



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

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

THE STUBBORNNESS OF BIBLICAL FACTS

PART II

By Wayne Camp

INTRODUCTION

In the March issue, we considered the stubborn biblical fact of the natural depravity and sinfulness of man. Regardless of how some may cavil and quibble, no success will be enjoyed by those who seek to deny the utterly helpless and totally depraved state of those descended from Adam, as are all members of the human race. Emotional arguments may be used to attempt to raise prejudice against this doctrine but they fall in the dust in the light of God’s revelation concerning man. **“There is none that doeth good, no not one.”** All are

shapen in iniquity and conceived in a state of sin.

This fallen and depraved state of men necessitates the new birth or regeneration. That was also considered in our March issue. Jesus declared in no uncertain terms that one must be born again if he is to enter the kingdom of heaven. In fact, he said one cannot see or perceive the truth of the kingdom unless regenerated by the Spirit of God. And John taught, as we showed, that the new birth is not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God.

(SEE STUBBORNNESS, Cont. P. 6, Rt. Col.)

Baptist Giants of Past Years Speak on the Nature of the Church

By Wayne Camp

Ephesians 3:21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

INTRODUCTION

I recently had the occasion to visit the library of the Union University in Jackson, Tennessee, as I was traveling to West Virginia. I had an appointment to eat supper and spend the night with some former members of Beverly Manor Baptist Church who now reside in a town north of Jackson. Just as I was about to depart the library, I noticed a book titled ***Baptists and***

their Doctrine of the Nature of the Church.

Since I needed to leave, I did not write the title down so this may not be the exact title. But, I did quickly glance at the book and it had several men with whose names I was familiar listed. It appeared from my hasty perusal that the book was designed to show the various views outstanding Baptists have held on the nature of the church.

I remembered, as I drove on to my supper appointment, an article published years ago with a similar name but it had to do with the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty as revealed in the doctrines of grace. Bro. John Gilpin was then editor of ***The Baptist Examiner*** and in the July

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29, 1972, issue, he published an article called ***The Biblical and Historical Faith of Baptists on God's Sovereignty*** with the sub-title being ***Baptist Giants of Past Years Speak on the Doctrines of Grace***. If I remember correctly, the entire July 29, 1972, issue of **TBE** was given to this subject. I remember that we ordered several copies of that issue and distributed them at IMBI and Beverly Manor Baptist Church. Having just shortly before become a believer in the doctrine of free and sovereign grace, this issue was truly

a blessing to me. The issue was later printed in a booklet of 51 pages. A facsimile of that booklet's cover is printed on page four of this issue of ***The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator***.

Not all the men quoted in the book are pictured on the front page of the book. Others, including J. M. Pendleton, Abraham Booth, John Bunyan, and B. H. Carroll, are not pictured on the cover but are pictured with their statement in the booklet. As I drove on to West Virginia the next day the book I had seen in the library at the SBC Union University and the one published by Bro. Gilpin and ***The Baptist Examiner*** were on my mind. I might add the fact that J. M. Pendleton was once president of Union University when it was located at Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

AN INDISPUTABLE FACT

Any student of the biblical and historical faith of Baptists on the doctrine of God's Sovereignty knows that our Baptist forefathers, even these ***Baptist Giants*** of past years did not fully agree on the doctrine of free and sovereign grace. To cite one example, Andrew Fuller and others did not agree with John Gill and others on the atonement. Yet, both have been treated in the booklet as ***giants*** among Baptists.

ANOTHER INDISPUTABLE FACT

Another indisputable fact is that these ***Baptist Giants*** of yesteryear did not agree in every detail on the nature of the church. While all held to the local nature of the church, some also held to a universal view of the church. In this series of articles, I want to show that some men who are treated as real, genuine Baptists by Baptist writers and editors, did, indeed hold to a view of the church with which many of us will strongly disagree. Sadly, we are sometimes like the Jewish leaders of Christ's day who garnished the tombs of dead prophets and sought to kill the living men of God, even Jesus Christ himself, who taught what those prophets taught. May God grant us the grace to be different than they.

