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# Shield of Faith

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A Primitive Baptist Publication

June-July, 2008

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## The Church Is...

### ...A City

By Elder Greg Phillips

“But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels” (Hebrews 12:22).

In many places in the holy scriptures, the Church of God is referred to as a city, and compared to Mount Zion. Zion (Zion in the Old Testament) literally denoted the southern hill in Jerusalem, on which a part of the city was built. That part of the city was made by David and his successors the residence of the court, and soon the name Zion was given to the whole city. Jerusalem was the centre of religion in the land; the place where the temple stood, and where the worship of God was celebrated, and where God dwelt manifestly.

The church is called “the heavenly Jerusalem” (Hebrews 12:22), and “new Jerusalem,” (Revelation 3:12, 21:2) because it “... cometh down out of heaven” (Revelation 3:12), and is contrasted to the literal, or “old,” earthly Jerusalem. If the Holy Spirit is pleased to open our understanding, we shall see many blessings and privileges of New Jerusalem, the church, illustrated in “old” Jerusalem.

Originally, the historical Zion was not a blessing to Israel, rather it was a *menace*. Held by their enemies, the Jebusites, Zion was so strongly fortified that Israel could not capture it (Joshua 15:63, Judges 1:21).

Zion was captured by David when Israel had been thoroughly tried and found wanting. The priesthood had been corrupted (I Samuel 2:22, 25) and the king of *their* choice (Saul) had been rejected because of his sin.

It was, then, at a time when Israel was thoroughly disheartened, and when (because of their great wickedness) they had not the least reason to expect it, that God graciously intervened. When Saul and Jonathan had been slain in battle and Israel had fled before the Philistines, the

Lord brought forth the man of *His* choice, David, whose name means the “Beloved.” Up to this time the hill of Zion had been a continual menace to Israel, but now David captured it out of the hand of the Jebusites and made it his stronghold.

When we were under the curse of the law God’s throne was one of *judgment*. But, just as David (the “Beloved”) secured Zion for Israel and made it the place of blessing where God abode in grace, so has Christ by grace prevailed on our behalf. “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross” (Colossians 2:13-14).

“Zion is the place of God’s habitation, where He dwells forever” (Psalm 9:11). God by his essence and power is everywhere. He fills heaven and earth, and cannot be contained in either. His glorious presence is in heaven; his gracious presence is in his church and among his people; where they dwell he dwells, and where he dwells they dwell (Isaiah 12:6). “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God” (Revelation 21:2-3).

The tabernacle, as that word is commonly used in the Scriptures, referring to the sacred tent erected in the wilderness, was regarded as the peculiar dwelling-place of God among his people--as was the temple afterwards. God promised He would dwell with the redeemed, as if in a tabernacle, or in a house specially prepared for his residence among them. He is permanently with them and shall never leave them.

He is our God, manifest in such a manner

that there shall be no doubt that He is God dwelling with His people. As a king dwells in his city, so God dwells in the church of believers. “For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it” (Psalms 132:13-14).

A city was considered to be a place of safety and a place of peace and rest. Often built with very high and strong walls, the inhabitants felt secure and nothing less than an extended siege could overthrow a fortified city. Jerusalem is especially associated with peace, the name meaning “possession of peace,” or “foundation of peace.”

Under the command of David, God brought peace to Israel and established them in the land. “For David said, The LORD God of Israel hath given rest unto his people, that they may dwell in Jerusalem for ever” (I Chronicles 23:25).

Sinners can find no place of rest or safety under the law, but in Christ, the Prince of Peace, we have peace with God and safety in divine protection. “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:1-2).

As well as having peace with God, believers, both Jew and Gentile, have peace with one another in Christ. When we see no peace among believers, it is because we have failed to avail ourselves of the peace Christ has purchased. “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace” (Ephesians 2:14-15).

The peace here referred to is that by which a union in worship and in feeling has been produced between the Jews and

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## The Church Is...A City

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the Gentiles. Formerly they were alienated and separate. They had different objects of worship and different religious rites. The Jews regarded the Gentiles with hatred, and the Gentiles looked on the Jews with scorn. Now, says the apostle, they are at peace. They worship the same God. They have the same Saviour.

