



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

“To testify the gospel of the grace of God.” Acts 20:24

PUBLISHED AS A MISSION PROJECT OF PILGRIMS HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

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ANNUAL BIBLE CONFERENCE

Pilgrims Hope Baptist Church

3084 Woodrow, Memphis, TN 38127

September 29-October 1, 1995

THEME: *THE LORD CHURCHES COMMENDED AND CORRECTED*

ALL ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO COME!

FRIDAY EVENING

5:30 Evening Meal

7:00 Singing

7:25 **THE IDEAL CHURCH**

Eld. Earl Smith

8:05 Singing

8:15 **THE CHURCH IN EPHESUS**

Eld. Jack Duplechain

SATURDAY MORNING

9:30 Singing

9:40 **THE CHURCH IN SMYRNA**

Eld. Lee Roy Dutton

10:20 Song

10:25 **THE CHURCH IN PERGAMOS**

Eld. Ron Crisp

11:05 **BREAK**

11:15 Song

11:20 **THE CHURCH IN THYATIRA**

Eld. Laurence Justice

12:00 **NOON—LUNCH**

SATURDAY EVENING

5:30 Evening Meal

7:00 Singing

7:20 **THE CHURCH IN SARDIS**

Eld. Brooks Glenn

8:00 Singing

8:10 **THE CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA**

Eld. Douglas Meadows

SUNDAY MORNING

10:00 Singing

10:15 **THE CHURCH IN LAODECEA**

Eld. Laurence Justice

10:55 **BREAK**

11:05 Singing

11:20 **THE DESTINY OF THE CHURCH**

Eld. Earl Smith

12:00 **NOON—LUNCH**
(Conference ends when lunch is over)

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Bible Study 10:00 A. M. Sunday

Worship Service 11:00 A. M. Sunday

Evening Service 5:00 P. M. Sunday

Mid-Week Service 7:00 P. M. Wednesday

You Are Welcome!

Bouquets & Brickbats

TENNESSEE: I really enjoyed your article called *Make Me A Barnabas*. It is difficult sometimes for us as Christians to really desire that which is better for us. It is also difficult for Christians to forgive Christians when they fail.

Those who cry loudest against one particular sin or another usually find themselves trapped by that sin before they die, and when it happens to them, they sing a different tale.

I'm not saying we shouldn't cry against sin, the Bible tells the Elder to cry aloud and show my people their sin in the book of Isaiah, but we are to have some compassion and not be judgmental against a brother who falls.

Keep up the good work.

OKLAHOMA: I am still enjoying your publication very much. Keep up the good work. I believe that you are right on the will of man. He is totally depraved. Bro. Camp I hope to see you again some day.

TEXAS: Let me say "Thank you for *The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator*." I read it and enjoy it.

TENNESSEE: I read your article on Barnabas and was encouraged by it.

I was discouraged by some of the responses that Bro. Huffman's article received as recorded in you last issue.

One of the things that has disturbed me for many years is the inability of many Baptists to precisely define the Biblical principle of unity. It is my opinion that any issue that cannot be defined with scriptural precision is not understood (1) and, as a result, is not being obeyed (2). . . . I would welcome a well-considered and Biblical discussion of unity

NEW MEXICO: I enjoy reading your paper very much. The recent articles on the KJV were very good. Keep up the good work. Thank you very much.

ARIZONA: . . . Thanks for forwarding the paper. I do enjoy it and thank you all for it each month. It has been a real blessing and does me much good for the challenges it sends forth.

In the May issue thee was an article by Bro. Huffman on charitableness. It was a good, no, an excellent article. But on the end I was left "hanging" (Pg. 5, rt. col.), and I did not know the ending. *(The brother is right. I inadvertently cut off the last three lines or so of Bro. Huffman's article and did not know it until now. At the end of this letter see ending. Please forgive my oversight. RWC)*

I've been meaning to write for some time but have failed you. Please forgive me. Your paper is worth reading and thank you for the blessing and the great privilege.

The Lord bless you in your labors. Please continue to contend on in our God Given Faith. Thank you for all your help.

THE LAST PARAGRAPH OF BRO. HUFFMAN'S ARTICLE, SOME OF WHICH WAS CUT OFF:

"This article concerns the subject of

REMEMBER THEM...

By Billy Holladay

(Wednesday, 2-16-83)

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The following article is a lesson Bro. Billy Holladay taught on Wednesday evening immediately after Bro. Charles Souder left the pastorate of the Pilgrims Hope Baptist Church. For those who may not know, Bro. Souder is not doing well at this time. The cancer has spread in his body and he is enduring a good deal of pain. The good news is the doctor says the cancer he has is not fatal.

