**T**HERE is a powerful supernatural evil being called the “devil.” In Revelation 12:9, we find this term and others applied to the prince of darkness. The word “devil” in the original language of the New Testament is *diabolos*, meaning accuser or slanderer. We get our Anglicized word “diabolical” from this Greek word. Also, the word “Satan” is found here, which means adversary, opponent, or enemy. He is all of these things in the exercise of being just who he is. The Jews called him “Beelzebub” (Mark 3:22), whose etymology is thought to mean lord of dung (filth) or lord of flies (obviously a term that came into being to be spoken contemptuously). This powerful wicked being is not just one. He has a kingdom of demonic spirits under him, carrying out his evil designs (Matthew 12:24-26; Ephesians 6:10-12).

### God and the Devil in Contrast

There is a sharp contrast between the devil and God. God is the Holy Spirit. Subsequently, He commands, “Be ye holy: for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16). The devil is the unholy spirit. He is the ultimate of depravity and wickedness. (See the out-working of these contrasts in Galatians 5:19-25). The Holy Spirit, called “the Spirit of truth” (John

16:13), would guide the apostles into “all truth.” In fact, 1 John 5:6 plainly states that “the Spirit is truth,” and Hebrews 6:18 emphatically asserts that it is “impossible for God to lie.” However, with the devil in mind, Christ pointedly said to the unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem, “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. *When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it*” (John 8:44). (See the sharp contrasts in Acts 5:3 and 1 Timothy 4:1-2 in this respect). God’s Spirit presents the truth, setting men free (2 Corinthians 3:17; John 8:32). The devil is the father of the lie, bringing death or, otherwise, enslaving men. The only reason the devil will tell you the truth is to get you to believe a lie.

### Assault on Mankind

In his rebellion against Heaven, the devil could not and cannot prevail against the Almighty God (Revelation 12:7-11). He could not prevail against God even when God became man and dwelt among us as a human (John 1:1-4, 14; Matthew 4:1-11; Hebrews 4:15). That being the case and the devil knowing his ultimate fate is irrevocable (in fact, hell has been prepared for the devil and his angels—Matthew 25:41), about the only way that he can get back at God is to get at man, who is made in the image of God and is a lower form of God’s creation (lower than the angels).

### Warnings and Admonitions

With all of this in mind, we would like to issue some warnings and make you alert to some of the diabolical designs of the old devil. The devil was so real to Martin Luther, that great protestant reformer, that he reportedly threw an ink bottle at what he thought was the devil. It splattered on the

(Continued on Page 4)

## THE SWORD AND STAFF

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—THANK YOU—

## Proverbially *SPEAKING...*

*MERCY and grace are flipsides of the same coin.*

Since the Bible is the textbook of our religion, why settle for anything else but the textbook?

*Love that is genuine will manifest itself in generosity.*

The more carefully we study the Bible, the more carefully we will try to put it into practice in our lives.

*Seven days without prayer make one week (weak).*

Exercise strengthens the body, and, likewise, the exercise of resisting temptation strengthens the soul.

*Do you count, or are you just among the counted?*

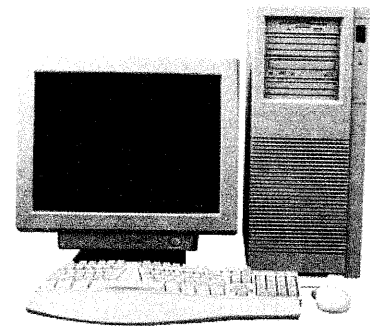
When you take your stand for the right, don't be surprised that not many are standing.

*If life hands you a lemon, make lemonade.*

They who will not listen to the wisdom of the elders will have to make and go through the same blunders of their elders before they acquire the wisdom of the elders.

*When the going gets rough, some people get going (in the other direction).*

# EDITORIAL COMMENTS



## THE FLIPSIDES OF THE SAME COIN

**T**HE 119th Psalm extols the law or the Word of God. Using the Hebrew alphabet with its 22 letters as a track to run on, the Psalmist (like using our A-B-C's) gives a listing of great things about the law under each alphabetical heading. We understand that under each heading, each verse begins with a word that starts with that letter of the Hebrew alphabet. All of this is a rather interesting and a unique way of presenting truth. Then on over in this psalm, the longest chapter in the Bible, speaking more specifically about love and hate in connection with the law (and God's Word), notice these pungent statements.

- "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore *I hate* every false way" (Psalms 119:104).
- "*I hate* vain thoughts: but thy law do *I love*" (Psalms 119:113).
- "Therefore *I love* thy commandments above gold; yea, above fine gold. Therefore *I esteem* all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and *I hate* every false way" (Psalms 119:127-128).
- "*I hate* and abhor lying: but thy law do *I love*" (Psalms 119:163).

All of these verses are almost like a concerted acknowledgment and response to the command in Psalms 97:10, "Ye that *love* the LORD, *hate* evil..." "Love" and "hate" are thrown over against one another. They seem to be flipsides of the same coin, so to speak. If we really love the Lord, we will hate evil (every false way). The Hebrew word for hate means to hate personally. Love and hate are inseparably connected and are intensely personal. This is not a fleshly hatred, but a spiritual one.

The Old Testament prophets had something to say about this. Amos urged the erring people of his day, "Seek *good*, and not *evil*, that ye may live: and so the LORD, the God of hosts, shall be with you, as ye have spoken. *Hate* the evil, and *love* the good, and establish judgment in the gate; it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph" (Amos 5:14-15). In Micah's day the princes of Israel had it turned around the other way. He said that they "*hate* the good, and *love* the evil" (Micah 3:2). How disturbing! This sounds very much like what we are confronting today (Isaiah 5:20)!

In the New Testament, quoting a psalm and by inspiration applying it to Lord Jesus Christ, the writer of the book of Hebrews said, "Thou hast *loved* righteousness, and *hated* iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of

## *We Have Messed Up*

At first a spotless gift, life comes from God  
Unsoiled, unliv'd, a path with steps not trod.  
It is a book of life not written yet  
With pages blank and bare, and type unset.

Naïvely we explore what lies ahead,  
And thrill to taste of life as one unwed.  
A world awaits where everything is new—  
So many things to see, to learn, to do!

The gift of life has hardly been unwrapped  
Until, alas, we have become entrapped  
The path that seemed to us at first not trod  
Was not that upward way that leads to God.

