



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

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

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TEXTS FOR THE SELF-CONSTITUTION THEORY

By J. C. Settlemaier

PART II

SCRIPTURAL CHURCH CONSTITUTION

Now in compliance with my brother's request, let me turn to the Scriptures.

Let this question be fairly answered and this debate will be at an end.

What actually constitutes a church?

CHURCH CONSTITUTION IS A DIVINE ACT

Is it the people themselves? Is it a mother church which quickens a church? Is it something done on earth? Is it the words spoken, the prayer offered? Is it the presbytery? Is it the act of a Bishop? Is it when a preacher says "I pronounce you a church of the Lord Jesus Christ", as the authority brethren often do? How does a group get **church-life** and **church-light**? Is it a single thing or is it a combination of several of these things?

I contend **the act which actually forms a church is a divine act**. When some of the saved, baptized, citizens of Christ's kingdom, led by the Holy Spirit, desire to form a church and they actually gather together in covenantal unity for this stated purpose, then, **the Lord Himself constitutes them a church**. It is His prerogative alone but it is manifested by the desire of these baptized disciples to form a (See **CONSTITUTION, Cont. P. 2, L. Col.**)

THE DOCTRINAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

By Wayne Camp

SCRIPTURE: Luke 22:15-20; Mat. 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; I Cor. 10:16-17; I Cor. 11:23-29

TEXT: *Luke 22:20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.*

with all the doctrines either expressly mentioned or implied in connection with the Lord's Supper.

This subject first occurred to me as I was working on a message that I preached in Kansas City on the perpetuity of the church. That doctrine is certainly implied in the scriptural discussion of the Lord's Supper. There are doctrines that relate to our salvation. There is also the doctrine of the second coming and the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

INTRODUCTION

As I was meditating on what I would preach tonight in connection with the observance of the Lord's Supper and reading the various accounts of the institution of the Supper, I was impressed

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EDITOR'S ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBERS AND E-MAIL ADDRESSES

The editor, Eld. Wayne Camp, may be reached at the address given above, or at his home address. His home address is: 2065 Tompkins Lane, Millington, TN 38053-5107.

Church Phone at Home: (901) 876-5015

Church Phone: (901) 357-0215.

E-mail address: RWcamp@cris.com

Visit our Home Page on the Internet

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church. He led them to take this action by His Holy Spirit and it is an honor and a glory to His holy Name when they do so, [2 Cor 8:5]. Only when Christ takes up His dwelling in the midst of a group does it become a church. He himself constitutes the church and lights another church candlestick. **This is what I mean by self-constituted.** Every other act, whether of pastor, pastors, helps, associations, presbytery, church or churches, singularly or in plurality does not, can not, produce, nor can they prevent, the constitution of a church. This is a Divine

prerogative and is analogous to marriage. As the covenant between one man and one woman constitutes marriage, and it requires no other authority on earth except that given by Lord in the original charter of the home in Gen 2:23-24. Yet the act of marriage is that of God and not of men. "... It was the Lord's act and deed, and to him Christ ascribes the act of marriage," [Gill, Body of Divinity, p. 711]. So in the constitution of churches.

In Mat. 16:18, Christ Himself tells us **He "will build up His church"**, which I understand to mean the generic institution which is manifested in each local congregation. This was not only the case while He was upon the earth in the days of His flesh but this "building up" shall continue to the end of the age, as He expressly declared in this remarkable passage. Furthermore, Daniel 2:44 speaks of the inceptive form of His Kingdom, and plainly says, **"The kingdom shall not be left to other people..."** Thus He never delegated or passed on, but retained, this authority for the constitution of churches. Every such assembly which meets in His name, by His direction, is one of His churches.

In Mat. 5:1 we have just such an assembly. J. R. Graves says concerning this meeting:

"The first full church-meeting— a gathering together of his disciples into one place for general instruction— is recorded by Matthew (5:1).

"The disciples, in the **wider sense**, including those of the apostles already **called**, and **all** who had, either for a longer or shorter time, attached themselves to him as hearers.** **The discourse was spoken directly to the disciples. etc."**

"And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying."

"These 'disciples' were not the twelve apostles, nor yet the seventy merely, for **they** had not yet been chosen from the whole body, but the multitude of his disciples. So Alford:"

Graves then goes on to say:

"Here, then, is a **real church** meeting; a visible assembly of men, possessing certain qualifications, called out from the **oklos**

(multitude) for a specific purpose, and this is the essential signification of ecclesia in Greek. We may add an organized assembly, since they recognized the supreme authority of Christ over them.”[*Intercommunion*, p. 154].