Formerly, when any Gentile came to Jerusalem they had no kind of rights whatever; nor could they, as heathens, settle among the Jews. If any of them acknowledged the God of Israel, but did not receive circumcision, he might dwell in the land, but he had no right to the blessings of the covenant. Such persons were called sojourners, and could have no property in the land, and could only rent a house for the time being.

Through Christ, the Gentiles, who were formerly "aliens" and "strangers," have equal rights and privileges with the Jews, and equal access to New Jerusalem. The word rendered *strangers* means, *foreigners in a state*, as opposed to citizens. The word rendered *foreigners* means *guests in a private family*, as opposed to the members of the family. That relationship is changed by Jesus Christ. "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:18-19). Every citizen of the heavenly city has equal rights and privileges and is entitled to all that the city offers.

New Jerusalem is the seat of the throne, reign and kingdom of Christ. Jesus sits upon the throne of grace, and the throne of power in the midst of his church. "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion" (Psalms 2:6). The world disowns his authority, but God declares it. The authority by which he reigns is from His heavenly Father; he is "my King," says God the Father, and I have set him up from everlasting. *Have I set*, is from a Hebrew word meaning *anointed, designed, appointed, or constituted*. God the Father has "...hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church" (Ephesians 1:22).

The church, under the figure of a city, is the object of innumerable Divine promises. "They that trust in the LORD shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so

the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever" (Psalms 125:1-2). Mount Zion is an emblem of permanence, and Jerusalem is one of security. Together they represent the firm and protected condition of God's people, supported not only by Providence, but by covenant promise. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early" (Psalms 46:4-5).

"The LORD shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life" (Psalms 128:5). God commanded the priests to pronounce a blessing upon Israel: "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace" (Numbers 6:24-26). These were to come upon the God fearing man, and Zion was the centre of blessing, and to it the people looked when they sought for mercy. Those spiritual and everlasting blessings are to be had no where but in Zion, and from the God who dwells in Zion.

God decreed that the Gospel of Christ come forth from Zion and Jerusalem. "And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Micah 4:2). The Apostle Paul called the church "...the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Timothy 3:15). The truth of God was entrusted to the church. The church is to keep it pure, to defend it, and to transmit it to future times. The truth is upheld in the world by the church.

Zion, a type of the church, was the object of God's special love. "The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob" (Psalms 87:2). It is here assumed that the Lord loves all the dwellings of Jacob -- he loves all those who are true Israelites and the church is "the Israel of God" (Galatians 6:16). Zion was favored with God's love above all other dwellings of Jacob. God manifested His love in a great way to his own elect nation, descended from his servant Jacob, and the central place of their worship of Him was especially dear. God delights in the

prayers and praises of Christian families and individuals, but he has a special eye to the assemblies of the faithful, and he has a special delight in their devotions in their church capacity.

God shows his preference to Zion by that marvelous protection which is afforded to the church of God and by the wonderful grace bestowed upon it. Though appearing outwardly weak, and frequently reduced to only a handful of disciples, yet they have been protected and sustained. Despised by the world, the church has always been a special delight to God.

Zion is "...the joy of the whole earth." "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King" (Psalms 48:2). If we understand *the earth* here to mean the habitable globe, there is no sense in which Zion ever was the joy of the whole earth. If we understand the words to signify *the whole of this land*, the assertion is plain and easy to be understood, for Zion was considered the ornament and glory of the whole *land of Judea*. The world in general finds no joy in Spiritual Zion. It is the redeemed world, the world of believers who rejoice in Zion.

Christ, the desire of all nations, is in it; and the blessed Gospel goes out from it unto the whole earth, and causes joy wherever it comes in power, and with the Holy Ghost. The church of Jesus Christ has joy in fellowship with its Redeemer and brings joy to sin-sick soul who is drawn to it. "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations" (Isaiah 60:15).

"There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High" (Psalms 46:4). The Holy Spirit, as a mighty river, sends His graces flowing down from the throne of God to the church, the city of God. This brings rejoicing and thanksgiving by assuring the citizens that Zion's Lord will unfailingly supply all their needs. In all seasons of trial and afflictions all sufficient grace will be given to enable the church to endure unto the end.

"Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness" (Psalm 48:1).

## Bible Quiz

Answer each question with the person involved in dreaming.