And now as then man's fall takes place again;  
Beguiled, deceived, ensnared—we fall to sin.  
Once more the Garden home is man's no more;  
The spotless book of life is blurred and tore.

"For all have sinned" speaks ill of all of us;  
We've marred our spotless gift and stand nonplused;  
That which was pure and good we have messed up;  
O LORD, to you we bring this empty cup.

*By James E. Gibbons*

- "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23, NKJV). "But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore, we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 5:20b-6:4, NKJV). □

gladness above thy fellows" (Hebrews 1:9). This is very expressive. He "**loved** righteousness and **hated** iniquity." The intensity of one determined the intensity of the other. The flipside of a great love is a corresponding disdain. The more we love righteousness, the more we will detest the opposite. The word "loved" here is the verbal representation of **agape**, that great Christian word for love. The word for "hated" means to dislike strongly, with an aversion and hostility implied.

Writing to the seven churches in Asia, John relates the words of Christ directly to them. To the church at Ephesus, the Lord took note "that thou **hatest** the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which **I also hate**" (Revelation 2:6). And to the church at Pergamos, he said, "So hast thou also them that hold

the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing **I hate**" (Revelation 2:15). So the Lord, who is the perfect representation of love, hated the deeds and doctrines of the Nicolaitanes. And what is our attitude toward false teaching? A great love will produce the corresponding flipside.

And speaking more from the positive viewpoint, Paul asserts that **love**, "Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth" (1 Corinthians 13:6). The early Christians rejoiced, responding to the good news of the conversion of the Gentiles to the truth of the gospel (Acts 15:3). John, that great apostle of love, wrote, "For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (3 John, verses 3 and 4). Do we experience such joy, or are we indifferent to this kind of news? Do we really love the truth and its uniqueness in contrast with that which is false and erroneous? Or, do we even care?

Closing out this little article, we leave you with the admonition of the apostle Paul in Romans 12:9, "**Abhor** that which is evil; **cleave** to that which is good." These are likewise flip sides of the same coin. "Abhor" means to loath, to detest utterly. "Cleave," in the original language here, comes from a word that means glue. So the idea is to really stick in there in reference "to that which is good." Furthermore, remember Paul's words in 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil."

How does our supposed love correspond to the flipside of the coin in reference to God, to right and wrong, and to the things of God? Do we have strong embedded convictions and feelings? The reality of our love has two sides to it. There is a flipside. □

## *Like Alice in Wonderland*

**CHRISTIANS** without goals are a little like Alice in the storybook *Alice in Wonderland*. In a conversation between her and the Cheshire Cat, Alice asked, "Would you tell me please, which way I ought to go from here?" "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the cat. "I don't much care where," said Alice. "Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the cat.—**Selected** □

*"Thou hast made us for Thyself and the heart of man is restless until it finds its rest in Thee."*—Augustine □

## The Repentance Aspect In Forgiveness

**L**UKE 17:3-5 is a very informative and insightful section of Scripture. Here, speaking to the twelve, the Lord said, "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." On another occasion, we read, "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven [in other words, the number of times was not to be limited by counting]" (Matthew 18:21-22). The way the Lord taught forgiveness, and the readiness to forgive, evidently reached beyond what his disciples at this time believed and were used to thinking. To them, even seven times in a day, seemed to be asking a lot. Consequently, we read, "And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith." Evidently, they felt like they needed a stronger faith to enable them to put this into practice.

But in these words spoken by the Lord in Luke 17:3-5, there is an aspect of forgiveness that is not usually noticed or emphasized. That is repentance. In this lesson one person has actually wronged another person. The person who has been wronged is instructed to frankly talk to the other person about it. The Lord said, "Rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him." And this repentance is likewise tied in with being forgiven the seven times during the day (and the seventy times seven). Repentance seems to be a prerequisite to forgiveness taking place. Certainly we are to have a forgiving attitude, and a readiness to forgive, but it seems that forgiveness in its fullness and in reality doesn't take place without repentance.

Interestingly, this seems to be verified by what the Lord prayed from the cross, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). A few weeks after this on the day of Pentecost, Peter concluded what he was preaching with these words: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). His audience was pricked in their hearts and wanted to know what they must do. They were told to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:37-41). Among those who heard Peter, and the other apostles, were some who had taken part in the crucifixion (Notice he said, "whom ye have crucified"). They experience forgiveness when they repented and were baptized. The prayer of Jesus from the cross was answered (at least for some of them).

Divine and human forgiveness are parallel in application. God is merciful and stands ready to forgive

all men who have sinned and fallen short of his glory (1 Timothy 2:4; Romans 3:23), but they must repent and accept forgiveness (2 Peter 3:9). As human beings we should stand ready to forgive those who have wronged us, always having a forgiving attitude, but there are certain perquisites for this actually to become a reality. Then when that person has repented, meeting the perquisites, we must forgive them, and especially if we ever expect to receive forgiveness from God ourselves (Matthew 6:14-15). As fallen humanity, the person who will not forgive burns the very bridge over which he, himself, must pass.—*J.E.G.* □



## SOME THINGS SATAN WOULD HAVE YOU BELIEVE

*(Continued from Page 1)*

wall. We would like to "spill" a little printer's ink much in the same way in this article. James adamantly admonished, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

We warn you. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). But his tactics are usually more covert and in the line of deception. Here are some things Satan would have you believe. Beware!

### I. THAT THE WORD OF GOD IS NOT TRUSTWORTHY

#### Paradise on Earth

God created man and placed him in the Garden of Eden, paradise on earth. Then to complete the picture, God made Eve and presented her to Adam as a "helpmeet" (a companion and helper corresponding to his likeness and needs). Only one law had been given for their well-being. "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:16,17). With such an arrangement and being placed in such an environment, everything should have been conducive to their happiness.

#### Satan Enters the Picture

However, the devil now enters the scene in the form of the serpent. We are amazed at the seeming naivety of Eve (but she was newly created and perhaps there were many things she did not know and yet had to learn). "And he [the devil] said unto the woman, Yea hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto

the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die; For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods [God, NKJV], knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:1-5).

### Did God Really Mean That?

We don't fully understand all of the particulars of what took place and was involved here. (Did the devil act as a ventriloquist? Did something supernatural take place like with Balaam's donkey? Was the temptation communicated audibly or just simply to the mind of Eve? etc.) And the magnitude of the wrong committed seems to go far beyond just eating the forbidden fruit. It involved not believing God (making him a liar) and in some sense, wanting to be as God (in essence, usurping his position). However, over-all we see what Satan was trying to accomplish with Eve. He wanted to plant doubt in Eve's mind. He wants her to believe that the Word of God is not trustworthy. He put questions in her mind about what God had said. Did God say that you couldn't eat of every tree in the garden? Really, now? You won't die. God is just holding back on you. He knows that when you eat of that forbidden tree, you are going to be like him. He doesn't want that to happen. We know the rest of the story.