A FIRM DECLARATION

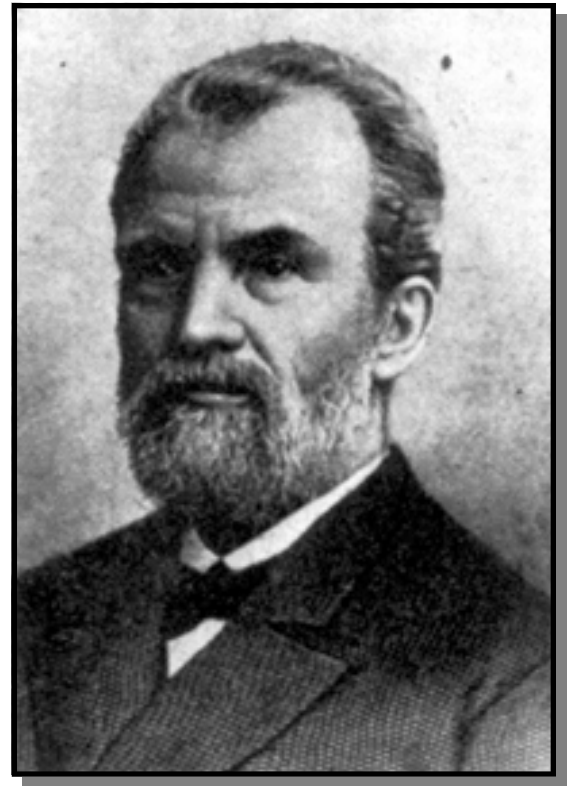
Let all who read this and subsequent articles on this subject read this carefully. This editor is in no way espousing the universal concept of the church. I have never held that view. I have never entertained the possibility of espousing that concept of the church. I am not now considering the universal invisible or the universal visible concept of the church to be true. God being my helper, I will never espouse that view. I believe the church of the New Testament is a local, visible body and that those few passages that seem to some to teach the universal concept are using the word in the generic or institutional sense.

While I have no love for, or belief in the doctrine that all the saved are in the church, I will be honest enough, however, to admit that some **Baptist Giants** of the past have held this view. I do not intend to limit these articles to brethren who held to the local-church-only concept espoused by the editor. I will also show that some men, who were and are considered to be **Baptist Giants** and **Pillars of Orthodoxy**, held to a view of the church that was universal. It is my personal conviction that I would be hypocritical to hold men up as great Baptists and Baptist

Giants on the one hand and then denounce them as heretics on the other hand simply because they do not agree with me on some point, even on the nature of the church. So, in the very beginning, I want to deal with one Baptist Giant who held to a dual concept on the church. On the one hand he admitted that most of the references to the church in the New Testament were to a local church or local churches. On the other hand he affirmed that the word church is used a few times in the New Testament to refer to the redeemed in totality. This Baptist Giant was

JAMES MADISON PENDLETON

Before I had cut my ministerial teeth, I began to hear about J. M. Pendleton. His name was one of the first of our Baptist forefathers of whom I heard after going to the Missionary Baptist Seminary in Little Rock, Arkansas. I heard about his influence as a Landmark Baptist. I heard of the tract written by him called "**An Old Landmark Reset**," a copy of which is lying on my desk as I write this article. He, along with J. R. Graves, was credited with calling