Bro. Souder and his wife recently celebrated their sixty-first anniversary. We congratulate them on three score and one year together.

We present this article as a salutation of respect for him and other former pastors, living or asleep in Jesus. May the Lord's churches heed the admonitions set forth in this message. (Wayne Camp)

Now we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake... (1 Thes 5:12, 13). Everyone would probably agree that these verses refer to pastors, and set before us what one's attitude should be toward his pastor. Commentators Leon Morris and William Hendriksen say the word **know** has the idea of knowing fully, appreciating at their true worth. There is a similar admonition in Heb 13:7, except for a difference in tense: *Remember them that had the rule over you, men that spake unto you the word of God; and considering the issue of their life, imitate their faith* (Heb 13:7, ASV-1901). Weymouth renders it: *...your former leaders...* Knox translates it: *...those who have had charge of you...*

The passage in First Thessalonians tells us that our present pastors are to be appreciated and esteemed very highly, not just because of their divine call (they are due our utmost respect for that), but because of their **work**. That implies labor and toil: *who labor among you...* They exert themselves in the interest of others. In love they labor—warning, admonishing, helping, encouraging. They often spend and are spent out of love for the Lord and love for those to whom they minister (2 Cor 12:15). The work of

pastors requires strenuous efforts, both physical and mental, which often result in weariness of body and fatigue of mind. Mainly, the work of pastors revolves around the Word—their faithful ministering of the Word of God. That involves untold hours of study and preparation. I have never taken a poll or survey, but I would think a pastor's direct efforts on preparation would require a **minimum** of one hour per 5 minutes of sermon/lesson. For three messages, that's at least 24 hours, besides his **personal** scripture reading/study and prayer (which are musts), and other routine study/research. That's at least 40 hours of work per week which we never directly see him doing! Then there's the visiting and counseling at all hours of the day and night, the general administration of the Lord's church, and, oh yes, the three hours or so of actual preaching and teaching, which may be the only "work" many of us actually see. It has been truly said, faithful pastors are among God's best gifts. They are to be appreciated and esteemed very highly by us all.

Then, according to the verse in Heb 13, those men who faithfully *spake unto you the word of God* are to be *remembered* when they are no longer serving in that capacity. Now that's a rather amazing admonition, don't you think? How could we ever forget that dear one who **labored** among us? Who admonished and cajoled; who warned and encouraged; who preached the Word faithfully *in season and out of season*; who listened sympathetically and who spoke authoritatively—Forget him?! Alas, how fickle human nature, even in the redeemed! How tragic that those who have truly spent and been spent for the sake of the word and for the benefit of God's people are sometimes so quickly forgotten.

I am reminded of the chief butler who was in prison with Joseph. After he was released and restored to his position in accordance with Joseph's word, it is written of him, *Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgat him* (Gen 40:23). Likewise, King Ahasuerus was very appreciative of Mordecai's heroic warning and even had it recorded

in the official record. But that was it. Mordecai was soon forgotten and, after a while, the king didn't even remember what, if anything, he'd done to show his appreciation (Ester 6:2, 3). There is no telling how many faithful pastors of the past are now forgotten as the poor wise man of Eccl 9:14-15: *There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.* Yes, dear ones, the admonition is necessary. *Remember your former leaders* includes thankfulness unto God for them, speaking well of them, and putting into practice their teachings. As Paul's attitude toward the church at Philippi, so should our attitude be toward faithful past pastors: *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you* (Phil 1:3).

A word of caution here. As callously forgetting them is one extreme to be avoided, so is the opposite perversion—our past pastors are not to be remembered with idolatrous veneration. We Baptists look askance at our Roman Catholic friends in their reverence of the very bones of some of their departed great ones, while we (sometimes) rename churches in honor of our own past pastors, or dedicate buildings to their memories. Paul had no such carnal memorials in mind; they are to be remembered spiritually, in the way lived (1 Cor 11:2; 1 Thes 1:8, 9, 2:9) and in what they taught (Acts 20:18-21; 2 Thes 2:5).

Neither should a previous pastor be remembered in such a way that causes divisiveness. On the one hand, we (who are not pastors) know that all pastors have their faults(?). So, to remember them (to others) as though they had been perfect is to invite rebuttal, which leads to divisiveness. On the other hand, to remember them by dwelling on their shortcomings is sure to set others to their defense, and, again, divisiveness. Remember, the deplorable situation at Corinth seems to have been based, at least in part, on a carnal evaluation of preachers (1 Cor 1:11-12).