### The Same Ploy Today

And now, although removed thousands of years from the Garden of Eden, the designs of the devil are still the same. He wants us to believe that the Word of God is not trustworthy.



He wants us to have question marks about the Bible, its authenticity and its authority. Do we really know if we have the Word of God? Do the Scriptures really mean what they say? And, as to what they say, that's just a matter of interpretation. That's just a matter of opinion. Actually, it doesn't really make any difference what you believe, just so you are sincere. It doesn't make any difference which church you attend, just so you attend. In our multicultural society, we must be politically correct, never saying that anyone or anything is wrong (especially religiously). But, in rebuttal, we respond. If it makes no difference, what you believe, it makes no difference if you believe. If it makes no

difference which church you attend, it makes no difference if you attend at all. If everybody is right, nobody is right. Truth does not contradict itself. All do not unquestionably believe that the Bible is the Word of God, nor are they faithfully trying to adhere to its teachings. Unbelief and the traditions of men contradict and compete with the Word of God.

### A Personal Testimony

To emphatically emphasize the truthfulness of what we are trying to say here, let us personally illustrate. Upon graduating from high school, this writer was prepared to enter in the ministry of a major denomination of which he was a member. To be more personal, let us drop to the personal pronoun "I." Having been given a Bible as a gift, I was challenged to study it, which I sincerely and carefully did. In doing this, I came to certain irrevocable conclusions. The denomination to which I belonged "baptized" babies and practiced sprinkling for baptism. I had to wrestle with this in the light of the Scriptures. I finally approached the minister of the local church where I was a member, and the following conversation took place. I said to the preacher, "I have come to the conclusion that I can't be a Methodist minister." Needless to say, he was taken back, and he wanted to know "why." I told him I could never be a Methodist minister because I could never sprinkle anyone or "baptize" babies. Again, he wanted to know "why." I continued the terse and uncomfortable conversation, saying that Jesus said to "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life..." That I had been doing this and no where could I find sprinkling or infant baptism taught in the New Testament Scriptures. I could never do this. His next words straightway left me in a state of shock. "Would you put your life between the covers of a book?" All over again, the words of the devil in the Garden of Eden come to mind. Can God's word be trusted? Is the Bible the Word of God? Flagrant unbelief is evident in this question that was fired back at me, implying the Bible is nothing more than another "book."

### What Satan is Trying to Accomplish

Why does the devil want us to believe that the Word of God is not trustworthy? Perhaps there are several reasons. The Bible teaches that "**faith** cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). Hebrews 11:6 states, "But **without faith** it is impossible to please him [God]; for he that cometh to God **must believe** that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently

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## SOME THINGS SATAN WOULD HAVE YOU BELIEVE

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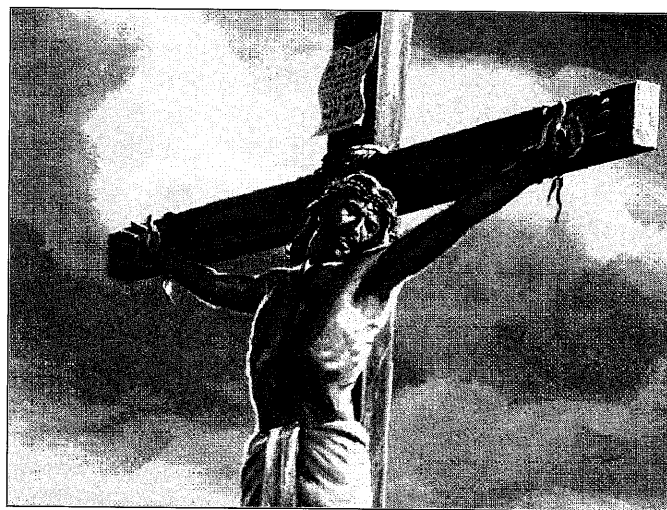
seek him.” Likewise, the Lord said in Mark 16:16, “He that **believeth** and is baptized shall be saved; but he that **believeth not** shall be damned.” Furthermore, Romans 5:1 and 2 are explicit in saying, “Therefore being **justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have **access by faith** into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Then the sobering words of Revelation 21:8 linger with us. “But the fearful, and **unbelieving**, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” So, if we think the Word of God is not trustworthy, we are not going to come to saving faith. Without faith, we cannot be a Christian. Consequently, our fate will be that of the devil throughout all eternity.

### Full Assurance and a Warning

But know assuredly that the Bible is the Word of God and that it is trustworthy. Don’t believe the devil’s lies. He was a liar from the beginning. “IT IS WRITTEN” are emphatic words that occur time and time again in the Scriptures, and make a most interesting study. Jesus spoke them to the devil when putting him to flight (Matthew 4:7 and 10), and, making emphatic points, he said them on other occasions. We find them continually in Paul’s writings. (Search out the different places where these words are used). “IT IS WRITTEN,” of course, has reference to God’s Word. And having been written, it irrefutably and monumentally stands. When God speaks, it is for time and eternity. The Lord said, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Matthew 24:35). Putting God’s Word in contrast with man, the apostle Peter asserts, “But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you” (1 Peter 1:25). Remember that Christ said, “He that rejected me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48). Likewise, Hebrews 3:12-15 solemnly warns us, “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief [like Eve], in departing from the living God...For we are made partakers

of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.” Being warned, let us take these truths to heart.

## II. THAT THE BLOOD OF CHRIST IS NOT NECESSARY



### The “Must” Statement

After the grand occurrence in Caesarea Philippi of Simon Peter making the great confession that Jesus was “the Christ, the Son of the living God,” we read, “From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he **must go** unto Jerusalem, and **suffer** many things of the elders and chief priest and scribes, and **be killed** and **be raised** again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. But he turned, and said unto Peter, **Get thee behind me, Satan;** thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not [you don’t understand] the things that be of God, but those that be of men” (Matthew 16:21-23).

