

SERMONS AND ARTICLES

by James Crumpton

A collection of sermons and articles by James Crumpton addressing various topics of Christian faith, doctrine, and practice.

15 Chapters

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Did Jesus Die on Friday?

DID JESUS DIE ON FRIDAY? By James Crumpton

How could there be three days and three nights from late Friday afternoon until early Sunday morning? At the most, there could only be two nights, one day, and a part of another! Had the Scriptures only said three days, we could have understood them to mean a part of three days, since both in and out of the Scriptures we use the word to mean only a portion of a day. However, the Scriptures specify “three days and three nights,” and thus verbal inspiration demands three twenty-four hour days.

It is good for us to note the difference in the Roman day, the Jewish day, and our present day. THE ROMAN DAY began at 6:00 A.M. and closed at 6:00 the next morning. THE JEWISH DAY began at sunset and closed at the next sunset (or from about 6:00 P.M. to the next 6:00 P.M.). OUR DAY begins at midnight and closes the next midnight. The Lord Jesus was placed on the cross about 9:00 A.M. our time and was there until about 4:00 P.M. It was on Wednesday! He was taken down from the cross and placed in the tomb before sunset--- before the beginning of the sabbath. Note that this was not the beginning of the regular weekly sabbath at sunset on Friday, but a “high sabbath”---a Passover sabbath which came on Thursday that week! [See Lev 23:5-7, where we find that the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was a sabbath day.] At about sunset on Thursday He had been in the grave one day and one night. At about sunset on Friday, He had been in the grave two days and two nights. Then, just after the three full days and nights, He arose. He arose as it began to dawn the first day of the week (just after sunset Saturday, our time). The women came early Sunday morning, our time, but He was already gone. The expression “on the third day” in the Gospels referring to His resurrection would be “after the third day” in our way of saying it.

Many have sunrise services commemorating the resurrection, and we see nothing wrong with that. It would be fine to have a high noon service commemorating His resurrection. But maybe we should have a sunset service.

He arose about sunset on Saturday. And that was sunset for our sins---because they were gone forever. Hallelujah!!! [Used by permission from Maranatha!!!, April 1982, Westside Baptist Church, P.O. Drawer 1425, Natchez, MS 39121] The following question and answer from Bible Questions Answered by William Pettingill offers more about the timing of the resurrection:

Question: “I have a problem which you might help me with, if you will. You stated that the crucifixion of our Lord took place on Wednesday, basing the statement on Mat 12:40 and other passages. This is reasonable, but even more often is the resurrection referred to as on the third day. Remembering that the Jews reckoned their days from evening to evening, if Christ were crucified on Wednesday, the resurrection would be on at least the fourth day after. I believe in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, and hence believe that there must be some explanation, although I do not understand it.”

Answer: It is true that the resurrection day is often referred to as the third day. But it is also referred to as “after three days” (Mark 8:31); “within three days” (Mark 14:58); “in three days” (John 2:19); and after “three days and three nights” (Mat 12:40).

I, too, believe in the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, and our problem is to find the harmony between all these expressions. That harmony, as I believe, is to be looked for in connection with idiomatic expression. You know that there is such a thing as usage, and as some one has said, “Any usage is good usage if there be enough of it.” In our English language we fall into usage which at first seems to be entirely contrary to grammar, and yet we go on using expressions which finally find their place in our English dictionaries because the usage becomes so common.

Now, then, if it can be found that “on the third day” was an expression used among the Jews as equivalent to “within three days” or “in three days” or “after three days and three nights,” then our problem is solved. And I think there is just such a solution to be found in the Word of God itself. Please look at Est 4:16, where Queen Esther is quoted as saying: “Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day.” Now look at the first verse of chapter 5: “Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther put on her royal apparel, and stood in the inner court of the king’s house.” You see here the expression “on the third day” is equivalent to “after three days and three nights.”

Now look again at 2Ch 10:5, where Rehoboam said: “Come again unto me after three days.” And yet in the 12th verse it reads: “So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king bade, saying, Come again to me on the third day.” Here you will see that “after three days” is the exact equivalent, according to the Hebrew usage and idiom, of “the third day.”

Now, does not this warrant us in saying that the expression in Mat 12:40, “So shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” is to be regarded as equivalent to the language of Luk 24:21, “To-day is the third day since these things were done?” (Pettingill, Bible Questions Answered).

Everybody is Quitting

"EVERYBODY IS QUITTING AND THOSE WHO ARE NOT QUITTING ARE COMPROMISING"

By James W. Crumpton

"Everybody is Quitting and Those Who Are Not Quitting Are Compromising." It is shocking as to how often and from the many places from which this quotation is being heard these days. I hear it in the homes, the churches, among Christians, and from preachers and missionaries. In most conversations about Christians, the Lord's work, religion, in Bible conferences, in mission conferences, in revival meetings, and on the street, this situation is called to our attention. And we must admit that the situation is tragic. The liberal theologians, the neo-orthodox, and the neo-evangelicals who have been translating and interpreting the Bible to prove their teachings, while denying the infallible truths of God's Word are having a heyday. The Bible is being ridiculed as the infallible, inerrant Word of God. The virgin birth, God incarnate in human flesh, the substitutionary atoning death of Jesus, His bodily resurrection, His personal return, church discipline, and separation of Christians from the world are passe with them. This crowd smiles with a cynical grin at those who believe these precious teachings, as teachings held only by backwoods' ignoramuses. This should not surprise us because the liberal theologians lie about other things, also.

Separation from the world, purity of Bible doctrine, New Testament church polity, morality, integrity, and modesty are not taught and practiced by those whom we had thought of as being God's preachers, God's people, and God's churches. Professed Christians, pastors, missionaries, church officers, and other leaders go half to three-fourths undressed. I fear that we will soon have crowds of men, women, boys, and girls who will be going around publicly in the nude. Drinking intoxicants, smoking tobacco and marijuana, popping dope, dancing, committing adultery, fornication, and sodomy, watching filthy, wicked movies, lying, stealing, gambling, and the practicing of every sin in the category is increasing in "leaps and bounds." In the face of all of this, preachers are being told by their members, as well as by outsiders, that compromise is the only way to reach the crowds, and many seem to believe this in the light of their practice of compromising. This makes our hearts sad. And another reason that our hearts are deeply grieved about this situation is that so often those who are saying, "Everybody is quitting, and those who are not quitting are compromising," evidently are using this kind of talk to excuse themselves from ceasing to be faithful, practicing sins of omission and commission, and ceasing to be active in our Lord's service. How sad! How sinful! How hypocritical!

Jesus told us that the majority always has been on the wrong road. "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Mat 7:13-14).

He also warned that the whole situation would get worse and more wicked as we approach His return. "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the

days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come" (Mat 24:37-39, Mat 24:42).

Oh, we need to wake up, be alert, recognize the strategy of Satan, and not use the falling away as an excuse for us to backslide. God's Word makes it clear the falling away will come.

"Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, not had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2Th 2:3-12).

God help us to be real soldiers. "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2Ti 2:3). Let us not excuse our going away, falling out on God, because of the preachers who are traitors to our Lord. God spoke through Isaiah of these kinds of preachers in his day and said of them: "His watchman are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant" (Isa 56:10-12).

Paul spoke of these same preachers as he wrote to young preacher Timothy.

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2Ti 4:3-4). And he told Timothy what to do in the face of these wicked changes that would come. "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry (2Ti 4:2-5). This is not time to turn back but to go forward at any cost. Truth has not changed. It is only being lied about by some preachers, processed Christians, religious folk, and Christians who have fallen out. The Lord challenges us to be faithful unto death.

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; he that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (Rev 2:20-21).

Footwashing

FOOTWASHING: CHURCH ORDINANCE OR CHURCH DISCIPLINE?

Dr. James Crumpton

[The following is from New Testament Church Discipline by James Crumpton, Pastor, West Side Baptist Church, P.O. Drawer 1425, Natchez, Mississippi 39121.]

"Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

"Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, ye are not all clean.

"So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? 13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

"I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." (John 13:1-20) This is a most precious part of this Gospel of John. In John 1:11-13, we have reference to those who did and those who did not receive Him. The majority did not; the minority did. In John chapters 13 through 17, we find Him alone with His own, telling them some intimate things about their portion and privileges with Him and with each other. How wonderful to read, "having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (John 13:1).

"His love no end or measure knows, No change can turn its course; Eternally the same it flows From one eternal Source."

What footwashing is not In studying the passage of God's Word, let us notice, in the first place, what it is not teaching. Some teach that foot washing is a church ordinance, just as baptism and the Lord's Supper, and practice is as such. We doubt not their sincerity and respect their desire to obey Christ in a day when so many are so lax; yet, we are convicted and fully satisfied that they have mistaken our Lord's meaning here. The following facts prove conclusively that Jesus is not referring to literal foot washing and that he was not giving us a third church ordinance:

(1) "What I do thou knowest not now" (John 1:7). The disciples certainly knew that their feet had been literally washed.

(2) The Scriptures nowhere indicate that any local church in the New Testament ever observed foot washing as a church ordinance because of this experience recorded in John 13:1-38.

(3) "If I wash thee not, thou has no part with me" (John 1:8). If under these circumstances foot washing is a church ordinance, then foot washing would be a part of salvation. This is the same mistake that those who teach that baptism is essential to salvation make. There is no sacramental salvation taught in the Bible.

(4) "Know ye what I have done to you" (John 1:12)? This would indicate that what Jesus was doing to them had a deep spiritual meaning of which they were unaware.

Some teach that the account in John 13:1-20 is given primarily to teach the humility of our Lord and to give us an example of how humble we should be. We know of one brother who wrote a whole book on this subject using this Scripture as the basis for the book. There is no question but that the humility of our Lord is revealed here, but it is not given primarily for this purpose. His humility was manifested throughout His entire sojourn here. "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Php 2:8).

Others teach that this passage we are considering is given only to remind the disciples of Jesus' continuing love for them in the sad hours just prior to His crucifixion. There is no doubt that we see here a reiterated emphasis of His love for His own. But we do not believe that it is given simply to teach His love per se, but to show what His love caused Him to do for them and in turn what His love would motivate them to do for each other.

One bath -- but daily footwashing In the discussion, Jesus distinguished between being washed (bathed) and needing the feet washed. He was saying that there is one bath and many foot washings. The whole picture is that of the public baths. When they walked from the bathing place home, they contracted dust (since they wore sandals) and so the practice of foot washing. Hosts and hostesses washed the feet of their guests as a gesture of genuine hospitality when folk came to visit them. Thus, we read: "Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work" (1Ti 5:9-10). Here Paul was speaking of the requirements for widows who were to be counted worthy to be placed on the list of those supported by the local churches; one thing was that she was to have "washed the saints' feet." In other words, a widow of genuine hospitality!

Now, what is the spiritual application? The bath once for all refers to the once for all cleansing in the Precious Blood of Calvary. "Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean" (John 13:10-11). The disciples had been washed (bathed); that is with one exception. You see, Judas Iscariot was never saved; he had not been washed (bathed). He was a devil, a lost man all the way. Before him lay "the blackness of darkness for ever." His heart was harder than the nether millstone, and his conscience was seared with a red-hot iron. He was not a lamb of the Lord becoming unclean, but a dog returning to his vomit. The act of foot washing was symbolic of that which ever will be necessary, the cleansing of defilement contracted by the way. We are pilgrims, and in our daily walk we become defiled. In John 12:1-50, we are pointed to the feet of our Lord; His were anointed feet. As He passed through this world, He contracted no defilement. When He went away, He was still like He was when He came: "holy, harmless, and undefiled." The "feet" speak of the walk. As His feet were anointed with spikenard, we are reminded of the sweet savour which ever ascended from Him to the Father. In John 13:1-38, the feet of the disciples were washed. In contrast to their Lord, the disciples were defiled, and the dirt must be removed. The blood is applied once and for all, and we are saved forever. "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1Jn 1:7). "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb 10:14). The New Testament knows nothing of a re-application of the blood. We do not come again or anew to the fountain which has been opened for sin. Sins which are contracted after being saved--defiled feet in the way--are cleansed by the washing of the Water of the Word. "That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (Eph 5:26).

So, being washed (bathed) and cleansed by the blood is a once for all transaction. It has to do with our position in Christ. Foot washing is a daily thing. We are cleansed from the defilement of the daily walk. It has to do with our fellowship with Him. When Jesus said to Peter, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" (v. 8), He was referring to fellowship. The word "part" is a word for "fellowship." In the tabernacle there was the altar of burnt offering first. That pictures Calvary in the New Testament where we receive the once for all cleansing in the Blood (washed or bathed according to John 13:1-38). Then, there was the laver; at the laver the priests washed their hands and their feet in water. This pictures the daily cleansing of defiled feet (foot washing in John 13:1-38) by the water of the Word in the New Testament. The priests washed their hands and their feet. Jesus washed His disciples' feet only. If the walk be right, the work will be acceptable. So for us, it is the daily washing of the feet (cleansing in our daily walk) by the water of the Word.

Foot washing refers to church discipline In another chapter [referring to Crumpton's book New Testament Church Discipline, of which this article forms the final chapter], we discussed Personal Church Discipline. Foot washing is applicable here because as we read and obey the Word, we are cleansed from the defilement of the way. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Psa 119:9).

We wash the brethren's feet as we preach the Word--that is, except those who draw their feet back under the pew and refuse to have them washed. This is Constructive Church Discipline. Through the preaching and applying of the journey through the wilderness of this godless world. The same is true as our teachers teach the Word. We must be careful in washing the feet of the

brethren; some are guilty of using either scalding water or ice water. Sometimes the preacher and teacher get the devil in them trying to get him out of somebody else. Too, we must also beware of the self-righteous who are ready and anxious to lift up the skirts of a brother to point out his need of a foot washing. Foot washing must be done in love, patience, longsuffering, and genuine brotherly concern. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal 6:1-2). And this is Punitive Church Discipline. We certainly must be emptied of all sense of self-superiority before we can restore a brother whose feet need washing. It is the love of the Lord which must constrain us. He tells us to wash one another's feet and to love one another. We need much patient forbearing with our brother's faults.

We are neither to ignore church discipline (foot washing) and hide our faces from sins with which we need to deal, calling evil good, nor are we to look on our brethren with Pharisaic complacency and cold indifference drawing our robes of self-righteousness about us.

Much exercise and searching of soul and much judging of ourselves are needed for such lowly work as foot washing, because we have to get down to our brother's feet, if we are to wash them. This means that our flesh is to be subdued. When Jesus washed the disciples' feet, He wiped them with a towel. When we discipline a brother, and he is restored to fellowship with the Lord and his church family, we are to count it as past and remember it against him no more. Amen and amen!!!

Conclusion: Foot washing is not a church ordinance; it is church discipline!

For the Lily Against the Tulip

For the Lily Against the Tulip, by James Crumpton [Read Rom 9:6-24; John 5:36-47 and Mat 23:37-39.]

I am convinced that the Lord would have me speak tonight on, "I am for the Lily of the Valley, the Lord Jesus Christ, and I am against TULIP theology." The Lord Jesus is so precious. We thank God for His Person, for His message, for His salvation, His atoning sacrifice on Calvary, and for the salvation He has given us in His own precious Son. The Word refers to the Son of God as "the Lily of the Valley" He is so wonderful! So precious! So lovely! We want to preach Him, to live Him, and to make Him known to the lost.

But, beloved, while we are for the Lord Jesus, the Lily of the Valley, we are very definitely against TULIP Theology. I say this not with sarcasm of the flesh, but with a broken heart.

WHAT IS TULIP THEOLOGY?

Some call it Calvinism Some call it Hyper-Calvinism. Some call it Five-Point Calvinism. That is because there is a list that signify the words that present the principles that are involved in TULIP theology. The "T" in the word TULIP is for Total Depravity. The second letter in TULIP is for Unconditional Election. The third letter in TULIP is for Limited Atonement. The fourth letter in TULIP is for Irresistible Grace. The fifth letter in TULIP is for Perseverance of the Saints.

Now I, beloved, am for the Lily of the Valley, the Lord Jesus, but I am against TULIP theology-not part of it, not two points of it, not three points of it-but all of it.

TOTAL DEPRAVITY This theology teaches the total depravity of man, and be sure you add, the total inability of man. Not there is no question but that the Bible teaches we are totally depraved, but it does not teach total inability. The Bible teaches that we came here totally depraved. Passage after passage talks about what terrible sinners were are, how we are lost and undone. But the Bible also teaches that the Lily of the Valley, the lovely Lord Jesus Christ, the Light of the world lights every man who cometh into the world, therefore making him responsible and giving him the ability to accept Christ as Saviour.

"There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light [capital L], that all men through him might believe. He [John the Baptist] was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light, that was the true Light, WHICH LIGHTEST EVERY MAN THAT COMETH INTO THE WORLD" (John 1:6-9).

We are born totally depraved, but the Lord Jesus gives enough light to every man to make him responsible to hear and to reject or accept the Gospel of the Son of God. In John 12:32 did the Lord Jesus say, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw a few men unto Me"? No, He didn't say that. Instead, He said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw ALL men unto me." Though we are totally depraved, yet the Lily of the Valley gives us enough light to make us responsible and declares that He draws all men unto Him.

Notice John 5:40. Does this verse say, “And ye will not come to Me, because you are not one of the elect”? or, “Ye will not come to Me, because ye are not ordained”? He didn’t say that. Rather He said, “And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” It is not that they were not elected; it is not that they were not ordained; it was that they **WOULD NOT COME**.

We are born totally depraved, but the Lord give us enough light to make us responsible.

He gives light in nature. He gives light through creation. We are told in Rom 1:19-20 :

“Because that which may be known of God in manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly see, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.”

He gives light through conscience. Look at Rom 2:11-16 :

“For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified: For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.”

I repeat: We are born totally depraved, but the Lily of the Valley, the Lord Jesus, gives enough light to make us responsible. He gives us light through creation. He gives us light through conscience.

Then we read in Mat 11:28, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” If we could not respond, we would think the Lord Jesus was making fun of us to invite us to come. But, praise God, He makes us responsible and makes it possible that we can come.

I repeat: We believe in total depravity, but we do not believe in total inability that TULIP theologians try to force on us. So I am against the first point of TULIP theology and for the Lily of the Valley, our Lord Jesus Christ.

UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION In the second place, I am for the Lily of the Valley, the Lord Jesus Christ, but I am against unconditional election as taught in TULIP theology. This is one of the most horrible things I have ever heard. You know, beloved, they are saying that when a little baby is conceived in this mother’s womb, and another is conceived in that mother’s womb, then God hates the one and loves the other. For nine months, while those two mothers carry those babies, God hates one of them and loves the other. When those precious little babies are born, God hates one and loves the other. When they get to be teenagers, God hates one and loves the other. When they get to be young married folks, God hates one and loves the other. When they get to be middle-age folks, God hates one and loves the other. When they get to be old gray-headed folds, God hates one and loves the other. And He will hate that one through all eternity and He will love this one through all eternity.

Friend, the Bible knows nothing of such a thesis. It is not in here-not from Genesis to Revelation. In fact, if the TULIP theologians are honest about it, they would go further back that and say, "Back before the foundation of the world, God knew what mothers would have a little baby. Even back there He started loving one and hating the other, and He will love one and hate the other through all eternity to come." How absurd! Beloved, that is close to blasphemy against our God.

Let's put this in the language of what we saw a moment ago in John 5:40. Did Jesus say, "Since before the foundation of the world I determined that you would go to Hell; you cannot come unto Me"? Wouldn't that be a changing of the precious Word of God? He said, "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life."

Turn to Mat 23:37, and put that in the language of the TULIP theologians and see how far they missed what our God has to say. To put it in their language: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and thou which stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often will I have gathered you, but you are not unconditionally elected, therefore you will have to go to Hell. There is no hope for you." Isn't that far from what our Lord Jesus said? What He said is this: ". . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens. . . and ye would not!" He didn't say it was ordained. He didn't say it was predestined. He didn't say you were elected to go to Hell before the foundation of the world. A thousand times, no. Beloved, that theology didn't come out of the Bible.

Turn with me to John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son..." Now the TULIP theologians have several worlds. They are saying John 3:16 is not the whole world but the world of the elect. It takes a great stretch of the imagination to try to believe such a thing. "For God so loved the world [everybody], that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." But the TULIP theologians say, "But, Brother James, God doesn't love sinners." You are wrong. I believe what Jesus said. In Mark 10:21 we have the story of the rich young ruler, a lost man who came to Jesus to inquire about eternal life. "Then Jesus beholding him loved him . . ." Jesus, beholding the sinner, loved him! ". . .and [Jesus] said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up thy cross, and follow me."

Yes, beloved, let the TULIP theologians say what they will about unconditional election, but God says He loves sinners and He sent the Lord Jesus Christ to die for sinners. When the Lord Jesus was here on earth He loved sinners. He went home with them. He had supper with them. Jesus was known as "a friend of sinners."

TULIP theologians are not very friendly toward sinners, but the Lord Jesus is a friend of sinners. I am glad He is. I got to be one of His children because He loves sinners, because He came to save sinners, because He is a friend of sinners. Yes, He is. Indeed He is. So it is totally unscriptural to say there is unconditional election.

I want you to look with me at a few verses they use erroneously to try to teach this doctrine.

Let me first say this. I wrote a missionary one day: "I want to make emphatically clear that we do not want missionaries to be affiliated with the Maranatha Baptist Mission who believe in the five points of Calvinism." And I added, "There is some question about your theology. Tell me, do you believe that God's grace is irresistible? Do you believe that God arbitrarily begins to love or hate

little babies in their mother's womb?" I wrote, "Do you believe that we are saved because of the perseverance of the saints, or because of the perseverance of the Saviour?"

What did he write back? "Who art thou that repliest against God?"

I hadn't replied against God: I had just asked him some simple questions. He was quoting to me from Romans, chapter 9, one of the favorite passages of these who try to teach us this ungodly doctrine. They look at Rom 9:13 and say, "See, 'it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.' Therefore, there is unconditional election."

First, this verse has nothing to do with salvation. It is talking about how God chose Jacob in the Messianic line in contrast to Esau, not about God loving and wanting to save Jacob, and God hating and wanting to damn Esau! By the same principle, I could look out here at some of you preachers tonight and ask, "Do you have a brother?" "Sure."

"Well, isn't it interesting that God chose you to be a preacher and He didn't choose your brother?" It would be the same thing from the standpoint of principle as to what we have in Romans, chapter 9.

God is not saying, "I want to damn Esau and send him to Hell and take Jacob to Heaven, so I make an unconditional election that Jacob will go to Heaven and Esau will go to Hell." That is gross misinterpretation of God's precious Word. In fact, "hate" here is the same word the Lord Jesus used when He said, "If you are going to be My disciples, you will have to hate your father and mother and your brother and sister and your wife and your children." What it means is "prefer." Jesus was saying, "If you are going to be My disciple, you must prefer Me and put Me first instead of wife and children and relatives or other folk," God is saying here that He prefers to put Jacob first in the Messianic line and to leave out Esau. That has nothing to do with God's unconditional election, His sending somebody to Hell and another to Heaven back in eternity.

I believe in the Lily of the Valley, the Lord Jesus Christ, but I am against TULIP theology.

Another verse these folks use to try to teach us that God carries out unconditional election is Eph 1:4, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." This didn't say a word about Heaven or Hell. It is talking about God choosing us to "be holy and without blame before him in love."

Nobody was arbitrarily assigned in unconditional election to Hell or to Heaven before the foundation of the world.

Again, John 15:16 is a verse these folks use to try to prove TULIP theology. There Jesus said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye should ask of the father in my name, he may give it you." This is not saying the Lord chose some for Heaven and some for Hell. This is saying the Lord chose and ordained that born-again, blood-washed believers should bring forth fruit to the glory of God. It has nothing to do with the salvation of the sinner.

They say, "Brother James, what about Rom 8:29?" First is that precious Rom 8:28 : "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Then Rom 8:29 : "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be

conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren.” This is not saying that God predestinated some to Hell and some to Heaven. This is saying that God predestinated that every born- again, blood-washed believer should be made to conform to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not talking at all about the Lord assigning some to Hell and some to Heaven in unconditional election before the foundation of the world.

Salvation is always-from Genesis to Revelation-conditional on faith. I didn't say that faith is the work of merit; I said it is the condition to salvation. If there is a condition for salvation, you can't say it is unconditional. There is a condition-the condition is faith. I repeat, it is not merit, it is not work, but it is a condition. God never saves anybody except they come by faith to the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am for the Lily of the Valley, the Lord Jesus Christ, and I am against TULIP theology.

LIMITED ATONEMENT

I am against TULIP theology that teaches limited atonement. They say that the blood of Christ is not for everybody, just for an elected few. They go further and say that if the blood of Christ is for everybody and everybody doesn't get saved, then it means God failed. It means no such thing! It means people fail to receive what God provided for them. God provided salvation for sinners everywhere, but if they don't come, God has not failed; people have simply limited what God wanted to do for them.

Now, our TULIP theologians would say, “Preacher, you really walked in to a trap. You can't limit God.” That 's what they think!