Let previous pastors be remembered—fondly remembered—for their faithful ministering of the Word of God. Let them not, however, be remembered in such a way that will make an impossible situation for the new pastor. A few years ago, Gene Bartow became the head basketball coach at UCLA after John Wooden retired. An impossible

situation! How can a mere mortal successfully succeed a legend, be he a coach or a pastor? Bartow couldn't. Although his teams won, there were too many comparisons—he didn't win as many as coach Wooden; he didn't do things like coach Wooden, etc.—and the fans never fully accepted him or his authority. The pressure was too great and Bartow resigned after a couple of seasons (UCLA has gone through a succession of coaches since). I know of a very, very similar thing that occurred in a Kentucky church when their beloved pastor of many years died. The man who succeeded him was imminently qualified and a fine preacher, but was never really accepted and was gone within a relatively short time. By all means, remember our past pastor, but be careful of too close a comparison, especially of personality traits; Apollos could not be a Paul, nor vice versa.

Although we can't get away from the sentimentality of it (and who wants to?), sentiment is not the reason for the admonition to remember. You'll recall that the Hebrew Christians were under extreme pressure to refute their profession and return to Judaism. They were persecuted, shunned by family and friends alike, barred from the temple, mocked, and confronted with difficult questions concerning their faith. Many had already abandoned their profession and gone back to the *weak and beggarly elements* of Judaism. Paul's immediate purpose in calling upon them to remember their past leaders was to fortify them against **departing from the faith**. In effect he was saying, "If you bear steadily in mind their instructions, you will be able to *withstand the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*" Our Lord said in John 10:4, 5, *And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.* That is the divine order. If we have known the teaching of the true servants of Christ, and be not *forgetful* hearers, we shall be neither attracted to nor deceived by false teachers and their doctrines.

Remember them that had the rule over you ... imitate their faith, or, as the KJV renders it, *whose faith follow*. Here is the greatest honor one can bestow upon an ex-pastor. In his old age, John reported, *I have no greater joy than to hear that my*

children walk in truth (3 John 4). Knowing that meant more to him than if they had bestowed a title on him, erected a monument to his memory, or named a church after him! It's far more pleasing and honoring to God, too. No doubt, many who sit under the ministry of God-called pastors agree with their doctrine, enjoy their preaching, and speak well of them, but do not put into practice their principles or adopt their example. The whole thrust of this admonition is that we are to remember our leaders so as to be influenced to live a faithful, holy life.

A pastor has the responsibility to set a good example for those entrusted to his oversight. 1 Tim 4:12 admonishes pastors in particular to be .. *an example of (for) believers, in word, in conversation (manner of living), in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Further, In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech, that cannot be condemned ...* (Titus 2:7, 8). In so far as pastors have lived before the people in this manner,

the people are called upon to *remember, ... to follow*, to adopt into their own life-styles these godly traits and characteristics.

Certainly, no man is perfect. All have their failings and mannerisms and idiosyncracies. But these are not what's in view. Such should be neither imitated nor used as an excuse for altogether rejecting a pastor's example. Paul recognized that. He called on the Corinthian Christians to *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ* (1 Cor 11:1). It is that *following after Christ* that is to be remembered and used as a model of conduct and attitude. For this cause I sent unto you Timothy, ... ***who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church*** (1 Cor 4:17).

To remember them—to call to mind their counsels, their warnings, their exhortations; to treasure up in the heart their instructions; to gratefully meditate upon their untiring efforts to establish us in the faith—that's the God-honoring

THE COMMONLY BELIEVED LIE CONCERNING GOD'S WILL AS REVEALED IN II PETER 3:9

By Wayne Camp

TEXT: *2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

INTRODUCTION

In the last issue I wrote concerning the commonly believed lie about the alleged free will of man. In this message we will look at a lie that is commonly believed concerning the will of God as set forth in II Peter 3:9. The majority of professing Christians believe this verse that I have read has a universal application. They believe that the *any* and *all* in the verse are universal in scope encompassing every last person in the world, yea, every last person in the human race, no exceptions. Many believe that all verses that speak of election or predestination must be rationalized and neutralized by this verse and John

3:16. A person said to me recently, "I interpret everything in the Bible in the light of what I believe about John 3:16. Others take the same position except they determine the interpretation of every verse that speaks of God's eternal election and predestination in the light of what they believe about II Peter 3:9.

If I set forth the fact that God has "*from the beginning chosen*" certain ones "*to salvation*" (II Thes. 2:13), I am informed that I must interpret that in the light of II Pet. 3:9 and the conception that it is all inclusive in its scope. Or, I am told that it must be interpreted in the light of John 3:16 and somebody's idea that it is universal in scope.