Now that Christ so assembled His disciples and that He constituted them a church without any outside authority from the high priest of Israel, or from the elders of Israel, much less from some other assembly (this is a biblical pattern), but simply by His word is quite evident and this simple act prepared them for the future constitution of assemblies all over the world to the end of time, in the same manner. Nor did Christ leave us to guess as to how this act of constitution was here accomplished. Rather He tells us how this is done in Mt 18:20, for we cannot believe he would constitute the first church one way but command His disciples to constitute churches in some other manner! Each local church is self-constituted by two, three, or more of His baptized disciples gathering together in His name, for these are His express words:

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

Thus the first church was self-constituted because they “Gathered together” for the purpose of worship in His Name and under His direction! Gathered in **His name**, which has the same sense of “baptize them in the name of,” that is, with that authority granted by Himself. This is a covenantal, a purposed, a designated, and not a chance meeting. Nor is it a casual thing but it is the stated purpose of these disciples to submit to the whole of the teachings of Christ and carry out His will in regular meetings, [Mt. 5:1; 6:12]. Such is the very essence of a NT assembly. The word here (in Mt 18:20) is a simpler form of the word found in Heb. 10:25, **“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together...”**

So this is church ground!

This is Christ’s authority and it is given to those who follow His instructions. The simplicity of His ways is a mark of His wisdom!

This is what Christ commanded and to such meetings He has given His promise to be present. When a group of baptized disciples **covenant together** in His Name, that is when they come to Him and submit themselves to Him to carry out His will, there Christ Jesus is **in the midst** and this is how churches are constituted and perpetuated. Mark it well, that Christ is in the midst of every self-constituted assembly, no matter if they are refused fellowship, if they are shunned or rejected by others saying, “They have no authority,” Christ is there! They have the highest authority on earth or in Heaven, the authority of Christ Jesus Himself. They have His promise, His authorization, His presence, His blessing, and His approval. This is all His disciples want and is all they need! He will meet with them even if there are those who will not! If Christ is in the midst of a people those people are a church and Christ recognizes them as belonging to Him and as constituted in His name according to His word. He owns them now and will manifest this at His coming—“So will Christ in the coming Day. That which has been done in full accord with God’s Word, though despised by man, shall be owned and rewarded of Him. His own words, in the final chapter of Holy Writ, are ‘And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.’”[Rev 22:12. A. W. Pink, *Gleanings in Exodus*, p. 316].

CHURCH-LIFE GIVEN BY CHRIST HIMSELF

Here then is Christ’s own word on church constitution. Nothing outside of the text needs to be added nor can anything be Scripturally added. This is the positive declaration of the Word of God. **“Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”** Whenever He leads men to gather together in His name by His Holy Spirit, then He promises to be in the midst of them. Another **church-life** is begun and another church-lamp is lit by the Lord Himself, [Rev 1:12]. This is how a church begins. He who walks among the lamps [Rev. 2:1] is the only one who can give a congregation church-light, and He is the only one who can extinguish that

light, and He is careful to tell us how this is accomplished, [Mt 18:20; Re 2:5].

Keep in mind that this text is in a passage dealing with the church and church authority! These are instructions for all time but given in the infant stage of the church and it will be one of those things which the Spirit will bring to the mind of the disciples of the Lord after He returns to Heaven and churches are multiplied. For this reason it was included in the Scripture by the Holy Spirit. This is not one of those passages that *seems* to speak of the church. This text and context unmistakably deal with church issues! Note that he speaks of brother trespassing against brother—who are these brothers? They are members of the same church, vss 15-17. They are to settle their problems according to Christ's laws, among themselves as members of the assembly, if possible. But if they cannot, they are to get others to help. If this fails they are to tell it to the **assembly**. And if the offending member refuses to hear the assembly, then they—the assembly—are to count him as a heathen and a publican, vss 15-17. Context is king and here it designates the church as the subject. Therefore you cannot make Mt 18:15-17 refer to the church and deny Mt 18:20 refers to the church.

But then the Lord goes on to speak of the binding of this **church-action**. It is bound in heaven or loosed in Heaven when done according to His Word, on earth, i.e., is in one of His assemblies which is on earth. In vs 19 he says that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven, vs 19. But He does not stop there but adds:

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name..." , vs 20.