Turn with me to Psa 78:41. It speaks of Israel and says, “Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and LIMITED THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL.” They kept God from doing for them what He wanted to do. Even some of these TULIP theologians have kept God from doing something for them that He wants to do.

I believe the blood of Jesus Christ is for ALL sinners. But some poor sinner may come up and say, “How do you know it is for me?” Because it is for EVERY sinner, everywhere.

There are several words in the Bible translated “redemption.” Agoraze, exagorazo, lutroo speak of redemption. In one case redemption of one who never was saved, though redemption was provided; in another case, saved and taken out of the slave market, but never accepting all that the Lord has for him; the other one, where one was saved from the market and made totally free.

We have a lot of Christians who are not free today. That is sad, isn't it? Let's look at that first word for a moment-agorazo. Look at 2Pe 2:1 : “But there were false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them [agorazo, redeem them], and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”

We go on down to 2Pe 2:2-4 :

“And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not. For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of

darkness, to be reserved unto judgment...”

He said they denied the One who bought them, so salvation was for them. It wasn't that it wasn't for them: it was that they didn't accept what the Lord had offered. Nobody will be at the judgment of the great white throne and consigned forever to Hell, for whom the blood of Christ was not shed on the cross.

Look with me at John 1:29. When He saw Jesus coming unto him, John the Baptist said, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of”-the few elect whom the Lord has picked out in His limiting the blood of Christ on the cross? No. “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the WORLD.” “World” means everybody.

Look at Heb 2:9. They say “world” doesn't mean the whole “world.” The Scripture says, “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” The Word says “every man.” When I wrote an editorial in my paper on “God So Loved Everybody,” I got one of the most scorching letters from a man telling me I was either ignorant, hypocritical, or prejudiced against Calvinists. Then he did add, “I don't believe you are hypocritical or ignorant.” And I am not prejudiced-I am against TULIP theology!

1Ti 4:10 says, “For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe”-meaning He came and died for all men, that He is the Saviour of all men, and He literally becomes the Savior of the ones who receive Him. That one condition is your faith-not merit but is the condition. And if it is the condition, it is not unconditional election.

Turn with me to 1Ti 2:5-6 : “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” Now wouldn't I be stretching the Scripture to say that He is the ransom for all the elect, for all the specially ordained, when the Scripture says He is the ransom for A-L-L period?

First John 4:14 : “And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world”-not the elect world, not the ordained world, not the world within the world, but the world.

First John 2:1-2 : “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not, And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” The blood of Christ is shed for everybody.

What does the Word of God say in Isa 53:6? “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of [some of us? No--] us all.” The story is told of a man who was in a meeting where one of God's fine preachers was preaching in London, England. In the last service of the meeting this man didn't come to the Lord, but he came under terrible conviction. The meeting was over and the preacher was leaving. This man under conviction ran down to the train station and said, “O preacher, I need to get saved and I need your help.” The preacher hurriedly said, “I have to get on this train to make my next engagement. So go home and read Isa 53:6. Go in at the first ALL and come out at the last ALL, and you can get saved.” The sinner went home and read those words: “ALL we like sheep have

gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us ALL.” The poor sinner said to himself, The preacher said, “Go in at the first `all,” which says we are all sinners-and I surely have been a sinner. And the preacher said, “Come out at the last `all”-which says the Lord has laid on Jesus the iniquity of us all. That means my sins are atoned for with the precious blood of Jesus Christ!

Beloved, the blood of Christ is for all sinners everywhere. A dear friend of mine in South Texas began to preach that the blood wasn't for everybody. One of my preacher brothers said to him, “Brother So-and-So, you know that you are the elect and the blood was shed for you. But how are you going to prove to your little daughter that it is for her also?”

If this doctrine is so, it is a strange thing that everybody who found out about it was in the elect. Seems like some of these preachers would get up and say, “I'm left out. I wasn't in the elect.

I am for the Lily of the valley, the Lord Jesus Christ, and I am against TULIP theology.

IRRESISTIBLE GRACE

I am against TULIP theology in teaching irresistible grace. Such a thing is unheard of in the Bible. Let's read Mat 23:37 in TULIP theology language: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered you, and you sure are going to have to come, because you can't resist My grace. You will have to be saved because I want you to.” Does the Bible say that? No! There is no irresistible grace there. Turn to Acts 7:51, and let's see what Stephen said: “Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.” It sounds like this grace is resisted. Emphatically yes-it is resisted.

Well, our TULIP theologians say that the Lord gives a general call and He gives a specific call-“effectual” is what they call it. In other words, are you theologians trying to tell us that God is a hypocrite-that He gives a general call and doesn't mean it? It sounds like blasphemy to me! God never issues any calls without meaning them! Don't come to me with some “general call” and some “effectual call.” When He says, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden,” He means every heavy laden and burdened person can come. Jesus is not insincere. God forbid that we should even think it, much less advocate it. The TULIP theologians remind me somehow of the evolutionists, who think that they are more accomplished academically than are the rest of us.

Well, any fool could believe the truth of creation in the book of Genesis ten times easier than he could the theory evolutionists try to force on him. The TULIP theologians pose as superior to most of us academically. But it is a lot easier to believe what Jesus said than it is to believe what the TULIP theologians say. I don't find it hard to believe what Jesus said, but I do have a hard time believing what TULIP theologians say.

Now, they say, “Brother James, what about Matthew, chapter 20?” Well, let's look at Mat 20:16: “So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.” Where is this verse? At the end of a parable. This parable has to do with service and rewards, not with salvation from sin. So they yank it right out of context and try to make it mean something it doesn't mean.

It is about as silly as the story I heard of the fellow who was dating his girlfriend. She was spiritual and he wasn't But he still wanted to impress her with his “spirituality.” So everywhere this traveling

salesman went, he would send her a telegram and stick a verse of Scripture on it. He had read a verse over in 1 John, chapter 4, that said, "Perfect love casteth out fear," so he thought that would be a good one for her. But he didn't know there is a difference in 1 John and the Gospel of John. So when he made up the telegram, instead of putting 1Jn 4:18, he put John 4:18, which reads, "Thou hast said well, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands"! When you start pulling a verse out that talks about rewards and service and make it apply to salvation, you, too, are far off.

Now in the same book, Mat 22:14, we come to those same words again, "For many are called, but few are chosen." Let's go back and see the parable as the Lord Jesus gave it. This one is on salvation. Here He is comparing salvation to a big banquet. The goodman of the house invites all the folks to come to the wedding feast. But one is inside without a wedding garment. When the goodman of the house asks him where it is, "He was speechless." The goodman instructed, "Cast him out."

What is the message of this parable? Beloved, in those wedding feasts over there, when one was invited to the wedding, a wedding garment was bought and given to the invited one. But this guy strutted up to the wedding thinking, I'll go in my own garments. I'll not accept the garment provided. But the goodman of the house said, "Cast him out!"

Now that is true of the message of salvation. God demands perfect righteousness if we are to go to Heaven. And here we are in our tattered rags and nakedness of sin. But our God provides, as a free gift, imputed righteousness, which is a robe given to all sinners who come to Christ. And if you refuse the robe, you will be cast out. That is not TULIP theology, that is the Lily of the Valley, the Lord Jesus, saying, "I have provided redemption for all sinners everywhere. So come, sinners, come, for all things are now ready. The feast is prepared. O taste and see that the Lord is good!"

PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

I am for the Lily of the Valley, the Lord Jesus, and I'm against TULIP theology. I am against TULIP theology that says it is the perseverance of the saints that gets us to Heaven. You are not here tonight as a Christian because of your perseverance. You are here because of the perseverance of the Lord Jesus.

Listen to Isa 41:10 : "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Some of our charismatic friends, some of our holiness friends, talk about holding on and holding out. We don't hold on and hold out; it is Jesus who holds us.

Suppose my Bible could talk and say, "You folks pray for me that I'll hold out and won't fall and get skinned on the corner of this pulpit." no need to pray for this Book to hold out; pray for my arm to hold out! Brother, no need to pray for you and me to hold out: we are held by the right arm of His righteousness! Praise God, He will never fail!

I got saved by the power of Jesus Christ; I am kept by the power of Jesus Christ; and I am going to Heaven by the power of Jesus Christ-not by the perseverance of James W. Crumpton.

Deu 33:27 : "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." We are not holding out. "The everlasting arms" are hold out. The Lord Jesus said, "No man is able to pluck

you out of My hands, and He is in the Father's hands!" That doesn't sound like our perseverance.

Look with me at Jude. This is a very interesting verse about perseverance. Verse 1: "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ." Their perseverance? NO! "... "preserved in Jesus Christ."

Turn to 1 Peter, chapter 1, verses 4 and 5. He says we are saved "to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of ... "-the perseverance of the saints? NO! We are "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

"Well, Brother James, what are you?" A Bible-believing preacher! And if you are a Bible-believing preacher, you will be neither a Five Point Calvinist nor an Arminian.

Some fellow in Ohio wrote me, "Brother James, if you are not a Five-Point Calvinist, and you believe that the blood of Christ is for everybody, you have to be an Arminian."

No. A thousand times no! I am not an Arminian. We don't help God save us. God does it totally and altogether by Himself.

He said, "Well, if you believe the blood is for everybody, you have to be an Arminian."

I said, "Oh, no. It is true the Arminians believe that the blood is for all, but they have certain additives along with the blood." The Arminians believe that you must have the blood-plus certain dos and don'ts, and when you lose the dos and don'ts, you have lost your salvation. Which means they are depending on the dos and don'ts, not the blood. I believe we are saved by the blood of Christ and saved forever. It is totally a work of God. We are a lost bunch of poor, Hell-deserving sinners saved by the precious grace of the Son of God. Don't let anybody browbeat you and say you have to be an Arminian or a Five-Point Calvinist. Be a Bible-believing Christian and you won't be either one. We had the Bible a long time before there was a John Calvin. We had the Bible a long time before there was an Arminius. And both of them are wrong on the subjects with which we have been dealing tonight.

Oh, I am so glad I'm saved! But when I get to Heaven, I won't be able to brag on Crumpton, because it is totally a work of the Lord Jesus. I was just a lost, no-good, Hell-deserving sinner, without God and without hope. One brother said, "He just gave me something for nothing." The grace of God is beyond our comprehension.

If we could go up tonight-up, up, up to the third Heaven and kneel down at the throne of God's grace and listen to the heartthrob of God's love; if we could go down, down, down to Calvary and see the torn, beaten, bruised body of the precious Son of God suffering all Hell for all sins, for all sinners, for all eternity, the Hell we would have suffered in the lake of fire and brimstone; then if we could go down, down, down to the charred walls of the damned and listen to the shrieks of damned souls in Hell-fire and brimstone; then if you can tell me how far it is from the highest Heaven to the lowest Hell by the way of Calvary, I can tell you how much is in that little word "grace."

Oh, the unmerited, unconstrained love of God toward poor Hell-deserving sinners like us! Lost, undone sinners on the slave block being sold and bought back by the precious blood of the Son of

God!

I am for the Lily of the Valley, the Lord Jesus Christ, and I am against TULIP theology. “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, ACCORDING TO the riches of his grace.” Amen!

God is Not...

GOD IS NOT...

GOD IS NOT A LONG GRAY-BEARDED SENTIMENTAL GRANDFATHER!

Some of the casual, light, childish, ignorant, and crude ways of referring to God these days should cause us to take note. There are those things that are said and written about Him that make God's people tremble and shudder.

Often when folk die who have refused Jesus Christ as Saviour and lived a wicked life, people are prone to say (even church people), "There was something good about him, and I believe God will let him into Heaven!" God is not that kind of God. We either get prepared for Heaven according to His Plan, or we do not go to Heaven. He does not wink at or excuse sin. He deals with it. He is not some sentimental pushover.

GOD IS NOT A HARD-UP MERCHANT RUNNING BARGAIN DAYS!

Many times when folk faced serious danger in war, mountains, forest, desert, etc., or difficulties, heartaches, bereavements, frustrations, etc., they said, "I told God if He would get me out of trouble, I would become a Christian and live for Him." God does not bargain like that. He may in grace and mercy get you out of a hard place but not because He bargains like some merchant at a dollar-day sale.

One man said to me that God had blessed him so much that he wanted to pay Him back. We cannot pay God back. How could you ever pay for the least of His blessings? In saving us, He does not leave us with some debt to pay. If He did, we would not be saved by grace. Sometimes sinners will say, "I will be saved, if God will not require me to be baptized or turn from some of my sins." God never saves anybody that way. You do not bargain with God. You come His way as a bankrupt sinner, or you do not get saved. God never said baptism is necessary for salvation. He commands all saved folk to be baptized. Yet, He never saves anybody who comes to be saved with reservations as to what they will or will not do. People do not make anything a point of issue with God in getting saved. If they try, He will not save them! Salvation is by grace through faith plus nothing and minus nothing in Jesus Christ.

GOD IS NOT THE "MAN UPSTAIRS!"

There are those who lightly refer to Him in this way. He is not some glorified man or celestial bellhop. Some theologians seek to humanize God and deify man. When I think of folk who do things like this I am reminded of the fact that the second Psalm says that God will sit in His heavens and laugh. Man's stupidity does not change the facts about God.

GOD IS NOT THAT "CAT WHO IS NEAT AND GROOVY!"

Some movie star who professes to be a Christian reportedly said, when asked if she were saved and knew Jesus Christ personally, "Sure I know that Cat; I talk to Him every night." This is little

short of blasphemy, if it is short. The tendency in this generation to debunk everything of the so-called establishment and that which is revered and sacred is dangerous indeed when it comes to such attitudes and talk about God.

GOD IS NOT A GOOD LUCK CHARM!

Football coaches are superstitious about sweaters; baseball players refuse to change sweat shirts during a winning streak; baseball pitchers sometimes refuse to pick up the ball on the mound -- it must be thrown to them, and millions of Americans have the same opinion about God. You would think that God is a bag of powders to frighten away evil spirits, or a ghostly presence to be summoned by incense and incantation. He is not a charm bracelet to be worn casually and inconspicuously around your wrist.

GOD IS NOT AN OUTMODED TRADITION!

Some sophisticated moderns speak condescendingly of God as though He were an invention of some ignoramus from the dark ages. The virgin birth, deity of Christ, bodily resurrection, and personal second coming of Christ are treated as harmless fables.

GOD IS NOT AN AMBULANCE CHASER found best in hospital emergency rooms or outside the door of the intensive care unit! He does not dwell within the walls of the funeral homes or cemeteries. He is a very present help in time of trouble, but He can be found before and beyond trouble.

GOD IS NOT AN IMPERSONAL COSMIC FORCE!

There are those pseudo scientists who would say that referring to God is the layman's way of referring to some cosmic force that is back of revealed things. Many use the word fate, mother nature, etc.; this is a cowardly way of denying God's existence. How foolish do we have to become to deny that a person planned and brought the universe into being?

GOD IS NOT NATURE IN THE PLANT AND ANIMAL KINGDOM!

Some so called theologians and scientists have said, "It is easier to believe in evolution than the Bible story of a bungling God." You see, they claim that a one celled animal was so intelligent and diligent that it went through all the stages of the lower animals to become a man. If this were the case there would be monkeys in the zoos becoming human beings real often. Their theories are as absurd as it would be to look at your watch and say that no one made it - the materials were all so intelligent and diligent they just got together of their own accord and volition. Or again, their theories are as sensible as it would be to say that some nicely printed and well-bound book was the result of an explosion in a print shop. It is far easier to believe the Bible account of creation than the evolutionist's wild dream.

We praise Him that there is another side to this picture. I have been saying a lot about What God is Not! But let us look on the other hand at what

GOD IS...

GOD IS THE OMNIPOTENT, OMNIPRESENT, AND OMNISCIENT CREATOR!

Yes, He is all powerful, all present, and the all knowing One Who created and made all we have in the universe, the plant kingdom, the animal kingdom, and the human kingdom. No wonder the Psalmist could say, "...I am fear-fully and wonderfully made..." (Psa 139:14). Yes, God is God, not a mere ornament of some man's imagination.

GOD IS A REAL, KNOWABLE PERSON! Our hearts go out to those who have not discovered that He is a Wonderful Person -- One Whom we can know, One Who cares for us, One Who loves and One with Whom we can fellowship. Yes, He purposes to make Himself known to all mankind. What blindness it is that keeps men shut off from Him!

GOD IS OUR HEAVENLY FATHER! And what a contrast He is to those who picture Him as an angry tyrant desiring to destroy us. All that a good earthly father is to us as human beings is but a mere shadow of His perfections as our Heavenly Father.

GOD IS THE HOLY SPIRIT! Our wonderful God is One Who is three distinct Persons. One of these Persons is our Heavenly Father. Another of these Persons is the Holy Spirit. Some erroneously refer to Him as it. What shame! He is the blessed Person Who convicts us, regenerates us, and lives in us who are the children of God.

GOD IS LIGHT! And we should add and in Him is no darkness at all. Darkness stands for Satan, his kingdom, sin, iniquity, wickedness, etc. Light stands for God, righteousness, holiness, purity, justice, and faithfulness. God is the absolutely perfect and sinless One.

GOD IS LOVE! As we think of His Holiness, Wrath, Justice, and Perfection, we rejoice that He is also Love. Love as thus described in His Word: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth..." (1Co 13:4-8). "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). He loves sinners and wants to save them.

God is the Giver of every good and perfect gift! He cannot be tempted with sin and He does not tempt us. He tests us many, many times. He does us good all the days of our lives.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jas 1:17).

God is our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners! God came to earth in the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ, died on the cross for our sins, was buried, and arose again that we could be saved. He did not come to condemn but to save. Our sins had already condemned us. Praise His Name; He came to be condemned, damned, judged in our stead. And that is exactly what happened at Calvary. Repent that you are a sinner, trust His finished work for you, and be saved today. God is our Saviour! God is our Lord Jesus Christ! How wonderful and precious!!!!

Good Friday

Good Friday? By Dr. James Crumpton, Pastor, Westside Baptist Church, Natchez, Mississippi The traditional view is that Jesus was crucified on Friday—but was He? The Catholics had a church rule for years forbidding the eating of meat on Friday, since that was supposedly the day of the crucifixion. Some time ago the rule was done away with, but many still voluntarily observe it. In Mat 12:40, our Lord Jesus said: "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." How could there be three days and three nights from late Friday afternoon until early Sunday morning? At the most, there could only be two nights, one day, and a part of another! Had the Scriptures only said three days, we could have understood them to mean a part of three days, since both in and out of the Scriptures we use the word to mean only a portion of a day. However, the Scriptures specify "three days and three nights," and thus verbal inspiration demands three twenty-four hour days.

It is good for us to note the difference in the Roman day, the Jewish day, and our present day. THE ROMAN DAY began at 6:00 A.M. and closed at 6:00 the next morning. THE JEWISH DAY began at sunset and closed at the next sunset (or from about 6:00 P.M. to the next 6:00 P.M.). OUR DAY begins at midnight and closes the next midnight. The Lord Jesus was placed on the cross about 9:00 A.M. our time and was there until about 4:00 P.M. It was on Wednesday! He was taken down from the cross and placed in the tomb before sunset — before the beginning of the Sabbath. Note that this was not the beginning of the regular weekly Sabbath at sunset on Friday, but a "high Sabbath" — a Passover Sabbath which came on Thursday that week! [See Lev 23:5-7, where we find that the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread was a Sabbath day.] At about sunset on Thursday He had been in the grave one day and one night. At about sunset on Friday, He had been in the grave two days and two nights. Then, just after the three full days and nights, He arose. He arose as it began to dawn the first day of the week (just after sunset Saturday, our time). The women came early Sunday morning, our time, but He was already gone. The expression "on the third day" in the Gospels referring to His resurrection would be "after the third day" in our way of saying it.

Many have sunrise services commemorating the resurrection, and we see nothing wrong with that; but maybe we should have a SUNSET service. He arose about sunset on Saturday. And that was sunset for our sins — because they were gone forever. Hallelujah!!!

It is Wed., but Sun. is Coming

IT IS WEDNESDAY, BUT SUNDAY IS COMING By James W. Crumpton, Pastor retired, West Side Baptist Church, P.O. Drawer 1425, Natchez, Mississippi 39121

Praise God for the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ! His resurrection is one of the pillars of true Christianity. It is one of the pillars of our faith. Traditionally, we are told that our Lord was crucified on Friday and arose on Sunday. We cannot accept this, because our Lord made it clear that He would be "three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." He said it this way, "... An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whales's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Mat 12:39-40). We believe that He was crucified on a fearful, memorable Wednesday. Keep in mind the difference in the days. The Jewish day began at sunset and closed at sunset. The Roman day began at 6:00 A.M. and closed at 6:00 A.M. Our day begins at midnight and closes at midnight. In our mind's eye, let us stand there at the foot of the cross. What a fearful, tragic day! It is Wednesday, but Sunday is coming! The Pharisees and the Sadduces were confidently marching in pride "calling the shots."

It is Wednesday, but Sunday is coming! His Precious Body is so beaten, torn, bruised, and mauled that you cannot even tell that He is a man. He tenderly prays, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

It is Wednesday, but Sunday is coming!

Satan is well pleased. He and his angels are dancing for joy with fiendish glee! They are sure that they are winning.

It is Wednesday, but Sunday is coming! The two thieves being crucified with Him cast sarcastic, facetious criticism at Him (though one later repents and gets saved).

It is Wednesday But Sunday is coming!

He commits the care of His mother to John, the beloved disciple and breaks all physical relationships with her. She is no longer His mother! Tradition says that she fainted, and we doubt it not. A sword twisted in her bosom (though she found it far more wonderful to be the daughter of the Christ than the mother of Jesus). It is Wednesday, but Sunday is coming! From twelve noon until 3:00 P.M., there is great darkness. The face of the sun is hidden. He is totally silent for these nearly three hours, and then He cries, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me? He is suffering all Hell for all sinners for all sins, the hell that they would have had to suffer in the lake of fire and brimstone.

It is Wednesday, but Sunday is coming!

During these three hours of darkness, there is a dreadful silence. In the last hour, He cries, I thirst," "It is finished," and "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit." He is dead!

It is Wednesday, but Sunday is coming!

Yes, beloved, He is dead! He is not asleep; He is dead! He is not fainting: He is dead! He is not playing dead; He is dead! He is not holding His breath; He is dead! He is not swooning; He is dead! He is not blacking out; He is dead! He is not semiconscious; He is dead! He has not passed out; He is dead! Oh, let Heaven, earth, and Hell hear! He is dead!

It is Wednesday, but Sunday is coming! His disciples are all scattered. Five of them stand at the foot of the cross (four women and one man). He is dead! Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus get permission to bury His body. He is dead!

It is Wednesday, but Sunday is coming!

Three days and nights of tragic sorrow, sadness and hopelessness are just ahead for His disciples. He is dead!

It is Wednesday, but Sunday is coming! Surely, Satan and all of his cohorts (all the forces of Hell) are shouting. He is dead!

It is Wednesday, but Sunday is coming!

Jesus was on the cross from 9:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M. (seven hours--God's number, the perfect number, the ultimate number). He was taken down and placed in the tomb just before sunset (the ending of the Jewish day) because the day that began at sunset was a Sabbath. It was not the regular weekly Sabbath but the Passover Sabbath (a high Sabbath). "The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day), besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away" (John 19:31). Thursday at sunset, He had been in the grave one day and one night.

It is Thursday, but Sunday is coming!

Friday at sunset, He had been in the grave two days and two nights. It is Friday, but Sunday is coming!

Saturday at sunset He had been in the grave three days and three nights. It is Saturday, but Sunday is coming!

Praise God! Sunday did come! As it began to dawn toward the first day of the week (at sunset on Saturday on the Jewish calendar), He arose!!!! He arose forevermore!!!! It was Wednesday, but now it is Sunday! His substitutionary, atoning sacrifice is accepted. Our sins are put away forever. Now, Praise God! It was Wednesday, but Sunday is now here!

"And the angel answered and said unto the women, fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you" (Mat 28:5-7). (Used with

permission from the book At The Cross by James W. Crumpton)

Jesus

Jesus By Dr. James Crumpton

“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Php 2:5-11).

“He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from heaven is above all” (John 3:31).

“Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for every, Amen” (Rom 9:5) In this message, I want to speak to you on the subject, “Jesus!” I am conscious of the fact that if I had ten thousand lifetimes to devote to it, I could not do Him justice in a sermon, a series of sermons, a book, and/or several volumes. To do justice to Jesus in a sermon would be more impossible than trying to water the lawn in the midst of a rainstorm, or trying to stop Niagara Falls with toothpicks, or trying to remove the Pacific Ocean with a teaspoon. No voice can compass, no pen can include the full statement of Jesus’ character. The world over, architects striving to build cathedrals worthy of Him, fall short of their high objectives. A sense of inadequacy falls oppressively upon musicians who try to create music sweet enough for His hymns of praise.