My subject is, *The Commonly Believed Lie Concerning the Will of God as Revealed in II Pet. 3:9*. Some may feel that I am being a little harsh classifying the generally held position on II Pet. 3:9 as a lie. If it is not true; it is a lie. And I doubt that any will deny that it is *commonly believed*. I might go a little further and say that it is *commonly*

believed among Baptists. I repeat, if it is not the truth it is a lie and since it is commonly believed it falls into the category of *commonly believed lies*.

I do not deny that many hold to this commonly believed lie ignorantly but that does not change the fact that it is a commonly believed lie. Others believe this lie because they do not have a love for truth. **2 Thessalonians 2:10-11** *And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.* Regardless of why men believe any lie, their believing it does not keep it from being a lie.

I believe II Peter 3:9. I have no quarrel with it. As a matter of fact, I rejoice in the wonderful truth it proclaims, a truth which I will set forth near the end of this message. I regularly use it in messages to show the certainty of the salvation of God's chosen people. That is what it does.

I remember one of my instructors in seminary telling us that most people interpreted II Peter 3:9 wrongly. Although he did not believe the doctrine of election, he insisted II Peter 3:9 did not have the entire human race in view, but had the saved in view. Bro. Stevenson's position was that the verse was assuring the eternal security of all the saved. He held that the *any* and *usward* of this verse were restricted to the saved. God was not willing that any of the saved should perish. That is a better interpretation than most people place on it.

And, I should also proclaim loudly and clearly that the verse is not an enemy of the doctrine of election; it confirms it very strongly. In this message I will not be arraying other verses against II Peter 3:9. Rather, I will be showing how, when interpreted in the light of its context and according to standard principles of interpretation, it beautifully harmonizes with all other verses of the Bible, even those teaching the doctrine of election.

May I also assure you, Dear Reader, I am not here teaching that God saves sinners against their will. When I was saved I was willing. When he drew me, I ran after him. When he called me I came. I was one of his sheep and I heard his voice. I was one of his people and he made me willing in the day of his power. I was chosen, though I did not know it, and he caused me to approach unto him. I was given to Christ and was drawn to him by the Father. I had

vowed that morning that there was no way they were going to "get me" that day. They didn't but God did. And I assure you, when I came to Christ, I was more than willing, I was eager and thirsty for the water of life. I hope, therefore, that no one will misrepresent me and say that I am teaching that God saves sinners against their will. Every sinner that has ever come to Christ has come to him willingly.

THE LIE: THE ANY AND ALL OF II PETER 3:9 ARE UNIVERSAL IN SCOPE SHOWING IT IS GOD'S WILL AND PURPOSE THAT EVERY PERSON IN THE HUMAN RACE BE SAVED

II Peter 3:9 teaches that it is God's will that not one single person in the human race perish but that every person come to repentance. God is not willing that *any* should perish; he is absolutely unwilling that a single person of the human race perish. It is God's will and purpose that *all men without exception* come to repentance and eternal life in Christ Jesus.

This lie goes on to say that God is trying every way he can to cause men to come to repentance and faith, all men without exception, but cannot and does not in any way affect their free will in bringing them to Christ. God will move heaven and earth before he will violate the free agency of men.

So goes the assertions associated with this commonly believed lie.

THE TRUTH: IF GOD'S WILL AND PURPOSE IS THAT ALL MEN, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, BE SAVED, THEN ALL MEN, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, WILL BE SAVED

I said, and I say again without any hesitation, *"If God's will and purpose is that all men, without exception, be saved, then all men, without exception, will be saved."* God's power is such that no one can keep him from saving if it is his will to do so. **Daniel 4:35** *And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?* Note the superiority of God's will over the will of man. No man can stay the hand of God. No man can stop God from doing his will. Ah, but the reverse is not true. God can stop man any time he is ready to do so. I

will deal with this later but for the moment, please keep this verse in mind. God does as he wills among the inhabitants of the earth.

There is absolutely nothing that is too hard for him to do. ***Genesis 18:14 Is any thing too hard for the LORD?*** Sarah was as good as dead. Abraham was as good as dead. They were well past the age for bearing children. Yet, the angel of the Lord declares that Sarah shall have a child conceived in her dead womb by body-dead Abraham. How? Through the invincible power of God. Nothing is too hard for him. And, he who can do such a thing can and does do as he wills ***“among the inhabitants of the earth.”*** And, not one inhabitant of the earth ***“can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou?”*** What a glorious truth! How wonderful that the creature cannot control the creator! Now, if it be the will and purpose of God to save all men, without a single exception, he who does according to his will among the inhabitants of the earth will surely save all men, without exception. He is unwilling that one of the ***US*** and the ***ALL*** of II Peter 3:9 perish, and none of them will perish. But, more on this later.

