

# "Stilling The Tempest"

by Bro. Jerry Brown  
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"And when Jesus was entered into a ship, His disciples followed Him. And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but He was asleep. And His disciples came to Him, and awoke Him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And He saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then He arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm." (Matthew 8:23-26).

The tempestuous seas and the storms of life have parallels; when viewed from a spiritual perspective, bring practical enrichment and enlightenment to the child of God. God controls, and has sovereign power over all of His creation; therefore, He can deal with such creation as is pleasing to Him, be it nature, or mankind. The sovereignty of God is taught in the practical lessons of the Bible, as well as in the doctrinal lessons, from Genesis through Revelation, for the word of God is a spiritually-golden, never-ending circle of truth!

When God's children sincerely endeavor to follow Him and do His will, they will, for a surety, deal with many and varied tempests along life's journey. Our faith will be tried and tested, and like the saints of old, we, many times, will "sin and fall short" of the mark. We will backslide and have doubts and fears. These experiences can only come to a born-again child of God, for a spiritually-dead man is incapable of falling short, doubting, fearing and backsliding. (Please read I Corinthians 2:14!)

As we "sail along" on our "ship of

life," it is vital that we have the Master Captain, our Lord Jesus Christ, in the ship with us, to guide us through the high, rough waves, and the storms of life! Without Him at the helm, we shall surely drown and our ship of life will be battered, and therefore, made unfit for service in the Gospel Kingdom. Many of God's children have battered ships, and they have been deceived into believing they can serve God acceptably with their oars of self-righteousness, of self-pity, or complacency or ingratitude. In reality all they are doing is "stirring the wind" of deceit and non-productivity, thus "slowly sinking" on the sea of life.

The presence of Christ, in our ship of life, brings calm. When it seems we will be utterly overwhelmed by the storms of life, then Christ, in His manifestation of love and grace and power, speaks, and says to the winds and the sea and to our souls, "Peace! Be still!" Christ is always in control. He can speak peace to your soul. What a marvelous consolation for the child of God!

If the disciples of Christ at times manifested a weakness of faith, then we would indeed be foolish to believe that we would not do likewise. (It is interesting to note that the disciples' manifestation of a weakness of faith, was many times in the presence of Christ). Oh, how weak we are by nature! They were in the ship with the Son of God and their Saviour, and the master of the Sea, yet their humanity became so evident as their fears overwhelmed them. Nevertheless, they did not lose sight of the fact that Christ was present, and

had the sovereign power to rebuke the winds and the sea, and bring about a great calm, as only He could do.

When the storms of doubt, fear, failure, disillusionment, heartache, grief and affliction come upon our "ship of life," and we feel we will sink and drown, may we be blessed to find our "Spiritual Captain," Jesus Christ, at the helm speaking those most comforting, uplifting and reassuring words: "Peace! Be Still!" Amen and Amen!

## "PEACE BE STILL"

Sailing on a journey, one dark,  
stormy night,  
The disciples all aboard the ship,  
Were filled with fear and doubt;  
But Jesus surely showed them;  
When the waves obeyed His Will;  
That no matter what may happen;  
He can whisper, 'Peace! Be Still!'

Sailing on a journey, over the sea of  
life,  
Often we're tossed about by the  
fears of sin and strife;  
But Jesus is the Captain; He's the  
Master of the sea;  
And no matter what may happen;  
He can still speak peace to me!  
He can say, 'Peace! Be Still!'  
When He says, 'Peace! Be Still!'  
All the winds and the seas obey.  
If there are storms in your soul;  
He is still in control;  
He can speak peace, sweet peace  
to my soul!"  
Author Unknown

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*Some churches let down their standards, and in so doing they say, "Whatever the world has going on in our city, you can do that in our church too." They have culturalized and climatized their church until they are no longer a lighthouse in their community. Shelton Smith*

# The First Fruits

by Elder Don McWilliams  
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"The first fruits of the labours, which thou hast sown in the field; and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field... The first of the first fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God." (Exodus 23:16,19).

God had instructed Israel that each year as the increase of the land and animals was realized, they were to bring of the very first and give that unto God. Although under the old law dispensation, the Israelites worshipped God on the last day of the week, this feast of first fruits pointed forward to the coming of Jesus Christ, who Paul called the first

fruits of them that slept.

All things in the eyes and thoughts of God have a reason and purpose. As long as Israel followed and observed this command of God, they prospered. However the flesh was weak and so soon to forget. Sometimes they would try to find the loophole in the law so that they might not have to observe that law. (We today haven't progressed much, have we?) They began to notice how good the first fruits looked, how fine an animal the first born seemed to be and they became covetous in their feelings and thoughts to the point of robbing God.

I wonder if today we realize how many

times we rob God of the first fruits that rightfully belong to Him. It may be in many forms. The greatest form of robbery is the TIME we should dedicate to God each FIRST day of the week. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33) We worry so much about how we can make ends meet or how we can obtain our goals in life on our own, and forget that all the resources in the universe belong to God to give us as He sees fit.

I pray we can dedicate our life, time, resources and hearts to the service of God first and foremost, above all things!

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## Answers to Old Testament Kings and Queens

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|------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. David   | 5. Nebuchadnezzar | 9. Ahasuerus       | 13. David          |
| 2. Ahab    | 6. Belshazzar     | 10. Solomon        | 14. Nebuchadnezzar |
| 3. Solomon | 7. Esther         | 11. Queen of Sheba | 15. Joash          |
| 4. Jezebel | 8. Vashti         | 12. Saul           | 16. Darius         |

# Let Every Man Take Heed How He Buildeth Thereupon

by Elder Greg Phillips  
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*"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Corinthians 3:10-15).*

First Corinthians 1:2 gives us a three-fold picture of the church which Paul addressed. They were... the church of God... sanctified in Christ Jesus... called saints. This perhaps brings to our imagination a group of people who were holy, dedicated, living strong, triumphant Christian lives. However, it is good to realize that this threefold designation is what they were positionally. This was their standing through the infinite grace of God. They were the Church, the called-out ones. They were sanctified in Christ Jesus, but this was not anything they had achieved. This was the work of the Holy Spirit. They were also saints; they had been made holy in the sight of God.

In like manner we, too, are the Church of God. We, too, have been sanctified in Christ Jesus. By the boundless mercy of God, we are saints-not because of the quality of the lives we live, but

because of what we have been made in Christ Jesus.

This then was their standing in the sight of God, but what was their standing in the sight of the people among whom they lived and worked and moved? If we turn to 1 Corinthians 3: 1-3, we find quite a different picture. Verse 1 says: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." They were still sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints in the sight of God, but what a different situation this chapter reveals. Paul could address them as brethren, but they were not spiritual. They were carnal, which means they were living the old life where self was in complete control. Verse 3 describes how this carnal life was showing itself, "there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions." Their beliefs were one thing, but their behavior was quite something else.

Verse 1 designates them as babes in Christ. From this we gather that they had been born again. They had life with all the potential of glorious future development for Christ. They possessed the capacity to be all that God wanted them to be but they were still babes in Christ. They had been saved by the blood of Christ through the infinite grace of God, but they were very immature in their Christian experience.

The Corinthian Christians had been born again. They had been given life through Christ Jesus, but something had entered to arrest the development of these young Christians. There was a resurgence of the old way of life. The carnal nature was demonstrating itself in their envy and strife and division.

1 Corinthians 5:1-2 reveals another area where their complete failure was shown. "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you." Notice the word commonly. This was an open sin for all the world to gaze at, but no one in the church had been moved to judge it and put a stop to the moral cancer in their midst. What a mockery they were making of their faith.