Sculptors, searching all quarries, nowhere find marble white enough for His forehead. Orators, whose sentences are flights of golden arrows, express only a meager measure of the honor due Him. Writers, words dropping from their pens like golden pollen from the stems of shaken lilies, feel the inadequacy of all words to set Him forth in His beauty. Devout poets, reaching from pole to pole with wings of their poetic genius, struggle for some metaphor with which to express Him. Profound scholars, rushing with archangelic splendor through mysterious realms of thought, light their brightest torches at His altar fires.

Jesus is the most Wonderful of the wonderful. Jesus is the most Precious of the precious. Jesus is the most Lovely of the lovely. Jesus never struck a jarring note.

He never made a misstep. On Him circumstances left no fingerprints. Popularity never caused Him to hasten a footstep. Hostility never caused Him to falter.

Temptations never loosened a moral fiber. As all the rivers are gathered into the ocean, so Jesus is the Ocean in which all moral excellencies and spiritual pleasure meet. Even His enemies said that they could find no fault in Him. His worst foe proclaimed Him innocent. He challenged them

with the question: "Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do you not believe me?" (John 8:46). God found no blemish in Him: "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mat 3:17). Jesus Himself said, "... I do always those things that please him" (John 8:29). Jesus is a sea of sweetness without one drop of gall. Things that shine as single stars with a particular glory all meet in Jesus as a glorious constellation. "For it pleased the Father than in Him should all fulness dwell" (Col 1:19). All other loveliness is derivative and secondary, but the loveliness of Jesus is original and primary. His is the beauty of holiness. Holiness is glory internal. Glory is holiness shining forth outwardly. He is the Lord of Glory! And, if you see no beauty in Him that you should desire Him, it is because the god of this world hath blinded your mind - and you are a victim of dawdling ditties, missing life's central melody,. The eyes of your understanding have not been enlightened.

Jesus - speaking as never man spake. Jesus - by Whom Almighty God hath in these last days spoken unto us. Jesus - Whom God hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the world. Jesus - Who being the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the Word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. Jesus - being made so much better and higher than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent Name than they. Jesus - Who is the Head of the body, the church, Who is the Beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he might have the Preeminence. Jesus in Whom by the pleasure of the Father, all fullness dwells. Jesus - counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He Who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house. Jesus - called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec, Who glorified not Himself to be made an high priest. Jesus - Son of man without sin, Son of God with power Who though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered, and became the Author of eternal salvation. Jesus - to Whom the sighs of a contrite spirit and the groans of a broken heart are more pleasing than the songs of angels. Jesus - from Whose Spirit and merit flow our redemption, our justification, our peace, our joy in the Holy Spirit, and our blessedness in the world to come. Jesus - once despised and rejected of men, now honored of angels, adored of saints, and The One to Whom God hath committed all judgment.

Yes, to the artist, Jesus is The One Altogether Lovely. To the architect, Jesus is The Chief Cornerstone. To the astronomer, Jesus is The Sun of Righteousness. To the baker, Jesus is The Living Bread. To the banker Jesus is The Treasure of all treasures. To the biologist, Jesus is The Life. To the builder Jesus is The Sure Foundation. To the carpenter, Jesus is The Door. To the doctor, Jesus is The Great Physician. To the educator, Jesus is The Great Teacher. To the engineer, Jesus is The New and Living Way. To the farmer, Jesus is The Sower and The Lord of the Harvest. To the florist, Jesus is The Rose of Sharon, The Lily of the Valleys. To the geologist, Jesus is The Rock of Ages. To the horticulturist, Jesus is The True Vine. To the judge, Jesus is The Righteous Judge, the Judge of all men. To the juror, Jesus is The Faithful and True Witness. To the jeweler, Jesus is The Pearl of Great Price. To the lawyer, Jesus is The Counselor, The Lawgiver. To the newspaperman, Jesus is The Good Tidings of Great Joy. To the oculist, Jesus is The Light of the eyes. To the philanthropist, Jesus is The Gift of God. To the preacher, Jesus is The Word of God. To the sculptor, Jesus is The Living Stone. To the servant, Jesus is The Good Master. To the student, Jesus is The Incarnate Truth. To the statesman, Jesus is The Desire of all

nations. To the soldier, Jesus is The Ten-Star General, The Commander-in-Chief. To the sailor, Jesus is The Calmer of the seas. To the theologian, Jesus is The Author and The Finisher of our faith. To the toiler, Jesus is Giver of Rest. To the sinner, Jesus is the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sin of the world. To the saint, Jesus is The Son of The Living God - Yahweh, The SAVIOUR, The Redeemer, and The Lord - Adonai.

Jesus is All and in all and above all? Yes, Jesus is The Adam, The Advocate, The Anointed, The Apostle, The Author, The Amen, The Alpha, The Ancient of Days born of a woman, The Adonai, The Almighty God.

Jesus is The Beginning, The Begotten, The Beloved, The Branch, The Bread, The Bridegroom, The Bright and Morning Star, The Bishop of our Souls, The Brightness of the Father's Glory.

Jesus is The Cluster of Camphire, The Captain, The Consolation, The Chief Cornerstone, The Counsellor, The Covenant, The Chosen of God, The Christ.

Jesus is The Daysman, The Deliverer, The Dayspring, The Daystar, The Door, The Desire of all Nations.

Jesus is the Elect, The Ensign, The Everlasting Father, The Emmanuel, The Great Elohim, The El Shaddai, The El Elyon, The El Olam.

Jesus is The Finisher of our Faith, The Forerunner, The Friend, The Firstfruits, The Faithful Witness, The Fountain of Life issuing from the cave of death.

Jesus is The God, The Gift of God, The Governor, The Guide, The Glorious Lord.

Jesus is The Help, The Hope, The Husband, The Horn of Salvation, The Hearer, The Head of the Church, The Heir of all things, The High Priest, The Hell's Dread, The Heaven's Wonder, The Holy One.

Jesus is The I Am, The Inheritance, The Image of God's Person, The Immortal and Invisible, The Intercessor, The I Who shall continue to be Who I have always been.

Jesus is The Judah, The Judge, The Just, The Jesus in contrast to "another Jesus" (2Co 11:4), whom many preach today.

Jesus is The King, The King of Israel, The King of Kings, The King Everlasting, The King of Glory, The King of Salem, The King of Saints, The King of Righteousness, The King of Zion, The King of Peace. Jesus is The Life, The Light, The Love, The Lily, The Lion, The Lamb, The Lawgiver, The Living Stone, The Lord of Glory, The Lord of Lords, The Lovely Lord, The Lord most Precious. The Lord our Righteousness, The Lord of Saboath, The Lord of Hosts, The Lord of the Armed Forces, The Lord of the Holy Prophets, The Lord of the Sabbath!

Jesus is The Messenger, The Mediator, The Master, The Messiah, The Mercy's Paradox, The Mighty (Almighty) God.

Jesus is The Nazarene, The Nazarite, The Number One in time and eternity.

Jesus is The Offspring of David, The Omega, The Only Begotten of God, The Offering, The Offerer, The One Altogether Lovely, The Great Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient One.

Jesus is The Priest, The Passover, The Potentate, The Prophet, The Propitiation, The Prince of Life, The Prince of Peace, The Physician.

Jesus is The Quickener of those who are dead in trespasses and sins.

Jesus is The Righteousness, The Rabbi, The Ransom, The Rest, The Root of Jesse, The Root of David, The Refiner, The Refuge, The Resurrection, The Rose of Sharon - blossoming in the shades of Hell - Whose sweat, tears, and blood, quenched for all believers the fires of Hell and clothed the crater of damnation with foliage, fruit, and flowers. Yes, Jesus is the Ruler, The Redeemer, The Rock of Ages, The Regenerate Breath rekindling the dead fires on the souls' altar and restoring the broken strings of the spirit's silent lyre, tuning them to Heaven's harmony.

Jesus is The Stone, The Shepherd, The Son of God, The Son of Man, The Shield, The Servant, The Seed of the woman, The Surety, The sufferer, The SAVIOUR, The Sinless Sacrifice, The Shiloh, The Same yesterday, today, and forever.

Jesus is The Teacher, The Truth, The Tabernacle, The Testator, The Treasure, The Tree of Life.

Jesus is The Universe's Man of Glory.

Jesus is The True Vine, The Very God.

Jesus is The Witness, The Word, The Way, The Wisdom of God, The Wonderful, The Wonder of Wonders.

Jesus is The X - that is The Unknown to an unregenerate world - yet He so loved the unregenerate that He provided redemption for them.

Jesus is The Yearner for souls to be saved, and for the saints to walk with Him, The Great Yahweh.

Jesus is The Alpha, The Omega, The A and The Z. Yea, in all things, Jesus is the Lovely and Mighty Christ beyond all comprehension of the finite mind. Jesus, Sweetest Name on mortal tongue, Sweetest Carol ever sung. Jesus, Blessed Jesus!!!!

Jesus is The Theme of the Bible, and He is The Theme of every book in the Bible!!!!. In the Book of Genesis, Jesus is The Seed of the woman. In the Book of Exodus, Jesus is The Passover Lamb, The Manna (The Bread), The Quail (The Meat). In the Book of Numbers, Jesus is the Smitten Rock, The Brazen Serpent in that He became sin for us and was judged. In the Book of Deuteronomy, Jesus is That Prophet likened unto Moses. In the Book of Joshua, Jesus is The Captain of The Lord's Host. In the Book of Judges, Jesus is The Great Deliverer. In the Book of Ruth, Jesus is The Kinsman Redeemer. In the six Books of the Kings, (I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, and II Chronicles), Jesus is The Promised King. In the Book of Ezra, Jesus is The Restorer of the temple. In the Book of Nehemiah, Jesus is The Restorer of the nation. In the Book of Esther, Jesus is The Advocate and The Propitiator. In the Book of Job, Jesus is The Daysman. In the Book of Psalms, Jesus is The All and in all. In the Book of Proverbs, Jesus is The Pattern. In the Book of Ecclesiastes, Jesus is The Goal. In the Book of Song of Solomon, Jesus is The Bridegroom, The Lily of the Valleys, The Rose of Sharon, The Bright and Morning Star, The Fairest of 10, 000 to our souls. In the Book of Isaiah, Jesus is prophesied as

The Miraculous One Who will be born of a virgin, The Suffering Servant. In the Book of Jeremiah, Jesus is The Lord our Righteousness. In the Book of Lamentations, Jesus is The Consoler in time of chastening. In the Book of Ezekiel, Jesus is The True Shepherd in contrast to the false shepherds. In the Book of Daniel, Jesus is The Ancient of Days, The Stone cut out without hands. In the Book of Hosea, Jesus is The Faithful and Loving Husband Who woos and wins the adulterous wife back to the bosom of her own husband. In the Book of Joel, Jesus is prophesied as The Judge calling all nations to judgment. In the Book of Amos, Jesus is The Champion of social justice. In the Book of Obadiah, Jesus is The Wrath and The Favor in the Day of the Lord. In the Book of Jonah, Jesus is The Missionary to all men loving souls more than gourds. In the Book of Micah, Jesus is The Messiah as the God-man. In the Book of Nahum, Jesus is The God of Vengeance. In the Book of Habakkuk, Jesus is The God of Justice providing salvation by grace through faith. In the Book of Zephaniah, Jesus is The Judge Who is prophesied to set up a kingdom of blessing as The Messiah. In the Book of Haggai, Jesus is The Restorer of the temple. In the Book of Zechariah, Jesus is The Angel of Jehovah, The Branch of David. In the Book of Malachi, Jesus is The Messenger of the Covenant, The Sun of Righteousness. In the Book of Matthew, Jesus is The King of Israel. In the Book of Mark, Jesus is The Servant of Jehovah. In the Book of Luke, Jesus is The Son of Man. In the Book of John, Jesus is Very God of Very God. In the Book of Acts, Jesus is The Risen Lord. In the Book of Romans, Jesus is Propitiator and Justifier of sinners. In the Book of I Corinthians, Jesus is The Risen, Coming Lord. In the Book of II Corinthians, Jesus is our All Sufficient Grace. In the Book of Galatians, Jesus is Himself alone our salvation. In the Book of Ephesians, Jesus is The Head of the Body, the Church. In the Book of Philippians, Jesus is our Life, our Pattern, our Object, our Strength, and our Supply. In the Book of Colossians, Jesus is The Image of the Invisible God, The Firstborn of every creature. In the Book of I Thessalonians, Jesus is The Bridegroom Who is going to rapture the bride. In the Book of II Thessalonians, Jesus is our Everlasting Consolation and Good Hope. In the Book of I Timothy, Jesus is The True Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. In the Book of II Timothy, Jesus is The Righteous Judge Who is soon to appear. In the Book of Titus, Jesus is The True Elder. In the Book of Philemon, Jesus is The Settler of our Account. In the Book of Hebrews, Jesus is The Eternal Sacrifice and The Eternal Priest. In the Book of James, Jesus is The Shekinah Glory. In the Book of I Peter, Jesus is The Chief Cornerstone elect and precious. In the Book of II Peter, Jesus is The Returning Lord Who is not willing that any should perish. In the Book of I John, Jesus is The Almighty God incarnate in the flesh as a man. In the Book of II John, Jesus is The Truth. In the Book of III John, Jesus is The Strength and Supply for the missionary. In the Book of Jude, Jesus is The One Who is able to keep us from falling and to present us faultless before the Presence of His Glory with exceeding joy. In the Book of Revelation, Jesus is The Coming King of kings and Lord of lords. In this message, I wish to emphasize three things, (1) Jesus is God, (2) Jesus Is The SAVIOUR, and (3) Jesus Is Lord!!!!

JESUS IS GOD

We have positive proof that Jesus is God because of His Godlike Character, His Godlike Teaching, and His Godlike Influence. Yes, we have positive proof that He is God because He has done and is doing only what God could do. As Bertha Davis has put in her poem, "The night was long and shadows spread As far as the eye could see, I stretched my hands to a human Christ And He walked through the dark with me.

Out of the dimness at last we came Our feet on the dawn warmed sod, And I saw by the light in His Wondrous Eyes, I walked with the Son of God.”

Liberal theology mutilates the Bible, minimizes sin, humanizes Jesus, and defies man. As far as this preacher is concerned, the liberal theologian, the Neo-orthodox theologian, and the Neo-evangelical theologian are the same traitors in different coats. And, at this point in time, it is my opinion that the Charismatic movement (which though there are saved folk in it) is the catalyst that is bringing strange groups into the modern day ecumenical movement and will be the adhesive and cohesive that will seal the modern day ecumenical movement into the world church of the Book of the Revelation. Yes, the liberal theologian says that Jesus is a great teacher, a great healer, a great guide, a great leader, a great lover, a great preacher, a great physician, and a great man, but that is all. But, beloved, that is nothing, if He is not God. Praise His Name, He is God!!!! As we read in John 1:1-3, John 1:14 : “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, - was tabernacled in the flesh and pitched in our midst, - (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

There is the prattle of the intelligentsia, which cannot go beyond human reasoning, calling Him a mere man. There is the cutlass of the skeptic carving boldly and declaring Him a mere man. There is the indifference of the majority which treats Him with less respect and honor than that of the “so-called” great men. Yet, there He stands in all of His Majesty, Power, Wrath, Righteousness, Justice, Holiness, Faithfulness, Purity, Love, Mercy, Pardon, Lovingkindness, Loveliness, Wonderfulness, Preciousness, and Grace, as God. Let men discover and advance as they will; only fools, to their own destruction, ignore Jesus as God.

And, beloved, since He is God, let us worship Him - honor Him - surrender to Him - serve Him!!!! Jesus is “the Sweetest Name on mortal tongue; the Sweetest Carol ever sung, Jesus, Blessed Jesus.”

Before meditating with you on the last seven sayings of the SAVIOUR on the Cross, I want to turn from the chronological order of events and look with you for a little while at the day of the crucifixion and go right over to the day of the resurrection.

Traditionally, we are told that Jesus was crucified on Friday and arose from the dead early Sunday morning. I cannot accept this interpretation because our Lord made it clear that He would be “three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” He said it this way, “... An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Mat. 12:39-40). He was crucified on a fearful, memorable Wednesday. He was there from 9:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M. In our mind’s eye, let up stand there at the foot of the cross. What a fearful, tragic day. It is Wednesday but Sunday is coming!!!! The Pharisees and Sadducees were confidently marching in pride “calling the shots.” His Precious Body is so beaten, torn, bruised, and mauled that you cannot tell that He is a man. The artists show some modesty in their painting by placing a loin cloth on Him. But keep in mind, as we are imagining that we are there, He is crucified naked. After seven horrible hours there on the tree (cross), He is dead! He is not holding His breath; He is dead! He is not swooning; He is

dead! He is not “blacking out;” He is dead! He is not semiconscious; He is dead! He has not “passed out;” He is dead!

Oh, let Heaven, earth, and Hell hear. He is dead!!!!

We must keep in mind the difference in days as we note that He was crucified on Wednesday and when He arose. The Jewish day began at sunset and closed at sunset. The Roman day began at 6:00 A.M. and closed at 6:00 A.M. Our day begins at midnight and closes at midnight. He was there as I have already said from 9:00 A.M. TO 4:00 p.m, and they were concerned to get Him buried before sunset because the Sabbath began at sunset. Some read this and conclude that it was Friday because the weekly Sabbath began at sunset on Friday. This was not the regular weekly Sabbath but an high Sabbath (the Passover Sabbath). The high Sabbath was on Thursday, from sunset on Wednesday to sunset on Thursday. The Word puts it this way: “The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away” (John 19:31). It is Wednesday, but Sunday is coming! At sunset on Thursday, He had been in the tomb one day and one night!

It is Thursday, but Sunday is coming! At sunset on Friday, He had been in the tomb two days and two nights! It is Friday, but Sunday is coming! At sunset on Saturday, He had been there three days and three nights. It is Saturday, but Sunday is coming! When it began to dawn toward the first day of the week (that is at sunset on Saturday), He arose. It was Saturday, but Sunday came.

Hallelujah!!!! He died but he arose after three days and three nights. It was Wednesday but now it was Sunday. Praise the Lord!!!! Hallelujah!!!!

So, in the end of the Sabbaths, He arose. There had been two that week: the high Sabbath (Passover Sabbath) and the regular weekly Sabbath. And, in the end of the two Sabbaths, He arose. There is also a spiritual truth here for us. It was the end of the Sabbaths. We no longer have a Sabbath. We have The Lord’s Day. The Sabbath commemorated the completed creation. The Lord’s Day commemorates the completed redemption! Praise the Lord!!!! Hallelujah!!!!

JESUS IS SAVIOUR

He is The Saviour. Yes, He is The Only Saviour. Men stand condemned before God - under the curse - doomed and damned for Hell because of sin. Yes, men are smitten with the cancer of covetousness, blistered with the bruising of blasphemy, lame with lust, perniciously anemic with adultery, foul with fornication, unaware of the dangers of uncleanness, lecherous with lasciviousness, weak with witchcraft, hurt with hatred, furious with the hydrophobia of atheism, gangrenous with godlessness, poisoned with philosophies, damaged with drunkenness, maimed with murderous desires, and rotten with the ruinous ravages of sin.

Yet, the evolutionist says that sin is a tumble upwards. The worldling sings about it in hillbilly jazz, shedding a few tears of lustful sentimentality. The sociologist excuses sin as that which is to be attributed to harmful environment, forgetting that Adam and Eve sinned in a perfect environment. The liberal theologian dismisses sin lightly as mere spots of personality that are cured by liberal doses of morality, education, and culture. He is one who is trying to purify the water by painting the pump white. The hippie denies sin, sings about Jesus as “The Soul Man,” and tries to drag the

Saviour down to his own level. And many young people of our day consider sin an ugly label by the “establishment,” for that which is real life, as in their rebellion, and arrogance, they plunge into Hell. And, on and on, various groups go trying to dismiss sin lightly and trivially. But sin is insidious like disease, ruining like rot, hampering, hardening, hindering, laughing, leering, sneering, hurling down to a heartless Hell deeper than the deepest paths of dark despair. Sin darkens the understanding. Sin defiles the conscience. Sin stiffens the will. Sin hardens the heart. Sin blinds, grinds, and damns. Sin misplaces and disorders all effectiveness which Jesus wants us to maintain. That is the reason the poet has said, “Twas but one little drop of sin. We saw this morning enter in, And, lo! At eventide the world was drowned.”

Sin puts the soul under the sentence of the Holy God to eternal wrath - the condemning sentence of the great and terrible God - than which nothing is found more dreadful. Ah, but thanks be to God, Jesus is The Answer! He is The Saviour!

He is The Only Saviour! For, we read in Mat 1:21 : “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.” And we read in Luk 5:32 : “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” And, we read in Heb 7:25 : “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come until God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”

See Him in dark Gethsemane, where He poured out the silver of His tears and the gold of His blood. Yes, see Him as His sweat drops coagulated huge drops of blood upon the ground. He said, “... My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death...” (Mat 26:38). You could paraphrase it, “... This is so fearful: my hair stands on end...”

See Him at the trial; there were twelve illegal procedures followed, in order to hurry Him to the crucifixion. They scourged Him with the “cat of nine tails.” It was a whip with nine leather thongs extending from the handle. These thongs were studded with bits of lead, stone, bone, nails, and shells. The big burly soldiers would lay on the lash 39 times with this whip. Multiply nine times 39, and you will know how many times the lash came down on His precious back during those horrible, early hours of that fearful, memorable Wednesday morning. The culprit was stripped to the waist and tied around the whipping post with the skin and flesh of the back in a tight position. The very first stroke of the “cat of nine tails” would bring the skin right off the back. They tell us that many times the entrails of the prisoners would come out of their backs and that they would die on the whipping post. Oh, how they beat, bruised, and mauled our Precious Lord!!!! I believe that one of the thongs came around the side of His Lovely Head and punctured His eyeballs. Prophecy said of Him that He would say, “... mine eyes fail...” (Psa 69:3). After the scourging, they beat Him over the head with rods. They plucked out His beard. They spit in His Precious Face. They blindfolded Him, slapped Him with their palms, pummeled Him with their fists, and said, “...

Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee”“(Mat 26:1-75)? They placed a crown of thorns on His Head piercing every square inch of His scalp. Oh, how He suffered even before He got to Calvary. But, remember, that it was all for poor Hell deserving sinners like you and me! Prophecy had said that He would be so marred that you could not even tell that He was a man, and that is what happened. “As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men” (Isa 52:14). Praise God for this manifestation of love, grace, and mercy!!!! He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth:

he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth” (Isa 53:7). Him at Calvary! See Him in the torture and agony of His sufferings!

During those seven hours on the cross - 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on that fearful, memorable Wednesday. He gave the last seven utterances. Seven hours and seven sayings; it is God's number - the number of perfection. Two is the number of testimony. There were two sevens (seven hours, seven says, seven words, or seven sentences) perfect testimony it was to God's perfect salvation provided at Calvary through His Son. He said: (1) "... Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do..." (Luk 23:34). (2) "... Verily I say unto thee, To day shall thou be with me in paradise" (Luk 23:43). (3) "... Woman, behold thy son!...

Behold thy mother!..." (John 19:26-27). (4) "... Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mat 27:46). (5) "...

, I thirst" (John 19:28). (6) "... It is finished..." (John 19:30). (7) "... Father. into thy hands I commend my spirit:..." (Luk 23:46).

Returning now, in our thinking to the crucifixion, we, in viewing Him as The Saviour, come to the heart of it all, when we look into these last seven words, sentences, or sayings of our Lord Jesus on Calvary. He is The Saviour, The Only Saviour!!!!

If we could glean all the truth from these utterances of our Lord on the cross, we would understand the wisdom of God, the love of God, the value of a soul to God, the awfulness of sin, and hatred of God for sin, as in no other place in the Bible. Hallelujah!!!! The message of the Cross is the heart of the Bible.

FIRST SAYING In the first place, Jesus said, "... Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do..." (Luk 23:34). This is not a blanket pardon for everybody's sins.

Because, in a little while, one thief was saved and the other went on to Hell. There are those who teach that everybody's sins were forgiven the moment Jesus prayed this prayer. Such an interpretation is grossly wrong. Again, it is not justification of ignorance. To neglect, to ignore, to be careless is sin, and God never winks at sin.

It was for Himself. He was praying, "Father forgive them and condemn me." He was saying, "Father, forgive them. And in the torturing, tormenting coinage of agony, hot from the furnace of Hell. I will bestow forgiveness upon these poor wretches as an act of righteousness as well as an act of mercy." He was purchasing "imputed righteousness" for sinners. Amen and amen!!!! In Mat 19:14; the word "suffer" is the same word translated "forgive" in this prayer. In Mat 27:49; the words, "let be" are from the same word as the word translated "forgive" in this prayer. So, Jesus was saying, "Father, let be suffer them - do not interfere - hold back the winds of wrath - postpone the judgment - for they know not what they do." Had He not prayed this prayer surely the judgment, holiness, wrath, and justice of God would have stricken dead and to Hell every living creature on the globe. The creature was crucifying the Creator!

Thus, love, grace, and mercy is crying for judgment to be held back until they can know. What grace, mercy, love, and compassion!!!! Because of this prayer, three thousand got saved fifty days later at Pentecost. Hallelujah, what a Saviour!!!!