### “The Things That Be of God”

We are amazed that Peter would respond to the Lord with these words in the light of the great confession that he had just made. Obviously, there were many things that he and the other disciples did not fully understand yet. Jesus said that he **must go** to Jerusalem, **must suffer** many things, **must be killed** and **raised** from the dead. “**Must**” means must, that this was absolutely necessary. The crucifixion of Christ “**must**” take place. From the beginning, God’s plan of redemption called for blood (Hebrews 9:22; Leviticus 17:11; Colossians 1:14). Every animal sacrifice theretofore, although imperfect, had simply served as symbolic prophesy and pointed to the coming “Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29; Hebrews 10:1-12; 1 Peter 1:18-20; Revelation 1:5;

Romans 5:9). The death, burial and resurrection of Christ would constitute the gospel (1 Corinthians 15:1-4; 1 Corinthians 1:18). The kingdom referred to in connection with Peter's great confession would be a spiritual kingdom brought about by the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28), not an earthly one like the devil tried to pawn off on Jesus (Matthew 4:8-9). The death, burial and resurrection of Christ would usher in this kingdom (Acts 2:30-36). It is no wonder that Jesus sharply rebuked Peter, saying, "**Get thee behind me, Satan:** thou art an offense unto me: for thou savourest not [you don't understand] the things that be of God, but those that be of men." To have listened to Peter's words would have derailed God's whole scheme of redemption.

### **"Nothing But the Blood"**

Satan is still around, as he has always been. He knows that all of mankind's attempts to be right with God aside from grace and the blood of Christ have been in vain. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23) and we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). An appeal to law only condemns us, for "cursed is every one that continued not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Galatians 3:10; 5:4). One sin makes us a transgressor, as "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4), and alienates us from God. Perfection would be the only way that a person could be justified by law, and no man has attained this. Then man left to himself without God cannot lift himself by his own bootstraps. Philosophy cannot get the job done, for when "the world by wisdom knew not God [Acts 17:30], it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Corinthians 1:18-31). Any way that you look at it, man needs a Savior. Realizing all of this, we grasp and cling to these marvelous words of the apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:21, "For he [God] hath made him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin: that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Yes, Christ "loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Revelations 1:5). And as a Christian "if we walk in the light, as he is in the light...the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). But Satan wants us to believe that the blood of Christ is not necessary. If he can keep us away from the blood, he knows we have no hope.

### **That Slaughterhouse Religion**

Satan's purposes are being accomplished in this respect in many ways today. Modernistic unbelievers have largely taken over in many of the old-line denominations, replacing the blood-redemptive

gospel with the so-called social gospel. Christ and the crucifixion are looked upon as a great example of a good man giving his life for a cause, and not necessarily for purposes of redemption. His example is to inspire us. His teachings are looked upon as aimed at social reform, bringing about a better day in our society. Someone said that the social gospel is the gospel of science, soup and soap. And, besmirching the blood-redemptive gospel, someone condescendingly asks, "Do you still believe in that old slaughterhouse religion?" (mouthing the words of the late Harry Emerson Fosdick). There are rumors that reference to the blood in some religious circles has been removed from the hymnbooks. With a bloodless religion Satan knows that we are not going to heaven, nor will we get the victory over sin. Those in heaven have their robes washed in "the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:11-17). Yes, "They overcame him [the old devil] by the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 12:10-11).

### **Blood Targets in Christianity**

We can expect that anything in Christianity that has the blood of Christ associated with it to be targeted by Satan.

### **This is Seen in Baptism**

This can be seen in baptism. The Bible plainly teaches that we are baptized for the remission of sin. That is what Acts 2:38 says. Read it. The apostle Paul was baptized to get his sins washed away (Acts 22:16). Colossians 2:11-13 tells us that "the body of the sins of the flesh" are put off in baptism. Romans 6:3-4 reads, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so, we also should walk in newness of life." Remission of sins comes only by the blood of Christ. We are baptized for the remission of sins. We are baptized into his death, thereby accepting the benefits of his blood. Our sins are washed away. To belittle baptism, in essence, is to assault the blood of Christ that takes away our sins. Satan would have you believe that baptism has nothing to do with your salvation.

### **Seen in the Lord's Supper**

This can be seen in the Lord's Supper. When Jesus instituted it, he said, "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28). Observing the Lord's Supper is an intense spiritual experience. It is the communion of the body and blood of the

(Continued on Next Page)



## SOME THINGS SATAN WOULD HAVE YOU BELIEVE

*(Continued from Previous Page)*

Lord (1 Corinthians 10:16). The association with the blood of Christ is so real and serious that Paul writes, "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body" (1 Corinthians 11:27-29). Our unfettered attention is to be focused on the Lord's death, as we enter into self-examination. The Lord's Supper was so important to the early church that they observed it every Sunday (Acts 20:7). And since these truths are so pronounced in the Scriptures, we are not surprised when the devil would try to detract from them. Don't observe the Lord's Supper at all, or, perhaps, just once a year, once a quarter or once a month. Thus, implying that the blood is not all that important.

### **The Blood-Bought Church of Christ**

We are told that Christ "gave himself for" the church (Ephesians 5:25) and "purchased" it "with his own blood" (Acts 20:28;). And the blood that saves us from our sin, in the very act of doing it, places us into the church of Christ (Revelation 1:5; Acts 2:38-41,47; Colossians 1:13-14). This high regard that Christ has for the church and the fact that he has purchased it with his own blood makes it another target of Satan. He would downplay and belittle the importance of the church, and the singular significance of Christianity, saying that all religions lead to God and that it doesn't make any difference to which church you "belong." But the church is precious to Christ. It is important to us. It is made up of the saved, and we better be sure that we are a part of it. Don't be deluded and deceived by the devil's disinformation.