The Corinthian church obviously was not properly building on the firm foundation on which they had been founded. All of us, in one way or another, are building on the foundation I described in 1 Corinthians 3:11. Some of the works we do may be excellent. Some may be satisfactory. With so many of us, we are completely unaware that we are building day by day in thought, word, or deed. We are always witnesses for Christ, but our heedless, careless, selfish lives so often make a witness which is anything but to His glory.

Verse 12 divides the quality of our work into six categories - gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay and stubble. Our Christian life will be a mixture of the six components. Notice that there is a descending order of values, beginning with the costliness of the pure gold and ending with the empty, spent, uselessness of dry, brittle stubble. While there are six different groups there are only two classes of works - those that remain, and those that are consumed. Verse 13 describes how these six groups are tested - they are tried by fire. Notice that it is the works that are tried by fire, not the Christian.

Gold, silver, and precious stones will remain untouched by the fire, but the wood, hay and stubble will disappear

in a cloud of smoke. It is a beautiful thought to consider that gold and silver can withstand the fire because that is how they are produced. They have already passed through the refiner's fire and therefore they are pure. Precious stones are produced in the earth by pressure and intense heat, so they, too, can withstand the testing of the Lord. This gives us a true indication of the quality of the works that please God and which meet with His approval at the Judgment Seat of Christ. They are essentially pure - refined as in gold and silver. They are the result of pressure and testing and fire, and each one had to be dug out of the earth by labor and toil.

This same passage in 1 Corinthians 3 gives us the two essential standards against which our works are to be judged. Verse 13 says, the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. Notice that last phrase, of what sort it is. This is the standard by which your Christian life will be judged. It is not how big it is, or how much it is, but simply what sort it is.

There are two sorts possible, and your work for Christ will be one or the other. When the Lord Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus in John 3:6, He uttered a most profound saying, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." There are two sorts of work possible - that which is born of the flesh and that which is born of the Spirit.

When a sinner is born again he receives a new quality of life. The Lord Jesus comes to dwell in his heart and life in the person of His Holy Spirit. So a Christian has both the flesh and the Spirit. He is a partaker of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4).

There can be two sorts of works. There can be that which I have done for Christ, that which I have originated,

the product of my own fleshly activity. There can also be that which has come through the outworking of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:8 teaches, "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." The flesh always wants to have its own way, whether bad or good. It is an open demonstration of independence in defiance of the Lord Himself.

That which is born of the Spirit is what has come in my life as I have yielded and continued to yield my life to Christ. He has been in control. His will has been done through me, so that the works that came as a result are truly the works of the Spirit. These are the works that bring glory to Christ, that fulfill His will and that stand the test of the fire at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

When verse 13 says, "of what sort it is," we know now what is implied. There are two sorts - "my sort" and "His sort." "My sort" are the wood, hay and stubble. "His sort" are the gold, silver and precious stones.

There is another essential standard we need to see in 1 Corinthians 3. Verse 10 says, "But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon." In verse 13, it was what sort it is, now in verse 10 it is how he builds. Notice that this is simply "how" you do the work. It is not how much or how big, but simply the manner in which you go about your work for Christ.

The word "how" is very important in this passage. One can serve the Lord and be involved in the activities of the church simply because it is expected. If he did not join in, there may be criticisms and questions asked, so he takes part just because of others. He can also serve the Lord in order to draw attention to himself. He can also serve as a means of promoting himself. It will be good for business and people will be able to learn about him

and what he can do.

There are endless reasons for "how" we do our work for Christ, but only a few are acceptable to Christ. First and foremost it should be out of deep love to Christ. To manifest our love for Christ we will work willingly, gladly, with all our heart, with no reservation or holding back. The "how" and the "what sort it is" will decide whether we hear those wonderful words, "...Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of the lord" (Matthew 25:23).

1 Corinthians 3:14 says "If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward." Revelation 22:12 states, "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Therefore we see a definite teaching of rewards for work done. In 1 Corinthians 3:8, Paul speaks especially of the ministers of the gospel, but his words apply to all; "...and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour." We are not told what the reward shall be, but we are assured that "every man shall receive his own reward," given by the Master specifically for the individual. We can rest assured that it will be a fitting reward.

God does not reward his servants according to the success of their labor, because success depends on Him; but he rewards them according to the faithful labor which they bestow on his work.

What greater reward could we receive than to hear the words of the Saviour, "...Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matthew 25:23).

***"It is religion and morality alone which can establish the principles upon which freedom can securely stand. The only foundation of a free constitution is pure virtue." (1776) John Adams***

# The Ministry of the Church

by Elder W. H. Durrence  
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The New Testament church has a minister called of God and sent to preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; however, we need to recognize that the church body also has a ministry to perform. This work has never been restricted to the pastor; it is to be a vital part of the activities of the church body as a whole. Any church which leaves its ministry entirely to the minister or pastor is a dying congregation. No one person can ever accomplish as much as the combined efforts of many people. Common sense would tell us that one man cannot perform as much work or do as many things as fifty or one hundred people. Neither can the ministry of the one man reach as many as the combined efforts of fifty or one hundred people. Therefore both the minister and the church have a ministry to perform together.

The ministry of the church is two-fold; it is to reach out and to reach in! Like the normal human body with its two hands, so the body of Christ, the Church (1 Cor. 12:12,27), is to use both its hands. With one hand we are to reach out to those who have not yet come to the church and minister to their needs, and with the other we reach in to those who are already in the church; therefore, we need to minister to the children of God both inside and outside the church membership.

There is no way that we can redeem people from their sins, for only Jesus Christ is able to do that (Eph. 1:7). He alone is able to save us from the eternal penalty of sin, and such was His purpose in coming to this world in the form of an infant (Mt. 1:21). God chose a great multitude of people. These elect are more numerous than the stars in the heavens or the grains of sand along the shores of this earth (Heb. 11:12). Jesus died and thereby redeemed a people "out of every kin-

dred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. 5:9). At God's appointed time, they are visited by the Holy Spirit and thereby born again. Neither they nor we can claim any part of this marvelous work which the Apostle Paul described by saying, "...by grace ye are saved..." (Eph. 2:5).

Jesus saves, but I believe that He expects us to minister to the needs of those whom He saved and made children of God. Whether they are already in the church or still outside its fellowship and membership, we are to love those that God loved and endeavor to minister to them. Some in the world can never be ministered to because "the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1:18). It is the last group which is upon my heart, for those whom God loved enough to save by the gift of His Son, we also ought to love and minister to. Jesus said, "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

Some of the objects of divine love are not yet in the church; therefore, the church should have an outreach. This means to reach beyond, reach out, or extend. In the Old Testament, I see God caring enough about some who dwelt in the sinful city of Sodom that He sent angels to get them out and save them from being destroyed with the city (Gen. 19:15). Today we cannot save people from the eternal penalty of sin, but we can save (deliver) them from the practice and present consequence of sin. When God's children are taught and converted, they turn from their sinful practices (James 5:19,20). When we grow to love our brethren enough to be genuinely concerned about them, it will matter to us how they live and what they do. Such loving concerned hearts will move us toward them, endeavoring

to minister to them by the Word of God, and thereby teaching them how to live the abundant life and so please God. The "work of the ministry" is "the perfecting of the saints" and "the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4: 11, 16); however, I can't believe that the only ministry of the church is performed by the preacher. I believe that every saint has a duty to minister to other saints (Ga. 6: 1,2).