God is able to quicken anyone whom he chooses; in fact he does quicken whom he will. ***John 5:21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.*** Now, notice please that the Son, as well as the Father, quickens ***“whom he will.”*** The verse does not say, ***“He quickens whosoever wills for him to quicken them.”*** Man does not will quickening or regeneration for himself. ***John 1:13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*** The quickening of a dead sinner is the work of God according to the will of God. If it be his will to quicken all men without exception, he will surely quicken all men without exception.

He always does as he pleases, so, if he was pleased to save every last descendant of Adam and all the fallen angels he would do it. ***Psalm 115:3 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.*** ***Psalm 135:6 Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places.*** There is no way to equivocate. There is no possible evasion from the truth of these verses. God does as he wills, where he wills, when he wills. That includes his will as set forth in II Peter 3:9!

He does all his pleasure; if it is his pleasure to save

every last person in the human race consider it done because he has unequivocally declared, ***“My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”*** (Isa. 46:10). How much of your pleasure will you do, Almighty God. ***“I will do all my pleasure!”*** Does that include your will and pleasure as expressed in II Peter 3:9? ***“I will do all my pleasure!”*** How can we be assured you will do all your pleasure. ***Isaiah 46:9 “I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me . . . I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass.”***

THE QUESTIONS: SCRIPTURE SUGGESTS A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS WHICH INDICATE GOD HAS NOT WILLED TO SAVE ALL MEN WITHOUT EXCEPTION

Since salvation is of the Lord and wholly of his grace, why does he not save all men without exception? ***Jonah 2:9 Salvation is of the LORD.*** This is a question that must be answered by those who affirm and insist that the ***all*** and ***us*** of II Peter 3:9 are universal in scope. Salvation is not a joint venture between God and man as the infamous heretic, Jimmy Swaggert infers. “God has already done everything heaven can do for the salvation of mankind. He left nothing undone. When Jesus said from the cross, ***‘It is finished,’*** he meant exactly that. There was nothing more that could be done. The plan of salvation was eternally finished. ***It was no longer up to God, it was now up to man***” (This last emphasis mine, RWC, Editor) (Evangelist Jimmy Swaggert, ***The Evangelist***, September, 1983). Salvation is of the Lord, not of the Lord and the sinner, as Swaggert declares.

If it be God’s will that not a single human being perish, why did he not choose all to salvation? It is evident that some were chosen to salvation, and, the very fact that God chose some is an indication that all are not chosen. ***2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.)***

If it be God’s will that not a single human being perish, why did he not give them all to Christ to save? Some were given to Christ and those given to Christ do come to him. ***John 6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*** Since all those given to Christ by the Father do come to Christ

and are saved, it seems he could have given all men to Christ to save if it was his will that not a single person perish.

If it be God's will that not a single human being perish, why did Christ only come to give eternal life to those given him by the Father rather than coming to give eternal life to all men? It is true that Christ came to give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him. *John 17:2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.* If it is God's purpose, will, and desire to save every last person in the human race, one wonders why all were not given to Christ so that he would give them eternal life. Yet, this verse clearly indicates that Christ came to give eternal life to *as many* as the Father had given him, no more and no less. The words, *to as many as thou hast given him* are obviously limited in their scope. There is no way they can be made to be universal, encompassing the human race entirely.

If it be God's will that not a single human being perish, why does God not grant all repentance as he does some? In his second epistle to Timothy Paul clearly enunciates the fact that it is God who grants repentance and strongly infers that he does it sovereignly and particularly. *II Timothy 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.* Two times in the book of Acts we learn that repentance is something given or granted by God. It is not something men do in and of themselves. God must grant repentance if a man repents. *Acts 5:31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. Acts 11:18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.* If it be the plan of God to bring all men to repentance, why does he not grant repentance to all men, without exception? Why would Paul admonish that certain ones be instructed *if God peradventure will give them repentance?* Is it conceivable that God peradventure may not grant some repentance? It is abundantly evident that God does not grant all men repentance for many die impenitent. It is up to God to grant or not grant repentance or Paul's words make no sense.