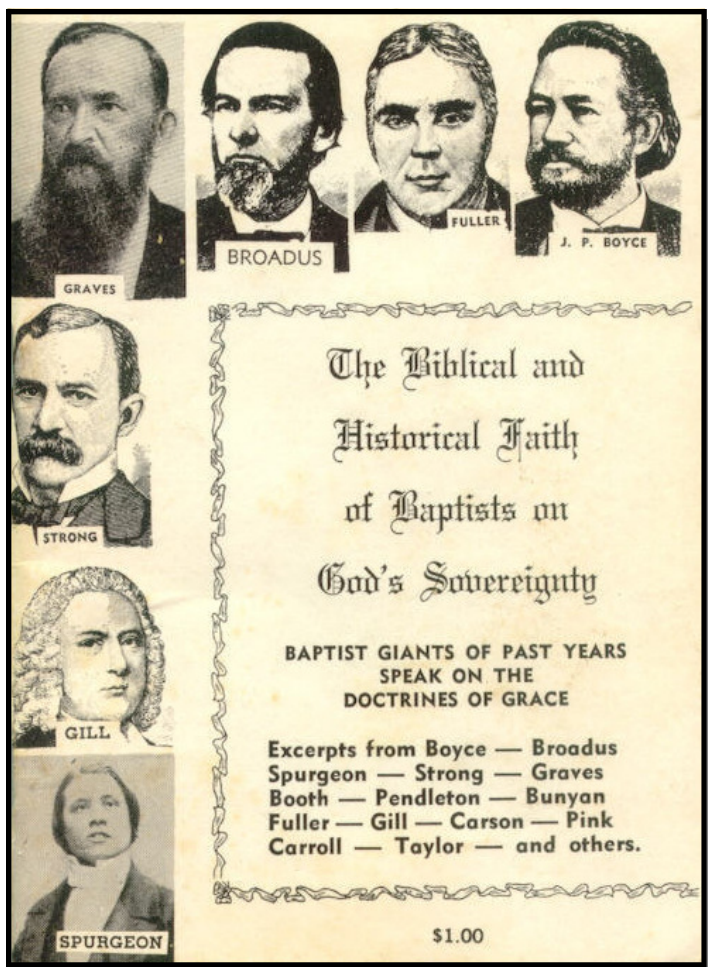


Dr. J. M. Pendleton

Baptists back to the ancient landmarks of the biblical and historical faith to which they had held before many edged toward pulpit affiliation and acceptance as valid Pedo-baptism and other things with Protestant churches.

For some time, J. M. Pendleton, J. R. Graves, and A. C. Dayton worked very closely as co-editors of **The Tennessee Baptist**. Pendleton separated from Graves and Dayton because of their differing opinions on slavery. Graves and Dayton went with the Confederacy while Pendleton strongly believed in the preservation of the Union. Though they parted as friends, their different views in this area resulted in their parting ways. Pendleton had to leave Tennessee because of his views. He moved to Hamilton, OH, where he pastored from 1862 to 1865 when he moved to the Baptist church in Upland, Pennsylvania. He served this church until 1883 when he retired from pastoral work.

I fondly, smilingly remember another thing concerning Pendleton. After the Lord opened my eyes to the marvelous doctrine of free and sovereign grace, I became a target for many of



PENDLETON'S DUAL VIEW ON THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

Pendleton held to a local view of the church as well as a universal view. He gave prominence to the local view but did not fail in his discussions of the nature of the church to set forth his universal concept also. I appreciate the emphasis he placed on the local church. I also appreciate his contributions to the historic Landmark movement. I will soon scan and put into electronic form his work called *An Old Landmark Reset*. He, J. R. Graves, and A. C. Dayton have been called the *Triumvirate of Landmarkism*. But, as we shall now see, Pendleton was not a local-church-only kind of Landmark Baptist.

Pendleton's local church view. In his oft printed and widely used *Baptist Church Manual* Pendleton gives the following concerning the word church when used in the local sense.

In a large majority of instances it is used in the Scriptures to denote a local assembly, convened for religious purposes. Thus we read of "the church at Jerusalem," "the church of God which is at Corinth," "the church of the Thessalonians," "the church of Ephesus . . . the church in Smyrna," "the church in Pergamus," etc., etc. Nor are we to suppose that it required a large number of persons to constitute a church. Paul refers to Aquila and Priscilla and "the church that is in their house," to Nymphas and "the church which is in his house," and in his letter to Philemon he says, "to the church in thy house." A congregation of saints, organized according to the New Testament, whether that congregation is large or small, is a church.

The inspired writers, as if to preclude the idea of a *church* commensurate with a province, a kingdom, or an empire, make use of the following forms of expression, "the

my ABA brethren. I was amused that at one of the messenger meetings, Dr. J. M. Pendleton was honored by the History and Archives Committee as one of the great Baptist Pillars of Orthodoxy among Baptists. This honor was given even though Pendleton could be quoted many times on his belief in the sovereign and free grace of God.