When the Great Commission was given to the disciples, it seems likely that it embraced a dual teaching method. Jesus said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Mt. 28:19-20). It seems to me that Jesus was telling the disciples to reach out by teaching the gospel message. Those that were born again and responded were received and baptized. They were then to be continually taught in the church. Outreach embraces the first teaching before they come and are baptized. Then by our reaching in, the person is continually taught so that he or she may better understand the will of God. Then he goes out to show it to others; this is again outreach and so the circle is completed. As one reaches out to others, they come in and in time reach out to others. So the spiral goes upward and outward, getting larger and larger. If the doctrines of grace and the service of God are a blessing to you, then love others enough to want to share it with them too. This is the process by which the early New Testament church grew, and the lack of such labors has greatly reduced our numbers today. We need more who will serve God by going out into the highways and hedges, compel-

ling others to come in and fill the house of God (Luke 14:23). Empty church houses are a testimony that this is not being done!

Now let us focus our attention on reaching in. Once a child of grace has entered the membership and fellowship of the church, our duty does not stop. Sometimes people are so overly concerned with numbers that they practice the outreach with great fervor, but they may become so busy reaching out that they forget about those within. Some others are so concerned about those within that they never reach out. Both attitudes are wrong! We are not to dwell on numbers but to be concerned about God's people both outside and inside the church. We are to reach out and draw into the church, then we are to continually minister to them after they are in. If after a while they have not grown spiritually, we should be concerned. If they grow cold and indifferent, we should not stand by and watch them slowly drift away; rather

we should pray for them and visit with them, endeavoring to minister to their spiritual needs. Helping people to deal with their problems is a great part of the reach-in ministry of the church. We should care about each of God's children and manifest our loving concern by ministering to them in their hour of need.

Every program in the church should examine its role in the total ministry of the church. The teacher or leader of each program should manifest the same concern for this group that the pastor does for the church. Not only should he invite and encourage people to attend, but also when someone drifts away, he should take time to find the problem and help him in his hour of difficulty. This attitude of concern should then be manifested by every member of that body, even as every member of the church watches over each other for good. Not only would they watch over those attending, but they would be ever striving to involve more laborers

in the work of the Lord. Such concern would stimulate the body and help it to grow. Together such groups could add to and strengthen the total ministry of the church with regard to both reaching out and reaching in.

People need to be loved and have fellowship with those of like belief and hopes. They need to be ministered to, not only by the pastor, but also by the membership. I am not trying to release the pastor from any of his present duties and responsibilities; however, I am encouraging you to join with him in this endeavor and thereby increase the benefits derived. People outside the church and inside expect a pastor to call on them, but when the interest and loving concern of the whole church are added, the benefits are multiplied and the total ministry to those persons is amplified. Pray for the pastor, but also become involved in the ministry of the church to which you belong. It will not only bless your life and that of others, but it will also glorify God, who saved you by His Son.

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## *Grow in Knowledge*

1. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that a great \_\_\_\_\_ from the Lord shall be among them;..."
2. "Her gates are sunk into the ground; he hath destroyed and broken her bars: her king and her princes are among the Gentiles: the law is no more; her prophets also find no \_\_\_\_\_ from the Lord."
3. "And there went out \_\_\_\_\_ from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord."
4. "And he said, Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel set their \_\_\_\_\_ on me, that I should reign: howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's: for it was his from the Lord."
5. "Their blood shall therefore return upon the head of Joab, and upon the head of his seed for ever: but upon David and upon his seed, and upon his house, and upon his throne shall there be \_\_\_\_\_ for ever from the Lord."
6. "But the Spirit of the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him."
7. "So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither awaked: for they were all asleep; because a \_\_\_\_\_ sleep from the Lord was fallen upon them."
8. "I have heard a \_\_\_\_\_ from the Lord, and an ambassador is sent unto the heathen, saying, Gather ye together, and come against her and rise UP to the battle."

# Purposes of the Gospel Cleansing by the Word

by Elder W. M. Mullis  
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(3rd in a series)

**“Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” (John 15:3). “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word” (Psalm 119:9).**

There are many purposes of the gospel. Jesus tells us here that one of the reasons we have the word of God is for our cleansing! How wonderful it is to feel clean. Think about how good you feel when you have been working all day, come home dirty, and are able to take a good bath or shower. Think about how dirty you feel when you have been very sick, and it has been a long time since you have washed your hair. Oh what a blessing it is to finally get a shampoo.

Think about being out in a hog pen, cow lot, or chicken house, working with the animals. Isn't it a pleasure and special blessing to come in to get clean with a good washing?

Jesus declares that there is another kind of cleaning we need! We need a spiritual cleaning, inside and out! **Fundamentally, we need to understand we were cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ, the Living word, NOT by the written or preached word!** This is an “unconditional cleansing.” It is not a cleaning that comes as a result of our belief or obedience. This cleaning by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, which God does for us, is the cleaning that gets us into the eternal Heaven. Though many of God's dear children never hear the preached word of God, never read the written word of God, yet the Living Word of God, Jesus Christ, has cleansed them, and removed their sins as far as the east is from the west. “As far as the east is from the west, so

far hath he removed our transgressions from us” (Psalm 103:12). This is a cleaning God does for us. This perfect, eternal cleansing took place at Calvary. The angel told Joseph, “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: **for he shall save his people from their sins**” (Matthew 1:21). Jesus paid it all! He saved His people from their sins. He cleaned and perfected forever those He chose and sanctified! “For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified (Hebrews 10:14). He did not try to save, or offer to save. He saved His people from their sins! We are forever secure because of the eternal cleansing He did at Calvary.

Next, there is a **practical cleansing that comes to the people of God by His people believing and obeying what God tells us to do in His word!** This is a “conditional cleansing,” which requires our believing and obeying the word of God. This is the cleaning we are to do, rather than the cleaning God has already done for us. We are to clean up the outside and the inside! “For the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord **looketh on the heart**” (1 Samuel 16:7). In Matthew 23:25-28, Jesus says, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make **clean the outside** of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed **appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all un-**

**cleanness.** Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” Our souls need to be cleansed. The word if God is given to us to cleanse us. When we believe and obey the word Of God, we are “clean through the word.” It is so wonderful to have the privilege of feeling clean spiritually, to feel that soul-refreshing joy of being clean through the word which He has given us.

Jesus again emphasized that outward, visible “service and worship” are not acceptable, no matter how clean it looks to men, unless we are clean on the inside! “This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; **but their heart is far from me.** But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Matthew 15:8,9).

We tend to concentrate on the outward cleaning (not committing murder, adultery, drunkenness, etc.) and fail to cleanse ourselves through His word inwardly. Notice the word of God in James 4:8: “**Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.**” The hands AND the heart must both be clean!!! WE are to cleanse our hands. WE are to purify our hearts. God does not do this cleansing for us.

When we hear (through the written or preached word) that we are to repent and be baptized, we are made clean by obeying the word of God! Does water baptism cleanse us from our sins before God, make us fit to enter eternal heaven? NO! “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (**not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer**

**of a good conscience toward God,**) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:" (I Peter 3:21). Water baptism does not put away the filth of the flesh, or wash away our sins eternally. That was accomplished by the work of God at Calvary. But we are clean through the word, have the answer of a good conscious before God, when we do what He tells us to do.

The Church at Corinth was cleaned through the word. They had been rebuked by God (see I Corinthians 5:1-13), because they allowed a member to live ungodly, and had not carried out church discipline. When they heard the word, they obeyed, put away that wicked member of the Church, and were thereby cleansed, saved from the judgments of God on the Church. In the second letter, when they had repented because of the word, Paul said, "For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing, that **ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge!** In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter. Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you" (II Corinthians 7:8-12). Notice the "cleaning or clearing" that took place by them obeying

the word of God, "What carefulness it wrought in you, yea, **what clearing of yourselves.**" There are many Churches today which need a good cleaning, a sincere "clearing of ourselves" by following the word of God. "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you!"

