



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Issue 24

Three Groups in Church History: To Which Do We Belong?

by – Gene Edwards, *Our Mission* (pp. 3-13, edited and abridged)

Flip through a Church history book, and you are struck by one thing: from 325 A.D. to about 1500 A.D. all you read about is Roman Catholicism. Beginning about 1500 A.D. there is a second stream, Protestantism. But is that all there is to Church history? Is there no more? Are we so bad off that the entire history of the Christian faith has nothing to speak of but Roman Catholicism and Protestantism? (I don't need to tell you that Protestantism today does not look much like the church did during the first century.)

There is a third line, a third group of people. Go back and pick up that Church history book again, and this time read the footnotes. There it is you will find the third line. It is made up of Christians who stood outside organized religion.

Who are they? What is their story?

Look at them carefully because they foretell ... our mission! (When you learn about them, you begin to see our place in history, our reason for existing ...)

Theirs is the most beautiful saga in Church history – the hidden Christians of the ages! Their story is the rich, compelling story ... unparalleled in the annals of mankind.

Don't look for one group, or an unbroken line. Don't look for the mythical "Apostolic succe-

sion." You will not find it. They have existed in every century since 325 A.D., but in every century their story is a little different ...

And what was God doing with each of these peoples? Simply this: He was keeping His testimony alive. A testimony of the centrality of Christ in the universe -- His preeminence ... This was their mission ...

This third stream of Church history has always been small. In fact some centuries they numbered only a handful. But mark this: their contribution has always been overwhelming. Their light has always been great. Often, if not always, they had more light than the other two lines combined. Some of the purest truth and some of the clearest and deepest insight into Christ are found among these people. So it has been, from 325 right up to this hour. And now we come to this present hour. As a people, in which of these groups do we fit? We could stand with the Roman Catholics, or we could go join the Protestants.

Actually, we don't belong with either. We belong in the line of those outside. We belong in the footnotes. We belong among those who have stood for the centrality and the supremacy of Christ ... in their lives, in their gatherings ... We take our place abreast of those who were determined to know nothing but Christ; to march

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Dear Readers:

BSN ARTICLES

Let me share with you a broader desire that we have for the future of the *Bible Student's Notebook*TM (BSN).

Our monthly, subscription based BSN has been going quite well. And can we keep it up? I am sure that is the question on the minds of many. Well, there are many faithful saints working together with us to assure that the BSN goes out as planned. And as for articles? Actually, we have enough written material on hand for *years* of BSN issues. And more materials are continually being prepared.

But we are truly interested in a more *mutual ministry* based BSN. Plainly stated: we would like to share the materials of our readers, such as yourself, through the BSN.

We know that there are many valuable materials being produced within the Body of Christ that would be helpful in the hands of other saints, especially teachers. We want to attempt to keep the ministry of the BSN balanced. And what better way to do that than through mutual ministry? The *"effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love"* (Ephesians 4:16).

Would you be willing to help us in this endeavor? We invite you to send us your own Bible study outlines, lessons and articles as well as the materials of others that have been a help to you personally. I am sure that many of you have such materials in your possession, and this information would be extremely valuable to others. Wouldn't you agree?

To demonstrate our serious commitment to this type of *mutual ministry*, to encourage you to send us your materials, and to extend partnership to you in the efforts of the BSN, we will increase your BSN subscription by THREE issues for each article, outline, lesson, etc. submitted by you that is used in the BSN.

Why not gather some of your materials together today? And then remember to put us on your "mailing list" and send us materials on a regular

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Bible Student's Notebook

This biweekly publication (24 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from the law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12)
- the distinct ministry of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15)
- the recovery of *rich* Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with ...
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6)
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4)

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "Movement," "Organization," "Mission," or separate body of believers, but is sent forth to and for all "saints."

SUBSCRIPTION

U.S.: 6 months (12 issues) - \$24⁰⁰; 1 year (24 issues) - \$42⁰⁰;
2 years (48 issues) - \$72⁰⁰; 3 years (48 issues) - \$96⁰⁰;
Foreign: 1 year (24 issues) - \$60⁰⁰;

PATRIARCHS

Remember that it is our responsibility as husbands and fathers to take the truths we learn from God's Word, the truths that we hold dear, and impart them to our families.