Everyone of us who are saved is an answer to this prayer. I know not how much longer the door of grace will be ajar. It will be closed; judgment will come. But praise the Lord, it is open now. Sinner, you may still come and be saved. Praise His Name!!!!

“Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” That is, “Father hold back the winds of wrath, postpone the judgment until they can know.” The grammar here is lineal action. So, it means that He went on praying it over and over. It was not simply an ejaculatory petition; it was a burning barrage of prayer.

It may have been that this petition went up an hundred and fifty times, or more, that fearful, memorable day!!!!

SECOND SAYING

Then, in the second place, Jesus said, “... Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Luk 23:43). This is indeed one of the most instructive, suggestive, and surprising statements of our Lord in the Gospels.

Here, Jesus struck the death knell to some of the most frightening heresies of the ages. He refuted and showed the fallacies of the teachings of soul sleeping, purgatory, sacramentalism, and universalism. No soul sleeping - the thief would be with Jesus in paradise that day! No purgatory - the sinner was transformed then and there and made ready for paradise spontaneously and instantaneously! No sacramentalism - the sinner man was saved apart from sacraments, ordinances, and ceremonies! No univalism - only one of the two thieves was saved!

And, at the same time, the Saviour showed the fallacies of these heresies. He made the plan of salvation so simple. A sinner repents and looks to the Saviour in simple faith and is born again, washed in the blood, transformed into a child of God!

Both sinners prayed. Both sinners believed He was the Son of God. It is true that one said, “... If thou be Christ, save thyself and us” (Luk 23:39). However, it is a fulfilled condition; so, he was saying, “Since thou art the Christ, save thyself and us.”

What about this thief’s plea when he said, “Save thyself and us.” He had no thought of salvation. He was pleading with Christ (Whom he now recognized as the Son of God) to save them from crucifixion. He had no conviction of sin, repentance, or desire to be saved from sin. In other words, he was saying, “Since you are the Son of God, get down from the cross and get us down, so they cannot kill us.” Jesus could have done just that, but had He done so He could not have saved any of us from sin. Praise God, he would not come down. The other thief repented as a sinner, looked to the Son of God, the Saviour, and in faith said, “... Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom” (Luk 23:42).

Two thieves, both believing He was the Son of God, and both praying to be saved. One wanting to be saved from crucifixion! The other praying to be saved from sin! And the grammar here again is lineal action, meaning that they prayed over and over again. Maybe fifty times each!!!! The Saviour was silent for a period of time, before He answered. When He answered, He took the side of the thief who was praying, “... Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom” (Luk 23:42), that is, “Lord, stay on the cross, buy a kingdom, and let me be a subject in that kingdom.” Jesus said, “... ”

Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Luk 23:43). The grammar is the aorist (once for all). Amen and amen!!!! When He took that thief’s side (answered his prayer) He took your side and my side, Hallelujah!!!!

Look at this verse in our English Bible, “And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Luk 23:43). Note that Jesus said, “To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” He did not say, “To day thou shalt be with me in paradise.” The way our Lord said it is the way we write an interrogatory sentence, but it does not have a question mark at the end. So, it is not an interrogatory sentence. If it were, that Our Lord was saying, “Do you merit being there?” “Are you worthy of being there?” It would be an altogether different matter. Neither that poor thief nor any of us helpless sinners could ever be saved!!!! What are the translators trying to tell us in affirmative sentence written in English, as we write an interrogatory sentence but without a question mark. It is an emphasis on precious truth. This grammatical construction is what is called an emphatic affirmation. To say it this way would give the emphasis that our Lord was giving, “To day, being with me, thou shalt be with me. It was emphatic assurance, the Lord!!!! What a Saviour!!!!

THIRD SAYING

Let us now note that Jesus said, in the third place, “... Woman, behold thy son!... Behold thy mother!...” (John 19:26-27). Many were at the cross to deride and cast all kinds of sarcastic slurs at our Precious Lord. But we are glad that there were some there who cared. They were a striking contrast to the mocking, sin-hardened crowd. There were five of them, four women and one man!

Men, I am sorry and ashamed that there was only one man there along with these four women. Who were the five? Mary, His Mother; Mary’s sister, the mother of the disciple John; Mary, the wife (or should I say widow?) of Cleophas; Mary Magdalene out of whom Jesus had cast seven devils; and John - “the disciple whom Jesus loved”!!!! Thank God for these who loved Him, sympathized with Him, and stood by with broken hearts. Will He through all of their torture and in all of His torturing, agonizing, suffering, have a word for them? He did; He gave three assignments: (1) To His mother, (2) to His beloved disciple, and (3) to Himself!

What was the assignment to His mother? Our Roman Catholic friends say that she is “The mother of God” - “The Queen of Heaven,” and then add many, many other honorary titles to her. They further claim that she is a mediatrix between Jesus and mankind. They have missed it a million miles. Who ever heard of the Eternal God having a mother? She was only the mother of the human body of Jesus. And the Word of God says that there is only one mediator between God and man.:For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time” (1Ti 2:5-6).

Jesus, in the Scriptures, is never recorded as calling Mary, “mother.” He always called her, “woman.” However, He used the word, “woman,” with all tenderness, respect, and honor. Why did He not call her, “mother?” Well, Jesus was no mere Palestinian peasant. He was Almighty God incarnated in human flesh. He knew thousands would go to Hell because of the heresy of Mariolatry, and He would lend no support to this heresy. Our Protestant friends say that Jesus was, figuratively speaking, pinning the first Mother’s Day red rose to the cross. Certainly, Jesus loved His mother. He loved her more than you and I love our mothers. You see, our love for our

mothers is diluted and polluted with human depravity. His love was perfect natural affection. But the Protestants interpretation here is only sentimentality. They, as well as the Catholics, miss the whole point. To get at the truth here, we must remember that it has to do with their relationship to each other - Jesus and Mary!!!! The blood that flows in my son's veins is neither my blood nor his mother's blood. It is his own blood, but it came through the seed of his father. My son's flesh is neither my flesh nor his mother's flesh. It is his own flesh, but it came from his mother. That is the way Jesus could be born of a depraved woman but not have a depraved nature. He had no human father. His was divine (not depraved, but sinless) blood, and that is the reason it could be offered as a substitutionary atonement for the sin of the world. The Catholics try to explain it by saying that Mary had no depraved nature. This is simply more of the heresy of Mariolatry. If that were the case, there would be a whole line of people, without a depraved nature, all the way back to Adam. And as the good old Southern black preacher put it, "It ain't so!"

Recall with me that when Mary took Jesus to the temple for the ceremony of circumcision, when He was eight days old, old Simeon said to her, "... Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" (Luk 2:34-35). This prophecy was being fulfilled. The sword was piercing the soul of this wonderful woman. She was already a widow. Joseph was already dead, and now her wonderful, magnificent Son Who was a great Enigma to this world was dying like a common criminal. And, to climax it all, Jesus was saying, "You are no longer to be my mother. Be a mother to John, and John, you be a son to Mary. "What a blow! The sword was thrust and hit its target! Yes, Jesus was saying that this human relationship ceased as of that hour. Tradition says that Mary blacked out (fainted), and I doubt not that she did. How she must have suffered, but in the assignments which He was making her. He suffered so much more than she did that it is beyond the understanding of our finite minds. Do not waste any tears over Mary and her suffering because she found out that to be the daughter of The Christ was infinitely more wonderful than to be mother of the human Jesus. Hallelujah!!!! And that was the change; she ceased to be His mother and became His daughter. What a miracle!!!! Note this fact, in her son, the Magnificent, she never called Him her son. She called Him her Lord, God, Saviour: "And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name: (Luk 1:46-49). So, we see His assignment to Mary, and what an assignment it was!!!!

Then, in this third saying, He made an assignment to John the beloved disciple.

It is as though Jesus is saying to John, "I am fulfilling the types of the blood sacrifices in the Levitical system and dying as your Substitute, and I want you to substitute for me in doing what I would do, if I remained in service here on earth. Be a son to My mother, and let her be a mother to you." He was saying, "John you be a substitute for Me because I am your Substitute." He is calling upon and assigning all of us born again, blood washed believers to be substitutes for The Substitute. As the poet has put it, "Christ has no hands but our hands To do His work today, He has no feet but our feet To lead men in His way, He has no tongues, but our tongues To tell men how He died, He has no help but our help To bring them to His side."

So, in this third saying, Jesus' assignment to His mother was that He severed His human relationship with her. His assignment to John is that He called on him to be a substitute for The Substitute. And, in making these assignments, He also made the main assignment to Himself.

Yes, He, too, is assuming an assignment! We must never forget that Jesus (not Mary, not John, not the penitent thief, not the crucifying crowd) was the central figure in this gruesome scene. Folk who make Mary the central theme are giving us Romanism, not Christianity! Jesus was supreme at Mount Calvary!!!! Jesus is supreme today!!!!

What was He doing in these assignments? This assignment for Himself? One of the least things we can say is that He was showing interest in fulfilling the last detail of the law. Moses had said, "Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother."

This, certainly, includes seeing about their food, clothes, and shelter. He, thus, instructs John to do just that. He was careful to avoid even the smell of the fires of sin upon His garments. Oh, that men and women today would thus honor their fathers and mothers! This is the least that we can say of the significance of the third word for Himself, but it is not the last or the most important. The most significant thing in this assignment for Himself is that it is the clearest, most easily understood demonstration of self-renunciation to be found in the New Testament. By this word He cut Himself off from mother-love. He forsook the best earth had to offer. He renounced every tie that would interfere with His Saviourhood. He cut Himself off from all filial relationships. He gave up all for sinners like you and me. This was self-renunciation that has never been demonstrated except at the cross. Yes, the third word twisted a sword in Mary's bosom. But her pain was nothing when compared to the agony of His sensitive heart. He was sacrificing to save these treasures from the fires of Hell.

How could we illustrate it? Human illustrations fall so short in the face of these infinite sufferings. I will give two human illustrations. If you will stand at the climax of these illustrations and picture sufferings (because of the cutting off of filial relationships) a billion times more intense, you may have a small conception of His suffering. The story of Perpetua, a young widow of twenty six, with an infant at her breast, is found in Fox's Book of Martyrs. Her husband had already died for his testimony for the Saviour. Her father was an unbeliever who tried to persuade her to make some offerings to the Roman gods and avoid dying by being gored to death by the wild bulls at Carthage. In fact, her father tried to carry her bodily from her cell, but was knocked out by a staggering blow from one of the prison guards.

Perpetua was hurt worse by the blow than her own martyrdom and was glad that her father came to consciousness before she was marched into the arena to die. She placed her little girl in the arms of her father, kissed them, and walked out to die for her testimony for our Lord Jesus Christ. She was cut off from all filial relationships for her Lord. But her suffering was minor beside that of our Lord as He said, "... Woman, behold thy son!" He cut Himself off from other love to go to Hell for all of us!!!!

We are told that Francis d'Assisi was in love with a sweet, beautiful, and noble woman. They were planning marriage and hoping for children. But God revealed His will for Francis d'Assisi to serve Him in such a capacity as to have to forego the privilege of having a wife and children. He struggled in prayer to become willing for such a sacrifice. One bright, moonlit night, when the

ground was covered with snow, he went out and fashioned in the snow an image of his beloved and still other images of children he had dreamed would be theirs, as a result of their union. He fashioned it all as a family circle around the hearth in an imagined living room, sat down, and enjoyed it all for one delicious hour, in his imagination. Then, he kissed them all farewell to go to do the Father's will for his life. He gave up all filial relationships to do the will of our Lord Jesus Christ. But this suffering was not a billionth as intense as the suffering our Lord faced, in saying, "... Woman, behold thy son!... Behold thy mother!..." All illustrations would fail to display the depths of sacrifice to which our Saviour, voluntarily, sank when He gave up all to make effective our eternal salvation.

What are the applications to be made of this great text? The first one is that there is no hope of salvation except in the Saviourhood of Jesus. It is in Him and Him alone!!!! The second one is that there is no usefulness except in the Lordship of Jesus. Do not feel sorry for those who permit Him to be Lord in their lives; they are enjoying billion dollar diamonds while you continue to play with tawdry ten-cent store tinsel. The third application is that joy unspeakable and full of glory is ours when He is truly Lord of our lives. Amen and amen!!!! The story is told of an evangelist, of another generation, who lived in Chicago.

He and his wife had only one daughter. At the time of the experience, which I am about to relate, this little girl was almost ten years of age. She was beautiful and had long, blond, curly hair. For several years, since she had been large enough, she had met her dad at the door when he came in from his office and/or special meetings. She would have his house shoes and bath robe in the living room, along with a cold coke or lemonade. When he was comfortably seated, she would crawl into his lap and smother him with hugs and kisses saying, "I love you more than anything or anybody!"

One day this dad decided to put his little daughter's love to a test. After having enjoyed his welcome home, with all the usual niceties and while she was hugging and kissing him, declaring that she loved him more than anything or anybody, he interrupted her and told her that he wanted her to give him her little necklace. It had cost ten cents at the local five and dime store (it would probably cost \$3. 85 today). She looked puzzled and asked him what he would do with it? He answered by saying that he wanted to burn it in the coal grate, and that, if she really loved him more than anything or anybody, she would not mind. She reaffirmed her love for him but refused to give up the necklace. She left him, went into the kitchen, and told her mother that he wanted to burn her necklace and that she liked it very much and believed that he was acting crazy. For the next three days, when dad came home, she met him with less enthusiasm and less and less favors.

Each day, he told her that he wanted her to give him her necklace, that if she loved him more than anything or anybody, why should she care? After three days, with her decreasing enthusiasm and favors, she did not welcome him home, show any favors, or express any love for eighteen long days - that made three full weeks, since her dad had originally made the request.

Then, the next afternoon, when he came in, she met him with all of her favors and smothered him again with hugs and kisses, saying that she loved him more than anything or anybody, and saying that he could have her necklace and burn it.

She cried a little, when she gave it to him but insisted that she really wanted him to have it. Then, while they watched it burn, she cried a little more but assured him again, that she wanted him to do it because she did love him more than she loved anything or anybody. This certainly included the cheap little necklace! When the necklace was burned and gone, her dad went to the closet where his coat was hanging. He took a little box out of the pocket and began to open it for her. In great excitement, with tear-stained face, she was saying, "Daddy, what is it?" He said, "Sweetheart, it is a string of genuine pearls for you. I paid hundreds of dollars for it." "Oh," she said, "Daddy, how long have you had these pearls?" His reply was, "My dear, I have had them for three weeks." Then, she said, "But Daddy, why didn't you tell me?" He said lovingly, "Sweetheart, I could not tell you, or give it to you, until you were willing to give up the cheap little necklace you had!" Beloved, are we not guilty of holding on to cheap, tawdry tinsel, when He wants to give us billion dollar diamonds? But it can happen only after we yield to Him as Lord. Then comes the joy unspeakable and full of glory! Amen and amen!!!! "...

Woman, behold thy son!... Behold thy mother!..."

FOURTH SAYING Let us note that Jesus said, in the fourth place, "... Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me" (Mat 27:46)?

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon on that fearful, memorable Wednesday when Jesus uttered this fourth saying on Calvary. A miraculous darkness (a preview of the outer darkness in the charred walls of the damned in the lake of fire and brimstone) had descended upon Golgotha some three hours earlier.

Surely, the crowd had ceased mocking because of fear and awe that had arisen in hearts. Only the difficult breathing and groaning of the victims were now breaking the deep silence. And at this time Jesus cried with a loud voice: "... My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me" (Mat 27:46)?

What did He mean? Some say that He was almost delirious and was babbling the words of Psa 22:1 - "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me" Why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?" which He had learned in childhood. Such a conclusion is cheap; it fails utterly. He was fulfilling a prophecy that David, His type, had been inspired to utter. Some say that He was uttering the cry of the martyr in His agony. But let us not forget that He was a volunteer, not a martyr.

We are told that Martin Luther once set himself to a study of this saying of our Lord on Calvary. For a long time, he continued without food, in deep meditation and in one position on his chair. After a lengthy time, he arose from his meditation and exclaimed in amazement, "God forsaken of God! Who can understand that?"

One would have to float around in the waves of the lake of fire and brimstone, free from the taint of personal sin, and do it as the Holy Son of God, to understand this statement coming from Him, Whose sufferings were infinite and, therefore, beyond the comprehension of our finite minds. What was it?

IT WAS THE DEPTH OF CHRIST'S SACRIFICE

It tells the distance which He had to travel to save us; it was the depth of His sacrifice. He traveled all the way from Heaven's throne to the place of Godforsakenness!!!! He knew His destination and

was not surprised when He arrived. The scapegoat in the Levitical system was a prophetic picture of our Lord Jesus carrying our sins, the sins of the whole world, into the agonizing oblivion of divine justice's condemnation. He was our Scapegoat on Golgotha!!!! The climax of the story of the Good Shepherd in Luk 15:1-32, is not the Shepherd returning with the bruised, mangled sheep, but at the point where He actually found the sheep - that was the place of the Shepherd's bruised, mauled, beaten, torn, mangled, and bleeding body. As the hymn writer put it, But none of the ransomed ever knew How deep were the waters crossed; Nor how dark was the night That the Lord passed through; Ere He found His sheep that was lost!

Paul, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, put it this way. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Php 2:5-8). And again, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2Co 5:21). Name the sins!!!! Fornication and adultery - God made Jesus these and crushed them. Uncleanness - God made Jesus that and crushed it. Lasciviousness - God made Jesus that and crushed it. Idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, wrath, factions, divisions, selfishness, drunkenness, homosexuality, lesbianism, envyings, lying, stealing, murder, revellings, immodesty, rebellion, arrogance, and all other sins, if you please - God made Jesus all of these and crushed them. He did not bear our sins; that is figurative language. He became sin (all sin) for us and was judged. God made Him sin for us and judged, condemned, damned Him in our stead. Oh, the horribleness of it all makes us want to bow our heads in shame and sorrow and let the tears flow like a river!!!! What grace!!!! What love!!!! What mercy!!!! What compassion!!!! The greatest love story every told!!!!

Yes, it was the depths of His sacrifice, God-forsakenness describes the depths to which He had to go. My Hell, your Hell, the Hell of all sinners in the eternal lake of fire and brimstone were burning their fires out on Him. He paid the price, not for Himself, but for each of us individually, personally, particularly!!!! And the poet expressed it this way, Not the nails: but His wondrous love for me, Kept my Lord on the cross of Calvary.

Oh, what power could hold Him there All my sin and shame to bear? Not the nails, but love for me, Kept my Lord on the cross of Calvary.

Oh, what power could hold Him there All my sin and shame to bear? Not the nails, but His wondrous love for me. In the second place, IT WAS GOD'S WRATH

We know that Golgotha was a revelation of God's love, as the hymn writer has said, "See, from His head, His hands, His feet, Sorrow and love flow mingled down! Did e'er such love and sorrow meet Or thorns compose so rich a crown?"

But, we must also remember that Golgotha was a revelation of the wrath of God. He was condemning sin against Himself. We are told of God's "hot anger" Jdg 2:14 - "And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies." We are told of His "hot displeasure" - Deu 9:19 - "For I was afraid of

the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith the Lord was wroth against you to destroy you. But the Lord hearkened unto me at that time also.” We are told of His “fiery indignation” - Heb 10:27 - “But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.” And His “wrath” will be revealed in coming judgment upon the earth - Rev 6:12-17 “And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

God’s wrath was revealed most clearly at the Cross. When Jesus suffered in the wilderness, an angel ministered unto Him. When He sweat blood in the garden, the Father’s peace was His. Divine sympathy never failed Him, until He stood naked before the bar of eternal justice, as the surety for lost sinners. No wonder that we read in Heb 10:31 - “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” His suffering when God’s wrath was poured out upon Him is beyond our finite comprehension.

Then, in the third place, IT WAS HELL’S TORMENT

Elizabeth Barrett Browning, the poet, put it this way, “Yea, once Immanuel’s orphaned cry, His universe has shaken -It went up single, echoless, ‘My God, I am forsaken.’It went up from the Holy’s lips Amid His lost creation,That of the lost, no son should use Those words of desolation.” His physical suffering surely spoke of even worse suffering. It may be that, among other reasons, the darkness was sent that none would get the idea that the physical suffering was all that there was to the agony of the sin punishment. Had I the ability to speak in the ultimate of every language, I could not describe the physical sufferings of our Lord at Calvary. And surely the emotional sufferings were worse than the physical, the mental worse than the emotional, and the spiritual worse than the mental. So, if I could speak in the ultimate of every language, I could not describe the physical, emotional, mental, or spiritual sufferings of our Lord in the torments of Hell. He suffered all Hell for all sinners, the Hell that all of us would have had to suffer forever in the lake of fire and brimstone, Oh, God, we cannot comprehend it!!!!

Let us note two words in His statement: (1) “Why?” - it was the question of a baffled heart, the enigma of a hopeless situation. It indicates that insoluble problems engulf the mind. The part of personality that controls actions, feeling, and desire is disorganized. The mentality cannot see beyond the maze. His question goes unanswered forever. It is a part of Hell which the unsaved must endure. No voice from earth or Heaven offers to untangle the twisted threads. He hurled His enigmatic “Why?” against brassy heavens. Nothing happens except the rebounding ceaseless echo - “Why?” Mental torment is far worse than physical agony. Then, (2) “forsaken” - The liberal theologians say that Jesus was not forsaken but that He just felt forsaken. That is nonsense!!!! That crowd lies about other things, also!!!! This word, “Forsaken,” is the saddest word in any language.

It comes from three words: the first meaning “to leave” - in the sense of total abandonment, the second meaning “down” - in the sense of being under in defeat and helplessness, and the third meaning “in” - referring to a hostile place and/or circumstances. As we would say it, our Lord cried with a loud voice, “My God, My God, why hast thou totally abandoned me while I am down under and in the midst of hostile circumstances.” And beloved, that is Hell!!!!

It means to forsake someone who is in a state of defeat and helplessness in the midst of hostile circumstances. At Golgotha there was no light - because God is Light, no love - because God is Love, no life - because God is Life. It was Hell’s torment!!!!

It was the condition of forsakeness as the worst agony the condemned will ever know. And from the sorrow, disappointment, frustration, pain, despair - name all of Hell’s brood - there is no escape. And, Oh, think of it, this is the destiny of every soul without Christ. As we think of the love and wrath of God manifested at Golgotha, we pull off our shoes because we are on Holy ground!!!!

Sinners are offered mercy now, but in the Day of His Wrath, perfect justice will be stern. No mercy was granted in response to His cry - nor will there be for the sinners in that Day. “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Acts 17:31).

We are told that when Jonathan Edwards preached his famous sermon on “Sinners In The Hands of An Angry God,” at Enfield, there was such a “breathing of distress” that he had to request the people to retain their composure. Oh for such God-fearing conviction to fall in these days, God grant that sinners will be brought to realize what it will mean to meet Him Whose blood they “have trampled underfoot.” It will be the torments of Hell for those Who have insultingly rejected His grace!!!! In these last seven sayings of our Lord on Calvary, there are three couplets. The first two show His deep concern for lost, condemned sinners. In three and four, we see forsakenness. He forsakes His mother, and the Father forsakes Him, in order that He might save effectively completely, and eternally. In six and seven we see Him, the Servant, laying down a finished work and resting in the arms of the Father. The three hours of darkness (12:00 noon to 3:00 P.M.) were now over, as He was hanging on the cruel cross. Do you suppose that, had we been there, we would have thought it was going to be dark forever? Total darkness for one minute, in the middle of the day, would probably seem like ten minutes! How long would three hours seem?

FIFTH SAYING In the fifth place, we read, “After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst” (John 19:28). This is a saying all alone. “... I thirst” (John 19:28). It calls attention to Himself. The need He mentions is purely physical, though it speaks of much more. They tell us that the tongues of those culprits would swell and make it difficult, or nigh impossible, to move them. They could barely speak, if at all.

But, really, there is much more here than just calling attention to His physical thirst. Some say that He asked for a drink to be able to talk, but no. He did not ask for a drink. He simply said, “... I thirst.” They gave Him a sponge dripping with vinegar. This fifth saying was evidently telling us two things. First, it was **THE WINNER EMPTIED AND DRAINED**

He was announcing Himself The Winner in the conflict. “After this,... “ (John 19:28) refers to after the blackest part of the redeeming sacrifice was made. “...

Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished..." (John 19:28). When He saw that He had won the battle for the souls of the lost, He thought of His famished and thirsty body. He was emptied and drained! And, as would the victor in the race course, He panted out the information that is already clear to all, "I thirst." In Colonial history, we read of the long struggle between England and France. It seemed next to impossible to dislodge Montcalm and his French troops from their strong position overlooking Quebec. At last, General James Wolfe dared to attempt the seemingly impossible. With an inferior force, he went through a ravine, up the precipitous walls to the Heights of Abraham, surprised the enemy, and won Canada for England. But it was indeed a desperate battle, and General Wolfe was carried from the battlefield mortally wounded. As he lay dying, he heard the men yelling, "They run; see them run!!!!" "Who runs?" cried the General. "The enemy, Sir; they give way everywhere." Then, the General, after giving a few last orders, turned on his side and said, "Now, God be praised; I can die in peace." In a few moments, the exhausted conqueror was dead.