This "**conditional cleansing**" which is a result of our obedience to God, is emphasized repeatedly in the Scriptures. Notice the following passages of Scripture.

1. "**Wash you, make you clean;** put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;

Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: **though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.**

**If ye be willing and obedient,** ye shall eat the good of the land:

**But if ye refuse and rebel,** ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it" (Isaiah 1:16-20).

In obeying the word of God, they would be clean, experiencing renewed fellowship with their heavenly Father. But if they would not hearken to the word, be made clean by it, they would be "devoured by the sword." We can be made clean by the word of God (sword of the Spirit), or be devoured by the sword.

2. "**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.**

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness**" (I John 1:7-9).

**teousness**" (I John 1:7-9).

Once again, this is a "conditional cleansing" that is dependant on us doing what the word of the Lord tells us to do. Jesus said, "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." Walking in the light, confessing our sins, are commandments from the Lord to His born again people. IF we obey His word (walk in the light and confess our sins), we are cleansed, and have the answer of a good conscious before God. Oh how good a shower feels when we are dirty. But how much more wonderful it is to be cleansed in the blood of the Lamb afresh, to feel His cleansing power in our lives, to walk anew in His fellowship in His kingdom, and experience the righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost! (Romans 14:17).

3. "O Jerusalem, **wash thine heart from wickedness, that thou mayest be saved.** How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" (Jeremiah 4:14.)

4. "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and **be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord**" (Acts 22:16).

5. "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let **us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God**" (II Cor. 7:1).

6. "**Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump**" (I Cor. 5:7).

All of the above six Scriptures are the word of God, telling us to do something to cleanse ourselves! God cleanses us for the eternal Heaven by the Living Word. We are to clean ourselves for the kingdom of heaven by obeying the written word! May God help us to rejoice in His unconditional cleansing for eternal heaven, and obey His word to experience the practical, conditional cleansing for the kingdom of heaven as we live each day!

**THE TEN COMMANDMENTS... ARE THE SUM OF THE MORAL LAW.**  
John Witherspoon

# The Saint That Ain't

by Elder Phillip Nichols  
Blackshear, Georgia

I want to begin this article with this question: "Are we really saints; or saints that ain't?" The word saint has reference to someone that is pure, blameless, consecrated or set apart for a holy use. This definition is not saying that saints are sinless. The Scriptures state, in Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Saints are God's children who don't allow sin to reign or control their lives. Righteousness is ruling in their lives.

There are many people who "play religion," but if sin is ruling in their lives, they are simply "saints that ain't."

Romans 14:23 states, "...whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Galatians 5:6 tells us that faith must work by love. These Scriptures tell us that whatever we do must be motivated by faith, and must be motivated by our love for God. We get faith and love from God when he quickens us. He quickens all those that he chose in Christ before the foundation of the world. Although God gives us faith in the new birth, it is up to us to use it. A saint will use that faith in all that he or she does.

The Pharisees had a great show of religion, but it was fake. Their religion dealt with what could be done before others outwardly, not inwardly (from the heart). They were proud of all they were doing. They were self-righteous in trying to be pure before God through their works. An example of this is found in Luke 18: 11-12 which states, "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week. I give tithe of all that I possess." Matthew 6:16-18 teaches us that when we fast, we are not to act like we are. If we fasted for show, or just where others would think something of us, that is our reward. We

should act in a way that fasting would be kept in secret between God and ourselves. God sees this done in secret, and will reward openly. Matthew 23:3 teaches us that what the scribes and Pharisees bid us to observe, we are to do. Yet we are not to do those things after the manner of the Pharisees' works, because they say, and do not. We also find in Matthew 23 verses 23-28 that it is teaching us that the Pharisees and hypocrites paid tithes of everything, but they'd forget the more important manners such as judgment, mercy, and faith. They should have kept these, and paid their tithes as well. They strained at a gnat and swallowed a camel. Their priorities were mixed up! They cleaned their outsides first, and left the insides dirty. They were like the whited sepulchres which outwardly appeared beautiful, but the inside was full of dead man's bones. Outwardly, the pharisees appeared very much righteous, but in actuality were full of hypocrisy and iniquity. God's word warns us repeatedly about a pharisaical attitude.

Matthew 6:1 tells us not to do our works to be seen of men, for if we do, that is our reward. We will miss our reward from God if we do our works for show.

The Scriptures here go on to say that when we do something, don't sound a trumpet or let everyone know what you're doing. Again, in that situation, men's praise is the only reward we will receive.

When we pray, it shouldn't be done only to be seen or heard of others. We are to pray in our "closet" communing with God. God is not pleased with his people praying to impress others with big impressive speeches. Vain repetitions do not cause God to answer our prayers. God knows what we're going to say before we say it. Matthew 5:20

states, "For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." This teaches us that some of what the scribes and Pharisees were doing was right, but we must exceed or do better than their works. We must do works out of love for and trust in God.

Sometimes we might not be pharisaical, yet we are still not becoming of saints. Many times we don't do anything religious around others because we don't want to seem hypocritical. James 4:17 states "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Anytime we don't do something that we should do, and feel that we are still faithful to God, we are wrong and are deceived. James 2:14-20 teaches us that faith alone is of no profit. If a brother or sister is naked and hungry and all we do is say, "I am praying for you," and send them on their way, what profit is that to them. Faith by itself without works is dead, or worthless. In verse 18 of James 2, we find, "Yea, a man may say, thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Verse 19 goes on to tell us that believing in one God is nothing, even the devils do that and tremble. Sometimes, we don't even tremble.

James 1:26-27 teaches "If any man among you **seem** to be religious, and bridled not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, **this man's religion is vain**. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." In the closing of this article, I want us to remember that if we are going to have a closer relationship with God, we must have good works,

yet they must be according to His word and leadership motivated by faith in Christ which worketh by love. Christ Jesus is the light within us, and we are to let His light shine before men. Again our works are not to be done for show,

but when and if others see our good works that they might glorify our Father which is in heaven. God help us to truly be as saints, rich in good works, one that is pleasing to our Saviour.

Some people do not strive to be

saints (to live a clean, godly life). Others claim to be saints, but ain't. May we all diligently strive to be the saints God called us to be. (Romans 1:7)

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# *In the World, Not of the World*

by Bro. Brad Kersey  
Leesburg, Georgia

How many people have heard this phrase before? It speaks to the responsibility of the church to be a light to the world, but without being worldly. I think that Primitive Baptists, as a whole, do a pretty good job of not being "of the world". I have it on my heart to address whether we are "in the world".

Our pastor, Mike Lyons, whom I think highly of, asked the church a very important question a few weeks ago. He presented us with some statistics that revealed that some 75% of people in Lee County are not members of a church. I think that data is somewhat skewed by our proximity to Albany, because it was based on population vs. membership just in Lee County churches. Still, let's say it was 50%. That's an awful lot of people! Salvation certainly is of the Lord, but going out into the highways and hedges and compelling God's people to come into

the house of God to hear the truth is our responsibility. The question that he asked pertained to the legitimacy of the church as an institution "in the world". He asked, "If our church one day suddenly ceased to exist, would anyone know the difference?" If we are totally honest with ourselves, the answer is frightening.

I think the question is certainly applicable to us Primitive Baptists as a denomination. Some other scary questions: When you tell people you are Primitive Baptist, how many people know what that is or have ever even heard of such? When you tell people you are Primitive Baptist, how many say that their grandmother was Primitive Baptist, or that their father was? I'm not going around saying that the sky is falling, but again, if we are honest with ourselves, I think we know where I am heading with this. Our denomina-

tion has declined in numbers over the years, and we risk extinction not from catastrophe or spectacular meltdown, but just from slowly disappearing. Would anyone notice?