As I write this part of this series, I have at hand four books written by Pendleton. I also have stacks, two of them very large, of several different publications edited by different Landmark brethren wherein Pendleton is freely and openly declared to be a Baptist of no small repute.

I declare to you, Dear Readers, Dr. J. M. Pendleton was a Baptist of no small stature. He is held in good reputation by most Baptists. Surely he would not be so freely quoted and so often published as a Baptist if, indeed, he was not.

churches of Galatia," "the churches of Macedonia," "the churches of Asia," "the churches of Judea"; but they never say the *church of Galatia, the church of Macedonia,* etc. Wherever Christianity prevailed in apostolic times there was a plurality of churches.

In answer to the question, What is a church? it may be said: A church is a congregation of Christ's baptized disciples, acknowledging him as their Head, relying on his atoning sacrifice for justification before God, and depending on the Holy Spirit for sanctification, united in the belief of the gospel, agreeing to maintain its ordinances and obey its precepts, meeting together for worship, and cooperating for the extension of Christ's kingdom in the world. If any prefer an abridgment of the definition it may be given thus: A church is a congregation of Christ's baptized disciples, united in the belief of what he has said, and covenanting to do what he has commanded.

I would also quote from ***Christian Doctrines*** by Pendleton, but it would be the same as the above. (See page 330).

Pendleton's universal church view. In ***Christian Doctrines*** Pendleton sets forth the following on the universal concept:

The term *church* frequently occurs in the New Testament. It may be found there more than a hundred times. The word thus translated means congregation or assembly, but it does not indicate the purpose for which the congregation or assembly meets. Hence it is used Acts xix. 32, 39, 41, and rendered *assembly*. In every other place in the New Testament it is translated *church*. In its application to the followers of Christ it is usually, if not always, employed to designate a particular congregation of saints or the

redeemed in the aggregate. It is used in the latter sense in several passages, as, for example, when Paul says, "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; . . . that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." Eph. v. 25-27. In these places and in several others it would be absurd to define the term "church" as meaning a particular congregation of Christians meeting in one place for the worship of God. (***Christian Doctrines***, J. M. Pendleton, P. 329).

Note that Pendleton held that the word church sometimes refers to "the redeemed in the aggregate." He goes on to say, "It is used in the latter sense (the redeemed in the aggregate, *i. e.*, all the saved of all the ages whether on earth or in heaven) in several passages, as, for example, when Paul says, "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; . . . that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." Eph. v. 25-27 (***Christian Doctrines***, J. M. Pendleton, P. 329). Pendleton gives the same in his ***Baptist Church Manual***, Pp. 5-6. ***Christian Doctrines*** was first published in 1878, five years before he retired from the pastorate of the Upland church and thirteen years before his death. Surely, if he changed his view before retiring or dying, he would have ordered a revision in his ***Baptist Church Manual*** and in ***Christian Doctrines***. Pendleton was 67 years of age when he wrote ***Christian Doctrine***. He was saved at the age of seventeen and shortly thereafter was licensed to preach. He was ordained in 1833, forty-five years before publishing ***Christian Doctrines***. I suspect his view of the nature of the church was fully matured when he wrote.

I should point out that the word ***aggregate***, used by Pendleton, means the ***sum total***. And, it has the idea of their all being in one body. According to my Webster's Dictionary, an ***aggregation*** is a body or whole composed of various units or persons. The ***redeemed*** are

those whom Christ has redeemed by his blood. Some of the redeemed are now in heaven. Some are still on earth. Some may not have been converted at this time. Some may not have even been born yet. But, in two different books, Pendleton has said that the word church is used in a few places in the New Testament to refer to **“the redeemed in the aggregate (the redeemed in the sum total, the redeemed in an aggregation, body, or whole).”**

It is unequivocally clear that Pendleton held to both a universal concept of the church composed of all the redeemed, or the aggregate of the redeemed, or the sum total of the redeemed, and to a local, visible concept of the church composed of saved, scripturally baptized believers united in their belief of what Christ said and covenanted together to work as a church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I seriously disagree with this universal concept of the church set forth by Pendleton. Yet, in spite of this universal concept of the church, all the Baptists with whom I have had any dealings during my almost 42 years as a Baptist preacher, have recognized and declared James Madison Pendleton to be a **Baptist Giant** and a **Pillar of Orthodoxy**. And, most had held that he was a Landmark Baptist. Personally, I will continue to look upon him as a Landmark Baptist and will quote him as such. I can disagree with him on this point and still hold him up as a Baptist and Landmarker.