There is both pathos and conflict in the picture of the exhausted, emptied, drained Winner and Victor over sin. Pathos in the fact that the Water of Life drained Himself dry in the fires of Hell! This was no synthetic conflict! The fight was so bitter, the fire so hot, the suffering so beyond our minds' comprehension, and the contest so severe that he had to give His all. Not even His beaten, torn, bruised, mauled, mutilated body could survive! Death was the price for His victory!!!!

We are reminded of another story of the early days of the French in Canada. The people of Quebec had been warned that twelve hundred Iroquois Indians were coming down the St. Lawrence River. And this could mean that their homes would be burned, their crops destroyed, and their people killed. They wanted to avoid the disaster, if at all possible. They must do something to keep the Indians from reaching Quebec. Daulac, with sixteen volunteers, went up the river to meet the enemy. These were joined and helped by forty, friendly Hurons. At the foot of a rapid, where the Iroquois must descend, they built a small fort and waited. The Indians soon came and made attack after attack. But the little group of defenders were fighting for their loved ones and their homes. Day after day, they beat off the Indians. Their food gave out, but they did not surrender. They found until the last one of them was dead. The Indians killed them! But those brave, dedicated Frenchmen won the victory. You see, the Indians turned back, and Quebec was saved. The Man of Galilee on Golgotha, while suffering all Hell for all sinners, held the enemy of souls back. He won the victory for us. He gave His life. He was emptied and drained. And praise God, He was the Winner!!!! In the second place, we see THE REDEEMER IDENTIFIED Our Lord was identifying Himself. The Scriptures had not said that He would cry out, "I thirst," but that, in His thirst, He would be offered vinegar for satisfaction.

Read Psa 69:1-4; Psa 69:7-9; Psa 69:19-21. He was not asking for water so much as recognition. He was identifying Himself as The Redeemer, The Saviour, The Messiah!!!! Oh, what if they fail to recognize Him!!!! and they did!!!!

There had been some earnest souls who had sought for the Saviour. Job had cried out for a daysman. Read Job 9:30-33. On the top of the mountain, Isaac had inquired of his father, Abraham, as to where was the lamb. "And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering"

(Gen 22:7)? Abraham had replied that God would “provide himself a lamb.” It was not that He would provide for Himself a lamb, but that He Himself would be the lamb. “And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together” (Gen 22:8). Jesus spoke of Abraham knowing of Calvary. “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am” (John 8:1-59). The wise men came looking for the King of the Jews. “Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him” (Mat 2:1-2). The superscription on the cross read, “... THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS” (Mat 27:37).

God was careful to identify The Messiah, The Saviour, The Redeemer, The King!!!! He told us that the year of His incarnation was marked (Dan 9:25), that He would be born of a virgin (Isa 7:14), that it would happen in Bethlehem of Judea (Mic 5:2), that as a child He would be brought up from Egypt (Hos 11:1), that he would speak in parables (Psa 78:2), that He would receive the praise of children when hated by men (Psa 8:1), that His zeal for the temple would burn and attract men’s attention (Psa 69:9), that He would enter Jerusalem triumphantly riding an ass amid the hosannas of the people (Isa 62:11 and Zec 9:9), that He would be betrayed by His own (Psa 41:9), that He would be numbered among the transgressors (Isa. 53:112), that lots would be cast for His garments (Psa 22:18), and that not a bone of Him would be broken (Psa. 34:209). What ample identification!!!! How important it was, and is, that He be identified -- The Saviour, The Redeemer, The Messiah, The King! Mistaken identify of the Redeemer is eternally tragic!!!! Ancient Rome once sent forth one who was a popular hero to conquer the rebelling tribes of Britain. Amid the cheering cries of the people, Caligula sailed forth, with pomp, in mighty ships from the Roman shores. The people confidently expected him to return immediately having taken over the proud islands bringing the conquered leaders to Rome in chains. But when the ships anchored off the English coast, Caligula was not interested in conquest. He walked up and down the beach collecting pretty shells and, what was to him, very interesting bits of seaweed. After this childish activity, to the disgust of his proud army, he sailed back to Rome. The people came in great crowds to welcome their conqueror and gloat over the enemy kings in chains. To their surprise, the emperor showed them withered and foul smelling curios. Rome was so disappointed and humiliated that she laughed Caligula to scorn, wrote him down as a madman, and put him to an early and terrible death. They had mistakenly identified a fool as a great champion. What if we should, like ancient Rome, pin our hopes of conquest and victory upon some foolish, impotent Caligula instead of Christ of Calvary. Ours is a Christ Who comes back from His conquest of Hell with a victory that will rejoice the angels. But there must be no mistaken identity. Here we have The Redeemer Identified.

See how those who depend on human efforts, plans, gifts, merits, and churches, the ordinances, the ceremonies, the sacraments, talking in tongues, worship on the Sabbath, etc, are mistaking withered seaweed and empty shells to save them from Hell and take them to Heaven. There is no mistaken identity here.

We have the Redeemer positively, definitely, and eternally identified!!!! A beautiful story comes to us from Russia. A group of sincere lovers of our Lord Jesus were meeting in secret worship. They

knew the danger of such meetings because the communistic authorities had outlawed the worship of Christ.

Nevertheless these remained true to Him and spent many happy hours in communion and fellowship with Him, in underground places of worship.

But, on night, the door of their meeting place was broken down by an agent of the secret police who was followed by a group of soldiers. He ordered that the names of the worshippers be written down (there were 30) and reminded them that they would be carried to jail. Then, an old man in the group said to the agent, "There is one Name you do not have." The surprised officer said, "I assure you that you are mistaken. I have them all!" "Believe me," said the old peasant, "there is one Name you do not have." "Well, we will prove it," yelled the impatient, angry agent. "We will count them again." And they verified every name. They were sure that there were only 30, no more, no less. "You see," said the confident officer to the old man. "I have them all, every one. I told you that I had them." But the old Christian still insisted, "There is one Name you do not have." "Who is it, then?" the officer demanded. "Speak out; who is it?" The old man said, "The Lord Jesus Christ! He is here!" "Ah," said the officer with a sarcastic sneer, "That is a different matter!" Indeed it is!!!! If He is with us as our Saviour and King, all is well. The Redeemer is here identified without question. Do you know Him? Make no mistake. He is the only One. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me: (John 14:6). "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

Yes, He was The Winner but emptied and drained. And He gave us the needed, positive identification. And in thirsting, He thirsted that we may come to the Fountain of the waters of life, drink, and invite a whole lost world to come. This Fountain never runs dry!!!!

SIXTH SAYING

We have looked at five of His last seven sayings on the cross, and, now, we consider the sixth one, as we praise God for our Wonderful Saviour and Lord.

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost" (John 19:30). In the fifth saying on the cross, we noted that our Lord called attention to the PERSON -- "I." We have said that this was really identification. Oh, the fearfulness of not identifying THE SAVIOUR! In this sixth saying, our Lord is calling attention to the WORK -- "IT." Oh, what is so important as the "I" and the "IT" -- that is the PERSON! and the WORK of CALVARY! In considering this sixth utterance of our Precious Lord, I want us to meditate upon three things. First, we note THE WORK -- ITS COMPLETION This statement, or its equivalent, is found three times in the Word of God. In the early pages of this Sacred Volume, we find these words in connection with the creation. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them"

(Gen 2:1). The Creator finished His work perfectly. "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good..." (Gen 1:31). And we know that this was all done by our Lord Jesus. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:1-3). When He finishes something, it is perfect, nothing can be

added to improve it, and nothing can be taken away without marring it.

Then, while on the cross, He said, "It is finished." The Regenerator finished this work perfectly. Nothing needs to be added, and to take away anything will do irreparable damage. In the closing Book, in the Word of God, we read. "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done" (Rev 16:17). He Who made a perfect salvation will finish it with a perfect judgment and take over as the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Surely, I cannot emphasize too much that our salvation is not repayment for some work we do for God or for some sacrifice we make for Him. It is all because of the work and sacrifice of Jesus Christ at Calvary!!!! Emphatically, it is not our works of righteousness "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that no of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph 2:8-9). It is not baptism, the Lord's Supper, church membership, talking in tongues, worshipping on the Sabbath, giving money, punishing ourselves in some physical, mental, or emotional way. It is not some ceremonies, sacraments, and/or ordinances. It is not praying all night weeping for some lengthy time, or any effort on our part.

It is the work of Jesus Christ for us. Here we have indeed the completed work He did to provide salvation for all sinners. He died for all sinners not simply for a select group (the elect). "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1Ti 2:5-6). "For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe" (1Ti 4:10). "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1Jn 2:1-2). He loves, and died, for all sinners, even those who reject Him. "Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions" (Mark 10:21-22). "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2Pe 2:1). In the second place, we consider THE WORD -- ITS MEANING

Let us be careful to observe that He did not say, "I am finished." He said, "It is finished." Roman Catholic theology has failed to discern the finished nature of the Work of our Lord on Calvary. And, so have the Protestants in most cases. Anyone who says that it is Christ plus anything or anybody that saves has missed this precious truth. Those who make salvation Christ plus certain additives, always conclude that they are lost, if they lose the additives. So, it is clear that they depend on their additives (the do's and don'ts) not the Lord Jesus Christ. And you cannot be saved that way!!!! The word here is tetelestai. It means that something is finished and forever done. You could express it, "It stands finished" or "Done," provided the idea of perfection is included. It is a word of victory as well as of work, a word of accomplishment as well as of relief, and a word of satisfaction as well as of fact.

It was a farmer's word. When birth was given to a ting animal in the herd that was so beautiful and shapely that there seemed to be no defects or faults, the farmer would exclaim with delight, "Tetelestai!"

It was an artist's and sculptor's word. When the artist had given the last stroke of the brush on the canvas, and the sculptor had chipped away all but what he desired for his sculpture, and they saw no need for correction improvement, they would joyfully murmur: "Tetelestai! Tetelestai!"

It was a priestly word. When the worshippers brought a lamb without spot or blemish, the pride of the flock, to the temple, the priest (who too often had folk try to offer the blind and defective) would look with great admiration upon the beautiful creature and exclaim, "Tetelestai!" The word, "Tetelestai: took on its greatest significance at Calvary, as the Lamb of God offered Himself on the Altar. He rejoiced with such joy that it bore down all His anguish before it. The sacrifice was stainless, complete, perfect, finished forever!!!! He cried with a loud voice, "Tetelestai!!!!" "It" was the torment of the payment of all sins for all sinners. "It" was the suffering of the full punishment of the guilt of all time. "It" was the combined Hells of all sinners who have offended God. The "It" of Isa 53:6; 2Co 5:21; 1Ti 2:6; and Rev 5:9 was complete and finished. As the Master Workman, Jesus was speaking with great satisfaction of His finished task, "Finished! Complete! Done! Perfect! Forever!"

It is only when we see the sixth word of the cross as the victorious cry of our Substitute, our Representative accomplishing a task on our behalf, that it really has meaning. The "It" which He completed so perfectly is the personal penalty due us because of our sins individually. James Proctor said it so effectively in his poem, Nothing either great or small, Nothing, sinner, no; Jesus did it, did it all, Long, long ago.

"It is finished," Yes, indeed, Finished every jot; Sinner, this is all you need; Tell me, is it not?

Cast your deadly doing down, Down at Jesus feet; Stand in Him, in Him alone, Gloriously complete.

Finally, we note THE ANNOUNCEMENT -- ITS EFFECT This announcement is made known in Heaven, in earth, and under the earth.

How is it received? What is its effect? Heaven was interested in this transaction?

Surely the hosts of angels crowded the Ramparts of Glory watching the tragic drama. When Jesus declared, "It is finished," joy unspeakable filled Heaven with glory. The war is won! The Victory is perfect! Since Jesus has paid the price of redemption with His own precious blood, God can receive repenting sinners both as a loving Father and as a just God. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works?"

Nay; but by the law of faith" (Rom 3:25-27). "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ: that we might receive the promise of the spirit through faith" (Gal 3:13-14).

What effect did this announcement have on the Old Testament saints who were already in Paradise (Abraham's bosom, the Place of Bliss and Joy)? Paradise was one division of Hades or Sheol where the saved went at death, before Calvary.

They did not go directly to Heaven. One can go to Heaven only on the merits of the shed blood of our Lord Jesus. They were those who had been saved "on credit." And Jesus had now paid the bill. Hallelujah, Glory to God!!!! They must have shouted all over Paradise. The bill had been paid!!!! They would be carried, very soon, into Heaven Itself by our Lord Jesus. This He did after His resurrection.

Now, saints go directly to Heaven when they die. It is all because of the great announcement, "Tetelestai!!!!"

What effect did this announcement have on those in the place of torment (fire and brimstone) in the other division of Hades or Sheol? The unsaved dead are not yet in Hell (Gehenna, the Lake of Fire). They are still in the fire and brimstone of Hades or Sheol, will be delivered up at the judgment of the great White Throne, and put in Hell, (Gehenna, the Lake of Fire and brimstone) forever. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev 20:12-15). What was the effect of our Lord's announcement, "Tetelestai," on them? They were utterly hopeless. Their despair reached infinite, eternal heights. The fixed gulf between them and any hope could never be spanned. They prayed vainly for folk back here to have someone resurrected from the dead to tell them of the fire and brimstone (eternal, infinite) that awaits them. And the Prince of this world, Satan, the dragon, that old serpent, who is the Devil, was crushed, defeated, made a prisoner of the King of kings. And, he, too, will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire and brimstone, Gehenna!!!! "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen 3:15).

What effect does this announcement have on earth? It is not uniform; it is mixed! To some, it brings boundless joy. Their salvation does not depend on their efforts or goodness. Like Paul, they shout, "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world" (Gal 6:14). As Ellis L. Carnett put it, It is finished, It is finished. My salvation full and free; Jesus paid the debt for sinners, When He died on Calvary To some, the meaning is not clear. They believe that they must have Jesus plus certain additives to go to Heaven. And this is so very sad because one can be saved by Jesus and Jesus alone. To trust Him plus anything does not bring salvation. Salvation is by grace through faith plus nothing and minus nothing in Jesus Christ. "Tetelestai!" To some, it is a matter of indifference. They are interested only in things and the pleasures of sin. Indifference to Christ, it is the climax of all sinning! And even to others, it brings antagonism and hatred. They hate God, love sin, and do not want to hear it. They want to be left alone. And one day that being left alone will be the forsakenness of their burning shame and agony. To all, it is an announcement of hope. But the announcement awaits our receiving Him, as a free Gift through repentance and faith!!!! God's

heart will go unsatisfied, if you refuse the finished work of Christ, and Satan will be comforted because of His hatred for Christ and your going to Hell forever!!!!

Ebenezer Wooten, an Englishman who was an earnest, outspoken evangelist, held a meeting many years ago at Ledford Brook. After the last service, the crowd was leaving, and the tent was being taken down. A young man approached the Evangelist and said, "Mr. Wooten, what must I do to be saved?" "Too late!" said the preacher and looking directly into the young man's eyes, said again, "Too late, my friend, too late!" The young man, quickly losing any indifference that had been his, said, "Oh, Preacher, is it too late just because the meetings are over?" Brother Wooten firmly replied, "It's too late! You ask what you can DO to be saved, and I tell you that it is hundreds of years too late. The work of salvation is done, completed, finished, Jesus did it all on the cross. You must accept salvation as a free gift in Him. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16).

SEVENTH SAYING And now we come to consider the seventh of His last seven sayings.

"... Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit..." (Luk 23:46). These words were also uttered, we are told, by Polycarp, Augustine, Bernard, John Huss, Christopher Columbus, and others when they died. Theirs were the cries of sinners fleeing to God for salvation, an echo of mercy. His was that of a Winner coming to God with salvation -- a salvation won by His own hands. With Him, it was a proclamation of justice! The death of our Lord was different. It was a voluntary death, a vicarious death, a victorious death. Amen and amen!!!! Death had no claim on Him, except as the Representative of sinners. He was doing man's dying for him. No man took His life from Him; He laid His own life down. He brought His spoil with Him. As He died, He cried with a loud voice. He did not yield to death in weakness. On the contrary, He summoned death to serve Him. Someone has said, "He gave up His life because He willed it, when He willed it, and as He willed it." In Php 2:8; we read, "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." The "unto death" means "up to the point of death." They did not kill our Lord. His sufferings (physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually), though they were beyond our finite comprehension and our ability to describe, even if we could speak in the ultimate of every language, did not kill Him. He laid down his own life. Listen to His own Word on the subject: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my father" (John 10:17-18). The cults say that when He died that He was afraid that He might not rise again. That is hogwash!!!! He was as sure of His resurrection as He was of His crucifixion!!!!

Physiologists will tell you that when folk are at the point of death that they will try to raise their heads to get one more breath of oxygen. Our Lord bowed His head. He laid down His life!!!! It is clear that He consciously and purposely "rendered up His life" (laid down His life). In His last saying on the cross, as He did a voluntary, vicarious, and victorious death, we see Him as The Prophet, The Lamb, The Priest, and The King. THE PROPHET

He was that Prophet likened unto Moses. All of His work and actions had prophetic significance. A prophet not only predicts but he, also, simply tells forth the Word of God. Jesus predicted, but He was also The Preacher speaking the Word of God. The Bible is the written Word. Jesus is the

incarnated Word. They both are the living Word.

Jesus, The Prophet, preached His greatest sermon from the cross. He dramatized His sermon on Calvary. Our Bibles would not be worth the paper upon which they are written were it not for the message of the Cross. But, somebody says that there are many other wonderful things in the Bible. Yet, none of them would be accessible to us were it not for the message of the Cross. In our meditations, we have been enjoying surface things in these last seven sayings of our Lord on Calvary. Were we able to understand them in depth, we would surely understand the wisdom of God as we could in no other place. For at the cross is manifest the wisdom of God. "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1Co 1:23-24). In His preaching, dramatically on Calvary, The Prophet, was speaking the language of sonship, service, and security. Until we are justified (made sons and daughters of God) by the shed blood of Christ, we are without God and without hope with no relationship to Him. It is only when, as born again ones, we commit ourselves into His hands that we may serve Him acceptably. And, praise His Name, in His hands, we are eternally secure. "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John 10:28-29). THE LAMB

We are told that when Abel came to worship that he brought a lamb. He did this because of instructions which he had received from God, and then, we read in Heb 11:4, "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." This pointed to the coming of the Lamb of God. In the Levitical system, the Jews were taught to bring a lamb for sacrifice. This pointed to the coming of the Lamb of God. In Isa 53:6-7, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lo he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, of us all, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." This pointed to the death of the Lamb of God. And in John 1:29; we read, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." This was the Lamb of God. And here on Calvary, we see Him Who Is The Lamb of God!!!! In the Old Testament, the lamb died for the shepherd. In the New Testament The Shepherd Who Became The Lamb died for all sinners!!!! Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! And when we get to Heaven, we will see The Lamb on the throne. "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth" (Rev 5:6). Oh, all that is ours in salvation is because of The Lamb slain on Calvary. Here, our Lord presents Himself to the Father as The Lamb slain for all sinners. "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1Ti 2:6). We teach it, preach it, testify of it, and sing about it. The Lamb and His Blood! And, praise God, we will do it through all eternity in Heaven. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev 5:9). The liberals make fun of the blood. But, eternal Hell awaits those who are not washed in the Blood!!!! THE PRIEST When Jesus said, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit," He, as the High Priest, was

offering Himself as The Lamb on that last Passover Day to atone for the sins of all sinners. See Him on the cross as the altar of sacrifice. See Him both as the blood Sacrifice and the officiating Priest. In His voluntary death, our Lord Jesus, The Priest, carried His sacrifice into the Holy of Holies of God's presence, and in His seventh saying, He offered it to God. For centuries, twenty-four courses of priests had been receiving the blood of thousands of paschal lambs brought by the people and slain before the altar. The base of that altar was soaked with blood. And yet the work was never done. But it was different on that day on Calvary. The all-sufficient Lamb had never been found until then. There has never been a need for another Passover Day. The Lamb of God had been offered once and for all. "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb 10:10-12). And, I repeat, He was The Priest and The Lamb. Hallelujah!!!! Jesus the Son of God offered His broken body, without spot or blemish to God. His precious and efficacious Blood is poured out at the foot of the cross (the altar). The Priest comes forth saying that it is enough, no more priests, but Jesus, no more blood but His Blood. The work is done forever.

Praise the Lord!!!! "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb 7:25).

We are told that in one of his periods of depression, Martin Luther seemed to see a hideous and malignant form writing out the record of his sins on the walls of the room. In the list, the accuser wrote Luther's sinful thoughts, his sinful words, his secret sins, his open sins, his evil deeds, his sins of omission, his sins of commission, and the list seemed endless. Luther said that as he looked up, the accuser had stopped writing and was facing him. "You have forgotten one thing!" cried Luther. "And what is that?" His tormentor asked, laughing. Luther replied, "Write across it all: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." When Luther spoke of the blood of Jesus, the evil spirit left, and the walls were clean. His Blood! His Blood! His Blood! His Blood! Presented by Himself, our Eternal Priest!!!! THE KING As we see Him as Prophet, Lamb, and Priest, God forbid that we should neglect to see Him as King. This last saying on the cross was not the cry of a defeated victim: it was the proclamation of a triumphant King. Jesus went to the Cross a King. He declared to Pilate that He was King. Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross: "... JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS." See John 19:19! From this world's viewpoint, He wore a strange kind of crown and is a strange sort of King.

He did not die a victim of the inevitable. He, as a King, walked through the battle to victory. His last saying on the cross was a proclamation of the King. This King rushes from the fires, torments, and tortures of hell into God's presence calling Him, "Father!" He was stronger than hell's power. He subdued the Devil and all his cohorts. And this King commands death to come to His service. The first Adam became death's servant. The Last Adam, The King, mastered death.

Death could not lay its cold, icy hands upon His pure body until He gave the permission. This last saying on the cross is the great conquering King's order for death's chariot to carry Him back home. He transformed the cross from a sign of shame, humiliation, ignomy, and defeat to the symbol of His great power. He took the cross and made it His greatest servant by using it to destroy the thing for which it stood -- death and despair!!!!

Praise God for The King of kings and The Lord of lords. Paul said of Him, "... the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords" (1Ti 6:15). John said of Him: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen" (Rev 1:7). And he also said that when He comes, "... he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev 19:16). We cry out with John the beloved disciple, "... Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev 22:20).

Some years ago a Japanese student, who was a Buddhist, enrolled in Columbia University. He decided that while he was in the United States he would go to church and see what comparisons and contrasts exist between Buddhism and Christianity. So, he began attending Riverside Baptist Church in New York City. At that time, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick was the pastor. Dr. Fosdick was a liberal theologian. He could preach; yes, he could weave a web around an angel of high.

I repeat, he could preach, but he was a liberal theologian! I read a letter that he wrote in which he said that any preacher who believed in the literal, bodily resurrection of Jesus and in the personal return of Jesus to the earth to rule and reign was a backwoods' ignoramus. If that is the case, I plead guilty to being a backwoods' ignoramus. The Japanese Buddhist went to hear Dr. Fosdick every Sunday for nine months, as he sought to compare and contrast Buddhism and Christianity.

He planned to return to Columbia University for summer school, but he had a change of plans and went to the University of Toronto instead. In those days, Dr. T. T. Shields was pastor in Toronto, Canada. While there, he went to hear Dr. Shields with the same purpose with which he had gone to hear Dr. Fosdick in New York. Dr. Shields was a conservative Bible believer. He preached the Bible in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Buddhist went to hear Dr. Shields Sunday morning, Sunday night, and again, on Wednesday night. He saw a great difference in the preaching than that which he had heard in New York. At the close of the service on Wednesday night, he asked an usher what he would have to do to get an appointment with Dr. Shields. The usher told him that he would not have to do anything, and then, simply escorted him to Dr. Shields' study. The Japanese student told this great preacher what had happened in New York and there in Toronto, as he had attended church. He said, "There is little difference, in principle, in the preaching of Dr. Fosdick and the teaching of my Buddhist priest in Japan. Dr. Fosdick, in preaching Christianity, says that if you dodo-do certain things and don't-don't-don't do certain other things all will be well when you die. It is true that the things they tell us to do and not to do are different, but in principle, they are both saying, "do, do, do and don't, don't, don't."

Then, as he continued, he said, "But, Dr. Shields, you preach that Christianity is something Jesus Christ has already done on the cross to make possible the forgiveness of all our sins." Dr. Shields assured the young man that he had heard correctly. He emphasized again how that we are all hell-deserving sinners, how Jesus died, and was buried, and arose again, and in so doing, He did all the work and made the only sacrifice that could ever forgive and save us from our sins.

There, the Buddhist student knelt, wept, repented, and received our Lord Jesus Christ by faith as personal Saviour. Hallelujah! What a Saviour!