Brothers and Sisters, if we truly believe that we are the legitimate purveyors of the truth as set forth in scripture, shouldn't we be telling everyone within earshot? Even though we believe that the Holy Spirit must speak to the heart, shouldn't we be speaking to the ears? Even if it never brings a new member through our doors, shouldn't people know who we are by our actions and our ministry to the world? I think we all know the answers to these questions as well. Please let us continue to be strong in the faith, but let us also work harder to establish ourselves and our legitimacy as God's church. Let us be true to our calling.

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# *Thank You Jesus*

by Sis. Kylee Wheeler, (8 years old)  
Waycross, Georgia

Jesus is the sweetest name I know,  
He sends the sun, stars, moon, and the snow.  
I can use my voice, and His praises sing,  
In heaven and earth, let His truth ring.  
Thank you, Lord, thank you, thank you,  
Thank you Lord, for all that you do!

# Ancestor Worship Among Christians

by Elder Jerry McMinn  
Ripley, Mississippi

It is a religious practice among many people in the Far East to bow in prayer and burn incense at family shrines. They pray to the souls of their dead ancestors to obtain wisdom and guidance for their present needs.

At best, we feel sorry for these people because we consider them to be ignorant of the True and Living God to whom prayers should be directed. Furthermore, we view this type of reverence for the dead to be a form of pagan idolatry from which they should repent.

Nevertheless, ancestor worship of a kind is thriving among Christians in America today. These worshippers may not meet at a specific shrine. They may not bow and offer prayers to departed souls, but they will **RELIGIOUSLY attend Family Reunions on the Lord's Day!**

Conscientious church members who are otherwise dedicated to the service of God will cast that aside if a family reunion is scheduled on a Sunday. Many families will attend four to six family reunions a year, all on Sunday, and think nothing of it.

May I clearly state that I am not opposed in any way to family reunions. I believe we need to give more attention to our families than we often do. What I

am opposed to as contrary to Scripture is the business of holding those family reunions on the Lord's Day.

God has given us six other days in the week to attend to other matters. He has designated that one day **each week is to be given to worship of Him!** There are NO exceptions given for family reunions, camping trips, sporting events, etc.

The Scriptures plainly teach that anything which comes between us and worshipping is a form of idolatry. This could be a job, a vacation, as well as a family reunion. If all the church members in our family connections would take a stand against holding family reunions on Sundays, I believe there would be enough to change the day to Saturday or one of the many legal holidays when most are off from work anyway.

God will be pleased by our efforts to keep His day holy. In fact, we cannot really honor our families and dishonor God at the same time. Do we not look to the Lord to bless and keep our families and to provide for their needs? If we trust Him in this manner, ought we not to conform all our activities to that trust, including family reunions?

Matthew 5:16 reads, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may

see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." The preceding verse warns against putting a candle (our light) under a bushel.

If we do anything which diminishes the good in our lives, it hurts our witness before others. For example, if we attend worship services faithfully, read our Bibles regularly, and do all manner of good deeds; yet, at the same time hold on to such bad habits as cursing or lying, people will not take us seriously in regard to the good that we have done. In effect, we have hidden the good that we do under a bushel of disobedience or sin.

Suppose next Sunday someone looks around the congregation at church and doesn't see you. If they should ask about your absence, what kind of report would you prefer to hear? "He's not here; he **must** be sick." (or) "He's not here; he **never** misses a family reunion!"

If the last statement is true of you, have you not put your light under a bushel that Sunday? Have you not put another activity between you and your duty to God? Think on these things. May the Lord guide you and me to do that which is the most pleasing in His sight.

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## Answers to Grow In Knowledge

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|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Tumult - Zechariah 14:3   | 5. Peace - I Kings 2:33      |
| 2. Vision - Lamentations 2:9 | 6. Departed - I Samuel 16:14 |
| 3. Fire - Leviticus 10:2     | 7. Deep - I Samuel 26:12     |
| 4. Faces - I Kings 2:15      | 8. Rumour - Jeremiah 49:14   |

# God's Gift of Love

by Elder W. A. Mullis  
(deceased)

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." (II Corinthians 9: 15)

The Greatest Gift! Luke 2:8 "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9. And, Lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

13. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

15. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us.

16. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.

20. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."

Hundreds of years before the birth

of Jesus, God had promised His miraculous birth. Thanks be unto God for this lesson and season of the year, "Tis a story that though over and over it is told, it is (to the people who love God) a story that shall never grow old."

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear, it soothes his sorrow, heals his wounds, and drives away his fear."

Not only was the promise of Christ given to those chosen of God, but likewise His birth was announced only to those chosen of God, who looked for redemption according to the promise of God. We can see, not only the great love of God manifested in the appearing of Jesus, but also His faithfulness in keeping His promise to the very jot and tittle, even down to the place and time of the birth of Christ!

These lowly shepherds, in the eyes of the world, who were keeping watch over their flock by night, were highly honored and greatly blessed through the mercies of God in being numbered among the elect of God, and having this announcement made known unto them. Somehow I feel they were among the "Very Elect" of God who had not bowed their knee to the image of Baal, but had been truly faithful and devoted to their God in His service. As shepherds, they were meek and lowly, and probably spent much of their time in talking of the spiritual things of God and of His goodness and mercy in their lives. Surely their treasures must have been in heavenly things, and not earthly, to have been so highly favored upon this earth.

The appearance of this angel of God and the glory of the Lord which shined about them brought great fear in their hearts, but the message of great joy drove away all fear. "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born

this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The great joy which these shepherds experienced in their hearts, could only be known by those of us who have been made to see our lost and ruined condition, then to have Jesus revealed to us as our Lord and Saviour. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." (Psalm 107:8,15,21,31)

Again let us look closely at the words in verse 10. "I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to ALL PEOPLE". This Scripture does not mean the message would be good tidings of great joy to every individual person, as the modern religious world would have it mean, for we know **many were seeking to take the life of Christ even from His birth!** If it had been good tidings of great joy to them, would they have been seeking to take His life? Listen to the Scripture in Rev. 5:9: "**Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood OUT OF every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.**" And to the redeemed of God **among all nations of people**, called by the power of God's Holy Spirit in regeneration, this same message still brings a joy that no other message shall ever equal. How often do you remember to thank God and praise His Holy Name for His goodness and mercy to you? Do you live each day in a way to prove the sincerity of your thanks to God? Actions speak louder than words! Some people show their thanks without their works. May God help us all to show our thanks by our works. May God help each of us to ever keep this thought foremost in our hearts and minds.

Now, notice carefully the words which the shepherds heard: "Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger". Of all the places and conditions in this world for

a person to look for the Son of God, who is King of kings and Lord of lords, this would be one of the last. "For your-sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich". "He made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant". The people of God today, at least the great majority, put their reputation among men ahead and above the obedience of God! How dreadfully shameful this fact is! Yet I believe it to be one of the greatest obstacles in the path of God's people. It is a millstone around our necks that prevents us from being true worshippers and the servants of Christ.

Then suddenly there was a moment of even greater rejoicing in the presence of those shepherds, for there was a multitude of heavenly host praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." The sweetness of that

service and the rejoicing of those shepherds, in the lonely hours of the night as they kept watch over their flock, has probably never been excelled on this earth. They did not tarry, but the Scripture says, "they came with haste to see that which had come to pass, which God had made known unto them."

Consider how greatly God blessed them in that night, then consider how greatly God has blessed us today, to be able to rejoice in the same message! Thank God for His goodness to us as well as unto them! Thank God for His gift of love!