If it be God's will that not a single human being

perish, why does he not give all men faith, as he does some? It is declared in Scripture that all men do not have faith. *2 Thessalonians 3:2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.* But God does give some faith. *Philippians 1:29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.* Faith is essential if one would have eternal life. One must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ or he will surely perish. Why then does God not give all faith, if it is his will that all believe?

If it be the will of God that all men without exception come to repentance, why are not all made willing by his power? Some are made willing by the invincible power of God. I think none will question the suggestion that God could cause all men to be willing to come to Christ. Yet Jesus said to some, *John 5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.* There are some who will not will to come to Christ. But there are some who will be willing to come to Christ. *Thy people shall be willing.* His chosen and called people shall be willing. When will they be willing? In the day of God's power. When God, by his invincible power, regenerates and calls them they will be willing.

If it be the will of God that all men without exception come to repentance, why are not all chosen and caused to approach unto Christ? Does God actually cause some to approach unto him? Does God cause some to come to him through the Lord Jesus Christ? *Psalms 65:4 Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts.* It is apparent from this verse that God does cause some to come to him. If God can and does cause some to come to him, why does he not cause all without exception to come to him? He could! But it is abundantly evident that he does not. If he is trying to save every last person in the human race, why does he not simply cause all men to come to him? Does God have the sovereign right to cause some to come to him and to leave some others in their sins without causing them to come to him?

If it be the will of God that all men without exception be saved, why are not all enabled to come to Christ? Salvation is in the Lord Jesus Christ. No one can come to the Father except through the Son. We have already seen that there are those

who were given to Christ and all of these come (Jn. 6:37). But, all do not come to Christ and none can come unless drawn and enabled to come by the Father. **John 6:44** *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.* It is indisputably evident that one cannot come to Christ unless he is drawn by the Father. It is equally evident that those who do come to Christ do so because they are enabled to do so by the Father. **John 6:65** *And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.*

God's sovereign bestowal of his gracious favors is often illustrated in Scripture. In the days of Elijah there was a terrible famine in the land. There was not a drop of rain for three and one-half years. When Elijah needed food, the Lord sent him to a Gentile widow who was near starvation and she was blessed by a continuous supply of oil and meal. Most know the story so I will not elaborate further. When Jesus came preaching he said, **Luke 4:25-26** *But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; 26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.* Why did God not send Elijah to all the widows, especially the widows in Israel, and give them all the exact same opportunity? Because it was not the will of God to do so! He could have. He could have halted the famine at any time. But, he sent Elijah to one single, solitary widow in the city of Serepta of Sidon. She, and she only, was blessed with this abundant supply of food. Did God have the right to show this special favor to this one, particular widow without bestowing the same favor to others? Was he obligated to send Elijah to every last widow in the world and give them the same opportunity to feed Elijah and be blessed? Jesus said, **"Unto none of them was Elias sent."** It is not that that he was sent to all, gave all the same opportunity, but none was willing to feed Elijah. No, **unto none of them was Elias sent.** One and only one woman was given this opportunity. Did God have the right to be so limited and particular in this matter? Certainly! After all, he is God who is gracious to whom he will be gracious and is merciful to whom he will be merciful. He is God who loved Jacob and hated Esau.

Jesus went on to further illustrate the sovereignty of God in the bestowal of his gracious favors. **Luke 4:27** *And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.* Leprosy is used in Scripture to illustrate the sinful state of depravity in which all men are born. In the days of Elisha there were many lepers in Israel. God did not cure a single one of them. **"None of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian,"** said Jesus. But, God did cleanse Naaman, a Syrian. Is there any reader who doubts that God could have cleansed all the lepers in Israel, plus Naaman? Yea, he could have cleansed every leper in the world with a simple word. But, he did not. He did not cleanse a single Israelite leper. He cleansed Naaman, the Syrian. This is a classic illustration of how God is gracious to whom he will be gracious, has compassion on whom he will have compassion, is merciful to whom he will be merciful, and hardens whom he will harden (Rom. 9:18).

Since God apparently has the right and exercises the right to cleanse one leper and leave all other lepers with their leprosy, does he not also have the sovereign right and does he not exercise the sovereign right to save one sinner whom he has chosen while leaving others whom he has not chosen in their sins? Jesus used a disease that is typical of sin to illustrate God's sovereignty in delivering from sin.