1. Who "suffered many things" in a dream because of Jesus (Matt. 27:19)?
2. Who was warned in a dream not to return to Herod (Matt. 2:1-12)?
3. Who did the Lord not answer by dreams or prophets (1 Sam. 28:6)?
4. Who did God scare with dreams (Job 7:14)?
5. Who caused the people to forget God's name by their dreams (Jer. 23:25-27)?
6. Who told false dreams (Zech. 10:2)?
7. Who caused themselves to dream dreams (Jer. 29:4-8)?
8. Who did Jude call filthy dreamers (Jude 4-8)?
9. Who did Isaiah say would be "as a dream of a night vision" (Isa. 29:78)?
10. Who asked Joseph to interpret a dream because his interpretation of another dream was favorable (Gen. 40:16)?
11. Who was hated by his brothers because he told them his dream (Gen. 37:5)?
12. Who will cause young men to see visions and old men to dream dreams (Acts 2:17)?
13. Who did not sin because God knew his heart and revealed Sarah's identity to him in a dream (Gen 20:4-6)?

*Answers on page 4.*

## Central States Bible Conference

The sixty-first annual session of the Central States Primitive Baptist Bible Conference will meet at Vincennes University, Vincennes, Indiana, July 22-24, 2008, the Lord willing. The total cost for food and lodging is \$86.00 per person.

Speakers are Elders Roy Perkins, Jim Bowen, Wallace Johnson, Keith Hamilton, Tommy Freeman, Philip Nichols, and Gary Brinson.

For more information, contact the conference chairman, Elder Greg Phillips, 807 Ashwood Lane, Chattanooga, Tennessee 37415. Phone (423) 875-3652 or email [eldphil@bellsouth.net](mailto:eldphil@bellsouth.net)

Live in such a way that those who know you but don't know God will come to know God because they know you.

Unknown

More important than length of life is how we spend each day.

Maria A. Furtado

## Q & A

By Elder Sylvester Hassell from *The Collected Works of Sylvester Hassell*

Q. Were the disciples of Christ divinely or humanly first called Christians at Antioch? (Acts 11:26).

A. Humanly, by the Gentiles, either the Greeks or Romans; for the Jews, who did not believe that Jesus was the Christ or Messiah, would not have called His followers Christians. The followers of Christ in the first century generally called each other brethren, saints, or disciples, or "the faithful in Christ Jesus," and the unbelieving Jews called them Nazarenes, or followers of Jesus of Nazareth. As a denominational name, the followers of James O'Kelly, a native of Ireland who came to America about 1777, and lived for some years as a traveling Methodist preacher, withdrew, in 1793 in Virginia and North Carolina, from the Methodist Episcopal Church, on account of their objections to the government of bishops and the use of creeds and disciplines, and in 1794 called themselves "Christians;" they admit the validity of sprinkling or pouring, as well as immersion, for baptism. The followers of Thomas Campbell, of Ireland, and then of Pennsylvania, called themselves "Christians" in 1809; but he and his son, Alexander Campbell, were immersed, June 14, 1812, as members of the Brush Run Baptist Church, which belonged to the Redstone Baptist Association in Pennsylvania. In 1823 Alexander Campbell began publishing a paper called the Christian Baptist; and in 1821 he founded a separate denomination called the Disciples of Christ; but in recent years they have assumed the name Christians, but are generally called by other denominations Campbelites. They agree with the Baptists in considering immersion the only baptism, and that only believers should be baptized.

Q. Is there any difference between the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit?

A. There is not; the same original word rendered "Ghost" is sometimes rendered "Spirit" by our translators. He is also called "the Spirit of Truth" and "the Comforter" (John 14:16,17), and the Third Person of the Trinity (Matt. 28:19). And by the "gift of the Holy Ghost" is meant in the apostolic age His miracle-working power (Acts 2:38; 5:32; 8:15-25; 10:44-48; 19:5,6); and, if this phrase may be used of persons since the apostolic age, I understand it to mean the refreshing, comforting, sanctifying and establishing influence of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of His people (I Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Eph. 2:22).

Q. Will our flesh, blood, and bones enter heaven?

A. Not as they are now, but when our bodies are changed, spiritualized, immortalized, and glorified, and made like the body of our risen Redeemer, they will be reoccupied by our purified spirits which He will bring with Him, and enter into the immediate, manifest, holy, and blessed presence of God.