#### Questions

1. Was the time and place of the birth of Christ made known to all men? If not, to whom was it made known?
2. What effect did the presence of the angel of God have on the Shepherds?
3. What effect did the message have

upon them?

4. Is and was the message "good tidings of great joy" to every individual person?

5. What do the words "all people" mean in verse 10?

6. Do you think God or Christ Himself was concerned with the "reputation" of Christ among men? On what Scripture or Scriptures do you base your belief?

7. Do you think this "same mind" is found in the people of God today? Now, let's narrow this question down. Is this "same mind" manifested in your life? Are you ashamed for your friends to know you "wash the saints feet"?

8. What did the shepherds do after the angels had gone back into heaven? Name two things found in verse 15 and 20.

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## *Bible Zigzags*

These are the names of Biblical persons. Each name begins with the last letter of the preceding word.

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|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The pioneer from Ur.</li> <li>2. The Law Giver.</li> <li>3. The boy who was brought up in a church.</li> <li>4. The doctor who wrote a gospel.</li> <li>5. The prophet who disappeared in a chariot of fire.</li> <li>6. Samuel's mother.</li> <li>7. The king who tried to kill baby Jesus.</li> <li>8. A woman of Joppa who sewed for the poor.</li> <li>9. The strong men.</li> <li>10. Ruth's mother-in-law.</li> <li>11. Jacob's father.</li> <li>12. The high priest of the trial of Jesus.</li> <li>13. The first king of Israel.</li> <li>14. The man whom Jesus raised from the dead.</li> <li>15. Builder of the first Temple.</li> <li>16. A Pharisee who went to Jesus by night.</li> <li>17. The disciple Jesus called Peter.</li> <li>18. The Syrian whose leprosy Elisha healed.</li> <li>19. The mighty hunter of Genesis.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>20. "The Sweet Singer of Israel."</li> <li>21. A famous woman judge.</li> <li>22. The prophet who suffered because of an unfaithful wife.</li> <li>23. Moses' brother.</li> <li>24. One of the minor prophets.</li> <li>25. Author of the second gospel.</li> <li>26. One of Job's daughters.</li> <li>27. King of Tyre who helped Solomon build the Temple.</li> <li>28. Sister of Lazarus and Mary.</li> <li>29. The Bible liar.</li> <li>30. His wife.</li> <li>31. The son whom David mourned.</li> <li>32. Famous for his extreme age.</li> <li>33. She was responsible for the death of John the Baptist.</li> <li>34. Her dancing daughter.</li> <li>35. Mother of John the Baptist.</li> </ol> |
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# Things to Remember

by Elder William M. Mullis  
Waycross, Georgia

The word of God repeatedly tells us specifically to **REMEMBER** certain things. Take your concordance and look up the word REMEMBER. Study those verses. The Lord willing, we will have an article each month on a verse telling us to Remember something. Please memorize that text each month, study the article, and discuss with your family the importance of remembering that lesson for the month. Consider carefully each month WHY God said to remember that point of truth. Look at other Scriptures which relate the same truth! Then **THINK ON THESE THINGS!** (Philippians 4:8)

“REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY!” (Exodus 20:8) Scripture: Exodus 20:8-11

You will probably readily recognize this as one of the ten commandments given by God to Moses and the children of Israel. It is the only commandment of these ten which is prefaced with the word “REMEMBER.” Also, it should be noted that eight out of the ten commandments are negative (i.e. Thou shalt **NOT** kill, thou shalt NOT covet, thou shalt **NOT** steal, thou shalt **NOT** commit adultery, etc.) But the text being studied is a POSITIVE command: **REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY!**

It should be mentioned before going into the study of this commandment, that the other nine combined will not raise as much controversy or difference of opinion as this one command: “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy .” For a minister of the gospel to expect everyone to agree with his understanding of what is meant by the command, would be unrealistic. On the other hand, to avoid this command because it is controversial would be unfaithful to his calling.

The word “SABBATH” means **intermission**, and comes from a word meaning “to resist from exertion;” “to rest;” “to put away or put down.” God commanded the children of Israel to have one day in seven as a day of rest -- a day when they were “to put down” normal, strenuous activities, and that day was to be kept holy unto God!

The first place in the Bible where the word “Sabbath” is used is found in Exodus, chapter 16. Please turn to Exodus, chapter 16, verses 22-26. Read

these verses carefully!

There God declares that Israel was not to gather food or do other things on the Sabbath! These verses are very exact as to the requirements of God for His people keeping the Sabbath day!

There are many specific commands of God to Israel about what could not be done on the sabbath day:

Exodus 35:3 “Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day.”

Numbers 15:32,35 “And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall surely be put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp.” To disobey any of these commands concerning the sabbath was most serious, as can be seen from reading Exodus 31:15:

“Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: **whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, HE SHALL SURELY BE PUT TO DEATH!**”

Nehemiah, you will recall, spent much time rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, cleansing and rebuilding the temple. However, in addition to the physical reconstruction of Jerusalem, **Nehemiah reminded the people to KEEP THE SABBATH HOLY!**

Nehemiah 13:15-22 shows the labor of Nehemiah attempting to warn Israel about failing to REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY! Please turn here and read what the people

were doing! They were treading the wine presses, bringing in sheaves, buying and selling wares, fish, and numerous other activities which might not appear detrimental or harmful. But it was! The people heeded Nehemiah’s warnings and stopped buying, selling, and working on the sabbath day! (Please turn and carefully read Nehemiah 13:15-22.)

Looking in the book of Jeremiah, it is also recorded that God warned Israel **STRONGLY** about His wrath being poured out unless they returned to **KEEPING THE SABBATH DAY HOLY!** Please turn to Jeremiah 17: 19-27. For the sake of time here, we will quote just three verses:

21. “Thus saith the Lord; **TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES**, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem;

22. Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, **BUT HALLOW YE THE SABBATH DAY, AS I COMMANDED YOUR FATHERS.**

23. **BUT THEY OBEYED NOT, NEITHER INCLINED THEIR EAR, BUT MADE THEIR NECK STIFF, THAT THEY MIGHT NOT HEAR NOR RECEIVE INSTRUCTION!**”

After Jeremiah warned Israel about not keeping the sabbath day Holy unto the Lord, the people smote him with the tongue and said, “Let us not give heed to any of his words!” ( Jeremiah 18: 18) Following the history of Israel here in the book of Jeremiah and Lamentations, we find Jerusalem

again destroyed by God because the people FORGOT GOD! They felt that God's way was too strict, straight, and narrow, so they chose the broad way which led to destruction!

Let us now look at the New Testament considering "REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY!" In studying, we see that the Pharisees repeatedly charge Jesus Christ with not **keeping this commandment!** On at least seven different occasions, Jesus was charged with doing things that were **not lawful** on the sabbath.

Of course, there were other things that the Pharisees attempted to charge against Jesus Christ; such as the time they brought the adulterous woman to Jesus and wanted Christ to command that she be stoned for being caught in the act of adultery!

Actually, there is a very close connection between these two methods of attempting to discredit Jesus: the Pharisees were not keeping the commandments themselves, but were ever so busy wanting to KILL the woman for adultery and KILL Jesus Christ for supposedly not KEEPING THE SABBATH DAY HOLY. To those Pharisees who brought the adulterous woman, he said, "He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her" (John 8:7)! Jesus was rebuking them for judging the woman while they had not judged themselves! The same kind of words are found when they charged Jesus with doing wrong by healing on the sabbath: Look just one chapter before the Scriptures about the adulterous woman! In John 7: 19-24, Jesus Christ sets everything straight concerning the TRUTH about KEEPING the SABBATH DAY HOLY! Please turn and carefully read John 7:19-24:

19. "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?"