During his ministry, Dwight L. Moody, the great evangelist, left Chicago by train for a city-wide campaign on the west coast. The engineer on that train was a Mormon. When he heard that the

famous Mr. Moody would be one of his passengers, he asked the conductor to request Mr. Moody to ride in the cab with him, saying that he would like to talk to this famous preacher. When the conductor relayed the engineer's request to Mr. Moody, he gladly consented. All the way to Salt Lake City that engineer tried to make a Mormon out of Mr. Moody. However, he did not have any success. As they neared Salt Lake City, the engineer said, "In Salt Lake City another engineer will take over and carry the train on to the west coast; so, I will have to leave you soon. But I do believe that you would make a wonderful Mormon preacher and would like very much to see you become one." Mr. Moody replied by saying, "Sir, I could never become a Mormon preacher. However, there is not much difference in your religion and mine, just two letters." The puzzled engineer said, "I do not understand. What do you mean?" Mr. Moody then said, "Well, you spell your religion D-O, DO. You teach that if you do-do-do and perchance do enough, when you die, you may go to Heaven. My religion is spelled D-O-N-E, DONE. It is not something we do; it was all done at Calvary through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has done all that was necessary for my sins to be forgiven through His death, burial, and resurrection. So, I am going to Heaven on the merits of the finished work of Jesus Christ." Amen and amen!!!!

Jesus is the Saviour; yes, He is The Only Saviour. Salvation is not an experience. Salvation is a Person. Sure, we have an experience with Him when we are saved, but the experience is not our salvation. The Lord Jesus Christ in Person is our salvation. He is God, and He is the only Saviour.

Jesus is "the sweetest Name on mortal tongue; the sweetest carol ever sung, Jesus, blessed Jesus."

JESUS IS LORD

Yes, Jesus purposes to be Lord in the lives of those whom He saves. For we read in Rom 10:9, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." When we are saved, we accept Jesus as Saviour and Lord because this verse in Romans is saying that if we confess with our mouth Jesus as Lord. When we come to accept Him as Saviour, it is unconditional surrender. We never get saved by coming to Him and saying, "I want to accept you as my Saviour, if You will not expect me to be baptized, or if You will not expect me to stop drinking booze, or if You will not expect me to join a church, etc." Now, certainly, we know very little about His Lordship when we accept Him as Saviour. At this time, I have been saved for than fifty-five years, and I am still learning more about His Lordship. He continues to lead me deeper and deeper into the crucified life (making Him Lord). On the other hand, we do not get saved by saying to Him, "I will accept you as my Saviour, but I do not want you to be my Lord." In other words, a sinner does not get saved by coming to Jesus and saying, "I have been a prostitute for the Devil, and now I want you to save me and let me be a prostitute for Jesus. Or, I have been a drunkard for the Devil, and now I want you to save me and let me by a drunkard for Jesus, etc."

Many trust Him for salvation but refuse to yield to His Lordship. One of the secrets as to why there are so many unhappy Christians is that they have received Christ as Saviour but not as Lord of their lives. Paul could say, "Paul and Timotheus, servants of Jesus Christ..." This word servants is our word bondslaves. They had not simply been saved, but had yielded and permitted Jesus to become Lord of their lives. Someone has well said, "The Statement of Faith of New Testament Christians was simply and profoundly, "JESUS IS LORD."

There is a heresy abroad today that teaches that Jesus saves sinners and says that if they want to make Him Lord it will be fine, or if they prefer to go on in their carnal ways and live "like the Devil" that that will be fine, also. The Bible knows nothing of such teaching. Jesus purposes to make real disciples out of all whom He saves and to be Lord of their lives. Would it not be wonderful if all saved folk wanted to grow up, and go on making Jesus Lord of their lives with the same enthusiasm that boys and girls want to grow up? For instance, when they have their sixth birthday, and even before the birthday cake is cut, should you ask them about their ages, the reply would be: "I am six going on seven." And those words, going on seven, would come out with emphasis. Oh, for Christians who will go on for Him making Him Lord of their lives.

How about you?

Let me shoot a quiver full of interrogatory arrows into your heart. Has Jesus the supreme place in your desires? Do you esteem all things but loss in comparison with the excellency of Jesus Christ, your Lord? Is He to you as a city of refuge to the manslayer? Is He to you as a spring of watering a dry, desert place? Is He to you as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land? Is He to you, having had experience with Him, a refuge and fortress, a very present help in time of trouble? Is everything in Jesus desirable in your eyes? Do you desire to obey His commandments? Do you desire to have His spirit? Are His holiness and government, His cross and sufferings desirable to you? Are you longing at all times for Him? Have your eyes been opened to see His "want and worth?" Is His righteousness the righteousness you desire? Do you want to do His will -- no matter what it may be? Are you willing for Him to dictate wholly your plans, actions, and speech? He is Lord of all, or He is not Lord at all! Is He really your Lord? Is He Lord of your body? Is He Lord of your mind? Is He Lord of your influence? Is He Lord of your abilities? Is He Lord of your talents? Is He Lord on your job? Is He Lord of pocket book? Is He Lord of all your activities? Is He Lord in your home? Is He Lord at school? Is He Lord at church? Is He Lord on your vacation? Is He Lord of your recreation? Is He Lord of your dating? Is He Lord of your grooming?

Oh beloved, is He Lord in every area of your life? He purposes to be Lord in the lives of all those whom He saves!

I would that He were Lord in our lives to the extent that we could all say with the poet, "Had I a thousand lives to live I'd live them all for Thee, Who once for me Thy life didst give, O Lamb of Calvary! Bought with Thy Holy Precious Blood.

I am no longer mine. Then take my life, Blest Son of God As Thine and only Thine.

"Had I thousand tasks to do, I'd do them all for Thee, If strength these labors to pursue Were given unto me. It matters not if these my hands Hold scepter, spade, or pen Lord Jesus to Thy blest commands I owe a glad 'Amen.'

"Had I a thousand griefs to bear, I'd bear them all for Thee. Rememb'ring well Thy anguished prayer In dark Gethsemane. Thy grace makes sweet the Mara cup Each burden, pain, and loss Grows light when I in faith look up To Thy Victorious Cross.

"Had I a thousand songs to sing, I'd sing them all for Thee -- Redeemer, Saviour, Shepherd, King To laud Thy majesty. Though psalms of earth cannot compare With anthems angels raise. Still would my tongue Thy praise declare In love divinest lays.

“Had I a thousand gifts to bring I’d bring them all to Thee’ Each one a love filled offering For all Thy love to me, While from the altar of my heart Prayers’ incense would ascent, And fragrance to each gift impart, For Thee my dearest Friend.” Had I a thousand deaths to die, I’d die them all for Thee. If, dying, I could glorify The love that bled for me Thy hand my feeble bark will take O’er Jordan’s rolling tide. When in thy likeness I awake I shall be satisfied.” Had I a thousand crowns to cast, Blest Saviour at Thy feet, When I have reached my Home at last, My bliss would be complete! Until I reach that shore divine, Beside the crystal sea. O My beloved, a smile of Thine Is Heav’n enough for me.”

Oh, for this kind of consecration to our Lord Jesus! May we come with the humility of John the Baptist who could say that he was not worthy to tie or to untie His shoes and that He must increase while he must decrease. Let us yield, surrender, and dedicate our all to do His bidding, letting Him be Lord in every area of our lives. And, sinner friend, would you behold Him! He is the Water, the Milk, the Bread, the Meat, the Honey, the Feast that your poor, dying, hungry, thirsty soul needs. The banquet is spread. Come, sinner, come!!!! Taste and see that The Lord is good! In Him is the fullness of righteousness. In Him is the fullness of holiness. In Him is the fullness of faithfulness. In Him is the fullness of Deity. In Him is the fullness of wrath. In Him is the fullness of justice. In Him is the fullness of power to put you in the lake of fire where you deserve to spend eternity. But praise God, there is also in Him the fullness of the love, the grace, the mercy, the pardon, the justification, the peace, the everlasting life that are all freely offered to you because of Calvary, because of the price He paid, because of His death, burial, and resurrection. Yes, in Him is the forgiveness of all of your sins. He invites you to come. He offers you life abundantly and eternally. He does not want you to perish, to go to Hell!!!! The best of saints compared to Jesus are but as dewdrops scattered on the Head of the Bridegroom, lost in the glory of His hair! In the language of The Song of Solomon 5:16, “His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend..” Come, sinner, come! Taste and see! He will be your Friend, your Beloved! Repent as a sinner, and receive Him by simple faith! He will save you! Oh, let Him save you now! Jesus is God! Jesus is the Only Saviour! Jesus is Lord!

Jesus sweetest Name on mortal tongue, sweetest carol ever sung. Jesus Blessed Jesus!!!!

*Dr. James Crumpton was the long time pastor of West Side Baptist Church (now Victory Baptist Church) and is the founder of Maranatha Baptist Missions.

Maranatha Baptist Missions P. O. Drawer 1425 Natchez, Mississippi 39121.

Neglected Church Discipline

NEGLECTED CHURCH DISCIPLINE By Pastor James Crumpton

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and write raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and him with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev 3:14-22). In our other chapters, we have looked at church discipline from several viewpoints: Constructive, Personal, Corrective, Punitive, and Local. Now in this chapter we want to consider how church discipline has and is being neglected and some of the tragic results. Our Scripture passage gives not only the command of our Lord that we exercise church discipline, but also the trend of the churches to neglect it during the time since our Saviour returned to the right hand of the Father after His death, burial, and resurrection.

There is not much true love -- God's kind of love -- known and practiced today. There is not a lot of sentimental selfishness that is passed off as love. I might illustrate what I am talking about by referring to the pastors who "cut corners" and compromise when it comes to preaching the whole counsel of God (and that would include church discipline). They claim to love their people and cannot press for these points that reprove and rebuke. But the truth is that they so love themselves they fear the criticism which Satan would foster against them, if they were true to the teachings of our Lord, if they really loved their people, they would teach them and lead them to practice what our Lord taught. Certainly, He loves the people and knows what is best and a necessity for all. It is never right to do wrong to make an opportunity to do right, and love -- real love -- true love -- always constrains us to do right. The loss of respect by many unsaved people for the churches goes right back to the spineless position, sentimental selfishness, unscriptural promotion, and numbers racket that exists in some of our churches today.

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; these things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God" (Rev 3:14). The word "angel" means messenger or pastor. So, the letter is addressed to the pastor, and the message is for him and for his flock. It is the church at Laodicea. Laodicea means "the rights of the people" or "the rule of the people." In other words, it means "democracy." Could any other term more aptly set forth the condition of the present-day church affairs? It is the mistaken idea that the voice of the people is

the voice of God; the age of anarchy is almost upon us. Someone has said that we once fought a war to save the world for democracy, but that the day will come when we will have to fight to save the world from democracy. The Bible nowhere teaches that the New Testament Churches are democracies; it does teach that they are theocracies. Baptists have been as guilty, if not more guilty, than other groups in this matter. What is a theocracy? It is government by the immediate direction of God; yes, it is government by priests, servants, and kings as representatives of God. Who are the priests, servants, and kings in the New Testament church? Every believer is a priest, servant, and king. Therefore every individual member is under obligation to find God's will in the policies, and methods followed in His church. And then when the church votes, there will never be divisions. He will not lead two people in the same congregation two different ways on the same subject. We have no right to vote and do as we please. We do have the right to vote and do as He pleases. So, New Testament churches are theocracies operated on democratic principles. He is the one "to run" the church as He speaks through us: His priest, servants, and kings! Most churches are far more concerned now about what will please the people than they are about what He wants. It is characteristic of the church that neglects discipline as ordained by our Lord. The remainder of the verse states that this message comes to the Laodiceans from "the Amen," "the faithful and true witness," "the beginning of the creation of God." When our Lord is spoken of as "the Adam," It means that He is the truth. He could be the truth without uttering a word, but the expression, "the faithful and true witness" means that He is not only the truth but that He faithfully proclaims, manifests, and makes known the truth to us. What He says will be exactly true because He is in Himself absolute truth, and there is nothing beyond Him in all the realm of truth. He is the faithful and true witness of God. When He speaks there is no exaggeration and no minimizing. When It says that He is "the beginning of the creation of God," it is referring to His deity. The Lord Jesus is God, and thus He speaks to this church at Laodicea.

"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Rev 3:15-16). The meaning of hot is seen in Rom 12:11; where the same Greek word is used -- fervent (burning) in spirit. The word translated cold is used in Mat 10:42, "a cup of cold water" and "as cold waters to a thirsty soul..." (Pro 25:25). The church at Laodicea was neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm. Some would lead us to believe the hot means the saved, the cold means the lost, and the lukewarm means the saved who are out of fellowship. Such an interpretation is not acceptable. The hot and the cold could both be applied to the saved who were doing something for Him. Some burning hot in His service -- some doing little things that will also be rewarded -- as those giving a cup of cold water in His Name. Certain things are good whether hot or cold -- tea for example -- but nothing that is lukewarm is good to the taste. This church was neither hot nor cold -- nothing was good -- it was a church filled with unsaved members. The Lord spoke of it as such a disgusting situation that He was about to spue (vomit) them out of His mouth.

"Because thou sayest, I am rich, ands increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see" (Rev 3:17-18).

These people had no consciousness of any need. They considered themselves rich. We see the same all around us today; churches so often measure themselves by the size of their offerings, membership, and buildings. And many of them from that materialistic viewpoint have need of nothing. But Jesus said that they were wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. Jesus said that they were miserable; it means pitiable. His heart was moved in pity toward them; He had no congratulations to offer them. When He said that they were poor, He meant that from His standpoint they were possessing nothing worth having. Then He used the word "blind" to describe them; it is the word "nearsighted" which most accurately expresses the thought -- lacking in vision, lacking light, devoid of the sense of the far distances, confined within narrow limits. Then again, He says that they are naked; yes, they were nude, stripped of the clothing of glory and beauty that ought to adorn the church as the Bride of Christ. They were lost people who needed to be clothed in the garment of His imputed righteousness. The Lord Jesus counsels them to get "gold tried in the fire," "white raiment," and to "anoint thine eyes with eyesalve." "The gold tried in the fire" would make them rich; it is divine righteousness -- that which is imputed to helpless sinners when they receive our Lord Jesus Christ as personal Saviour. The "white raiment" would give them clothing; this is referring to practical righteousness. It is the bride's trousseau, that she may be properly clothed; yea, it is practical righteousness produced in the life of the saint by the Holy Spirit, when the individual surrenders to Him. The "eyesalve" for the eyes is the anointing of the Holy Spirit. John in the second chapter of his first epistle tells us what is ours through this anointing. Let us read verses 20 and 27, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent" (Rev 3:19).

Here our Lord makes it clear that these stinging words of rebuke from Him come because He loves them. He then challenges them to repent. And that is Christ's last word to the churches -- "repent." Today the way so many leaders talk you would think that His last word is "go," evangelize. But it is not! Evangelism comes as a result of revival. Revival comes when men repent. So, to get to the bottom of our troubles, we need repentance. He said "go" before His ascension. The churches were not going now; so, this time His Word is "repent."

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me" (Rev 3:20).

Here our Lord stands outside the local church seeking entrance. Think of it -- Jesus shut out of a church which claims to be His. What a tragedy! But after all, the church which "cuts out," ignores, and refuses to practice some sections of His Word that displeases the members is shutting Christ out. We cannot refuse His Word and have Him!

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev 3:21-22). Our Lord certainly knows that many local churches as such in these last days will never open the door to Him. Yet, some are so stupid as to teach that the whole world will be converted. And when He is not even wanted in so many churches! Yet, our Lord does plead with any and every individual who will heed. He also mentions the special reward for those who do

heed and who overcome.

NEGLECT OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE IS REBELLION AGAINST GOD'S AUTHORITY The fact that man is sinfully depraved makes him rebellious against authority. And the Word makes it clear that this rebellion will wax more and more evident as we approach the second coming of Christ. Today we see as never before rebellion against authority in the home, school, government, and churches. Is there any wonder so many fight against the Bible as being verbally inspired? They desire to excuse themselves from accepting the authority of the Word.

Yes, the Laodicean age is upon us. There is much talk that illustrates it: "The majority is right" -- "The people don't like it" -- "The voice of the people is the voice of God" -- "You should not preach like that; people won't like it" -- "I believe in going along with the boys" -- "Everybody does it; it must be all right." In neglecting the Word of God and its teachings concerning church discipline, we are simply showing how we are rebelling against God's authority. We prefer our ways and will to God's Way and Will. The natural man is that way, but God expects us to be different because He saved us. He expects us to submit to His authority. Could it be that the big trouble today is the same as it was at Laodicea -- church members who need to be saved?

NEGLECT OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE LEADS TO BOASTING IN THE FLESH The church at Laodicea was actually boasting that she had no needs. These folk felt that they "had arrived." Churches with big buildings, offerings, and memberships often do the same and class folk as "of brand," and "fanatical" who emphasize the need of not compromising the Word, living a separated life, and walking in the Spirit.

Paul said, in the second verse of the fifth chapter of First Corinthians, that the church at Corinth was all puffed up. Look at the verse, "And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you." They were boasting of how liberal they were in having a man in the church guilty of this gross sin of fornication or adultery. You see, they did not want to be accused of being narrow-minded; so, they boasted (and surely such boasting was in the flesh) that they permitted such a man to retain his membership with them. Does it not remind us of such boasting today? Could you imagine one in the leadership of the Holy Spirit boasting that his or her church condoned immorality? But the Laodiceans believe that what pleases the people is right; they believe the voice of the people is the voice of God. Their own will is their authority, not the Word of God. They follow their own desires and defy those who would in any way cross them.

NEGLECT OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE CONDONES IMMORALITY As Paul wrote to the brethren at the church of Corinth, he reminded them that to neglect dealing with the case of immorality in their midst would affect the whole congregation. He put it this way, "Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth" (1Co 5:6-8). Surely as members of the same local church of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are our brother's keeper. And not to do something to help our brother who has gone into gross sin that needs to be dealt with by the church makes us guilty before God. To ignore sin that should be dealt with in our local congregations is to condone it. Today many people remain in good standing in their churches even

though they are drunkards, harlots, murderers, adulterers, adulteresses, gamblers, dope addicts, etc. We know that there are unsaved people who will always be critical of the churches, but they certainly have a right to be so, when churches so operate as to condone immorality.

NEGLECT OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE EVENTUALLY OMITTS THE GOSPEL

Practically all churches who neglect the practice of church discipline do so because it displeases the people. It is so clear how the erroneous idea of the churches of Jesus Christ being democracies instead of theocracies leads to the doing of what human nature likes instead of what God commands. The average church begins by saying that she is opposed to drinking, adultery, gambling, etc., but that she can not, or will not, go so far as to take any action against it. You know, it is like being against a rattlesnake coming into your house, but certainly not being so drastic as to put it out should it come in anyway. THIS SPIRIT OF COMPROMISE GROWS LIKE CREEPING PARALYSIS. AND BEFORE ONE REALIZES IT, THE CHURCHES SPEAK OUT SO WEAKLY AGAINST ANY SIN THAT IT CAN BARELY BE HEARD, AND CERTAINLY THEY WOULD NEVER TAKE ACTION OF ANY KIND. THEY JUST SIT TRYING TO BE PLEASING TO EVERYBODY UTTERING A FEW PIOUS MEANINGLESS PLATITUDES.

And, of course, when the churches get to this point, they cannot afford to preach the Gospel, telling people that they are hopelessly lost unless they get born again and washed in the blood of Christ. They are already so filled with unregenerate members that the voice of the people, which they suppose is the voice of God, would not allow such preaching or teaching. It would be all right to brag on buildings, offerings, membership, etc., but to preach on Hell, Sin, or Regeneration would be unthinkable. They need nothing, in their estimation, not even the Gospel!

NEGLECT OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE LEAVES CHURCHES NO MORE THAN SOCIAL CLUBS

When a church is what Christ teaches her to be, she is as attractive as a very beautiful woman, but wrong doing is as out of place in her presence as immorality is with a real lady! But today because of rebellion against God's authority, holy living, and an uncompromising stand for right and against wrong, the average church is no more than a social club. In fact with the eating programs, athletic programs, and forms of amusement programs you would think that most of them ARE social clubs. If an Elijah, Moses, Amos, Paul, John the Baptist, or our Lord Jesus Christ should come to preach in the average church today, they would declare them fools and fanatics who were so crude that they should not be permitted to speak in polite (?) society. You can join the average church today, and then, never attend, never give, and do everything to destroy that church's influence for 40 years and still be in good standing. The average social club is not that lenient. What a shame and a tragedy for a church of the Lord Jesus Christ to command less respect than a social club, all because of an effort to appease the sinful flesh.

NEGLECT OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE CAUSES A LOSS OF SPIRITUAL VALUES

The church at Laodicea was thinking altogether in terms of the materialistic: money, buildings, crowds, popularity, etc. They had no place for the message of salvation and finding of God's Will for Christian lives. Today we see the same things. Some are more concerned to have a good report at the close of the year than to reach the lost, build up the saved, and walk with Him. Some are more concerned to build fine buildings than to send out missionaries, claiming that they will send out missionaries after they get well fixed at home. Do you suppose they ever realize that it may be to late then? Most of them forget about missionaries when they get their fine buildings. They feel like

the people at Laodicea -- they are in need of nothing.

Oh, how temporal and materialistic churches can become. How easy it is for spiritual values to be lost in the debris of the desires of the flesh. How they find themselves trying to appeal to and please the material man who knows not Christ. Yet from this standpoint Christ was a perfect failure, and so will these churches be when they follow His steps.

NEGLECT OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE MAKES CHURCH MEMBERSHIP MEAN LITTLE IF ANYTHING

How many members of the average church could die and it would make no difference, as far as the work of our Lord is concerned? Can one honestly say that his or her church membership really means something, if the church would have to close her doors if all the members were like that individual? Church membership reports are the highest ever in our nation and so is crime. Does being a church member really mean something today, or is it a sort of badge of respectability or even a "cover-up?"

If churches respected the authority of Christ and His Word instead of rebelling against them, it would be a different matter. Church membership would then mean something. I had rather be a member of a church of Jesus Christ than any other organization on earth. But many prize membership in lodges, clubs, and societies above that of membership in a church. They prove it by the small place they give the church in their lives. And this all goes back to our churches neglecting to do what our Lord Jesus taught them. What a price has been paid to please people! How foolish to believe that the voice of the people is the voice of God!

CONCLUSIONS

1. The churches as a whole are doomed because they are listening to and will continue to listen to the voice of people as though it were the voice of God. Jesus made it clear such would be the case.
2. New Testament churches are theocracies and not democracies.
3. Churches cannot please unregenerate men, if they follow their Christ.
4. Many preachers today find where their churches want them to go and follow along instead of finding out where Christ wants them to go and teaching and leading them in His way.
5. Most churches had rather be popular with men than popular with Christ.
6. The measure of greatness by most local churches today is money, members, and buildings, not devoted faithful servants of God.
7. The historical Christ and His message are just as unpopular today as when He lived here on earth some 1900 years ago.
8. The supreme need now is for saints who will follow Christ regardless! The previous is one chapter of the book *New Testament Church Discipline* by the late Pastor James W. Crumpton of Westside Baptist Church, Natchez, Mississippi.

Substituting for the Substitute

SUBSTITUTING FOR THE SUBSTITUTE! By James W. Crumpton As that fearful, memorable Wednesday morning passed toward noon, Jesus gave the third of His seven sayings on the cross. "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home"(John 19:26-27).

I am glad that there was somebody at the foot of the cross who cared. There were five who were sympathetic, bereaved, astounded, brokenhearted, and deeply concerned (four women and one man). It is a pity that there was only one man to four women. Men, mourn with me!!! In many churches today, there are four women and children, to every one man, who are faithful. Men, what a shame!!!

Mary, His mother, was there. She had suffered much because of this unique Son. Gossipers smirked at His birth, suggesting that He was an illegitimate child. (The liberal theologians still do, and the neo-orthodox and neo- evangelicals claim these theologians as their brothers. They are all traitors only in different coats.) Jesus had wisely ignored Mary when it hurt (Mat 12:46-50). The sword was twisting in her bosom (Luk 2:35).

She was there. She loved Him and suffered much!!! The mother of John, the beloved disciple, was there. She was Mary's (His mother's) sister. Love for her strange and wonderful nephew and her widowed sister brought her great grief and concern. She was there.

Mary the wife (now the widow) of Cleophas was there. Cleophas was the brother of Joseph, the foster father of Jesus. He loved Him. He was there.

Mary Magdalene was there. Jesus had cast seven demons out of her. She was so grateful to Him for the miracle He had performed for her. Surely, she represented all who had been blessed by His miraculous ministry. She was there.

John the disciple was there. He was the only one of the inner circle of disciples who was present. He had followed faithfully through the trials and was there regardless of the personal risk. He was there.

Here at the foot of the cross were the nearest and dearest on earth to Him. Will He notice? Will He have a word for them? Yes, He does! It is a surprising statement, probably different than any would have expected. He speaks as Lord! He issues commands as a King on His throne. On Calvary, Jesus was not helplessly surrendering to the inevitable. He was the General marching through the battle to victory!!!