## Original Sin

Written by Lemuel Potter

*Taken from The Gospel Witness, Volume 1, Issue 11, which published it from an earlier uncited source.*

We believe in the doctrine of original sin, and that all of Adam's posterity are sinners by nature, and that they have neither will nor power to deliver themselves from their condemned state.

In this principle of faith is a clear and concise expression of the state and character of the fallen race of the family of Adam. It is an absolute truism that we who now dwell upon the earth are in actual possession of a sinful, depraved and corrupt nature, with which we were born into this world. It is not something that we have simply acquired by imitating others, but it is born in us. It is what we have received from our parents. The question propounded by Job, the good old servant of God, is certainly to the point here when he asks: "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one" (Job 14:4). This agrees also with the doctrine of our adorable Savior in His simple metaphors, in which He so clearly teaches us that a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. It is universally conceded that in nature every seed produces after its own kind. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," is a truth, and we only have to refer to the Scriptures to find that "God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" (Genesis 6:12). If we should start back up the long stream of time, through all the generations of men, from now until the date of Adam's transgression, we would find not one single generation – no, not one nation or family or even one individual person – born so pure and holy as to live uprightly before God and not sin. The most favorable picture in the Bible of the moral condition of man is decidedly against him. "There is none that doeth good, no, not one," (Romans 3:12) is about as good as we can find for poor sinful man, in the sacred writings. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23), is the unerring decision of inspiration. Every nation that has existed in the whole world, and every generation, has recorded crime of almost every description – yea, and every family, almost, has had its dark page in its history; and even in our own day and country, our daily newspapers are

largely devoted to the publication of almost everything that poor, corrupt nature can invent in the way of wickedness and nefarious abominations in the sight of God. This depravity and degeneracy are as extensive as our fallen race. This important truth was revealed to the ancient servant of God: "There is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20).

While man was in the Garden of Eden, he was good, innocent and harmless, and in that state he was not condemned for wrong doings, for he had done no wrong. Disease, pain, sorrow, disappointments, mental or physical afflictions, not even death could invade his premises. Everything around him was smiling, and the sunshine, in its most cheerful effulgence and glory, seemed to face him in every direction he might look; and, above all, he had free communion with God, his Creator. While in that innocent, he never dreaded to meet Him and hold sweet intercourse with Him. In the words "And God saw every thing that He had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31), man was embraced, he was very good, and God, who had created him found no fault with him until after he had transgressed God's law, and then how suddenly matters changed and what a different aspect is opened up to our gaze. Man is sunken very low now, in comparison of what he once was; God made him but a "little lower than the angels" but now we find him likened to the beasts that perish. In his fallen and wicked state, he is represented as being a compound of evil qualities of the worst creatures – the fierceness of the lion, the cunningness of the fox, the unteachableness of the wild ass, the filthiness of the dog and the swine, the poison of the asp, and many other things. Can it be questioned for one moment that man's nature is miserably corrupted? It is difficult for man to confess his own faults, and especially to con-

less himself to be as wretched and depraved as he really is. It is an easy matter to get a man to see a point in his own favor, but more difficult to get him to see a point against himself. In this respect, there is no species of the creation of God more selfish than man, the cap sheaf of all God's creatures. We are all guilty in this particular. Even in the most modest and liberal Christian may be seen the outcroppings of some degree of preference for self. In fact, it would be quite unnatural to human nature to have as much care and solicitude for others in anything favorable, as for self, and precisely to the extent that a man is in favor of self he is opposed to others.

The Bible requires us to love our neighbor as ourself, and if it was not that we are selfish that would not be hard to do. Man is as much biased in favor of sin as he is against good. He is averse to good, but he is in favor of evil – so much so that he sins voluntarily, and to refrain from sinning requires greater effort on our part than we are able to put forth. "Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). "An evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things" (Matthew 12:35). "By one man sin entered into the world" (Romans 5:12). This man was the cause of all men being sinners. This does not mean, simply that Adam was the first sinner, or that sin simply began with him. The idea that sin entered into the world of mankind by one man, is, according to the apostle's writings, by Adam's transgression, all his posterity were made sinners. All his progeny were involved in his guilt, and they were condemned with him as a punishment inflicted on him for his sin. "Death passed upon all men" (Romans 5:12). That is the penalty of sin passed upon all that sinned. The penalty extends to all that sinned and no further. The words, "for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12) plainly assign the reason why all men are exposed to death. It is said that many older commentaries and theologians, both Calvinists and Arminians, translate it, "in whom all have sinned", instead of "for that all have sinned." I think there can be no doubt that the meaning of the whole verse is about this: By one man all men became sinners, and hence death passed upon all men, through that one man, in whom all sinned. It is very evi-