20. The people answered and said,

Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?"

21. Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

22. Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.

23. If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath day?"

24. Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. Jesus was NOT condoning adultery, NOR was He saying it was all right to work and labor as usual on the sabbath! The apostle Paul gives the NEW TESTAMENT method of dealing with those who are guilty of such things. THEY ARE NOT TO BE IGNORED!

In John 7:19-24, Jesus declares first that the Pharisees were so busy trying to find fault with Him that they could not see the good He was doing. Also, He was rebuking them for attempting to KILL HIM for supposedly not keeping the Sabbath day, when "NONE OF YOU KEEPETH THE LAW!"

Repeatedly, Jesus says when confronted about healing people on the sabbath, "It is lawful to do well on the sabbath days!" (Matthew 12:12; Luke 6:9; etc.)

Look at seven instances where Jesus was charged with not REMEMBERING TO KEEP THE SABBATH DAY HOLY!

1. Jesus was rebuked by the Pharisees because His disciples plucked some ears of corn and ate them (Matthew 12:1-8; Mark 2:23-28; Luke 6:1-5). 2. Jesus was accused when He healed a man with dropsy in the house of a Pharisee (Luke 14: 1-6). 3. Jesus was charged as He healed the lame man at the pool of Bethesda on the sabbath (John 5:1-18). 4. Again as Jesus

healed the blind man on the sabbath, he was accused (John 9:1-16)! Now listen closely to these last three! 5. Jesus healed the man with the withered hand on the sabbath day **IN THE TEMPLE** (Matthew 12:9-13); Mark 3:1-6; Luke 6:6-11)! 6. Jesus cast out devils on the sabbath **IN THE SYNAGOGUE** (Mark 1:21-28)! 7. Jesus healed a woman who had been bowed and bent for 18 years - -and it was on the sabbath **IN THE SYNAGOGUE** (Luke 13:10-17)!

Please REMEMBER TWO MAIN POINTS FROM THESE SCRIPTURES: JESUS WAS DOING GOOD, SERVING AND HELPING PEOPLE ON THE SABBATH DAY; AND **JESUS DID NOT FORSAKE GOING TO THE TEMPLE IN ORDER TO DO GOOD!**

Some have desecrated the sabbath day by working and laboring as usual; **others claim to be keeping it holy but do not go to the house of God to worship. Jesus Christ went to the Synagogue every Sabbath day, EVEN WHEN HE HEALED!** (Luke 4:16, 31). Much of His healing was **in the synagogue, and His healing was not done for money!**

Some claim to be serving God by working on the sabbath day! If so, the work should **not** be done for financial gain personally; and going to worship should **not be neglected** to do the work!

Again, as we study the life of the apostle Paul, we find that he, too, was in the synagogue every sabbath! (Acts 18:4; 17:2; 16:13-15; 13:14,42,44). Then **we** have the command in Hebrews 10:25 to NOT FORSAKE "THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER!"

May God help us all to study and pray even more over this text, "REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY!"

**Every day** should be spent serving the Lord; and one day in seven should be a day of rest and worship!

*"If we are not governed by God, then we will be ruled by tyrants."*  
William Penn

# A Little Pink Rose

by Sis. Sarah D. Ledger  
Bartow, Georgia

Our hearts were saddened when we got the call that sister Anna Maude had passed away. She had been a part of our church family as long as I could remember. Although she had not been able to attend worship for several months, I knew just how badly we were all going to miss her.

I once told Sister Anna Maude that she reminded me of a little pink rose that my husband has in his garden. Sister Anna Maude was a petite person and she had laughed and asked me if she reminded me of the rose because it wouldn't grow. I had replied that it wasn't that at all, but because it was always there when someone needed roses. I don't think my husband ever cut roses that he didn't cut from that particular bush. Sister Anna Maude

was like that; she was always available. She never wanted any recognition. She was just to be used in whatever manner she was needed.

Sister Anna Maude's church life was an important part of her existence. When a member of our church family, or a member of the community for that matter, passed away, she prepared what seemed to me an entire meal to take to the family. She did the same thing when we had lunch or supper at the church. She took part in every activity that the church had. Even after her husband became home bound, she would get him settled so that a niece or nephew could watch him for her while she came to worship. Her husband, Brother James, passed away five years ago.

After Sister Anna Maude got to the point that she did not drive, she rode to worship with Sister Martha, her neighbor and good friend. She sat with Sister Martha during Bible Study, but when it was over, she moved to her place across the aisle, one that she had occupied for so many years.

Sister Anna Maude had to go to a nursing facility several months ago in the city to be near her niece and nephew. Recently, they had her transferred to the nursing home here where she passed away. We laid her to rest on a beautiful summer morning. How hard it was to let her go!

I like to think of that little pink rose blooming in God's garden. Her troubles, trials, and cares are all over. All she has to do is be beautiful.

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## Old Testament Kings and Queens

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. What king wrote many of the Psalms?   | 9. What was the king's name? (Esther 1:1)   |
| 2. What king coveted his neighbor's vineyard?  | 10. What king was noted for his wisdom?   |
| 3. What king built the first Temple?   | 11. What queen traveled a long distance to consult him?   |
| 4. What queen threatened the prophet Elijah?   | 12. What king went to the witch of Endor for advice?  |
| 5. What king went insane and ate grass?  | 13. Who was called the Shepherd King?   |
| 6. What king saw the handwriting on the wall?  | 14. What king commanded his subjects to fall down and worship him at the sound of music?                      |
| 7. What queen saved the Hebrew people from annihilation?                                       | 15. What king of Isreal was hidden in a church for six years when a child to save his life? (II Kings 11:2-3) |
| 8. What queen refused to appear at her husband's drunken feast and was divorced as punishment? | 16. What king put Daniel in the lions' den? (Daniel 6)  |

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## Answers to Bible Zigzags

- |            |               |                   |                |
|------------|---------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Abraham | 10. Naomi     | 19. Nimrod        | 28. Martha     |
| 2. Moses   | 11. Isaac     | 20. David         | 29. Ananias    |
| 3. Samuel  | 12. Caiaphas  | 21. Deborah       | 30. Sapphira   |
| 4. Luke    | 13. Saul      | 22. Hosea         | 31. Absalom    |
| 5. Elijah  | 14. Lazarus   | 23. Aaron         | 32. Methuselah |
| 6. Hannah  | 15. Solomon   | 24. Nahum         | 33. Herodias   |
| 7. Herod   | 16. Nicodemus | 25. Mark          | 34. Salome     |
| 8. Dorcas  | 17. Simon     | 26. Keren-happuch | 35. Elizabeth  |
| 9. Samson  | 18. Naaman    | 27. Hiram         |                |

# Bible Reading Calendar for December

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
1	Ezek. 43,44	II Pet. 2
2	Ezek. 45,46	II Pet. 3
3	Ezek. 47,48	I John 1
4	Dan. 1,2	I John 2
5	Dan. 3,4	I John 3
6	Dan. 5,6	I John 4
7	Dan. 7,8	I John 5
8	Dan. 9,10	II John
9	Dan. 11,12	III John
10	Hos. 1-4	Jude
11	Hos. 5-8	Rev. 1
12	Hos. 9,10,11	Rev. 2
13	Hos. 12,13,14	Rev. 3
14	Joel 1,2,3	Rev. 4
15	Amos 1,2,3	Rev. 5