### **III. THAT YOU CAN DO WRONG AND GET BY Judgment Now or Later**

Some people have deliberately done wrong and thought they could get by with it. Others have fallen into sin and have made attempts to get by with it. With others, living in sin is just their depraved "life-style," with little thought about the consequences. The devil would delude one and all into believing they can do wrong and get by. He knows that God's wrath will eventually be upon

the sinner. That would please him very much. Since Satan cannot directly prevail against God, men are the more immediate objects of his hostility. But we can't do wrong and get by. Paul stated, "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after" (1 Timothy 5:24). Be it known, there is a day of

*(Continued on Page 14)*

## BIBLE QUESTIONS

*(Random Questions Over the Bible)*

1. What ancient city in the Bible is called "the city of palm trees"?
2. Specifically, why did the children of Israel have to wander 40 years in the Wilderness before they could go into the Promised Land (why 40 years)?
3. From where was Moses allowed to view the Promised Land before he died (and why was he not allowed to enter the Promised Land)?
4. Mount Abarim was another name for what well-known mountain in the Bible (and what else was a section of this mountain called)?
5. Besides wanting to be like the other nations, what prompted Israel to want a king when Samuel became old and was no longer able to judge Israel?
6. When Samuel died, where was he buried?
7. What statement describes the period of the judges in the history of Israel?
8. Where was the tabernacle of the LORD situated in the period leading up to the building of the temple by Solomon?
9. How many years was Solomon involved in building the temple (and how many years in building his own house)?
10. Which psalm is king David's prayer of repentance after committing the sin of adultery with Bathsheba?
11. What Old Testament prophet was a "bald head" man?
12. What Old Testament book is the most quoted in the New Testament?
13. What was the relative value of a denarius (translated a "penny" in the KJV) as indicated in one of the parables of the Lord?
14. Which one of the disciples of Christ took care of their money matters?
15. Which is the only parable of Jesus in which a personal name is used?
16. What great climaxing miracle in the ministry of Christ made the Jewish leaders conclusively decide that he must be put to death?
17. Which gospel writer is the only one who tells of an angel coming to strengthen Jesus when he was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane?
18. Which book in the New Testament presents Christ as our great high priest in heaven?
19. What command in the New Testament is called a "royal law"?
20. Which New Testament writer states that Christians are a "royal priesthood"?

**(NOTE: Answers found elsewhere in this issue of the paper)**



# READERS'

## ...Response

**APOLOGY:** Please accept our humble apology for slowness in getting correspondence answered. "We" have no staff of secretaries, etc. to handle such, and this is done by the "editor" as time allows. Be it known that you are sincerely appreciated. ☐

### NORTH CAROLINA:

- "Please remove us from your mailing list."
- "May you be richly blessed in your continuing work in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ!"
- "Thank you for shipping 16 copies of the Holy Spirit booklets. We believe this is the most misunderstood subject in the Bible. We will benefit from this study.

*"We appreciate all your work in publishing THE SWORD AND STAFF and we know God will bless your work.*

*"Thank you very much."*

### TENNESSEE:

- "A note to let you know the work there is in my prayers and thoughts. I know the paper THE SWORD AND STAFF is a great benefit for those studying God's Word and those seeking the truth."
- "I came across a copy of THE SWORD AND STAFF, vol. 29, #4, 1991. It was great reading. I am hoping that this paper is still available and if so please let me know how to subscribe. Also, are there any back issues available? Thank you for your time and help."
- "Please send me the 10 volumes [of THE SWORD AND STAFF]...I would like to use them as message materials to share with others. Your publication has been a blessing so many years. Enclosed is a small gift to off-set some of the shipping and handling expense. God bless you."

### VIRGINIA:

- "Thank you for THE SWORD AND STAFF and staying in the Word."
- "Just received the latest issue of the paper, it's great!

*Keep up the good work, and may God bless you with good health to continue on."*

- "Thank you for the wonderful work you are doing with THE SWORD AND STAFF.

*"Thank you for the stand you take on the Word of God, for your steadfastness and faithfulness. Sometimes I feel like I am the only one left. People want to change everything from dress to the Lord's Supper. They want to do away with the reason we are come together and keep adding some kind of entertainment. I wonder a lot of times where are all the ones who just want to do what God has told us to do and nothing else.*

*"I know Jesus died for the church and I love the church, and it is very good to see THE SWORD AND STAFF come in the mail. It tells me there are others who love the church and love God just like I do. More I would like to say, but I know you are busy and need your time for study and teaching. Thanks again."*

### KENTUCKY:

- "Thanks for the bound copies of THE SWORD AND STAFF. God will reward you immensely for your teaching and spreading the gospel. You have a gift from God."

### NEW YORK:

- "...I was wondering if you could send me one of all of your [bound] volumes [of THE SWORD AND STAFF]...Thank you very much and I would greatly appreciate it." (E-mail)

### OHIO:

- "Keep printing the truth as long as God gives you the ability. Here is a small gift to use anyway it is needed..."
- "Thanks for holding the standard high in a time when so many are lowering it. The enclosed check is to help wherever needed."

### INDIANA:

- "Please take us off your mailing list. We no longer want THE SWORD AND STAFF. Thanks."
- "Thank you so much for all of the wealth of good, Biblical information we have found in THE SWORD AND STAFF newsletter for many years..."
- "I have enjoyed your publication for many years, and encourage you to keep up the good work and committed stand for God's Word..."

*"If you have enough, I would like to receive a copy of all the bound volumes of THE SWORD AND STAFF. I hope this check helps out in a small way."*

### IOWA:

- "Thank you, sir, for the good articles you put in the paper with the plain helpful way for people to understand and get the picture of truth. We trust they will think about it long enough to make it part of themselves and to help their families live it also..."

(Continued on Next Page)

## READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

### MISSISSIPI:

■ "Grace and peace be yours from the Lord!"

"Thank you for your continued great work publishing the Truth! May God sustain you in the new year, 2010 and beyond..."

### TEXAS:

■ "We are requesting 25 copies of 'A More Excellent Way' (a study of I Corinthians 13) for our ladies' class...All of your literature, brochures, etc. is helpful. It is appreciated...We thank you for this good work. We will reimburse you for these good lessons."

■ "I trust this finds you well and pray the Lord to give you many years of ministry for Him. *THE SWORD AND STAFF* has meant a great deal to me through the years. Seems your paper is rare in this world where the gospel truth has been toyed with. Thank you for your faithfulness."

### OKLAHOMA:

■ "I think you did a great job on the Holy Spirit. I wish that all saints understood this subject..."

■ "May this be an encouragement to you in your work, your life, your ministry, and your writing/publication. I do appreciate your thoughts, studies, and the other items in *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. May our wonderful Lord be praised! May He continue to bless you. And may your life and mine be lived for the praise of His glory."

### MONTANA:

■ "It's the 'midnight hour' for catching up on sending you a gift to help in your publications. Your faithfulness is appreciated."

### CALIFORNIA:

■ "Enclosed find check to renew my subscription to *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I enjoy your stand on the Bible and the different material in your paper."

### OREGON: :

■ "I would like to order bound volumes of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* 1989-2008 please. Also would like a copy of each of your tracts...Thank you. I feel fed when I read your publication. Thanks for all your effort in this area, of standing up and speaking for the Truth." (E-mail)

### WASHINGTON:

■ "Please cancel this subscription. Thank you."