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### Answers to Bible Quiz

1-Pilate's wife, 2-Wise Men, 3-Saul, 4-Job, 5-False prophets, 6-False prophets, 7-Nebuchadnezzar's captives from Babylon, 8-Ungodly men, 9-Nations that fight against Mount Zion, 10-Pharaoh's chief baker, 11-Joseph, 12-God, 13-Abimelech

Devotions:

## Daily Devotion

By Elder Bill Taylor

Workday Grace—June 13, 2008

Times of Rejoicing

"When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn." Proverbs 29:2

Throughout the history of mankind on the earth, there have been rulers of people. Whether in families, communities, villages, states, or countries, men have always organized their segment of society and appointed someone with the authority to be their ruler. The purest concept of ruling is to measure out - called "mete out" in God's word - the things needed to provide for an orderly, and safe if possible, existence for the people being "ruled." Authority is vested in the one selected to do this, as the representative chosen to make general decisions on behalf of the common good. In earlier times, the concept of "princes" and rulers grew to embrace larger segments of society because that was the order of the family. Someone had to be in charge, and there were rules to determine that. When the concept of princes (chief rulers) became strong enough, the chief ruler began to be called the king. It was at this point that the position of authority was determined strictly by family lineage, and it was understood that the chosen son of the present king would eventually become the king. Among the tribes of Israel, that system produced some very good and righteous kings; but it also produced some very bad and wicked kings. In that light, today's verse assumes a constant stream of rulers based on right of succession to the position of authority and rule purely because of family lineage. When the people were blessed with a good and righteous ruler, they rejoiced. Life was good. Such a ruler sought for peace but also resisted wicked assaults against his people with a strong hand. King David was such a ruler. He was a righteous man who loved the Lord and desired to lead the people in righteousness. When David was king, God's people could rejoice. His focus was on doing works of righteousness, even when his own personal life took a bad turn. Still, he was a caring, compassionate, just ruler. The same could not be said for the majority of those kings who followed David. At times, wickedness was the hallmark of the kingdom. The wicked rulers not only were not concerned with righteousness in their own lives, they seemed determined to cause the people to follow after wickedness as well. For instance, idolatry was rampant during the times of the wicked rulers. In those times, there were no doubt some people who were well suited to the wickedness; but God's people - the people really being spoken of here - no doubt mourned during those times. That was then, and this is now, is the response of some people today. But things have not really changed. If we - God's people - think there is no impact to electing a person to "rule" over us who will not lead us in the paths of righteousness, we ought to think again. God's word and history itself have proved time and time again

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Hymns and Hymn Writers

## Day By Day

The waves of revival that swept the Scandinavian countries during the latter half of the nineteenth century were greatly influenced by the wealth of fine hymns which flowed from the pen of Lina Sandell, born on October 3, 1832 at Froderyd, Sweden. She was a daughter of the pastor of the parish church of that community. Being a frail youngster, she usually preferred to spend her time in her father's study rather than to join her comrades in play. When she was twenty-six years of age, she accompanied her father on a journey to Gothenburg, and tragedy occurred before the destination was reached. The ship gave a sudden lurch and Lina's father fell overboard and drowned before the eyes of his devoted daughter.

Although she had written hymns prior to this tragic experience, more songs began to flow out of her broken heart which reflect a simple, child-like trust in Christ and a deep sense of His abiding presence in her life.

The remarkable popularity attained by her hymns has been due, to a large extent, to the simple but melodious music written for them by such musicians as Oscar Ahnfelt. He was known as a "spiritual troubadour" in his day. Not only did he possess the gift of writing pleasing melodies that caught the fancy of the Swedish people, but he also traveled from place to place throughout the Scandinavian countries singing these folk-like songs to the accompaniment of his home-made ten-string guitar. Miss Sandell once said, "Ahnfelt has sung my songs into the hearts of the people. "

Day by day and with each passing moment,  
Strength I find to meet my trials here;  
Trusting in my Father's wise bestowment,  
I've no cause for worry or for fear.  
He whose heart is kind beyond all measure  
Gives unto each day what He deems best  
Lovingly its part of pain and pleasure,  
Mingling toil with peace and rest.