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with those little bands who were seeking a full experience of the body of Christ ... the experience of the church!

Turn around and look back! Yes, by all means look back. Be a student of Church history. Look at those little groups who came before us. Drink deep of their experience. Learn what they went through. Read their messages. Read their history. Find out what they learned. We need to know all they learned. We will never get anywhere unless we know ahead of time what they have already discovered! We are not to begin at zero. We must begin, rather, where they left off ...

Today we step into this unnumbered throng and take our place. As we do we look back, and unashamedly we draw from the wisdom, the experience, the mistakes of those who have come before us.

Imagine with me a great mountain. The summit of that mountain is important. That summit has already been reached. Once [by Paul]. Since that time others have assaulted that summit ... And now! Now you are one of those who have been called to assault its heights. As you stand in the foothills and look up, you must realize that you don't really start here. Others before you have made it possible to go directly to some high outpost ... a place where other men in the recent past came. There they pioneered. Now they have laid down their climbing gear; the camp is still. The angels wait for another group of men to take up the task. You can go directly to that campsite. It shan't take long, if you know the way! If you know what has been done before. Others have pioneered a way up that mountain for you ... And at a bloody price ...

Now as you begin to move up the steep slopes you notice a series of banners along the way. These banners were thrust in the earth long ago by those groups who came before you. Look up the side of the mountain. Can you see a banner waving high up there – far, far above all the rest? Someone has already reached a far

point. 'Tis the last outpost! In fact that point was reached not so long ago. In this century! Look into the soil. You can still see the footprints of those who came before you. Along the way you may come to think you have reached a place where no man could have reached before. Be careful. You will come to places that seem impossible to forge. But look! See, incredibly, there in the distance another banner waving high and proud! After a while, you will begin to deeply appreciate what God has already done; the enormity of the suffering, the sacrifice; the experience that has already been poured out by men seeking the heights. Eventually a sense of humility will overtake you. You will even sit down sometimes and question, question seriously, if any group of people (especially those of us who have grown up in this modern society) can ever match the devotion of those saints who came before us. Can any people in this modern age press the banner higher? As you see the places they have scaled, you wonder if we have the mettle to go beyond where they left off. In fact, I must confess, that question has yet to be fully answered! Let us hope the verdict is, "Yes!" If that is the answer, then this age is going to need a new breed of men. The folks who came before us gave up so much; they loved Him so much, with such an abandonment; the thought that we might catch their devotion is breathtaking!

Press on up the hill. See! The distance between the banners became shorter and shorter, the slopes steeper and steeper. Even though there is not much distance between the banners, yet there was as much grace (and devotion) needed to forge those short distances as there was for the long ones.

At last you come to a banner waving so high. It is in a place so remote, a place so spectacularly difficult to reach, you can hardly believe any man ever came this far! You know, instinctively you know, "this is where our mission begins." ... Now turn around and look back. And now turn around again and look up. Where is the summit? Is it near or is it far away? ...

And now that brings you face to face with a question. Do you dare assault the mountain?

Be certain of this – the men who came before you suffered. If you seize that tattered, blood-stained banner you will suffer!

Yes, these dear pioneers have always been praised for being the greatest Christians of their century ... but remember that praise came several hundred years after they were dead and buried. When they lived, they were hated. They were despised. They were called terrible things. That happens to hurt. Deeply. Those dear saints bore unbelievable abuse. Until that hate has piled upon you, individually, personally, you can't really imagine how awful it is. Oh, your grandchildren may stand one day at your grave and say, "If we had lived then we would have honored, not persecuted, these holy people." But that is pretty scarce encouragement when you have been dead for a hundred years. Remember that!

But there is more than just suffering. In fact, that is the romantic side. There was success, and with that fact I'd like to change the subject a little.

Search the records. Call the roll. Look at the names. Priscillians. Brethren. The Waldensians. The Moravians ... All these – and others – were at one time the center of God's work on the earth. They were His work. They were the vanguards of restoration. They were the standard of their age ... But read the story as they seized the banner. They moved up the slope. One day they, too, came to a place that they knew was new territory. (That's an exciting moment!) ...