How is a church dissolved? I have known of a few churches which dissolved. They voted to dissolve in the same manner they voted to constitute. Christ is the one who actually snuffs out the lamp-light of a church just as he is the one who lights the lamp but he does this through the action of the group itself. Surely constitution is more important than dissolution, yet Christ is the only one who can dissolve a church! "**Remember therefore from whence**

thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." [Re 2:5]. Therefore, if we reason from the lessor to the greater (removing and setting up), we can see that Christ is the only one who can constitute a church and he does this by leading His disciples to desire to covenant together for this purpose, [Mt 5:1,11, 14-15].

HOW CHURCHES ARE FORMED SCRIPTURALLY

For means He is now going to give the reason why the action of such an insignificant (in the eyes of the world) gathering which agrees on earth has binding force—and that is because "**Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.**" This is His authority. This is how His churches are formed. This is His promise to come down and dwell in every such assembly formed in this manner. He did not say, nor did He mean that where two or three get authority from another church, from bishops, presbytery, association, convention, or any such thing, there I am I in the midst of them. In fact, everyone of these have been appealed to and used in the constitution of Baptist churches, but Christ never authorized any of them. No Scripture states this. There is no church promise to a group so formed. But where two or three—this is the minimum number He requires to constitute a church, so covenant, i.e., "in His Name,"—there He gives a promise which is as valid in the year 2001 as it was in AD 33, [2 Cor 1:20]. The Lord Himself condescends to attend every such meeting and grace it with His abiding presence— "**There am I in the midst of them.**" That is, the first constitutional meeting and every other subsequent meeting to the end of time, if they meet in and with the same standards and for the same purpose.

Lest some may think this a private opinion I will submit a few authorities.

"*In my name.* That is, 1st, *By my authority, acting for me in my church.*"—[Barnes, Mt. 18:20].

"Similarly, their *sumphonia* [agreeing] must

consist in being gathered together *in the name of Jesus*. If such be the case, Himself is in the midst of them by His Spirit. It is this presence of the Shechinah, in the real sense of the term, which forms and constitutes His *ekkleesia*, or *Kahal*."— [Lange, Mt 18:20].

"A generalization of the term church (assembly), and the powers conferred on it..."[Alford, Mt 18:20].

"The presence of Christ in the assemblies of Christians is promised, and may in faith be prayed for and depended on; *There am I*. This is equivalent to the Shechinah, or special presence of God in the tabernacle and temple of old...."[M. Henry, 18:20].

"But we must take care, first of all, that those who are desirous to have Christ present with them shall *assemble in his name*; and we likewise understand what is the meaning of this expression.... It means that those who are assembled together, laying aside every thing that hinders them from approaching to Christ, shall sincerely raise their desires to him, shall yield obedience to his word, and allow themselves to be governed by the Spirit. Where this simplicity prevails, there is no reason to fear that Christ will not make it manifest that it was not in vain for *the assembly to meet in his name*."[Calvin, Mt 18:20].

"This union between them is made by voluntary consent and agreement; a Christian society, or a church of Christ, is like all civil societies, founded on agreement and by consent..."[Jn Gill, Body of Div. P. 623-4].

We call attention to the fact that Christ here [Mt 18:20] does not append any stipulations whether of a church giving authority to them, or a bishop bestowing, or a council decreeing, or a presbytery constituting, nor the permission of any other entity on earth, for one is as essential and as necessary as the other—but He gives His Word which is as sure as His throne, [Heb 6:18]. It does not take ten men to constitute a church as it did to set up a synagogue. Nor does it take any other church. No approval except that of Christ's own word is required.

This is His direction as to the constitution of a church. All the essential parameters are included here. We dare not **exclude** anything He included nor can we **include** anything which

He excludes as essential unless we wish to incur His displeasure and teach for doctrines the commandments of men, which is what the authority brethren do. [Mt. 15:9]. "The commandments of men are properly conversant about the things of men, but God will have his own work done by his own rules, and accepts not that which he did not himself appoint. That only comes to him, that comes from him."[M. Henry, Mt. 15:9].

THE MEANING OF EKKLEESIA

The very word **church** in Greek, speaks of how a church is formed. **Ekkleesia** is formed from two Greek words. As Trench puts it: "In respect of the first [i.e., the first stage of this word—JC], the *ekkleesia*...was the lawful assembly in a free Greek city of all those possessed of the right of citizenship, for the transaction of public affairs. That they were *summoned* is expressed in the latter part of the word; that they were summoned *out of* the whole population, a select portion of it, including neither the populace, nor strangers, nor yet those who had forfeited their civic rights, this is expressed in the first. Both the *calling* (the *kleesis*, Phil 3:14; 2 Tim. 1:9), and the *calling out* (the *eklogē*, Ro. 11:7; 2 Pet. 1:10), are moments to be remembered, when the word is assumed into a higher Christian sense, for in them the chief part of its peculiar adaptation to its august uses lies." [Trench, *Syn. of NT*, p. 1-2].