[Editor's note: Next time we will feature another **Baptist Giant of Past Years**, B. H. Carroll, and his position on the church. He held to the local-church-only view. This **Baptist Giant** was once asked about disfellowshipping those who held the universal church view. "Do you dis-fellowship your Baptist brethren who teach the present existence of 'an universal, invisible, spiritual church'?" "Most certainly not so long as they duly honor the particular assembly and its ordinances, as multitudes of them do, in spite of the natural tendency of their theory to discredit it. Many of them, known to me personally, are devoted to the particular church and its ordinances, responsibilities and duties. "It will take a wider divergence than this to make me disfellowship a Baptist brother,

though I honestly and strongly hold that even on this point his theory is erroneous and tends practically to great harm." (B. H. Carroll)

STUBBORNNESS CONTINUED)

Now we will consider some other stubborn biblical facts.

CONSIDER THE STUBBORN FACT THAT SALVATION IS OF THE LORD AND IS BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

Election to Salvation is of the Lord

First, there is the stubborn fact that the election to salvation is of the Lord. **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.** God is the one doing the choosing, according to this verse, and no amount of twisting will change this stubborn fact. Note that it is God who, from the beginning, has chosen you to be saved. Salvation is that to which we have been chosen and no amount of textual manipulation will change this stubborn fact. There are many who will accept an election to national privileges as in the case of Israel. Many will also accept an unconditional election to service such as men who are called to pastor the Lord's churches. But, this verse speaks neither of national privileges nor of service. It speaks of an election unto salvation.

Second, there is the stubborn fact that God is absolutely sovereign in the bestowal of these blessings of salvation. There is the stubborn fact that God works all things after the counsel of his own will and that includes the salvation of his people. **Ephesians 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel**

of his own will. Will any reader deny that salvation is according to the will of God? Will any reader deny that God works all things after the counsel of his own will? It follows then that God is sovereign in this work of salvation

There is the stubborn fact that God has mercy on whom he will and whom he will he hardens. **Exodus 33:19 And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. Romans 9:15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. Romans 9:18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.** Ah, Dear Reader, see the awesome sovereignty declared in these verses. God will be gracious to whom he will be gracious. God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy. God will have compassion on whom he will have compassion. And, just as surely, God will harden whom he will harden.

Another stubborn fact about this salvation that is of the Lord is that it was given us in Christ before the world began and is absolutely not of works. **2 Timothy 1:8-9 God . . . hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.** In the mind and purpose of God, the elect were saved before the foundation of the world. Salvation and the calling thereto were given us in Christ before the foundation of the world. It is true that experientially one is saved at the time of his regeneration and conversion. There is also a sense in which we are being saved as we grow in grace and knowledge and practical sanctification grows in our lives as God works in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. There is also a sense in which we shall yet be saved when our bodies are glorified and our minds are perfectly conformed to the will of God. But, as set forth in this verse, we were saved and called with a holy calling in the mind and purpose of God before the foundation of the world. That

salvation and calling were without and not according to works, but according to God's own sovereign purpose and grace.

The Essential New Birth Is Of The Lord

Still another stubborn biblical fact about this salvation that is of the Lord is that the new birth discussed in March is of the Lord. In that message I set before you the absolute necessity of the new birth; now I call your attention to the fact that the new birth is an act of God upon the dead sinner in which he gives him spiritual life. **Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.** It is abundantly evident from this passage and others that the sinner is passive in his regeneration. It is God who quickens into life, regenerating the sinner who was dead in trespasses and sins.