Now comes the sad part. The darker side of this wonderful saga. Let's look at it. When this "new territory" is reached by a group of people, without exception, someone among them cries out, "We are it! Look at us, we are it! We are God's work upon the earth today! We have seen, we have experienced, what no one else

in our age has seen. We know a fuller restoring of God's mystery than any other people who have come before us ... We are it ..."

Well, saints, when you hear this, you know this isn't a proper attitude, and you know that you must not make this mistake. But don't be too critical of them, either. And don't kid yourself. We are a small group of people but we have all had these exact same feelings right here among us. Furthermore, we are keenly aware it is almost impossible to keep from having these feelings. In other words, we know what we are up against. The temptation is overwhelming ... The chances are that we, too, are going to fall into this same pit. In fact it is virtually assured that we will.

So we have three huge questions before us as we stand at the foothills. First, in the light of such great suffering, do we dare press the battle for the summit? Second, do you realize the great unlikelihood of reaching the summit? Third, do you realize the great pitfalls we might fall into ... for all those in the past have made terrible blunders!

For instance, we have already experienced how difficult it is not to feel special in the eyes of God. The truth is this: when you do break out into some new heights, and know you're in new territory, it is very hard not to feel special ...

I do publicly confess that there is an excellent chance we are going to fall into this same trap. The temptation is well nigh irresistible. As far as I know, everyone who has traveled this way before – for at least a millennium – has fallen into this pit. Frankly, we don't know a cure for this disease. But there is one thing we can do! Today! Here! At this retreat! We can look this awful temptation straight in the face. We have recognized the danger. We have stated it, out loud. We have brought this ugly villain out into the light and made him stand here. We have calculated the danger. We have warned ourselves.

Now the decision. Do we take the banner in

hand? And if so what is our mission? ... That brings us to the next point. Look at our choices. They are two. First, stay home. Second, go ... and fall in the trap. If we go on we are almost certain to fall into some kind of pit! So maybe it's not worth the effort! We will stay home! (Let's not venture out if we are going to spend our whole life in fear that we will fall into some trap.)

... [T]here just may be a third possibility. We could look the danger straight in the eye, consecrate ourselves in a spirit of humility, in a spirit of teachability, and a spirit of receptiveness...and we can ask the Lord to keep us ...

Yes, we can venture out, but it is dangerous. If we do, then from this day forward, we must seek to be without spiritual pride, pretension, sectarianism or boastfulness ...

So, should we venture out, will we plant this banner on yonder summit? Who knows! The fact is we may not get past the very first banner! But this is also a fact: it is our heart to take that banner and place it on the highest summit. We don't know if we will, and we will not boast. Nonetheless we have a hope: if we fail the summit, we ask a grace-filled Lord to at least give us the privilege of taking that last banner beyond its present point. That is reward enough!

Every once in awhile someone says, "Why, you folks are going to end up just like all the other groups. You're going to end up as a denomination; another sect. Everyone else in church history has failed before you. And you will fail, too. Why do you want to go and add one more tragedy to the mess? The present chaos is bad enough." We agree. Everything in that statement is true. But please, my friend, behold our choices: Stay home or dare!

If we stay home then we will simply hope that in some ethereal way we can fellowship with the whole body of Christ. We can be a glob. We will sit in the ectoplasm; a gooey, non-world, for the rest of our lives.

Or we can dare! Dare the dangers, chance the failure. The way is fraught with destruction. We run the risk of failing where everybody else has failed before us, where everybody else has missed the mark. Dear brother, when faced with those two alternatives, and having no other choices before us, our way is clear: WE WILL DARE!!!

Under no circumstances are we going to sit home. An ethereal, universal glob we will not be! We, today, will dare. We're going to look back at our heritage; we're going to look up to what is not! We are going to take the wisdom, the experience, the conquest, the victories, and the defeats, of those who have gone before us ... We will not sit alone in our living rooms and wave at one another across the street. We will dare do what men have paid with their lives to do in ancient ages. We will gather. We will meet ... And we shall be a people! With a view as wide as the horizon, and as high as the summit ... Saints, we have no choice.