If it is the will of God that all men without exception be saved, why did Christ refuse to pray for the world but prayed only for those given to him by the Father? In the light of the interpretation of II Peter 3:9 by the majority of preachers and others today, one is made to wonder. Jesus said emphatically, ***I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.*** (John 17:9). Would Jesus refuse to pray for some folks while at the same time trying to save them. He not only prayed for those whom he had at the time but ***"for them also which shall believe on me through their word."*** His prayer is by no means universal. It is for those given to him by the Father. In encompasses all those who had already come to him and all who would come to him. One wonders, "If God is trying every possible way to save the entire human race, and is showing none any favor over others, why would Jesus pray a prayer that was limited and particular in its scope?" Why would he

not pray for the whole world? Why would he discriminately say, *“I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me”*? Was it right for Jesus to only pray for certain ones and not pray for all? Was it right for Jesus to pray only for those given to him by the Father and not pray for the rest of mankind?

If it is God’s will and purpose that all men without exception be saved, why did he ordain some to eternal life but not all? Acts 13:48 And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. Not all the folks at this place believed. As many as were ordained to eternal life did believe. Apparently those who did not believe were not ordained to eternal life. Acts 13:18 stands in contradiction to the *commonly believe lie* about II Pet. 3:9.

If it is God’s purpose and will that all men without exception come to repentance, why did he make some vessels unto dishonor while making others vessels unto honor? Romans 9:21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? If one reads the context of this verse it is unequivocally evident that God, as the Great Potter does make some vessels unto honor and others unto dishonor. There can be no doubt about that. As the Potter he has that right and as God he exercises that right, making some vessels unto honor and some vessels unto dishonor. Will any suggest that God, the Great Potter of all creation, does not have at least as much sovereignty over the vessels he makes as the potter in the pottery shop has over the vessels he makes?

If God seeks the salvation of all without exception and it is his sovereign will that all, without exception, come to repentance, why does he harden some while having mercy on others? Romans 9:18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Can that really be true? Does God really have mercy on whom he will have mercy and really harden whom he wills to harden? Either he does or Paul and the Holy Spirit lied when this verse was written.

The questions continue to come. **If it is truly the will and purpose of God to save all men and he is unwilling that any of the human race perish, why does he make some who are vessels of wrath fitted**

to destruction, while others are made vessels of mercy prepared for glory? Is it conceivable that God would make some vessels of wrath fitted to destruction while making others vessels of mercy which are prepared for glory? Those who hold the *commonly believed lie concerning the will of God* as they think his will is set forth in II Peter 3:9 would have to say it is inconceivable that God would make some men vessels of wrath fitted to destruction while making others vessels of mercy prepared for glory. Yet, here it is out of the same context as we have just read. *Romans 9:22-23 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.* Does God have that right? Has God exercised that right? God not only has the right, he exercises the right to do what he wills with that which is his. And, in the exercise of that sovereignty which belongs to God, he has made some vessels of wrath to be destroyed to the glory of his of justice, wrath, and power. And, to magnify and glorify his mercy and grace he has made some to be vessels of mercy and these he has before prepared for glory. In the light of the commonly believed lie concerning II Peter 3:9, I would like to see this passage harmonized.

If it is the desire, will and purpose of God that not one person of the human race perish, why did he ordain some to condemnation? Are there some who are ordained to condemnation? Let the inspired holy man of God, Jude, answer that question. *Jude 4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation . . .* No man could before of old ordain himself to condemnation. God would not give Satan the power and authority to ordain some to condemnation for he would ordain all to condemnation. The ordination of some to condemnation is the prerogative of none but God and since some are definitely ordained to condemnation and this ordination took place a long time ago, we must conclude that God ordained some to condemnation and there is no way that harmonizes with the idea that he is unwilling that any perish.

If it be God’s will that all men without exception come to repentance and that not one perish, why does he blind some so that they cannot believe? Does God, really blind some so that

they cannot see spiritually? Does God truly harden the heart of some so that they cannot understand with their hearts and be converted? Our Lord Jesus Christ taught that he does and has. *John 12:39-41 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.* How can that be harmonized with the commonly held interpretation of II Peter 3:9?

If it be God's will and purpose that all men without exception come to repentance why does he permit Satan to blind the minds of some so that they will not be saved? There is no doubt that God could keep Satan from blinding them lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them. The fact remains, however, that Satan does blind some of the lost so that they are not saved. *2 Corinthians 4:3-4 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* There is no doubt that God does prevent Satan from blinding some because some are saved. If God is trying to save all men without exception as some claim, why does he allow the blinding of some by Satan and prevent the blinding of others by Satan?

If, as many insist II Peter 3:9 teaches, God wills the salvation of the entire human race without a single exception, why are some like brute beasts who are made to be taken and destroyed? 2 Peter 2:12 But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption.