### UNITED STATES:

#### A VERY SERIOUS INQUIRY

■ "I have a very serious inquiry..."

"After witnessing, and my dear friends suffering from multiple physical and sexual abuses by members of the church, including leaders, we are all being terribly slandered, borne false witness against etc. for deciding not to 'keep the secrets' anymore.

"Sexual abuse in the church is a serious and spiritually damaging event. When leaders are involved, it is even more seriously damaging. When leaders band together under the mantra of 'unity in leadership' to attack the victims and witnesses it is beyond comprehension.

"My questions are these? Why won't any leader have a serious Bible study to find the Biblical answers to dealing with sin at the leadership level? How is it allowed to have women slandered and sinned against to shut them up?

"Through my study of the Bible I have found principle upon principle upon principle related to the physical and sexual abuse of children, along with the proper methods for dealing with sin in the leadership.

"Why has this part of the Bible been silenced or thrown out completely in order to preserve the ongoing sin in leaders? Do any of your writings address these issues? How do you deal with these issues?" (E-mail)

#### Editor's Reply:

##### No Light Matter

These words are shocking! Whether in the writings of the Old Testament or the New Testament, the Bible has zero tolerance for sexual sins. The sanctity of sex and marriage are one. Let us "nail down" some statements of truth showing that this is no light matter and then take note of these questions over-all.

##### Capital Offenses

God made us male and female, and after making everything, notation is made that "it was very good (Genesis 1:27,31). Looking to the future, after Eve was brought to Adam, we read the commentary of Moses, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). This "one flesh" involves or includes the sexual relationship (1 Corinthians 6:15-18). As the writer of Hebrews later in the New Testament would say, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers [fornicators] and adulterers **God will judge**" (Hebrews 13:4). "Thou shalt not commit adultery" was one of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:14). Then Leviticus 20:10 shows how serious breaking this commandment was. "And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, **the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.**" And to further emphasize the awfulness of perverted sexual practices, Leviticus 20:13 reads, "If a man also lie with mankind [a man], as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: **they shall surely be put to death;** their blood shall be upon them." Under the Law of Moses sexual sins were capital offenses.

##### Eternal Consequences

We are under the New Testament today, and it is our final word on anything religious. The Old Testament was the law of sin and death. Physical death

was the penalty for being a sex offender back then. In the New Testament eternity more vividly comes into play, and physical death is not the primary emphasis. Those guilty of sexual transgressions will not go to heaven, if their sins are not repented of (and the grace of God accepted). They will be “cast into hell.” Consider the following somber and irrefutable New Testament Scriptures.

#### Ephesians 5:3-7

Ephesians 5:3-7 covers the wide spectrum of sexual sins, and this Scripture concludes by saying people who practice these sins will not have “any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God” and the “wrath of God” will come upon them. Such sexual sins are not to be even “named” or hinted at as being among Christians. We give this in two different translations (KJV and NIV) that follow for clearness and emphasis sake.

● “But **fornication**, and **all uncleanness**, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither **filthiness**, nor **foolish talking**, nor [**coarse**] **jesting**, which are not convenient [fitting]: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no **whoremonger [fornicator]**, nor **unclean person**, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them” (Ephesians 5:3-7, KJV).

● “But among you there must not be even a hint of **sexual immorality**, or of **any kind of impurity**, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people. Nor should there be **obscenity**, **foolish talk** or **coarse joking**, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure: No **immoral**, **impure** or greedy person — such a man is an idolater — has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them” (Ephesians 5:3-7, NIV).

#### Other Plain Scriptures

Here are some other New Testament Scriptures that show sexual sins are not a light matter. They are of eternal consequence.

● “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: **neither fornicators**, nor idolaters, nor **adulterers**, nor **effeminate [homosexuals]**, nor **abusers of themselves with mankind [sodomites]**, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 6:9-10, KJV).

● “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; **Adultery**, **fornication**, **uncleanness**, **lasciviousness [lewdness]**, Idolatry, witchcraft [sor-

cery], hatred, variance [contentions], emulations [jealousies], wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such thing shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:19-21).

● “Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but **whoremongers [fornicators]** and **adulterers** God will judge” (Hebrews 13:4). “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and **whoremongers [fornicators]**, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death” (Revelation 21:8). Check out Matthew 5:27-30.

#### Dealing With the Problem

For those who believe the Bible, these Scriptures make it very plain just how wrong and wicked sexual sins are and that certain punishment awaits in eternity for those who commit them. Now let us see how to deal with them before and when they raise their ugly heads in the context of the church. Different Scriptures in the New Testament have a bearing on this. The apostle Paul faced such problems in the church at Corinth.

#### Past Tense Now

When we come to Christ, sexual sins are forgiven along with all other past sins. We listed 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 a few paragraphs ago. Having said, “Be not deceived: neither **fornicators**, nor idolaters, nor **adulterers**, nor **effeminate [homosexuals]**, nor **abusers of themselves with mankind [sodomites]**...shall inherit the kingdom of God,” Paul continues. “And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (6:11). Please notice he said, “And such **were** some of you.” This kind of living was now past tense with them. Like the Lord said to the woman taken in adultery, upon forgiving her, “Go, and sin no more” (John 8:3-11).

#### Propriety Enjoined

Sex is holy in the context where God has placed it, and that is marriage (Hebrews 13:4). Paul instructed and admonished the new Christians at Thessalonica, “For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel [his body] in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence [passion of lust], even as the Gentiles which know not God” (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5). Lest there be any hint of promiscuity, Paul admonished the Ephesians, “But **fornication**, and **all uncleanness**, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither **filthiness**, nor **foolish talking**, nor [**coarse**] **jesting**...” (Ephesians 5:3-

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## READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

4). And lest there be any hint of impropriety in his relationship with the women in the church, Paul told the young preacher Timothy to treat "the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity" (1 Timothy 5:2).