Take a sober, yes even a grim look at the problems we face. Having done that, we must now order our lives so as to avoid the many dangers that are before us. But such a noble gesture is a guarantee of absolutely nothing. We have no guarantees. I would like to repeat that. We will probably fail. If we fail, we fail. But this one thing we will never do: we will not sit home. We will be. We will dare.

Beside you is the banner. Before you ... is the summit. ■



The Promise: God's Plan (The Divine Doctrine of Preservation)

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE BIBLE

Part V

Text: II Timothy 3:15-16

I. Preservation Defined

A. Webster's Dictionary (1828)

"To keep or save from injury or destruction; ... to save from decay; to keep in a sound state; ... to keep or defend from corruption."

B. Oxford American Dictionary (1980)

"To keep safe, to keep in an unchanged condition; to keep from decay, to treat so that it can be kept for future use."

II. Preservation Declared

- A. Psalm 111:7, 8
- B. Psalm 119:89
- C. Psalm 119:152
- D. Psalm 119:160
- E. Isaiah 40:8
- F. Matthew 5:18
- G. Matthew 24:35
- H. Luke 16:17
- I. John 10:35
- J. I Peter 1:23, 25
- K. Psalm 33:11 (Where is His counsel? Psalm 107:11)
- L. Psalm 100:5 (What is Truth? John 17:17; II Corinthians 6:7; Ephesians 1:13; II Timothy 2:15)

III. Preservation Detailed

The Definitive Declaration of Preservation:
Psalm 12:6-7

A. The Action – Preservation

B. The Agent – God; It Is Divinely Achieved.
God would leave this to none but Himself (it's *His* book)!

C. The Extent - The Very words

D. The Site – Generation; Earth

IV. Preservation: Its Related Grounds

A. The Nature of God

1. God Cannot Lie

(Numbers 23:19; Titus 1:2; Romans 3:4; Hebrews 6:18).

2. God is Sovereignly Omnipotent and Omniscient (Isaiah 46:9-11; Acts 15:18).

3. God Does Eternal Work

(Ecclesiastes 3:14)

B. The Nature of the Bible

1. It is the Word of God

The Bible abides because of the fact that NO word that God has spoken can ever be removed or shaken.

2. Magnified

(Psalm 138:2)

God has “staked” all on His book.
He has placed Who He is “on the
line.”

3. Alive

(John 6:63)

4. It is Inseparable from God

(John 1:1; Galatians 3:8; Romans
9:17; Hebrews 4:12-13)

The Bible could no more be “lost”
than God could. It’s as sure and
constant as He.

C. The Nature of Man’s Need

1. In Relationship to Life

(Matthew 4:4)

God wrote His Word for man. What
good is it if it is unavailable?

2. In Relationship to Faith

(Romans 10:17)

The quality of faith can be no greater
than the quality of its source.

3. In Relationship to The Judgement

(John 12:48; Romans 2:16) ■

A Selection of *The Last Words of the Dying*

MARTIN OF TOURS (Roman Catholic Prelate &
Patron Saint of France)

“What doest thou here, thou cruel beast?”

(*Last Words of Saints and Sinners* by Herbert
Lockyer p. 71)

MEYER, F.B. (Preacher and author)

“Read me something from the Bible, something
brave and triumphant.”

(*Last Words of Saints and Sinners* by Herbert
Lockyer p. 73)

MIRABEAU, GABRIEL (1749-1791, French statesman)

“Give me more laudanum [opium sedative], that
I may not think of eternity and of what is to come.
I have an age of strength, but not a moment of
courage.”

(*Last Words of Saints and Sinners* by Herbert
Lockyer p.90)

McKINLEY, WILLIAM

“Nearer, my God to Thee, Nearer to Thee. It is
the Lord’s way. Good-bye all!”

MARGARET OF SCOTLAND (1445; wife of
Louis XI)

“Shame on life.”