WHY SELF-CONSTITUTED

This is a good question and we seek the Lord's answer. First let it be remembered that the altar of God was fired from Heaven. **It was spontaneous combustion!** They were to bring no strange fire, that is man-made fire, to God's altar. This was to be supplied by the Lord. We see this in the dedication of the Temple built by Solomon. This teaches us that we are to bring no man-made devices or doctrines into the House of the Lord, that is, in the church. Each church is to get its authority directly from the Lord Himself. He is jealous of His glory and will not give that glory to another, even to one of His

churches. ***“Unto Him be glory in the church,”*** so the text runs and this does not mean that the church can legislate or extend its power to other groups. This over reaching generates confusion which is contrary to His purpose for His churches, ***“For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints,” i.e., “In all assemblies of the saints”, [1 Cor 14:33].*** An assembly is a group which **assembles together in His Name!** They do this by His Word, not by the word of men. They must receive their constitution from Him, or else they are striking strange fire! This is building on the Rock! [Mt 16:18; 1 Cor 3:11; Mt 7:24].

The self-constitution of churches has many obvious advantages.

First, because each church rests on Christ as a foundation and not on the scripturality of fifty or sixty churches, mostly unknown, and unknowable up the line of history. No searching dusty records, no trying to ascertain the records of churches long gone out of existence, as to how they were formed and as to what they believed. Just simply taking Christ at His word is an act of obedient submission. This is Christ's own ordained method of founding a church.

Second, because each church is formed in exactly the same way, Mt 18:20. This is a church organization that has a positive command as to the heart of the issue even though we don't have details of a single organization in the NT.

Third, each church is just as important as any other church! There are no churches with clout while others are considered merely “wart churches.” The house churches mentioned in Scripture were just as important as those with large memberships and the country churches as important as the city churches. The young churches were as valuable as the old churches.

Fourth, each church is just as Scriptural as every other church. No “mother churches” giving warnings to “daughter churches” saying “You had better listen to your mother,” because each church appeals directly to Christ and His Word.

Fifth, each church looks not to her mother church for her origin but to Christ whose promise they believe.

Sixth, this prevents boasting because every church must depend not on a long list of precarious mothers but on the firm Word of Christ. This is far better even if other methods were permissible.

IMPLICATIONS, Continued from Page 1

It is simply amazing how the three Persons of the God-head have surrounded everything they do with so much truth. It truly magnifies those inspired words of Paul. ***2 Timothy 3:16-17 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.***

CHURCH TRUTHS ARE IMPLIED IN THE SCRIPTURAL DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING THE LORD'S SUPPER

The church was founded during the personal ministry of Christ and was the institution to which the supper was given and that before his death at Calvary. As evidence that this is true I remind you that Jesus set gifts in the church during his personal ministry. ***1 Corinthians 12:28 And God hath set some in the church,***

first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

I would also remind you that Jesus instructed the church in one matter of church discipline during his personal ministry. ***Matthew 18:15-18 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. 18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.***

The biblical doctrine of church discipline is very closely related to the Lord's Supper. In his discussion of the needed exclusion of the sinful member in I Cor. 5, Paul makes clear reference to the Lord's Supper. **1 Corinthians 5:7-11** *Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: 8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: 10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. 11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.*

Church discipline is one of the greatest arguments in favor of the observance of the supper being restricted to church members only for we have no disciplinary authority over non-members.

The perpetuity of the churches of the Lord Jesus Christ is also implied and expressed in the scriptural discussions of the Lord's Supper. **1 Corinthians 11:26** *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.*

For this church ordinance to be observed until he comes there must be true churches to keep it till he comes. This adds credence to the promise of the Lord that the gates of hell would not prevail against his churches. Commenting on this expression "*till he come*" John Gill wrote, ". . . 'till he come'; which shows the continuance of this ordinance, which is to last till Christ's second coming, where the carnal ordinances of the former dispensation were shaken and removed; and also the continuance of Gospel ministers to the end of the world, to administer it, and of churches to whom it is to be administered: this assures of the certainty of Christ's second coming; as it

leads back to his coming in the flesh, suffering and dying in our stead, and thereby obtaining redemption for us; it leads forward to expect and believe he will come again, to put us into the full possession of the salvation he is the author of; when there will be no more occasion for this ordinance, nor any other, but all will cease." (Gill's Expositor, Notes on I Cor. 11:24-26).