### Preacher Paul Deals with the Problem

The epistle of 1 Corinthians is a call to repentance. The apostle Paul had started the church in this city, but he was no longer there. However, he had heard of all kinds of problems coming into the church. One of them that seemed to be widespread had to do with sexual immorality. (Corinth was notorious for this in the ancient world). Read the 5th chapter of 1 Corinthians. Here he writes, "It is reported commonly that there is **fornication** among you..." First he deals with a glaring case of incest, a man is living with his "father's wife" (thought to be his step-mother). Others seem to have been involved in fornication generally. Instructions are given about "disfellowshipping" the incestuous persons. And, more generally, he writes, "But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a **fornicator**, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one not to eat." Then he goes on to say, "Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

### Efforts Largely Successful

As we go to 2 Corinthians, we seem to get a good report about the church situation, although a few seem to be holding out on Paul. In chapter 2, verses 4 through 11, we get the impression that the "disfellowshipping" maneuver has worked with the incestuous couple. They have repented. They are to be forgiven and received back into full fellowship. Those guilty of other sins seem to have repented, too. Read chapter 7, verses 9-11. The well-known verse 10 is talking about restoring erring Christians. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of [regretted]; but the sorrow of the world worketh death." In reference to this godly sorrow and repentance, Paul goes on to say, "what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter." However, there seem to be others among the sexual offenders who still are holding out. On toward the end of this epistle, he writes, "For I fear, lest when I come, I shall not find you such as I would...and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the **uncleanness** and **fornication** and **lasciviousness** which they have committed" (2 Corinthians 12:20-21).

### Titus and Timothy

To further highlight the evangelist's responsibility toward the local church, notice what Paul said in Titus 1:5. "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee." The preacher is responsible to see that the local church is "set in order." Certainly, dealing with the problem of sexual sins would be in the category of things that need to be "set in order." Timothy's relationship to the church in Ephesus in 1 Timothy was parallel to that of Titus. He is given instructions about dealing with elders. "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" (1 Timothy 5:19-20). Witnesses had brought grievances against the elders. Now the situation was being handled.

### The Elders' Responsibility

Basically, keeping the local church pure and faithful is the elders' responsibility. Paul admonished the Ephesians elders, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost [Spirit] hath made you overseers, to feed [tend, take care of] the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28). After this verse, the apostle went on to say that grievous wolves would enter, not sparing the flock. He is talking about false teachers. But sexually speaking, "grievous wolves" abound today, and many times these predators are around in "sheep's clothing." It is the elders' job to protect and to look after the flock. But, many times elders, instead of being leaders, are followers of the crowd. When they won't deal with such problems, the problems are compounded and multiplied. As Paul said, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (1 Corinthians 5:6). Faithful preachers need to step up and deal with the situation.

### Concluding Remarks

As we bring our reply to our e-mail correspondent's questions to a conclusion, let us say that we do not know the correspondent. We know nothing of the correspondent's personal situation involving the problem, nor the specific location where this is taking place, except for the e-mail letter that has been received. We have simply called your attention to basic truths of the Scriptures. And as we have pointed out, faithful leaders are the key in dealing with church problems, sexual or otherwise. But when the leaders are the problem, or part of the problem, the problem is many times compounded and is made even harder to solve, if indeed it can be. Sometimes the only recourse is to relocate where the leadership respects the teaching of the Word of God and is concerned about the purity of the church (the bride of Christ). Sexual immorality is no light matter. Eternity is in the balance. Repentance is the only solution. □

## “Praying with Your Eyes Wide Open”

- (1) “Take ye heed, *watch* and *pray*: for ye know not when the time is” (Mark 13:33).
- (2) “*Watch* and *pray*, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:41).
- (3) “Continue in *prayer*, and *watch* in the same with thanksgiving” (Colossians 4:2). □

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## **BARBS** ...with a POINT

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*IT is hard for “dead wood” to bear fruit.*

Unless we believe in the awfulness and enormity of sin, all talk about grace is meaningless.

*Do you count, or are you just among the counted?*

There is nothing stingy about Christianity, and we shouldn't be stingy with our Christianity.

*The flatterer flatters, not merely to please you, but to deceive you.*

Many who in belittlement call devout Christians “straitlaced” really are themselves “unlaced” or have never been “laced.”

*Some people want strong preaching until it begins to show up their weakness.*

When the “chickens come home to roost,” in reference to fiscal irresponsibility, there may not be a place for them to roost.

*If the preaching of righteousness offends you, you are not right with God.*

A man's standing with God determines the stand that he takes, or even if he will take a stand.

*To sin against the light is to bring upon oneself the darkest night.*

If your circumstance in life brings you to your knees, just remember that this is the best position to be in when we pray.

*Sometimes people have to feel the heat before they can see the light.*

If we don't learn from our bad experiences, we set ourselves up to repeat them.

*A church that compromises does not comprise a faithful church of Christ.*

When we experience unfulfilled “dreams,” it is then that we begin to “wake up” to the harsh realities of life.

*Where we are physically many times indicates where we are spiritually.*

The man who must always be trying to prove to himself that he is a man will never be satisfied with the proof.

*Compromising the Word of God to accommodate erring brethren is not love, it is apostasy.*

It is hard for a team to pull and work together when one is a bull and the other is a donkey that constitutes the team.

*“All nice and no sacrifice”—that describes the situation of too many professing Christians!*

Be more than a second hand Christian who has responded to prefabricated beliefs supplied by others; personally search out the Scriptures for yourself.

*It is hard to build someone up if you are always tearing him down.*

If we disregard the Bible and throw our convictions to the wind, we will be “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Ephesians 4:14).

*If we have to eat “humble pie” because we have been so arrogant, it is not a tasty dish.*

You can kick a dead dog all that you want to, but he is not going to get up and go anywhere.

*Most of us have a problem, and much of the time that problem is us.*

Religious movements that are geared to the personalities of men, and not distinctly to the Word of God, are destined to fizzle out in bringing about permanent change.

*New Testament Christians are the only kind you find in the New Testament.*

Do what is right and you won't have to worry about the consequences of doing wrong.