"...Woman, behold thy son...Behold thy mother..." In this saying, He makes three assignments: the assignment for His mother, the assignment for John, His beloved disciple, and the assignment for Himself. THE ASSIGNMENT FOR HIS MOTHER

What is His Word for her? Is she given a special, unique place of exaltation? The Roman Catholic Church insists that she was given the position of mediatrix, entrusted with treasures of His grace, and given the responsibility of distributing His bounty. They call her the "Queen of Heaven," the "Mother of God," and a score of other high sounding titles. The Bible knows nothing of such a teaching. Jesus was careful to guard future generations from the heresy of Mariolatry.

Jesus, in the Scriptures, is never recorded as calling her "mother." He always called her "woman." However, He used the word "woman" with all tenderness, respect, and honor. Why did He not call her "mother?" Well, Jesus was no mere Palestinian peasant. He was Almighty God incarnated in human flesh. He knew that thousands would go to Hell because of the heresy of Mariolatry, and He would lend no support to this heresy. And it is happening before our very eyes. Mary is no mediatrix between God and man.

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus"(1Ti 2:5). The Protestants say that Jesus was making loving provision for His mother, as she is being assigned a place to live. In other words, they say that Jesus was, figuratively speaking, pinning the first Mother's Day red rose to the cross. Neither is this correct! We cannot accept this or the Catholic version.

What was He doing? What was He saying? It has to do with their relationship. How could a woman who had a depraved nature give birth to a Son Who had no depraved nature? And that is exactly what had happened! The blood of a child comes through the seed of the father. The flesh of the child comes through the mother. Jesus had no human father; so, His was blood with no depravity. His human flesh came through Mary. It was divine blood that flowed through His veins. The heresy of the Immaculate Conception seeks to explain the virgin birth by saying that Mary was born without a depraved nature. This is good logic, but it is not true! I agree with the good old Southern black preacher who said: "It just ain't so!" Amen and amen!!! Mary gave Jesus a physical body and that was all. He was saying that their relationship as mother and Son ceased that day. "A sword twisted in her heart." Tradition says that she fainted, and I doubt it not.

It was not that Jesus did not love her. He loved her more than you and I love our mothers. Our love for our mothers is diluted and polluted with human depravity. His love for His mother was perfect natural affection; He had no depravity!!! To Mary, this was devastating. But He was suffering a million times more in the assignment than she. If you have any tears, do not waste them on Mary. She found out that it was far more wonderful to be the daughter of the Christ than the mother of the human Jesus. She said so in her magnificat (Luk 1:46-56). Did she call Him her son? No, she called Him her Saviour, Lord, and God!!! Amen and amen!!! Now, let us take note of-- THE ASSIGNMENT FOR HIS DISCIPLE

John speaks of himself as being "the disciple whom Jesus loved." My, in this strata of society are the spiritual four hundred, the upper ten!!! That would be better than having a write-up with your picture in all of the denominational and independent papers! I do not believe that this is supposed to cause us to feel that Jesus loved John more than He loved the other disciples. I believe that John had a greater capacity for appreciating and appropriating His love than did some of the others.

"...Behold, thy mother..." It is an assignment for John to substitute in the responsibilities of our Lord that had to do with the flesh. The Word makes it clear that John took Mary to his own home.

Jesus was on the cross dying a substitutionary death for sinners, fulfilling all of the types in the Levitical system. Hallelujah, what a Saviour! Ah, was not our Lord saying, "John, I am dying as your SUBSTITUTE that your sins may be forgiven; now, you go and be my substitute here! Take care of my mother--make her your mother!" John's assignment was to be the substitute for The SUBSTITUTE!!! Is not this the assignment for all of us who are born again, blood washed believers? We are to substitute for Him here, since He was our SUBSTITUTE at Calvary!!! We are to win the lost and feed the lambs. We are to bring the lost to Christ and disciple them for Him. The poet put it this way:

"Christ has no hands but our hands To do His work today He has no feet but our feet To lead men in His way He has no tongue but our tongues To tell men how He died, He has no help but our help To bring them to His side!" For us to ignore this privilege and responsibility is to despise the cross.

Because of His love displayed at the cross, it is our privilege and assignment to substitute for The SUBSTITUTE!!!

Certainly, our Lord purposes this for every blood-washed, born again believer. Oh that we will be faithful substitutes for the SUBSTITUTE!!! In making these assignments for His mother and His beloved disciple, He automatically made AN ASSIGNMENT FOR HIMSELF

Yes, He, too, is assuming an assignment! We must never forget that Jesus (not Mary, not John, not the penitent thief, not the crucifying crowd) was the central figure in this gruesome scene. Folk who make Mary the central theme are giving us Romanism, not Christianity! Jesus was supreme at Mount Calvary!!! Jesus is supreme today!!!

What was He doing in these assignments? This assignment for Himself? One of the least things we can say is that He was showing interest in fulfilling the last detail of the law. Moses had said, "Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother." This, certainly, includes seeing about their food, clothes, and shelter. He, thus, instructs John to do just that. He was careful to avoid even the smell of the fires of sin upon His garments. Oh, that men and women today would thus honor their fathers and mothers! This is the least that we can say of the significance of the third word for Himself, but it is not the last or the most important. The most significant thing in this assignment for Himself is that it is the clearest, most easily understood demonstration of self-renunciation to be found in the New Testament. By this word, He cut Himself off from mother-love. He forsook the best earth had to offer. He renounced every tie that would interfere with His Saviourhood. He cut Himself from all filial relationships. He gave up all for sinners like you and me. This was self-renunciation that has never been demonstrated except at the cross. Yes, the third word twisted a sword in Mary's bosom. But her pain was nothing when compared to the agony of His sensitive heart. He was sacrificing to save these treasures from the fires of Hell.

HOW COULD WE ILLUSTRATE IT?

Human illustrations fall so short in the face of these infinite sufferings. I will give two human illustrations. If you will stand at the climax of these illustrations and picture sufferings (because of

the cutting off of filial relationships) a billion times more intense, you may have a small conception of His suffering. The story of Perpetua, a young widow of twenty six, with an infant at her breast, is found in Fox's Book of Martyrs. Her husband had already died for his testimony for the Saviour. Her father was an unbeliever who tried to persuade her to make some offerings to the Roman gods and avoid dying by being gored to death by the wild bulls at Carthage. In fact, her father tried to carry her bodily from her cell, but was knocked out by a staggering blow from one of the prison guards.

Perpetua was hurt worse by the blow than her own martyrdom and was glad that her father came to consciousness before she was marched into the arena to die. She placed her little girl in the arms of her father, kissed them, and walked out to die for her testimony for our Lord Jesus Christ. She was cut off from all filial relationships for her Lord. But her suffering was minor beside that of our Lord as He said, "...Woman, behold thy son." He cut Himself off from mother-love to go to Hell for all of us!!!

We are told of a preacher who lived many hundreds of years ago and who was in love with a sweet, beautiful, and noble woman. They were planning marriage and hoping for children. But God revealed that this was not His will. The man's service to Christ was to be in such a capacity as to have to forego the privilege of having a wife and children. The man of God struggled in prayer to become willing for such a sacrifice. One bright, moonlit night, when the ground was covered with snow, he went out and fashioned of the snow an image of his beloved and still other images of children he had dreamed would be theirs as a result of their union. He fashioned it all as a family circle around the hearth in an imagined living room, sat down, and enjoyed it all for one delicious hour in his imagination. Then, he kissed them all farewell to go to do the Father's will for his life. He gave up all filial relationships to do the will of our Lord Jesus Christ. But this suffering was not a billionth as intense as the suffering our Lord faced in saying, "...Woman, behold thy son...Behold thy mother..." All illustrations would fail to display the depths of sacrifice to which our Saviour voluntarily, sank when He gave up all to make effective our eternal salvation.

WHAT ARE THE APPLICATIONS TO BE MADE OF THIS GREAT TEXT? The first one is that there is no hope of salvation except in the Saviourhood of Jesus. It is in Him and Him alone!!! The second one is that there is no usefulness except in the Lordship of Jesus. Do not feel sorry for those who permit Him to be Lord in their lives; they are enjoying billion-dollar diamonds while you play with tawdry ten-cent store tinsel. The third application is that joy unspeakable and full of glory is ours when He is truly Lord of our lives. Amen and amen!!! The story is told of an evangelist, of another generation, who lived in Chicago. He and his wife had only one daughter. At the time of the experience, which I am about to relate, this little girl was almost 10 years of age. She was beautiful and had long, blond, curly hair. For several years, since she had been large enough, she had met her dad at the door when he came in from his office and/or special meetings. She would have his house shoes and bath robe in the living room, along with a cold coke or lemonade. When he was comfortably seated, she would crawl into his lap and smother him with hugs and kisses saying, "I love you more than anything or anybody!"

One day this dad decided to put his little daughter's love to a test. After having enjoyed his welcome home, with all the usual niceties, and while she was hugging and kissing him, declaring that she loved him more than anything or anybody, he interrupted her and told her that he wanted

her to give him her little necklace. It had cost ten cents at the local five and dime store (it might cost \$3.85 today, with inflation!). She looked puzzled and asked him what he would do with it? He answered by saying that he wanted to burn it in the fireplace, and that if she really loved him more than anything or anybody that she would not mind. She reaffirmed her love for him but refused to give up the necklace. She left him, went into the kitchen, and told her mother that he wanted to burn her necklace and that she liked it very much and believed that he was acting crazy. For the next three days, when dad came home, she met him with less enthusiasm and less favors.

Each day, he told her that he wanted her to give him her necklace, that if she loved him more than anything or anybody, why should she care? After three days, with her decreasing enthusiasm and favors, she did not welcome him home, show any favors, or express any love for 18 long days--that made three full weeks, since her dad had originally made the request.

Then, the next afternoon, when he came in, she met him with all of her favors and smothered him again with hugs and kisses, saying that she loved him more than anything or anybody, and saying that he could have her necklace and burn it. She cried a little when she gave it to him but insisted that she really wanted him to have it. Then, while they watched it burn she cried a little more but assured him, again, that she wanted him to do it because she did love him more than she loved anything or anybody. This certainly included the cheap little necklace! When the necklace was burned and gone, her dad went to the closet where his coat was hanging. He took a little box out of the pocket and began to open it for her. In great excitement, with tear-stained face, she was saying, "Daddy, what is it?" He said, "Sweetheart, it is a string of genuine pearls for you. I paid hundreds of dollars for it." "Oh," she said, "Daddy, how long have you had these pearls?" His reply was, "My dear, I have had them for three weeks." Then, she said, "But Daddy, why didn't you tell me?" He said lovingly, "Sweetheart, I would not tell you, or give them to you, until you were willing to give up the cheap little necklace you had!"

Beloved, are we not guilty of holding on to cheap, tawdry tinsel when He wants to give us billion-dollar diamonds? But it can happen only after we yield to Him as Lord. Then comes the joy unspeakable and full of glory!

Amen and amen!!!!

The Seven Sayings on the Cross

THE SEVEN SAYINGS ON THE CROSS By James Crumpton

See Him at Calvary! See Him crucified! See Him in the torture and agony of His sufferings! During those seven hours on the cross -- 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. -- He gave the last seven utterances. Seven hours and seven sayings; it was God's number -- the number of perfection. Two is the number of testimony. There were two sevens (seven hours and seven sayings); perfect testimony it was to God's perfect work at Calvary through His Son. He said:

(1) "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," (2) "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." (3) "Woman, behold thy son!...Behold thy mother!" (4) "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (5) "I thirst." (6) "It is finished." (7) "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

Let us note some things, briefly, about these sayings:

(1) "FATHER FORGIVE THEM; FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO." We could paraphrase this saying: "Father hold the winds of wrath, postpone the judgment until they know what has happened here." Jesus was asking that judgment be withheld until poor dupes of sin knew what the sinners had done to the Creator and what the Creator had done for sinners. Every sinner saved since that day is an answer to this prayer. Surely, had He not prayed this prayer God would have stricken dead and to Hell every living creature that day!

(2) "VERILY I SAY UNTO THEE, TO DAY SHALT THOU BE WITH ME IN PARADISE." The text is saying: "Amen to you I say -- with me in paradise." Both thieves mocked Him, believed that He was the Son of God, and had all power.

One prayed that He would come down and get him down from the cross and save them from dying. He had no reference to being saved from sin. The other thief changed his mind (repented) and, to paraphrase his request, said, "Lord, stay on the cross, buy a kingdom, and let me be one of the subjects in your kingdom." Jesus' answer, "Amen to you I say -- with me in paradise," was really saying, "So let it be as you have prayed. I take your side, answer your prayer. You will be with me today." It was salvation spontaneously and instantaneously. And in taking that thief's side, He took the side of all of us poor Hell-deserving sinners.

(3) "WOMAN, BEHOLD THY SON!...BEHOLD THY MOTHER!" Mary was not the mother of God. The eternal God has no mother. She was the mother of the human body of Jesus. Here He severs that relationship forever and turns her over to the beloved disciple, John, who was to see to her care. It must have been a heart breaking word to Mary. Tradition says that she fainted. But she found it was far more wonderful to be the daughter of the Christ than the mother of Jesus. Amen and amen!!!! Jesus was saying to John that He wanted him to be the substitute for the Substitute. You see, our Lord was dying as John's Substitute for sin; He was fulfilling all of the types in the various sacrifices of the Levitical system. So, as He gave Himself as the Substitute for John's sin,

He was assigning John to be His substitute here in this life. And He purposes the same for all of us who have been purchased by His Precious Blood. As the poet has said;

"Christ has no hands but our hands To do His work today, He has no feet but our feet To lead men in His way, He has no tongue but our tongues To tell men how He died, He has no help but our help To bring them to His side."

(4) "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?" This word came at the close of the three hours of darkness (from 12:00 noon till 3:00 P.M.). Oh, it was during this time that the seed of the serpent bruised the heel of the Seed of the woman, and the Seed of the woman bruised the head of the seed of the serpent. Literally, Jesus said: "My God, my God, why hast thou totally abandoned me while I am down under and in the midst of hostile circumstances." His physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual sufferings were beyond the comprehension of our finite, human minds. He suffered all Hell for all sins, for all sinners, the Hell that we would have had to suffer for all eternity in the lake of fire and brimstone. The darkness of those three hours surely speaks of the outer darkness in the charred walls of the damned.

(5) "I THIRST." The One Who had said that those who are thirsty are invited to come unto Him and drink was now thirsty. He thirsted that sinners might have their thirst quenched at the Fountain of the Waters of Life. They tell us that those who died on the cross became so thirsty that their tongues would swell and protrude from their mouths.

(6) "IT IS FINISHED." Here our Lord Jesus used the word, "tetelestai"; it is a word of accomplishment, satisfaction, and victory! It could be translated: "It stands Finished." In exclamation, it might be said:

"Done!", being sure that the idea of perfection is included. The full meaning of the word is: "It was finished and as a result is forever done." Tetelestai was the word the farmer used when there was born into his herd an animal so shapely, beautiful, and healthy that it seemed to be without defects and fault. Tetelestai was the word the sculptor or the painter used when the last finishing touches had been put on the sculptured material or the painting, and it seemed that nothing called for improvement or correction. Tetelestai was the word that the priest used when the devout worshipper brought a lamb without blemish, a male of the first year (according to God's instructions in Exo 12:5), to be offered as a sacrifice. Tetelestai is the word that takes on its greatest significance when our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, offered Himself as the Lamb of God on the altar of Golgotha and used it to describe His Sacrifice for sins which was complete, stainless, perfect, once for all, eternal, finished, and done forever. Amen and amen!!!!

(7) "FATHER, INTO THY HANDS I COMMEND MY SPIRIT." The Word says that as He uttered these words He bowed His head and gave up the ghost. Doctors and nurses tell us that when people are dying, they try to raise their heads for one more breath. He bowed His head. You see the sufferings did not take His life, ferocious though they were; He laid it down of Himself!

Hallelujah! What a Saviour!

What do we conclude about all this? There is no salvation in the churches, baptism, the Lord's Supper, human merits, human efforts, human gifts, or plans of men. Salvation is in Jesus Christ and in Him alone. We are not saved by any words or sacrifices that we make for God, but by the

word and sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ at Calvary. Salvation is in Him and Him alone. We come to Him in repentance and faith (both of which He gives us) and are saved by grace through faith, plus nothing and minus nothing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us join the hymn writers in saying: When I survey the wondrous cross On which the prince of glory died, My richest gain I count but loss, And pour contempt on all my pride.

Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Save in the death of Christ, my God;

All the vain things that charm me most - I sacrifice them to His blood.

See, from His head, His hands, His feet, Sorrow and love flow mingled down; Did e'er such love and sorrow meet, Or thorns compose so rich a crown? Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were a present far too small:

Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all.

There is a fountain filled with blood Drawn from Immanuel's veins, And sinners plunged beneath that flood Lose all their guilty stains:

Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood Shall never lose its pow'r, Till all the ransomed church of God Be saved to sin no more."

Some years ago a Japanese student, who was a Buddhist, enrolled in Columbia University. He decided that while he was in the United States he would go to church and see what comparisons and contrasts exist between Buddhism and Christianity. So, He began attending the Riverside Baptist Church in New York City. At that time, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick was the pastor. Dr. Fosdick was a liberal theologian. He could preach; yes, he could weave a web around an angel of light. I repeat, he could preach, but he was a liberal theologian! I read a letter that he wrote in which he said that any preacher who believed in the literal, bodily resurrection of Jesus and in the personal return of Jesus to the earth to rule and reign was a backwoods' ignoramus. If that is the case, I plead guilty to being a backwoods' ignoramus. The Japanese Buddhist went to hear Dr. Fosdick every Sunday for nine months, as he sought to compare and contrast Buddhism and Christianity.

He planned to return to Columbia University for summer school, but he had a change of plans and went to the University of Toronto instead. In those days, Dr. T.T. Shields was pastor in Toronto, Canada. While there he went to hear Dr. Shields with the same purpose with which he had gone to hear Dr. Fosdick in New York. Dr. Shields was a conservative Bible believer. He preached the Bible in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Buddhist went to hear Dr. Shields Sunday morning, Sunday night, and, then again, on Wednesday night. He saw a great difference in the preaching than that which he had heard in New York. At the close of the service on Wednesday night, he asked an usher what he would have to do to get an appointment with Dr. Shields. The usher told him that he would not have to do anything, and then simply escorted him to Dr.

Shield's study. The Japanese student told this great preacher what had happened in New York and there in Toronto as he had attended church. He said, "There is little difference, in principle, in the preaching of Dr. Fosdick and the teaching of my Buddhist priest in Japan. Dr. Fosdick, in preaching Christianity, says that if you do-do-do certain things and don't-don't- don't do certain other things, all will be well when you die. My priest in Japan also tells us to do-do-do certain

things and don't-don't-don't do certain other things and all will be well when we die. It is true that the things they tell me to do and not to do are different, but, in principle, they are both saying, "do, do, do, and don't, don't, don't."

Then, as he continued, he said, "But, Dr. Shields, you preach that Christianity is something Jesus Christ has already done on the cross to make possible the forgiveness of all our sins." Dr. Shields assured the young man that he had heard correctly. He emphasized again how that we are all Hell-deserving sinners, how Jesus died, was buried, and arose again, and in so doing, He did all the work and made the only sacrifice which could ever forgive and save us from our sins. There, the Buddhist student knelt, wept, repented, and received our Lord Jesus Christ by faith as personal Saviour. Hallelujah! What a Saviour!

During his ministry, Dwight L. Moody, the great evangelist, left Chicago by train for a city-wide campaign on the west coast. The engineer on that train was a Mormon. When he heard that the famous Mr. Moody would be one of his passengers, he asked the conductor to request Mr. Moody to ride in the cab with him, saying that he would like to talk to this famous preacher. When the conductor relayed the engineer's request to Mr. Moody, he gladly consented. All the way to Salt Lake City that engineer tried to make a Mormon out of Mr. Moody. However, he did not have any success. As they neared Salt Lake City, the engineer said, "In Salt Lake City another engineer will take over and carry the train on to the west coast; so, I will have to leave you soon. But I do believe that you would make a wonderful Mormon preacher and I would like very much to see you become one." Mr. Moody replied by saying, "Sir, I could never become a Mormon preacher. However, there is not much difference in your religion and mine, just two letters." The puzzled engineer said, "I do not understand. What do you mean?" Mr. Moody then said, "Well, you spell your religion D-O, Do. You teach that if you do-do-do and perchance do enough, when you die, you may go to Heaven. My religion is spelled D-O-N-E, Done. It is not something we do; it was all done at Calvary through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has done all that was necessary for my sins to be forgiven through His death, burial, and resurrection. So, I am going to Heaven on the merits of the finished work of Jesus Christ." Amen and amen!!!!

Jesus is the Saviour; yes, He is the only Saviour. Salvation is not an experience. Salvation is a Person. Sure, we have an experience with Him when we are saved, but the experience is not our salvation. The Lord Jesus Christ in Person is our salvation. He is God, and He is the only Saviour.

Jesus is "the sweetest Name on mortal tongue; the sweetest carol ever sung, Jesus, Blessed Jesus."

And, finally, let me emphasize that

JESUS IS LORD

Yes, Jesus purposes to be Lord in the lives of those whom He saves. Many trust Him for salvation but refuse to yield to His Lordship. One of the secrets as to why there are so many unhappy Christians is that they have received Christ as Saviour but not as Lord of their lives. Paul could say, "Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ..." This word "servants" is our word bondslaves. They had not simply been saved, but had yielded and permitted Jesus to become Lord of their lives.

There is a heresy abroad today which teaches that Jesus saves sinners and implies that if they want to make Him Lord it will be fine, or if they prefer to go on in their carnal ways that that will be fine, too. The Bible knows nothing of such teaching. Jesus purposes to make real disciples out of all whom He saves and to be Lord of their lives. Would it not be wonderful if all saved folk wanted to grow up, and go on making Jesus Lord of their lives with the same enthusiasm that boys and girls want to grow up? A little boy and girl have their sixth birthday, and even before the birthday cake is cut, should you ask them about their ages, the reply would be: "I am six going on seven." And those words, going on seven, would come out with emphasis. Oh, for Christians who will go on for Him making Him Lord of their lives. How about you?

Let me shoot a quiver full of interrogatory arrows into your heart. Has Jesus the supreme place in your desires? Do you esteem all things but loss in comparison with the excellency of Jesus Christ, your Lord? Is He to you as a city of refuge to the manslayer? Is He to you as a spring of water in a dry place? Is He to you as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land? Is He to you, having had experience with Him, a refuge and fortress, a very present help in time of trouble? Is everything in Jesus desirable in your eyes? Do you desire to obey His commandments? Do you desire to have His spirit? Are His holiness and government, His cross and sufferings desirable to you? Are you longing at all times for Him? Have your eyes been opened to see His "want and worth?" Is His righteousness the righteousness you desire? Do you want to do His will -- no matter what it may be? Are you willing for Him to dictate wholly your plans, actions, and speech? Is He really your Lord? Is He Lord of your body? Is He Lord of your mind? Is He Lord of your influence? Is He Lord of your abilities? Is He Lord of your talents? Is He Lord of your job? Is He Lord of your pocketbook? Is He Lord of all your activities? Is He Lord of your home? Is He Lord of your recreation? Is He Lord of your dating? Is He Lord your love, courtship, and marriage? Is He Lord of your dress? Is He Lord of your grooming? Oh, beloved, is He Lord in every area of your life? He purposes to be Lord in the lives of all those whom He saves!

I would that He were Lord in our lives to the extent that we could all say with the poet: Had I a thousand lives to live I'd live them all for Thee, Who once for me Thy life didst give, O Lamb of Calvary!

Bought with Thy Holy Precious Blood, I am no longer mine.

Then take my life, Blest Son of God As Thine and only Thine. Had I a thousand tasks to do, I'd do them all for thee, If strength these labors to pursue Were given unto me.

It matters not if these my hands Hold scepter, spade, or pen Lord Jesus to Thy blest commands I owe a glad 'Amen.' Had I a thousand griefs to bear, I'd bear them all for Thee, Rememb'ring well Thy anguished prayer In dark Gethsemane.

Thy grace makes sweet the Mara cup Each burden, pain, and loss Grows light when I in faith look up To Thy victorious Cross. Had I a thousand songs to sing, I'd sing them all for Thee - Redeemer, Saviour, Shepherd, King - To laud Thy majesty.

Though psalms of earth cannot compare With anthems angels raise, Still would my tongue Thy praise declare In love divinest lays. Had I a thousand gifts to bring, I'd bring them all to Thee Each one a love filled offering For all Thy love to me, While from the altar of my heart Prayers' incense would ascend, And fragrance to each gift impart, For Thee my dearest Friend. Had I a thousand

deaths to die, I'd die them all for Thee, If, dying, I could glorify The love that bled for me Thy hand my feeble bark will take O'er Jordan's rolling tide. When in Thy likeness I awake I shall be satisfied. Had I a thousand crowns to cast, Blest Saviour at Thy feet, When I have reached my home at last, My bliss would be complete!

Until I reach that shore divine, O My Belov'd a smile of Thine Is heav'n enough for me.