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
16	Amos 4,5,6	Rev. 6
17	Amos 7,8,9	Rev. 7
18	Obad.	Rev. 8
19	Jonah	Rev. 9
20	Mic. 1,2,3	Rev. 10
21	Mic. 4,5	Rev. 11
22	Mic. 6,7	Rev. 12
23	Nah.	Rev. 13
24	Hab.	Rev. 14
25	Zeph.	Rev. 15
26	Hag.	Rev. 16
27	Zech. 1-3	Rev. 17
28	Zech. 4,5,6	Rev. 18
29	Zech. 7-10	Rev. 19,20
30	Zech. 11-14	Rev. 21
31	Mal. 1-4	Rev. 22

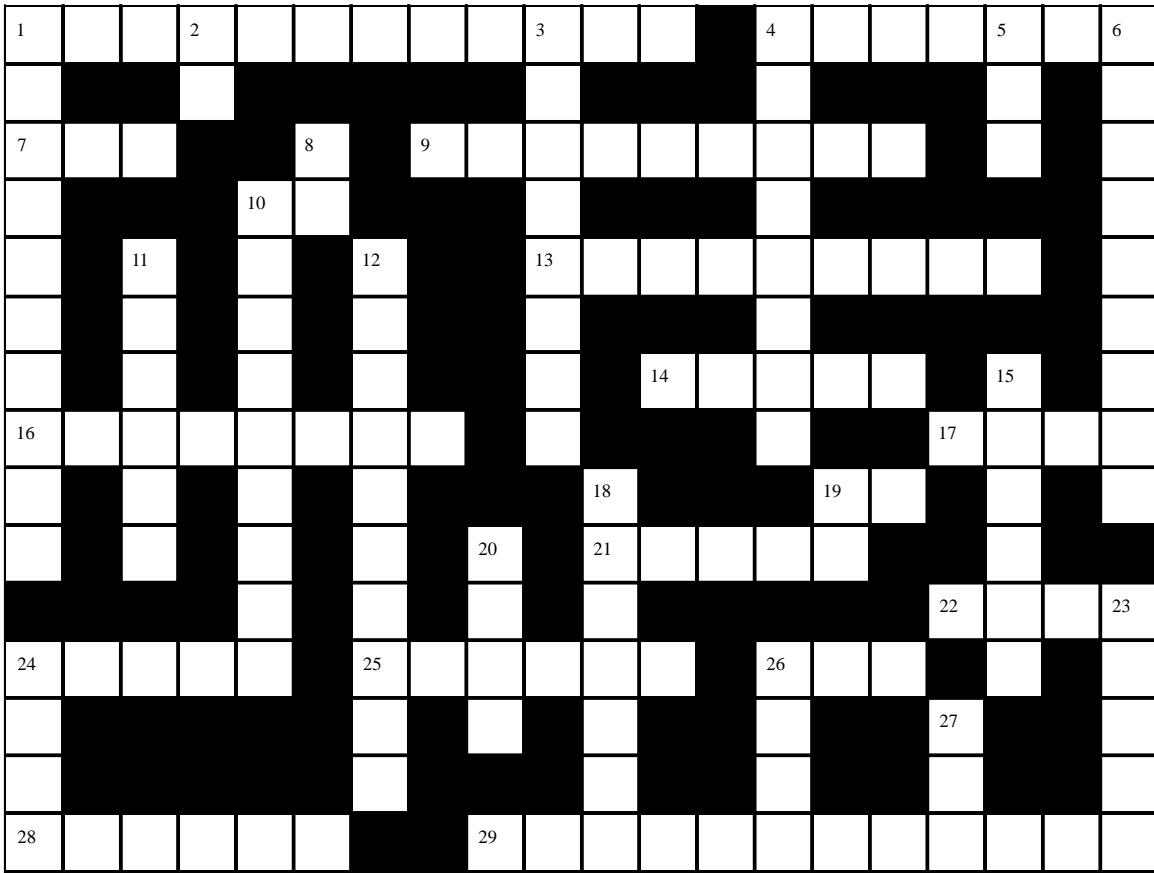
**ANSWERS TO  
CROSSWORD  
PUZZLE VOLUME  
XXIV NOVEMBER  
2007**

1	S	T	R	O	N	2	G	3	P	4	L	5	A	N	6	G	U	I	7	S	H	I	N	8	A
	T					O		R		N		I		E											I
	R		9	J	U	D	G	E		G		V		A						10	T				V
	E							S		E		E		11	A						H				E
12	T	O		13	K			14	T	E	M	P	L	E		15	A	B	S	T	A	I		N	
	C			N				N				S					L				N				
	H			O		16	P	U	T					17	S	A	18	M	E			K		19	V
	E			W		U								T		A			20	H	21	A	S	T	E
22	D	E	C	L	A	R	E			23	H			R		Y				S					N
				E		E				I		A													G
24	B	O	N	D	S			25	G	O			26	M	E	N		27	P	R	O	V	O	K	E
	U			G				R				S		G		E									A
	I		28	Y	E		29	C	A	U	S	E		30	E	N	T	E	R	T	A	I		N	
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31	T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R				F		32	S	C	R	I	P	T	U	R		E	

# Crossword Puzzle

## ACROSS

1. "And the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the \_\_\_\_\_ shall stone him with stones without the camp." 4. "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good \_\_\_\_\_ of great joy, which shall be to all people." 7. "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think \_\_\_\_\_ the Son of man cometh." 9. "...and as his custom was, he went into the \_\_\_\_\_ on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read." 10. "... for it were better for \_\_\_\_\_ to die, than that any man should make my glorying void." 13. "Judge not according to appearance, but judge \_\_\_\_\_ judgement." 14. "How much then is a man better then a \_\_\_\_\_? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days." 16. "But they obeyed not, neither \_\_\_\_\_ their ear, but made their neck stiff, that they might not hear, nor receive instruction." 17. "...He that is without sin among you, let him first \_\_\_\_\_ a stone at her." 19. "And this shall \_\_\_\_\_ a sign unto you;..." 21. "...are ye \_\_\_\_\_ at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?" 22. "Six days may \_\_\_\_\_ be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord..." 24. "And they, came with \_\_\_\_\_ and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger." 25. "And, Lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore \_\_\_\_\_." 26. "Oh that men would praise the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" 28. "Then said they, Come, and let us \_\_\_\_\_ devices against Jeremiah;..." 29. "Moses therefore gave unto you \_\_\_\_\_; ...and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man."



## DOWN

1. "And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them \_\_\_\_\_ this child." 2. "Did Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why \_\_\_\_\_ ye about to kill me?" 3. "For this they willingly are \_\_\_\_\_ of, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the Water and in the water:" 4. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves \_\_\_\_\_, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." 5. "But the heavens and the earth, which are \_\_\_\_\_, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgement and perdition of ungodly men." 6. "Jesus answered, are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he \_\_\_\_\_ not, because he seeth the light of this world." 8. "Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and \_\_\_\_\_ all marvel." 10. "And suddenly there was with the angel a \_\_\_\_\_ of the heavenly host praising God, and saying," 11. "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered \_\_\_\_\_ upon the sabbath day." 12. "Through faith we \_\_\_\_\_ that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." 15. "...but \_\_\_\_\_ ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers." 18. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a \_\_\_\_\_ which is Christ the Lord." 19. "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock \_\_\_\_\_ night." 20. "Ye shall kindle no \_\_\_\_\_ throughout you habitations upon the sabbath day." 23. "...Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made \_\_\_\_\_ unto us." 24. "Thus saith the Lord; Take \_\_\_\_\_ to yourselves;..." 26. "...for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were \_\_\_\_\_ the beginning of the creation." 27. "Whereby the world that then \_\_\_\_\_, being overflowed with water, perished:"