*It seems that some people can't tell the truth and other can't tell the difference.*

If you tolerate wrong, and learn to live with compromise, the next step is to accept it. □

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## Appalling Information

**T**HE PRINCETON Religion Research Center has measured the impact of religion on day-to-day work. Comparing the “churched” with the “unchurched” on a wide range of behaviors like pilfering supplies (stealing), overstating qualifications on resumes (lying), calling in sick when not sick (lying and stealing), and overstating tax deductions (lying, stealing, and cheating), the center finds “little difference in the ethical views and behavior of the churched and the unchurched.” What differences there are “are not significant or are of marginal significance.”—*Christianity Today* (!!!) □

## SOME THINGS SATAN WOULD HAVE YOU BELIEVE

*(Continued from Page 8)*

judgment coming; if not now, hereafter. Romans 14:11-12, likewise, plainly states, "As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

### The "Accursed Thing" and Achan

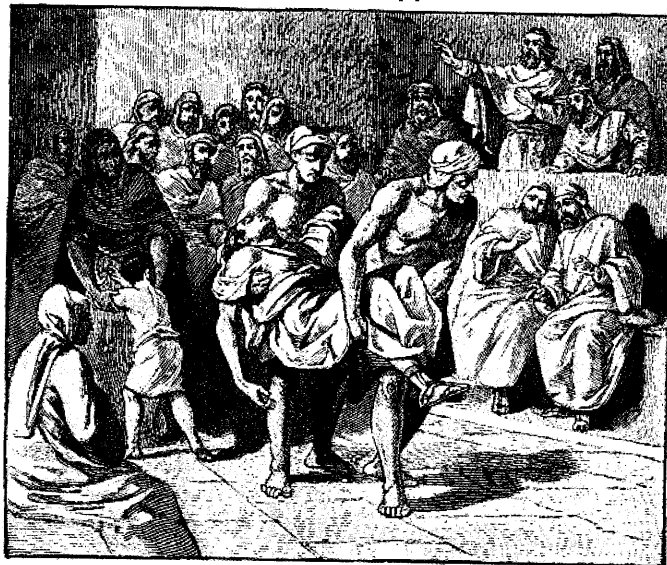
There are repeated examples, time and time again throughout the Bible, of people doing wrong, thinking they could get by. We remember the case of Achan who had taken the accursed things in the beginning of the conquest of Canaan. Read the 7th chapter of Joshua. Beginning with the destruction of Jericho, they were told that things taken in battle were not to be kept for themselves. Joshua said, "But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD" (Joshua 6:17-19). When Israel was defeated in confronting the little city of Ai, it was obvious that something was wrong. And especially since Jericho had fallen with no effort. Joshua concluded there was "sin in the camp." As all passed before Joshua, Achan was exposed and made to confess the wrong that he had done. "When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them: and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it." Judgment was forthcoming, immediate and swift. Achan was stoned to death and a great heap of stones was raised over him. The devil had deceived him into thinking that he could do wrong and get by with it. He didn't get by.

### "The Counsel of Balaam"

Earlier in the plains of Moab on their way to the Promised Land, the Israelites had experienced the judgment of God because they did wrong. They didn't get by with it. This involved Balak, king of Moab, and the false prophet Balaam, who had been hired to curse Israel as they passed through that land. (Numbers chapters 22 through 25 make very interesting reading. Check this out). When Balaam tried to curse Israel, only blessings came out of his mouth. Try as hard as he would, he couldn't change it. But finally he told the disgruntled Moabite king how to bring the disfavor of God upon the Israelites. It had to do with getting them involved with idolatry and sexual immorality (which were interwoven). Revelation 2:14 calls this counsel that was

given, "the doctrine of Balaam." Numbers 31:16 says that the Moabites "caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD...and there was a plague among the congregation of the Lord." Balaam knew that judgment would come from God if the Israelites got involved in these things. Somehow through the weakness of the flesh they did, and in one day 24,000 people fell into sin and death. An awful plague came upon them from the LORD. They did not do wrong and get by with it.

### Ananias and Sapphira



The unseemly episode in the book of Acts involving Ananias and Sapphira shows that Satan is behind the scenes orchestrating deception, making people think they can do wrong and get by with it (Acts 5:1-11). Impacted by the grace of God, many of the more well-to-do in the early days of the church sold their houses and land and gave what they had gotten from the property to be used to help those less fortunate (Acts 4:33-37). Ananias and Sapphira looked upon all of this with fleshly eyes. They wanted to be listed among the number selling land, with the desire of fleshly and flamboyant recognition. They wanted the glory of giving all while at the same time holding back part for their own selfish purposes. They lied in doing this. Peter questioned Ananias, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost [Spirit], and to keep back part of the price of the land?" Upon hearing these words, Ananias dropped dead. The same thing happened all over again when his wife came in later. Great fear came upon the church. You can't do wrong and get by. This doesn't happen every time a sin like this takes place today, but there is a day of judgment coming. God did not want his infant church spotted. He lets us know for

time and eternity what he thinks of such sin and implying punishment is sure to come.

**Summary Scriptural Statements**

As we look at things from the viewpoint of now and then on into eternity, the following Scriptural statements summarize and are very plain and emphatic in this matter. "Be not deceived," we are repeatedly told. You can't do wrong and get by with it. There are consequences.

● "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34). "The wicked shall be turned into hell [sheol], and all the nations that forget God" (Psalms 9:17).

● "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness [lewdness], Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance [contentions], emulations [jealousies], wrath, strife, seditions [dissensions], heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21).

● "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate [homosexuals], nor abusers of themselves with mankind [sodomites], Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

● "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29). "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:12-15; 21:8; etc.).

**The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire**

Edward Gibbon, author of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, has attributed the fall of the Empire to:

1. The rapid increase of divorce; the undermining of the dignity and sanctity of the home, which is the basis of human society.

2. Higher and higher taxes and the spending of public monies for free bread and circuses for the populace.

3. The mad craze for pleasure; sports becoming every year more exciting and more brutal.

4. The building of gigantic armaments when the real enemy was within, the decadence of the people.

5. The decay of religion—faith fading into mere form, losing touch with life and becoming impotent to warn and guide the people.

—Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. □

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**Answers to:  
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1. Deuteronomy 34:3; 2 Chronicles 28:15; 2. Numbers 14:33-34; 3. Deuteronomy 3:25-28; 32:48-52; 4. (Mount Nebo (Numbers 27:12; Deuteronomy 32:49); Pisgah (Deuteronomy 3:27); 5. 1 Samuel 8:1-5; 6. 1 Samuel 25:1 (7:15-17); 7. Judges 17:6 (21:25); 8. Gibeon (1 Kings 3:4; 1 Chronicles 16:39; 21:29); 9. 1 Kings 6:38; 1 Kings 7:1; 10. Psalms 51; 11. 2 Kings 2:22-23; 12. Psalms; 13. A day's wages (Matthew 20:2); 14. John 12:4-6; 13:29; 15. Luke 16:19-31; 16. John 11:43-54; 17. Luke 22:39-46; 18. The book of Hebrews; 19. James 2:8; 20. 1 Peter 2:9. □

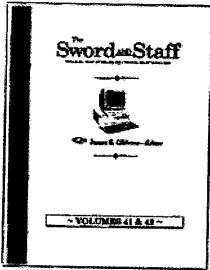
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