Oh, for this kind of consecration to our Lord Jesus! May we come with the humility of John the Baptist who could say that he was not worthy to loose or to unloose His shoes and that He must increase while he must decrease.

Let us yield, surrender, and dedicate our all to do His bidding, letting Him be Lord in every area of our lives.

And, sinner friend, would you behold Him! He is the Water, the Milk, the Bread, the Meat, the Honey, the Feast that your poor, dying, hungry, thirsty soul needs. The banquet is spread. Come, sinner, come!!!! Taste and see that the Lord is good! In Him is the fullness of righteousness. In Him is the fullness of holiness. In Him is the fullness of faithfulness. In Him is the fullness of Deity. In Him is the fullness of wrath. In Him is the fullness of justice. In Him is the fullness of power to put you in the lake of fire where you deserve to spend eternity. But praise God, there is also in Him the fullness of the love, the grace, the mercy, the pardon, the justification, the peace, the everlasting life which are all freely offered to you because of Calvary, because of the price He paid, because of His death, burial, and resurrection. Yes, in Him is the forgiveness of all of your sins. He invites you to come. He offers you life abundantly and eternally. He does not want you to perish, to go to Hell. The best of saints compared to Jesus are but as dewdrops scattered on the Head of the Bridegroom, lost in the glory of His hair! In the language of the Song of Solomon: "His mouth is most sweet; yea he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved and this is my friend...."

Come, sinner, come! Taste and see! He will be your Friend, your Beloved!

Repent as a sinner, and receive Him by simple faith! He will save you! Oh, let Him save you know! Jesus is God! Jesus is the only Saviour! Jesus is Lord!

Three Fundamental Needs of Our Local Churches

“THREE FUNDAMENTAL NEEDS OF OUR LOCAL CHURCHES”

*Dr. Crumpton is the long time pastor of West Side Baptist Church and is the founder of Maranatha Baptist Missions P. O. Drawer 1425 Natchez, Mississippi 39121 Sermon by: James W. Crumpton

“And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.” (Rev 3:1)

Surely the needs of our local churches have never been greater than they are today. From the days of the apostles in the New Testament record the churches have faced many problems, but how could we dare say that they were ever greater than those of the present? There are several different things that can and are being done about these needs. Some are ignoring them; even others are denying that they exist. But those who are playing the ostrich are really “kidding” themselves only. Again, there are those who are facing the needs and seeking by God’s grace and the leadership of the Holy Spirit to meet them in the way that, would best glorify our Lord Jesus.

It is the laziness, coldness, indifference, and lethargy’ of the average member of the local church that has and is resulting in the springing up of various “isms” “cisms”, and “spasms”. In Rom 1:18 we read, “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.” The last phrase of this quotation could be read—“who hold down the truth in unrighteousness”. What a picture that is of many present-day Christians. They are as orthodox as the apostle Paul but doing nothing about getting out the truth of the Word of God. They are sound in the faith; yea, but they are sound— asleep! God’s children are definitely responsible to give out the message of the gospel and as He said, “teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you . . . “. Today we have so many preachers trying to ride several horses going in various directions at the same time and bragging about how they overlook discussion of the nonessentials in order to reach all people in all religious groups. Pray tell me what Jesus taught that is non-essential! He said that we were to teach them ALL things whatsoever He had commanded. We are as obligated by ‘the words of this commission to teach the truth about the church’s organization, ordinances, and polity as we are to preach the gospel. The average church member knows more Hollywood (fallen) stars than heroes of the Word of God. They can tell you what some actress wears, eats, and how she takes a bath, but some of these same folk cannot talk intelligently about the experiences of Abraham, Moses, Elijah, or Jeremiah with the Lord. How many of you listeners have a reason from the Word of God to believe the doctrines that you claim to stand for as a church member? Is your belief merely a lot of second-handed, polly parrot stuff that has been handed down to you, or do you search the scriptures for the truth? Oh, that more might be burdened for our church to be one that teaches and practices the teachings of the New Testament without compromising with the sinful desires of men. In this message I want us to note three needs that the church faces which I believe are truly

fundamental. The first one is that of a converted church membership. The New Testament teaches it. In Acts 2:47 we read, "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." This contradicts the teaching of our Roman Catholic friends when they say that the church is a saving institution. Really, it is a body of regenerated people who have been immersed in baptism and are voluntarily banded together for the purposes of worshipping God, spreading the gospel to the ends of the earth, and of living, teaching, and practicing the complete message of the Saviour. Hence, we can scripturally say that an unsaved person should not be a church member. A lost person has no more business being a 'church member than a rattlesnake has in being in a baby nursery. But in the face of the New Testament, which teaches that we should have a converted church membership, what is the present condition? Thousands and thousands of lost church members are ample proof that the teachings of the Word have been ignored. . One preacher has said that our churches do not need new members half so badly as they need to have the old bunch worked over. It is an unregenerated church membership that led this preacher to speak thus. A missionary to Palestine under the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention returned to the states. visited and preached in many churches. anti then stated that he believed that the devil could tuck his horns behind his ears, walk down the aisle of the average Baptist Church, and, without objection, be received into the full fellowship of the church. Baptists, this ought to cause us to hang our heads in shame and confession of sin before God. And you people of the other denominators must admit that your situation is no better. There is not as much care taken in receiving folk into the church as there is in receiving them into the lodges, clubs, and societies of the world. How can we expect a church to be anything but dead when its members are composed of those whom the Bible speaks of as being dead in trespasses and sins. Too many church meetings today are merely herding lost people into the church instead of winning them to Christ.

Let me challenge you Christian friends to get a burden for a converted church membership. We are stewards for the Lord Jesus; how can we go on failing Him? We must take the responsibility of talking with those seeking church membership that we might have assurance that they have had an experience of salvation with Christ. They must also be instructed as to what God expects of a church member. A good friend of mine testifies that when he went forward during an invitation that he was given three words of instruction before the church received him. The pastor shook hands with him, giving the three words of instruction which were: "Have a seat!" Personally, I believe that every church should have a church membership committee. It is not to serve as a police force, as some falsely accuse. but as an instruction and welcoming committee. In observing one function for nearly ten years, I can testify that it works. The second need of our churches which is fundamental is that of consecrated church membership. Of course, consecration is a work that God does for us when we sanctify ourselves or. We do the sanctifying (setting apart), and God does the consecrating (baneful—the giving of hands to do for Him). Again, we turn to the New Testament to find the Word advocating the separation that is necessary for consecration to be effected. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you." (2Co 6:17). "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? . Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.", (Jas 4:4) Our churches sadly lack what the Word advocates here. The absence of prayer with its power, Bible study with its food, soul winning with its joy, and daily abiding in Him with its peace is conspicuous. There is more and more attention given to such

things as the theater, the dance, the night club, the cocktail party, the mixed bathing party, the bridge party, and the “our clique” party. Many attend Sunday School to eat and drink the doughnuts and coffee that will be served without thinking of the food and drink that the inner man needs. Others attend regularly in order to be able to play on the church’s athletic team. “They satisfy”, “Not a Cough in a Carload”, and “Easy on the throat” have convinced many church folk of the harmlessness (??) of the filthy, sinful habit. Oh for a separated, consecrated people that would be the New Testament kind of Christians who are all out for God.

Let us accept God’s challenge, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” (Rom 12:1) The story is told of a lady who asked her pastor to tell her how to go about becoming a consecrated Christian. His reply was that she should take a blank sheet of paper and sign it at the bottom. Then she was to ask God to fill it in; she had already signed whatever He would write. Think of the transforming revival that we would experience with a consecrated, converted church membership.

Finally, we look at a courageous church membership as the third fundamental need of our churches. We see it in the testimony of Peter and John when they were forbidden to speak any more in the Name of Jesus; listen to their answer in Acts 4:19-20 : “But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” Paul manifested that needed courage in preaching the true gospel of salvation by grace through faith plus nothing, and when attacked by the Judaizers, he, by the leadership of the Holy Spirit, uttered the words of Gal 1:8-9: “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

We live in a day when every truth of the Word is attacked. The virgin birth, inspired Bible, blood atonement, bodily resurrection, and second coming are denied by so many that even some Christians seem apologetic for believing these truths. I attended a Sunday School class sometime ago where a preacher was teaching the lesson on the resurrection, but he practically apologized for believing it before he was through. Oh, for courageous Christians who will go in the boldness of the Holy Spirit When we see the lack of courageous Christians, we say that there is no wonder that the world laughs at Christianity. This same lack of courage is seen in the matter of taking a stand against sin. The average church today has drunkards, gamblers, murderers, thieves, whoremongers, harlots, adulterers, adulteresses, and operators of various immoral and illegitimate places of business who are still in good standing with the church. Some times the church officers have a part in these gross sins; yet, the church officers and members in general lack the courage that is necessary to take a stand for Christ. Is there any wonder that the world often thinks of the church as a sissy, soft-soaping, compromising institution?

God help us to courageously stand for the truths of the Word of God, to condemn sin fearlessly, and do it all lovingly for the glory of our Lord Jesus. Every church should courageously carry on a New Testament church discipline program. It will work, else Jesus would not have commanded it. May we face these needs of a converted, consecrated, and courageous church membership and

seek His leadership in meeting them for His glory!

Unpardonable Sin

Unpardonable Sin, Blasphemy of the Holy Ghost, the Sin Unto Death By James Crumpton

See Mat 12:22-32 and 1Jn 5:10-17. The blasphemy of the Holy Ghost is usually called “The unpardonable sin.” However, that is not the name which Jesus gave it. He called it “The blasphemy of (against) the Holy Ghost” (Mat 12:31). It is true that he made it emphatically clear that this sin is unpardonable. But let us use the name which He gave it. It will be clear later in the message as to why I am making this request. In discussing what the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost is, let us look at it first from the negative viewpoint.

WHAT THE BLASPHEMY OF THE HOLY GHOST IS NOT! In the first place, let me say that IT IS NOT PROFANITY. Cursing is a terrible sin and should not be in the vocabulary of God’s children. This is true of “profanity in long” and/or “profanity in short.” Some will not use the first, but they do use the second. For example, many folk will not say, “Damn,” but they will say, “Darn.” And “Darn” is short for “Damn.” They will not say “God!” in exclamation but they will say “Gosh” or “Golly.” And these are short for “God.” They will not say “Jesus Christ!” but they will say, “Gee Whizz!” And Webster’s International Dictionary tells us that “Gee Whizz!” is used for Jesus Christ in minced oaths. They will not say, “Hell!” but they will say “Heck!” And that is short for “Hell!” They will not say “Holy Spirit!” or “Holy Ghost!” but they will say, “Holy Smokes!” And that is short for “Holy Spirit!” or “Holy Ghost!” I repeat we should not use “profanity in long” or “profanity in short.” However, as bad as profanity (cursing) is, it is not synonymous with the sin of the “blasphemy of the Holy Ghost.” We may also use His Name in vain in our singing and praying by using His Name without it being sincerely from our hearts. The sin of profanity (cursing, using His Name in vain) is indeed a terrible, abominable sin. Nevertheless, it is not the sin of the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost.

Then we note that the blasphemy of (against) the Holy Ghost IS NOT SUICIDE. Indeed Suicide is a gross sin. Some would say that if you commit suicide you could not go to Heaven. But, really, this is not true. If one is a Christian and commits suicide, that one will go to Heaven, If one is a lost sinner and commits suicide that one will go to Hell. The Christian who commits suicide does not go to Heaven because of the suicide but because that one is saved. The sinner who commits suicide does not go to Hell because of the suicide but because that one has never been born again. Folk go to Heaven because they are born again, washed in the blood of Christ. Folk go to Hell because they are not born again, not washed in the blood of Christ. Some would say that they cannot understand how a saved person could commit suicide, and it is indeed difficult to understand. Something would have to “snap” in the mind of a Christian for that one to be able to commit suicide. However we cannot say that a Christian cannot commit suicide. Really, it is difficult to see how a Christian could commit a large number of the gross sins. But, God help us, they evidently do! However the sin of committing suicide is not synonymous of the blasphemy of (against) the Holy Ghost.

There are those who teach that REJECTING CHRIST is the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost. For one to go through life rejecting Christ is to positively go to Hell, forever. And no one who ever committed the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost had not rejected Christ first. One who has trusted Christ as personal Savior cannot commit the Blasphemy of the Holy Ghost. If it were possible, how could one who has rejected Christ for 70, 80 or 90 years ever be saved? And, praise God some of them do get saved! Amen and Amen!!!! Those who say that rejecting Christ is synonymous with the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost qualify their statement by saying that rejecting Him over a long period of time is the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost. They are very vague as to how long the time is before the rejection of Christ actually becomes the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost. Rejection of Jesus Christ is a terrible, terrible sin, and if one goes through this life rejecting Him, that one will definitely, dogmatically, and positively go to Hell. But, I am convicted that it is unscriptural to say that rejecting Christ is synonymous with the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost.

There are also those who say REFUSING TO JOIN THE LOCAL CHURCH is the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost. I do believe that it is sin for one who has been saved to refuse to be baptized and become a member of one of his local churches. To be baptized and “added to them” (one of His local churches) are the first things our Lord commands us to do as His children. Not to obey Him is sin! Personally, I question the salvation of one who professes to be saved and then refuses to be baptized and become affiliated with one of the Lord’s local churches But I do not find in the Bible that the sin of refusing baptism and church membership is synonymous with the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost.

Again, there are those who teach that LOSING ONE’S EMOTIONAL FEELINGS, as that one hears the Gospel over and over, is evidence that such a person is guilty of the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost. There are those who say that when I heard the Gospel the first few times, I was so convicted that I needed to be saved and was so stirred by my emotional feelings that I had to hold to the church pew to keep from going forward to be saved. Then that same person says that now that I have heard the Gospel over and over, I have lost that deep conviction and those emotional feelings that would compel me to be saved. Certainly, such a one admits that the knowledge that salvation is needed is still there, but the being stirred and moved have practically dwindled away. Some preachers would tell such a person that this is evidence that such a one has committed the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost. Oh, I would be the first to say that such a one is in a very dangerous condition. That one has become callused in heart to the Gospel and may slide on into Hell without much disturbance of heart. When I am preaching, I urge such a one to ask me to stop preaching and let them come and be saved immediately. Dear reader, if this condition describes you, I beg you to stop reading immediately, fall on your face and call upon the Lord Jesus Christ to save you.” “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Rom 10:13).” That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom 10:9-10). You see, dear friend, your sins (like the sins of every one of us) are as mountainous as the Alps, as black as the darkest night, and as numberless as the stars. Yet our Lord Jesus suffered all Hell for your sins and offers you imputed righteousness provided through His death, burial and resurrection, if you come to him confessing yourself a sinner, repenting that you have sinned against Him, and trusting Him personally to wash your sins away in His blood. God, help you do it right now!!!! To

return to our subject, I must say, though, that as dangerous as such a condition is, it is not synonymous with the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost.

Let us turn to the positive side.

WHAT IS THE BLASPHEMY OF THE HOLY GHOST?

What did these people do Mat 12:1-50? One who was "...possessed with a devil, blind and dumb (was brought to Jesus) and He healed him insomuch that the blind and the dumb both spake and saw" (Mat 12:22). So Jesus freed one who was possessed by the power the Holy Spirit. Jesus did all of His work and His miracles through the power of the Holy Spirit. When this was done, the people began to say," ...Is not this the son of David" (Mat 12:23)?" What did such a question mean? It meant that they were, because of the miracle, believing that Jesus was the Messiah!!!! This greatly disturbed the Pharisees. They had seen and heard enough of our Lord's teachings and miracles to be convinced also that he was indeed the Messiah. But they had adamantly rejected Him and were determined not to acknowledge Him as the Messiah. They were frightened by this suggestion of the multitude of people; so they blatantly and blasphemously declared, "...This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils" (Mat 12:24). It is simple enough to see what they did in committing the blasphemy of (against) the Holy Spirit. THEY ATTRIBUTED THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE MINISTRY OF OUR LORD TO THE DEVIL. THAT IS THE BLASPHEMY OF (AGAINST) THE HOLY GHOST!!!!

Having identified the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost, we come immediately to the question, "CAN THIS SIN BE COMMITTED TODAY?" There are teachers and preachers who answer, "Yes!" And some will give illustrations of those who have committed it. I do not believe that it can be committed today. There are several reasons for this conclusion. In the first place, there is no record of it being committed any time after this in the New Testament. In fact, this is the only place in the Bible where we have a record of its being committed. Evidently, the Apostles, after the Savior went back to Heaven, met and dealt with the committing of all other sins, but there is no record of them dealing with any who had committed this. Again we do not have an analogy of it. It is true that if God's servant stands, preaches, and does His bidding in the power of the Holy Spirit, and someone says that it is of the Devil, we have similar situation. But really, that is not an analogy because they attribute the work of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ (not some mere preacher's) to the Devil. DOES Mat 12:32 REFER TO PURGATORY? Roman Catholic theologians have attempted to use Mat 12:32 to support the doctrine of purgatory, but this is impossible. According to Catholic dogma, purgatory is a place where the souls of believers are purged from any sin remaining from their earthly lives so that they are prepared to enter Heaven. Purgatory is not a place of eternal torment, but a place of temporal torment. The judgment described by Christ in Mat 12:32, though, is permanent. He is describing a punishment which will never end and which can never be rescinded. That some Catholic theologians have attempted to find biblical support for purgatory in this passage illustrates the utterly unscriptural nature of that doctrine. There is absolutely no biblical support for the Catholic dogma of purgatory.

We Need to Establish Local, Indigenous NT Churches

WE NEED TO ESTABLISH LOCAL, INDIGENOUS, NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES By Pastor James W. Crumpton

There are more missionaries giving out the Gospel in more countries today than at any time since our Commander and Chief, the Lord Jesus Christ, gave His fourfold order! But many are not going about this eternal, important business the New Testament way.

Some go, preach the Gospel, see souls saved, baptize them, and move on to other areas. One missionary told me that over a period of years he covered one whole continent, won 5,000 to Christ, and baptized them. I asked him if he trained the new converts and organized local churches. He said that he did not; he just considered it his business to lead them to Christ and baptize them. Yet, our Lord told us to lead them to be saved, baptize them, and teach them all things which He commanded us. And I do not read anything about some being sent to only do part of the Commission. It is good to get souls saved. Amen and amen! But how about the responsibility of making disciples and organizing local, indigenous, New Testament churches?

Others do mission work from the standpoint of social betterment. They do more Americanizing than evangelizing. Usually they establish compounds, schools, hospitals, agricultural projects, and maybe after ten or fifteen years, a local church which is pastored by the missionary himself. They so often distrust the nationals, counting them too ignorant to lead in local churches. And there are variations of these methods and even other methods that still others use. Let us consider the New Testament way. The first thing that comes to our attention is --

PREACHING

They went everywhere preaching. Take Paul for example. He preached in the homes, on the streets, by the river, in the jails, in the synagogues, on the ship, in the courtrooms, in the school of Tyrannus, and anywhere else where he was afforded opportunity.

These preachers of the New Testament preached that men are sinners, lost, and Hell-deserving. They told of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection, providing forgiveness of sins to those who repent and trust Him as personal Saviour. "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 20:21). When the Gospel was preached, souls were saved. Then they baptized them (immersed them in water in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit). "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." (Acts 2:41). "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his straightway." (Acts 16:33).

After preaching, leading people to Christ, and baptizing them, they then went about -- MAKING DISCIPLES When we get folk saved, there remains much to be done. A great weakness is seen in churches in that they lead folk to Christ but do not make disciples. One of the real reasons that

missionaries do not establish local, indigenous New Testament churches on the mission fields is that they lead folk to Christ but do not make disciples. In the New Testament, they made disciples. "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42).

"But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples." (Mark 4:34).

Making disciples is what Jesus meant by saying, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." (Mat 28:20). The next thing that they did was that of -- ESTABLISHING CHURCHES Too many missionaries have mistakenly called "preaching stations" churches.

It sounds good, seems like real success, and encourages the supporting churches. But a New Testament church is a lot more than merely a "preaching station."

New Testament churches were self-supporting. They did not depend on foreign money, brought by the missionaries, to meet the expenses of their work.

These churches were also self-governing. The missionaries believed that the Holy Spirit could teach and lead nationals who had been saved. National men became pastors, deacons, missionaries, etc. It is also important to note that the New Testament churches, established by missionaries in those days, were self-propagating. They, the saved people, went about leading others to Christ and establishing other churches in the area and neighboring regions. The missionaries trained the converts in responsibility, not in dependence upon themselves.

Paul was not busy establishing clinics for Dr. Luke, or colleges and seminaries, but New Testament churches. It is good to have clinics and schools, but the churches should come first. And these other projects should be ministries of the local churches and not independent projects of the missionaries.

Some missionaries act as if they were going to set up a corporation for some big oil company or a factory for some shoe firm. They arrive at the place of their calling, have a meal, sleep a few hours, and write a hurried prayer letter for churches to send money to buy some land and build a building. They miss the fact that in New Testament, missions employed such a simple --

METHOD

I do not read anything in the New Testament about Paul writing back to Antioch asking the people to make a sacrificial offering to help him build the dear people at Thessalonica or Philippi a church house. Do you? He looked for sinners, led them to Christ, disciplined them, and organized churches (who often met in homes). "And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house." (Phm 1:2). "The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house." (1Co 16:19). In fact, in all of his missionary journeys and in all of the mission work that he did, Paul never once mentioned church houses, much less solicited funds with which to build them. Today, prayer letters often go out from missionaries soliciting funds to build church houses. And some Missions circularize the churches all over the United States and elsewhere seeking to raise millions of dollars to build church houses at home and abroad.

Why is it done so differently than the method of the New Testament? The New Testament method was so simple, yet, so effective... Paul did not write to get support for Timothy, his son in the ministry, either from Jerusalem or Antioch. And we still have a lot of God's servants today who work long, hard hours to prepare for the ministry to which God has called them. You cannot stop a man, if he is called of God! And this method should be the same in Brazil, Korea, Japan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal, etc.

Let us move on in our thinking to the most important element in New Testament missions. Here I refer to the --

POWER

All that I have said about New Testament missions is vain and helpless apart from the power of the Precious Holy Spirit. A missionary may go, use the simple New Testament method, and do everything just like clockwork, and be a complete failure, if he does all of this apart from the power of the Precious Holy Spirit! In the early churches, they preached, won folk to Christ, baptized them, disciplined them, organized churches, and in such simplicity; yet, it was all through the power of the Holy Spirit. It was not through some cheap or carnal man-made methods. The Holy Spirit moved in the missionary, in his hearers, convicted, converted, and taught as He, the Person, used the instrument, the Word of God, as it was preached and taught.

Oh, blessed Lord, help us to do missions the New Testament way.

"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." Acts 10:44

"So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus." Acts 13:4

"And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." 1Co 2:3-5

When Did Our Lord Establish His Church?

WHEN DID OUR LORD ESTABLISH HIS CHURCH?

Pastor James W. Crumpton The first New Testament church was established during our Lord's ministry. Some deny this and try to justify their position by saying that our Lord said in His ministry: "I will build my church..." (Mat 16:18). They then conclude that He began His first local church at Pentecost, Jesus did say, "I will build my church," that is: "I will be building, will go on building my church." He had already started and willed to go on, and praise His Name, He is still going on building His Church.

We see this truth clearly brought out in Mat 18:15-19. Jesus here tells His disciples that if a brother trespasses against one of them that he should go to that brother and seek reconciliation. If this fails, he is to take it to the church, would not the disciples have asked about when one would be established? We certainly would have asked, and I believe that the disciples were as curious as we are. Jesus spoke of the church as already in existence and not once did He ever mention that His church would begin at Pentecost.

So, the church, and the first local church began in our Lord's ministry. The church age began with our Lord Jesus Christ! He took the disciples of John the Baptist and started a New Testament church. At Pentecost, those who had been born again and were a part of the church were for the first time baptized into one body. At Pentecost, they were also filled with the Holy Spirit, anointed by the Holy Spirit and given miraculous power to speak unlearned languages. they were already being permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit. This had been true since their meeting with Jesus, not long before His ascension, as recorded in John 20:1-31, where we read: "And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them: and whose so ever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John 20:22-23). Our Lord did many wonderful things for those who were a part of the church at Pentecost. But the church and the first local church began in our Lord's ministry, not as Pentecost. If the church began at Pentecost, where is there any record of Jesus putting apostles in the church, giving the ordinances (baptism and the Lord's supper) to the church, and/or commissioning the church. If the church began at Pentecost, when did the apostles receive Christian Baptism? The ordinances belong to the local church not to individual believers, that is, unless the church did not begin until Pentecost. If she began then, this would be good interdenominationalism and/or /Protestantism.

Jesus called his apostles and gave them to the church in Luk 6:12-16, "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles: Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor." It is true that there is no record that our Lord ever said, "this is the beginning of My Church!" this is for the

reasons best known to him. Had He done so, men might still be worshipping that place. We do know that He established His Church in His ministry. He taught His first local church, indoctrinated her, gave her the ordinances, and discipline during His ministry.

("When did our Lord establish His Church?," MARANATHA !!!! October 1985, page 6)

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