I had several other questions that I compiled while driving to Michigan recently, but these should suffice to show the weakness of this commonly believed lie concerning II Peter 3:9

(This message will be concluded in the next issue of The Grace Proclamator & Promulgator. Sorry for the inconvenience but just did not have the space this time. I could have included a bit more of it this time but this was a logical breaking point. Be sure to hold on to this issue in the event you wish to refer back to it, maybe reread it, when you receive the next issue.)

DO I KNOW THE BIBLE?!

(FROM A SERMON BY ELD. BILL SASSER)

There was a church I heard about that called a man to preach, and they called him in and said, "Brother, we want to examine your knowledge of Scripture. Do you know the Bible?"

He said, "Do I know the Bible!"

A deacon said, "Well, John, you say you know the Bible?"

He said, "Yes sir, I know the Bible."

One of the other deacons said, "Well, why don't you tell us the story of the Good Samaritan?"

"Well sir," he said, "There was a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho, but he fell among thorns and the thorns sprung up and choked him. And as he went he didn't have any money, but he met the Queen of Sheba and she gave him a thousand talents of gold and a hundred changes of raiment. Then he got into a chariot and he drove furiously, and while he was going he passed under a big juniper tree. And don't you know, when he went under that juniper tree, his hair caught on a limb and he hung there many days and many nights. The ravens brought him food to eat and water to drink, and he ate five thousand loaves of bread and two fishes. One night while he was hanging there asleep his wife, Delilah, came along, and she cut off his hair and he fell down on stony ground.

"But, you know, he got up and went on and it began to rain. And it rained forty days and forty nights, and he hid himself in a cave and lived on locust and wild honey. Then he went on until he met a servant who said, 'Come and take supper at my house.' But he made an excuse and he said, 'No, I won't go for I've married a wife and I can't go.' The servant went out into the highways and hedges and compelled him to come in. After supper he went on until he finally came down to Jericho, and when he got there he looked up and saw that old Queen Jezebel sitting way up there high in the window. And she was laughing at him, and he hollered up there and said, 'Throw her down.' And they threw her down, and he said, 'Throw her down again,' and they threw her down seventy times seven. And of the fragments that remained thereof, they took up twelve baskets full, besides women and children. They said, 'Blessed are the piece makers.' Now whose wife do you think she'll be on that great judgment day? And

(See, Bouquets, Cont. P. 12, Left Col.)

Bouquets, Cont. from Page 2

CHARITABLENESS. If you have missed my point, so be it. If you have been reading with an open mind, may God use these words to His glory and to the good of His people.

Duncan, Oklahoma—March, 1995

FLORIDA: Keep pressing forward in the work of the Lord. I pray the Lord will continue to bless you and the work He has entrusted to your care. The eternal grace of God be with you.

ILLINOIS: I have enjoyed reading your newsletter for sometime from a friend. I am now requesting that you put me on your mailing list. If you have other material that we might be interested in at the church, please inform me. I would like information regarding the use of wine or grape juice for the Lord's Supper.

TENNESSEE: Please send me 10 copies of the August, 1995, issue of your Publication, "*The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator.*"

TEXAS: I wish to thank you for adding me to your mailing list for "*The Grace Proclamator and*

Promulgator." I have enjoyed reading the last two issues . . . I would like for my father to get this also.

ALABAMA: Thanks for the August 1, 1995, issue of *The GP&P* paper. Please send me a number of copies of "*Alleged Free Will.*"

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Citrus Missionary Baptist Church, 6670 Turner Camp Road, Inverness, Florida, has called Elder Troy Sheppard as her pastor. Pastor Shepherd's new address is 10523 E. Peace Ct. Apt 3, Inverness, FL 33450. His new phone number is (904) 860-1636.

ANNUAL BIBLE CONFERENCE
EAST SIDE BAPTIST CHURCH
 311 Fifth Street
 BENTON, ARKANSAS 72015
 October 14, 1995 10:00 A. M.
 Theme: The Doctrines of Grace
 Speakers: Wayne Gregory, F. P. Wolfe, James White, Earl Smith, and Orval Heath
 Pastor: Eld. Stephen G. Raines
 Phones: (501) 778-8443 or 776-8537

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**North Central Mississippi Bible
 Conference**
CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH
 327 Second Street
 Grenada, MS 38902
SEPTEMBER 19, 1995
9:45 AM through Evening
 Speakers in order: Jack Maroon, Ed McCollum, David Jones, Norris I Corley, Charles Cloyd, Milburn Cockrell, Wayne Camp
 Pastor: Eld. Cecil A. Fayard, Jr.
 Phones: Ch. (601) 226-2715 Res. (601) 227-9844