The words of Jesus to Nicodemus are in the passive voice, clearly indicating that the one being regenerated is not the actor but the one acted upon. **John 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. John 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. "Be born again,"** is clearly in the passive voice. If you have forgotten your English grammar remember that in the passive voice the subject of the verb is not the actor but is acted upon. "Joe was hit by John." The subject is "Joe" but John is the actor and Joe is acted upon. Joe is completely passive. **"Ye must be born again."** The verb **"be born"** is in the passive voice indicating that the one being born again is not acting but is being acted upon. And, we are told that this regeneration is **"of God."**

The Apostle John sets forth in clear and unequivocal terms the fact that man does nothing to produce his regeneration, or new birth; it is of God. **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.** Regeneration is not because of our nationality; it does not run in the blood of certain people. The Jews thought that being the blood-relatives of Abraham made

them exempt from the necessity of the new birth. Regardless of your bloodline, God must regenerate you; you must be born again.

John also tells us that regeneration is beyond the scope of the will of the flesh which is without any spiritual good. He further informs us that regeneration cannot and is not willed by man. Regeneration can only be produced by God himself.

James also established the stubborn fact that the new birth is a work of God, not man. **James 1:17-18 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. 18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.** These two verses show that regeneration is a gift that comes down from God. They show that the new birth is the product of God's own will, not the product of something man wills for himself. They show that the born-again person is a creature or creation of God.

What James, John, and Jesus say is also advanced by Paul. **Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.** We are the workmanship of God. He has created us in Christ Jesus. He has quickened us together with Christ. We were dead but he has made us alive.

Let us hear another testimony from John. John tells us again that the new birth is of God; its source is God. **1 John 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 1 John 2:29 If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him. 1 John 5:1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. 1 John 5:18 We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.**

In all four of the verses above, the matter is stated in passive voice. The one, or ones, under consideration have been born of God, not works, not blood, not family, not one's own will, but the actor in each case is God. He regenerates. He quickens into life. We live because he has said, "Live!" **Ezekiel 16:6 And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live.**

Jesus affirms that regeneration is a work of the Trinity. **John 5:21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.** The stubborn biblical fact is that it is God who is to be praised for our being born again. **1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.**

It is out of pure mercy for hell-deserving sinners that God regenerates. Again we are brought face to face with the stubborn biblical fact that regeneration is the work of a merciful God. Even though the elect sinner is dead in sins, God lovingly and graciously regenerates him. **Ephesians 2:4-5 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;).**

Again and again, God's word lays before us this stubborn biblical fact that all the glory and credit for our regeneration must be laid at the feet of our loving, merciful, gracious God who alone, of his own will and by his own power freely regenerates whom he will.

The Repentance That Is Commanded By God Is Also Given by God

Again, there is the stubborn fact that the repentance that is commanded by God must come from God. God commands all men to repent but none will unless God grants them repentance. **Acts 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now**

commandeth all men every where to repent. One of the marvels of the salvation that is of grace is that what God requires he also grants.

If the sinner repents of his sins, God must give him that grace. **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.** The stubborn biblical fact that repentance is a gift of God is accompanied by the stubborn biblical fact that God grants repentance when and to whom he wills. **2 Timothy 2:25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.** Repentance involves turning away from sin and the stubborn biblical fact is that if one turns from his sin it is because God has turned him. **Acts 3:26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.** When God began to visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name, he granted them repentance. **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.**

The Faith That Is Necessary Is Also A Gift From God

Inseparably associated with the stubborn biblical fact that God must grant repentance is the stubborn biblical fact that he must give the faith to believe on his Son. I just recently heard a preacher make the argument that all men have faith; they just need to exercise it. The problem with his position is that it is just not so. Contrary to what some claim, 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.**

If one does not have faith, how does he ever believe? Does he conjure up faith in Christ? Is he able just to make himself believe? Can he just make up his mind to believe?

The stubborn biblical fact is that if one is ever to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ faith must be

given to him. **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.** Please note that there are two gifts given in behalf of Christ mentioned in this verse. The first is **“to believe on him.”** The second is **“to suffer for his sake.”** Our concern is with the first. It is given to the elect to believe on Jesus Christ. That is why Paul calls it **“the faith of God’s elect” (Titus 1.1).** No man can make himself believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; God alone can grant that kind of faith.