(*Last Words of Saints and Sinners* by Herbert
Lockyer p.84)

MAZARIN, JULES (1602-1661; French statesman)

“O! my poor soul! what will become of thee?
Whither wilt thou go? Oh, were I permitted to live
again, I would sooner be the humblest wretch in
the ranks of mendicants than a courtier.”

(*Last Words of Saints and Sinners* by Herbert
Lockyer p.90)

■

Paul's Apostleship

By – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Paul's apostleship is a ...

I. GENUINE APOSTLESHIP

A. A DIVINE APOSTLESHIP

“Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;)” (Galatians 1:1)

B. A HEAVENLY APOSTLESHIP

“And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light FROM HEAVEN: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.” (Acts 9:3-5)

“At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light FROM HEAVEN, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I

have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee ... Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the HEAVENLY vision” (Acts 26:13-17, 19)

Paul was the spokesman for the RISEN, EXALTED CHRIST – (I Corinthians 14:37; I Timothy 6:3).

II. GENTILE APOSTLESHIP

A. A DISTINCT APOSTLESHIP

Paul's apostleship was distinct from that of “the twelve” (Romans 11:13; 15:15, 16; Galatians 2:8). Twelve apostles for the twelve tribes; one apostle for the one body.

B. A GLOBAL APOSTLESHIP

“And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 3:9

III. GRACE APOSTLESHIP

A. A NEW MESSAGE

Paul did not preach what “the twelve” taught – he preached the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24; c.f. Galatians 1:11, 12; 2:2, 6-9). This message was kept secret since the world began (Romans 16:25).

B. A NEW DISPENSATION

A revelation of a whole new program – the unreserved dispensing of grace (Ephesians 3; Colossians 1:25).

C. A NEW COMMISSION

Even the way in which the new message was ministered was different (I Corinthians 1:17; II Corinthians 5:18-21).

D. A NEW PEOPLE

The formation of the Body of Christ, a heavenly creature (II Corinthians 5:16-17; I Corinthians 12:13, 27; Philippians 3:14, 20; Ephesians 1:3; Colossians 3:1, 2).

That makes it a serious matter (c.f. John 13:20)!

Paul’s message is final and complete (Galatians 1:8, 9; Colossians 1:25). It is the standard of divine judgement (Romans 2:16).

B. Its Historical Importance

To disregard the importance of Paul’s apostleship is to bring about disaster. Those in the “Asia” of biblical times *turned* away from Paul (II Timothy 1:15) and were themselves *turned* unto fables (c.f. II Timothy 4:4). Even after over nineteen centuries the people occupying this area are in spiritual darkness.

C. Its Present Importance

The answer to the current ills and “isms” of the church are to be found in Pauline truth. Paul says to us, “be ye followers of me” (I Corinthians 11:1).

Paul’s heavenly message, ministry and method has become the pattern (I Timothy 1:15-16.)

IV. GRAVE APOSTLESHIP

The serious nature of Paul’s Apostleship.

A. Its Biblical Importance

The importance of the apostleship of Paul cannot be overstressed; it was the Lord Jesus Christ that sent him.

Conclusion:

“The only hope of Christianity is in the rehabilitating of Pauline theology. It is back, back, back, to an incarnate Christ and the atoning blood, or it is on, on, on to atheism and despair.” – The late Francis L. Patton, president of Princeton University. ■

The Power in You

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.
Text: Ephesians 3:16-20

Sometimes people misunderstand God's present purpose in the dispensation of grace. They think that God is far removed from the 'day to day' activities of this planet and that He is not operating on earth today. And yet, nothing could be further from the truth.

Even though today God is no longer performing outward, supernatural, 'visible' miracles, His power is nonetheless very definitely at work. It is just that He has chosen to manifest His great power in a different way. He has chosen to do so through the life of His saints. This is the ministry of the Holy Spirit, using the written Word, in the inner man. This is a *most* exciting and overwhelming truth!

I. The Available Power

"... To be strengthened ..." (vs. 16)

It is God's will that the believer be strong (Ephesians 6:10).

II. The Awesome Means

"... with might ..." (vs. 16)

This word is also translated (Strong's #1411) as 'miracle' and 'miracles'. We're talking about the power of God (Colossians 1:11).