Ev 'ry day the Lord Himself is near me  
With a special mercy for each hour;  
All my cares He fain would bear, and cheer me ,  
He whose name is Counsellor and Pow'r.  
The protection of His child and treasure  
Is a charge that on Himself He laid;  
"As thy days, thy strength shall be in measure,  
"This the pledge to me He made.

Help me then in ev 'ry tribulation  
So to trust Thy promises, O Lord,  
That I lose not faith's sweet consolation  
Offered me within Thy holy word.  
Help me, Lord, when toil and trouble meeting;  
E'er to take, as from a father's hand,  
One by one, the days, the moments fleeting,  
Till I reach the promised land.

## Obedience to the Gospel

Written by J.M. Bullard

We do not teach, or claim, that the obedience of man is a part of or in order to a blessed state; nor do we teach that our obedience is, either directly or indirectly, the cause of regeneration. It is in no sense a prerequisite to regeneration; but, as in Eph. ii. 1, we believe and teach that God, by His Holy Spirit, quickens us from a state of death in sin to a life in Christ. He raises us up from that dead state, not because we obey Him, and get Him to raise us up because of our obedience; neither because we believed in Him while in that dead state, and He in turn quickened us because we believed. But His children, the objects of His love, were steeped in sin, and unable to render a spiritual obedience to Him; hence the cause of His quickening, or raising up His children, into eternal life was not found in the children, but in Him, in His Son and the Holy Spirit, who, in perfect unison and unflinching harmony, had purposed that these objects of His love should be raised into a higher order of life, and be permitted, according to His eternal purpose, to live eternally in heaven.

But we do teach that the children of God, who are thus raised up, and brought under parental laws to their Master, can and should be active and ready in every command of the gospel. They should ever feel the keen sense of duty to engage in His service, as He has commanded. They should be ready to every good work yet fully realizing that these good works of obedience are their reasonable duty, and not in order to a home in heaven. Usually, any act of obedience, or service, which is done for the purpose of receiving gain in return for it is not worth very much. If you administer help to someone, and hope that you shall receive something in return, the Bible condemns you for it. So when the children of God render every act of obedience they are capable of rendering, they have no right to claim that God saved them for doing those things. When we have done all that is required of us, we then should confess that we are "unprofitable servants; we have done only that which is our duty to do." I fear that at least most of us fail to do that which is our full duty as children of God.

I think I have seen a sad neglect in the children of God in recent years. Many in

the churches that I have visited, in some thirteen states, have been frank to admit that a large number of the membership was far from being obedient to the laws and commands of the gospel. This neglect is traceable, partly, to slackness in discipline, and, perhaps, to some extent to the ministry. I have observed this by careful notice of the preaching of the majority of our preachers. That is, they, or rather we, preach almost exclusively on the fundamental principles of the doctrine, to the neglect of laying out and explaining the laws and orders of the gospel. I remember, one time, asking the clerk of a church which I was serving as pastor to bring the church book and read the church covenant the next day. He did so, and there were members who had been in the church for thirty years who told me that they never knew there was a church covenant. Many members turned a new leaf and had a great zeal to live up to their agreement. It worked wonders. I just wonder, now, how many of you who read this have ever heard your church covenant read? Many of the Lord's people would be more active and prompt in their church duties if they had more encouragement and backing from the ministry and deacons and older members and leaders in the church.

Have you ever noticed how, so many times, some very poor, commonly dressed member is passed up unnoticed? Well, are you guilty of doing that very thing yourself? Can you do that and feel that you are obeying your blessed Saviour? Are we not a respecter of persons when we do that? Nay, but often that very one so neglected may have the very dwelling presence of Christ in his heart. To serve the Lord in the right way is to serve one another in the right way. One command of the gospel is for those who occupy a place in the gospel church to separate themselves from the world and from anything that stands as an enemy of Christ and His kingdom. No man can serve the Lord in humble obedience in the church, and at the same time be engaged in worldly, sensual, and devilish practices. It just will not work that way, although some try hard to do it. Some even claim to be rendering obedience to their Master and serving Him when they are partaking of the very things which are expressly denied and forbidden in the