When Peter made a great confession of faith, he was reminded by Christ that this did not come from flesh and blood but from God. **Matthew 16:16-17 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.** This great faith in Christ that was expressed in Peter’s confession can only come from God. Flesh and blood cannot reveal Christ to man in such a powerful manor that he can lay hold of him. Only the Father in heaven can do this.

It is through the gracious working of God that men come to believe. **Acts 18:27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace.** I pray that any who may be bent toward taking credit for their faith will consider carefully this verse. We who have believed to the saving of the soul have done so through grace. God has graciously implanted faith in our hearts in regeneration. He alone can do that.

Believing on Christ is synonymous with coming to Christ and no one can come to Christ, or believe on Christ, except through the drawing power of God. **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.** One must be taught of God before he can or will come to Christ. **John 6:45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of**

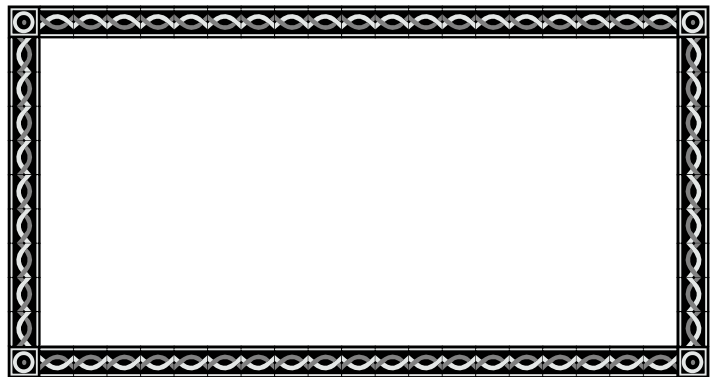
God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. Even more revealing is the Lord's own explanation of what he said in verse 44. **John 6:63-65** *It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. 64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. 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.*

When Paul and Barnabas returned from their missionary journey they gave a report to the church in Antioch in which they declared that God had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. **Acts 14:27** *And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.* Note that the apostles gave God all the glory for what had happened; they rehearsed all that God had done with them. They also rehearsed how God had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. When the gospel is preached the hearers will only believe it when the hand of the Lord is with them to grant faith. **Acts 11:20-21** *And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. 21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.*

It is only when God's power accompanies the word and gives faith that men believe. **1 Corinthians 2:4-5** *And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.*

Much more could be said and more Scriptures set forth showing the stubborn biblical fact that faith comes from God. **(TO BE CONTINUED IN A FUTURE ISSUE).**

"When Bible believers take a stand against false doctrine, they are accused of "rocking the boat." It is better that belief should rock the boat than that unbelief should wreck the boat." —Vance Havner—



ON SUFFERING

By John Bunyan

It is not every suffering that makes a man a martyr; but suffering for the Word of God after a right manner; that is, not only for *righteousness*, but for righteousness' sake; not only for *truth*, but out of love to truth; not only for God's Word, but according to it: to wit, in that holy, humble, meek manner, as the Word of God requireth.

It is a rare thing to suffer aright, and to have my spirit in suffering bent against God's enemy, sin. Sin in doctrine, sin in worship, sin in life, and sin in conversation.

Neither the devil, nor men of the world, can kill thy righteousness, or love to it, but by thy own hand; or separate that and thee asunder, without thy own act. Nor will he that doth indeed suffer for the sake of it, or out of love he bears thereto, be tempted to *exchange* it for the good will of the whole world.

I have often thought that the best of Christians are found in the worst times: and I have thought again, that one reason why we are

not better is, because God purges us no more. Noah and Lot, who so *holy* as they in the time of their afflictions! and yet, who so *idle* as they in the time of their prosperity?

Bouquets and Brickbats

OREGON: After reading your article on homosexuality, I must admit that I feel nauseated. As tends to be the case with most polemics against homosexuality, you demonize and depersonalize gay men and lesbians. While I have no intention of trying to persuade you that your stance is wrong, I feel that an opposite viewpoint needs to be heard. I don't follow the "Killer God" Christianity that has characterized the religious right.

You seem to say that homosexuality is God's abandonment of homosexuals. I seek a clarification of your argument. What sin have homosexuals committed that causes God to make them homosexual? I find your implication that God causes people to sin as punishment for another sin to be un-Christian and judgmental on one hand, ill-reasoned and ignorant on the other.