III. The Amazing Place

"... in the inner man" (vs. 16)

Not the outward man, where we often place the focus of our attention. Saints, more

often than not, have a real preoccupation with sight. There is a real battle of "truth or circumstances."

When believers learn the secret of this available inner strength they can face tremendous difficulties and work under severe handicaps (Philippians 4:13). The issue is back to faith. Thus, back to the Word (there *are* conflicting informational sources!).

The goal is that the life of Christ can be manifest in our flesh (II Corinthians 4:6-18). Now *that's* power!

IV. The Activating Agent

"... by His Spirit ..."

How does the Spirit accomplish this? Through His Word! (Philippians 2:13; I Thessalonians 2:13)

V. The Astonishing Measure

"... according to the power that worketh in us ..." (vs. 20)

c.f. Ephesians 1:19, 20; Colossians 1:11 (note the results); Romans 1:4, 16, 20.

The introduction of this power to the life of an individual is in Christ's cross work (I Corinthians 1:18, 23-24; 2:4-5; II Timothy 3:5; II Corinthians 12:9-10; II Timothy 1:8).

God uses His Body! It is God's plan to use you! Get in the Book! ■

The Sin Principle

by – W. Ian Thomas, *The Prayerline Newsletter*, Vol. 6., No. 3, page 4

At the fall of man, when Adam sinned, God withdrew His Holy Spirit from the human spirit, and although man retained his animal¹ body and possessed still a functioning soul of mind, emotion, and will, he was empty of God. Spiritually bankrupt, man was destitute of that spiritual life which could be his only by virtue of God's presence, through His Holy Spirit, within the human spirit. God had left him!

This was the consequence of sin – the absence of spiritual life. As the absence of all physical life means physical death, so the absence of all spiritual life means death. This is the wages of sin; not the ultimate consequence of sin *one* day, but that which has been the consequence of sin ever since man fell and that which is now the consequence of sin to all who have ravages of a sin principle that came into the human heart the day that God went out.

This sin principle is called in the Bible “the flesh.” This is not the human body, which in itself is not sinful, but the flesh in this biblical sense speaks of an evil bias, a satanic agency from which springs all man's own inbred wickedness, so that in Mark 7:20-23, the

Lord Jesus said, “*That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.*”

Paul, in Romans 7:19-20, writes, “*For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.*” “Sin,” in this sense, as a singular word, is the same thing as “the flesh” -- the root that bears the fruit. And in this our flesh dwells no good thing! It is “*enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*” (Romans 8:7b).

It is quite obvious that it is no more God's purpose for you to remain in this condition of spiritual destitution and defeat than it was God's purpose for His earthly people, Israel, to remain in the land of Egypt, tyrannized by Egyptian taskmasters.

We may understand again, therefore ... that God's purpose in the Cross of Jesus Christ was twofold: first that we might be forgiven, being saved from sin's penalty because Christ died for *us*, and second, that we might be delivered from sin's power, because this old sinful nature, called the flesh, died *with*

¹. Understandably, some of our readers will be concerned with the author's use of “animal body.” Be assured that the author did not intend to convey any type of evolutionary idea but was using the word “animal” in its most basic sense. The etymological meaning of this word is “living” as can be seen in the word “animate.” Noah Webster (1828) defines animal as: “An organized body, endowed with life and the power of voluntary motion; a living, sensitive, locomotive body; as, man is an intelligent animal.”



Letters to the Editor

"Just finished your tapes on the 'Lord's Supper' for the second time. They sure have helped me confirm why I didn't take it.

"Please renew my BSN subscription and use the rest where it is needed most." MI

"Just wanted to thank you for the wonderful weekend we had with you all a few weeks ago and also for your counsel ... We are so thankful for the opportunities we have to fellowship together." VA

"Thanks for your hospitality. Thanks for all the kindness and thoughtful touches that made it nice and easy to feel 'right at home' ... We had a wonderful time." VA

(continued from page 234)

basis. Many saints could greatly benefit from your decision to participate.

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Your brother,