Bible. Such ones claim that it is all right to worship with any creed, just so it is a religious order. This cannot be right, for it would open the way for any and all false and idolatrous worship. It would have no regard whatever for these things and pray that none of these things come upon you. Be instant; be faithful; be zealous; be kindly affectioned one to another; be patient; be sober; be content; be holy in all your conversation; be ready to every good work; be slow to speak, but ready to hear. These are some of the laws and demands of the gospel. They are some things you can do. "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Lord, help us to be submissive

### Original Sin

*(Continued from page 4)*

dent that the primary meaning of this Scripture is to illustrate the doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ, which had been established in the previous chapter. All mankind are subject to death, or penal evils; therefore all men are regarded as transgressors of the law. It is too plain to admit of doubt that the language, "By one man sin entered into the world" (Romans 5:12), expresses the idea of all men's becoming sinners. It seems clear to my mind that from the reading of Romans 5:12, 16, every person should bow down before God under the humiliating consciousness that he is a member of an apostate race; the son of a rebellious parent; born estranged from God, and exposed to His displeasure. The first description of man's moral character, after the fall, is this: "And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). What a dark picture! The truth of this text is established beyond the possibility of doubt, in the course and conduct of the poor ignorant, and hard-hearted rebel, when he would arraign the great God of his creation into his own court, and accuse Him of injustice, in His dealings with His creatures; he only evidences more clearly and truly, his native depravity.

## The Sin of Indifference

Written by R. W. Cothorn

The poor little struggling people of God are naturally prone to sin. We will undoubtedly always be imperfect as long as we live in this body of mortal flesh. We will stumble along, and fall into one wrong, feel the sting and pain of penitence, beg God to forgive, and we feel forgiven.

Then, almost in the next step we fall into another wrong. The worst condition of all, and one which we become too blind to see, is the sin of indifference.

All I know about these matters is what I have learned in the past 50 years from my own experience and what I read in the Bible. Over and over, I have lapsed into states of indifference, and while at it wasted many precious days, drifting idly along with the current, not caring or much concerned, which way the river runs. The thought presents itself to me, "Why don't you quit worrying about Primitive Baptists' troubles and about your own troubles, and learn to just take it easy. Have a good time! You are doing all right; you don't need anything. Enjoy life while you have it."

That's just a pretty good philosophy for the natural man, if he can make himself forget he is a soldier of the cross and has a responsibility to fight all evil in self and in the great kingdom the order "present your bodies living sacrifice holy, acceptable to God."

Sometimes when I visit neighboring churches and find that many of their members can't find the time or inclination to come out to their meetings, I wonder if they too are not afflicted with this worldly philosophy of "taking it easy." If they are, then I would like to talk things over with them from my own experiences. Maybe we can understand each other, and profit from the advice the good book gives us. One of the messages of Jesus to the church at Laodicea was "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit sayeth to the churches." Of course the fellow who is "rich, and increased with goods, and hath need of nothing" is pretty hard to attract with this advice, because of his cold indifference. He is neither cold nor hot; he just doesn't care. Chances are he will likely stay that way until some gospel "eye-salve" is applied so he can see just how "wretched and poor and blind, and miser-

able, and naked" he really is.

Just what is the spirit saying to the churches? One thing it is saying is "I counsel thee to buy of me gold, tried in the fire (and that is pure gold. That is the kind the very streets of heaven are paved with, the kind that will make you rich in heavenly values, that even the fires of hell will not melt or destroy). This gold not only makes you rich, it glitters with a luster that lights up the whole church and gives you a feeling of wealth, health and happiness!

Then the spirit is also saying to the churches to "buy white raiment, that ye may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness do not appear." True reconciliation to the will of God, and true unselfish service to the best of your ability is all the obedience God asks of you. If He has that kind of obedience, He will clothe you in the beautiful and comfortable "white raiment" of His sweet approval. If through your indifference and cold neglect, you refuse him that obedience, he is going to let you go unclad, and the "shame of your nakedness" will be revolting to God and all the humble people. So "he that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit sayeth, for "the Spirit and the bride say come, and let him that heareth say, come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him balm the water of life freely."

Not long ago I was in attendance at a little church, where many were absent. The few present feeling their poverty of soul, sang that sweet old song, which is an index to the feelings of those who are rich with the "gold" of our text, and able to feel their need before their God:

"Hungry and faint, and poor;  
Behold us Lord again,  
Assembled at thy mercy's door,  
Thy bounty to obtain.