I have Christian beliefs, but I am constantly amazed at religious groups that use the Bible as a justification for hate and the marginalization of human beings. While your writings and beliefs may not directly cause an act of violence against a person, I know that many people respect and believe what you say. You are not responsible for hate crimes, but you (and many similarly-minded men and women) have done nothing to stop them. I respect your beliefs and worldview, but when your beliefs sanction, cause, and create an environment that supports violence, hate, and intolerance, then I believe that must be challenged.

NEW YORK: Re: Chain-link Ecclesiology: I was fascinated by your treatise on this subject. I never knew that this controversy even existed! The saddest thing about this is that people probably spend more time trying to unchurch "unworthy" churches than they do spreading the Gospel.

WWW: We really enjoyed your page, I didn't see a guest book, so I hope you don't mind this note. I belong to the Church of Christ, and we don't celebrate Easter or Christmas. Our reasons are much simpler though. We don't do it because the Bible doesn't say we should. Where the Bible speaks, we speak, where the Bible is silent we are silent. We feel we celebrate the Resurrection every Sunday. Thanks for listening.

ARIZONA: You are very definitive about the Bible never stipulating that The Lord's Supper was the Christian Passover. I do not agree totally; But My Question is; do you with as just as much vigor believe; that the Bible has never rescinded God's Sabbath (of the 7th day) since it was instituted in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:1-3).

WWW: RE: Jacob loved/Esau hated: Hi, someone directed me to your page on the above. I am an unificationist and would like to say something about the case of Jacob and Esau.

In short, I would like to highlight reasons/laws/principles that God is following in His actions.

In the Divine Principle, the main text of my faith, this is similar to the case where God accepted Abel's offering but not Cain's. In brief, the reason for God to love one but not another is to separate sin, at least symbolically from whoever He has to deal with in His providence to restore His creation back to the state before the fall of Adam and Eve.

FLORIDA: I have been meaning to write for some time now, but as you might imagine my time does not include much spare! I know you understand what I mean. All is going well here in Pensacola, The church here has been so good to us during our transition, but the Lord has blessed over and over again! The church is small in number but not in heart or desire for the truth of the word. I praise the Lord for that. Many men of God, much more qualified, and faithful than I have not been so blessed.

I have really enjoyed your paper, I really enjoyed the article on the suffering of Christ. Oh, how he suffered for us unworthy, ungrateful, sinful creatures!! What a blessed Lord and Saviour he is. I don't see how anyone could deny his Grace for if it weren't for HIS Grace what a hopeless, helpless state we would be in! Many people say, "I don't believe God would just choose some." But I don't see why he would choose any. TO GOD BE THE GLORY!!!!!! I hope all is going well there at Pilgrims Hope. I would love to hear from you, if you get a chance. Well I better go for now May God Bless you and yours.

PLANNING TO MOVE? If at all possible, please notify us three weeks in advance of your change of address so that we may keep your paper coming. It costs us 50 cents to get your new address from the Postal Service and that may take long enough that two papers are returned at a cost of \$1.00 before we get the correction. This will mean you miss one or two papers. Your help in saving us this expense will be appreciated.

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Pilgrims Hope Baptist Church

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Wayne Camp, Pastor

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Joe Maldonado: How to Be a Good Pastor in God's Eyes & How to Be Instant Out of Season

Michael McCosky: The Preacher Enduring Hardness & The Preacher's Equipment

Royce Smith: A Bishop Must Be Blameless & The Preacher and Persecution

Kyle White: Exercising Oneself Unto Godliness & The Preacher as an Example of the Believer

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Faith has scheduled a Baptist Christian fellowship meeting for 7:00 p.m. Friday, May 14, and 10:00 a.m. Saturday, May 15, with Brother Holmes Moore, pastor of Bible Baptist Church in St. Louis, Missouri, preaching from Daniel 9:24-27, Matthew 24, and Revelation 20. An early afternoon meal on Saturday is intended to conclude the meeting. We will be pleased to get to show you some Baptist Christian hospitality if you can attend.

Eld Jud Travis, Pastor