Thy word invites us nigh;  
Or we must starve indeed;  
For we no money have to buy,  
No righteousness to plead.

The food our spirits want,  
Thy hand alone can give;  
O hear the prayer of faith and grant,  
That we may eat and live."

Tears ran from the eyes of the singers, and love filled our hearts for each other.

The Spirit of our God made his royal presence felt, and we were "rich" in the glory of faith, hope and charity.

We were clothed in the raiment of His love and sweet approval. O what riches! Can we afford to lose them in a desert of lost causes? Is life in this world worth living without God's peace, without the peace and fellowship of each other?

I drove home that evening over some hundred miles of desert. As far as I could see, the highway stretched mile after mile toward the sunset, and it was something like my own little highway of life—...hedged with cactus, thorns, and briars. A drought lay heavily upon the land and there was no flowers or any green living thing to break the monotony.

But the sound and rich sentiment of that little song and the memory of the powerful gospel preached during the meeting was something like soft music in my soul. And I said, "this is the true water of life. O Lord let me take it freely." I am sure I will die poor in this world's goods, but I long to enjoy the "gold, tried in the fire" and I am willing to "but it" even if it costs my very life.

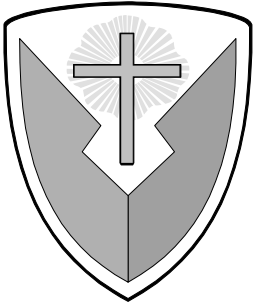
Please help me pray for grace to overcome the awful sin of indifference.

### SOME TESTS FOR RIGHT AND WRONG

1. The personal test: Will doing it make me a better or worse Christian?
2. The social test: Will doing it influence others to be better or poorer Christians?
3. The practical test: Will doing it likely bring desirable or undesirable results?
4. The universal test: Suppose everybody did it?
5. The scriptural test: Is it expressly forbidden in the Word of God?
6. The stewardship test: Will doing it likely help or hinder the progress of the kingdom of God?

"He that doubteth," if he proceeds in the face of his doubt, sins for "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." See Romans 14:13-23. Therefore, when in doubt, DON'T!

from Elberton Bulletin



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The *Shield of Faith* is available without charge to any who request it. Request for subscriptions or donations should be directed to the editor at the above address.

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And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works, Hebrews 10:24

## Confess Our Wrongs

*(Continued from page 5)*

that God's people will mourn when the wicked rule; but when the righteous are in authority, we can rejoice. This applies to some extent in every segment of society. The good news is that the Lord hears the prayers of His people. After being in captivity for seventy years under many wicked Babylonian rulers, The Lord saw that the people's hearts were set on righteousness and tired of mourning; so Isaiah tells us, "The LORD hath broken the staff of the wicked, and the sceptre of the rulers. He who smote the people in wrath with a continual stroke, he that ruled the nations in anger, is persecuted, and none hindereth. The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they break forth into singing" (Isaiah 14:5-7).

Today is a good day to pray fervently for a time of rejoicing under righteous rulers.

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Elder J. H. Oliphant

PRIMITIVE MONITOR-APRIL 1921

WHAT shall we do when we wrong a brother? We cannot do better than to confess our sins and forsake them. If we remember that our brother hath ought against us, it will spoil our offering; we must make amends by confessing that we did wrong and ask to be forgiven. It is noble to say "I did wrong," I ought not to fail to confess. It is an opportunity to a noble thing when we confess our sins. Many years ago I treated a neighbor wrong; I bore it a while, the burden got heavier and heavier till I could not rest. I went to him and told him the burden pressed me. At first he thought I came for a quarrel. But I made him know I was troubled over the wrong I did him, and when he did so, he put arms around me and assured me he was perfectly satisfied. I had two experiences like this with the best results.

If you have done wrong to some one, try it and see if it is not better than to defend your conduct. If we go to a brother to make peace we will find the rule is good. It will never fail if done in the right spirit. We must go to make peace, not in a spirit of strife to triumph over an enemy. We may desire to come out best. It will be good if we could come out fully, and say I am wrong-I have done wrong, try it; and see tears of love flow from his eyes and enjoy the sweetest sensation you ever enjoyed. The Savior came to us and told us our sins so kindly and sweetly that it won us to him. There is an art in telling men their faults so as to fill them with love to you. Jesus did so with us.

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