Of course, the fact that baptism precedes the participation in the Lord's Supper makes baptism a related doctrine. One must be a member of the church to partake of the supper. One must be baptized before he can be received into the church.

SEVERAL DOCTRINES RELATING TO THE DEATH OF CHRIST ARE IMPLIED IN THE SCRIPTURAL DISCUSSIONS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The substitutionary nature of the death of Christ is clearly revealed in the Lord's Supper. **Matthew 26:26-28** *And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. 27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; 28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.* The blood that Christ shed in his death is the blood of the everlasting covenant. **Hebrews 13:20** *Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.*

The limited purpose of his death, or the limited atonement is revealed in the biblical accounts of the Lord's Supper. His blood was shed for many, not all men without exception. **Matthew 26:28** *For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. Mark 14:24* *And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.* He gave his life a ransom for many. **Matthew 20:28** *Even as the Son of man came not to be*

ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. He laid down his life for the sheep. **John 10:15** *As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.* He was once offered to bear the sin of many. **Hebrews 9:28** *So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.* He suffered to bring many sons to glory. **Hebrews 2:10** *For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.* He will justify many for he has born their iniquities. **Isaiah 53:11-12** *He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*

I especially call your attention to verse eleven, the last half of it. **By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.** Please notice that “*many*” and “*their*” refer to the same people and are equal in their number, whatever it may be. The “*many*” whom he shall justify the ones whose iniquities he bears. The clear indication is that he bears the iniquities of exactly the number of people whom he justifies. If he does not justify all men in the human race, he does not bear the iniquities of all persons in the human race. If he bears the iniquities of all person in the human race then he justifies all persons in the human race. This verse is clear on that matter.

We see this same truth set forth in the words of Jesus on the night that he instituted the Lord’s Supper. He refers to the same many as Isa. 53:11 when he says, “***This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.***” The folks whose sins are remitted are the same ones for whom Jesus shed his blood. No more and no less. The

number is equal. If Jesus shed his blood for the whole human race he remits the sins of the entire race. Those for whom he shed his blood have their sins remitted.

THE BIBLICAL DISCUSSIONS OF THE LORD’S SUPPER SUGGEST THE SINLESS NATURE OF CHRIST AND THE SINFUL NATURE OF MAN

One of the most important doctrinal implications of the Lord’s Supper is the sinlessness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The purpose of the wine, as opposed to grape juice, and the unleavened bread, as opposed to bread with leaven in it, is to show the sinless nature of Christ. He knew no sin. **2 Corinthians 5:21** *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* He did no sin. **1 Peter 2:22** *Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.* He did no violence and no deceit was in his mouth. **Isaiah 53:9** *And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.* He is holy. **Hebrews 7:26** *For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.* One of the thieves crucified with him could say he had done nothing amiss. **Luke 23:41** *And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.* The centurion who participated in his crucifixion could say that he was a righteous man. **Luke 23:47** *Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.* Jesus could challenge his persecutors to convict him of sin. **John 8:46** *Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?* Paul declared him to be without sin. **Hebrews 4:15** *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* In contrast with himself and others who sin, John called him Jesus Christ the righteous. **1 John 2:1** *My little children, these things write I unto you, that*

ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. John also declared that there was no sin in Christ. **1 John 3:5 And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.**

His suffering was for the remission of sins. **Matthew 26:28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.** Through his blood we have the forgiveness of sin. **Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. Colossians 1:14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.** His blood cleanses from all sin. **1 John 1:7 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.** He gave himself in his death to redeem us from all iniquity. **Titus 2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.**

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST IS DECLARED IN THE LORD'S SUPPER

We are to show forth his death until he comes again. **1 Corinthians 11:26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.** This magnifies the fact that he promised that he would come again. **John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.** Every time we observe the Lord's Supper we are expressing our conviction that Jesus is coming again.

I have heard of those who believe his coming again has already happened still continuing to observe the Lord's Supper. Why? If we are not anticipating the coming again of our Lord, why would we observe the Lord's Supper in which we are to show the Lord. Some who saw the inconsistency of this practice abandoned the physical observance in which his death is shown. But, they say they observe the supper spiritually by simply coming together for

services. Why observe it physically or spiritually if it was only designed to show forth his death till he come?

CONCLUSION

I am sure there are more doctrines that are expressed or implied in the biblical discussions of the Lord's Supper. It is a most meaningful ordinance and reflects the great wisdom of the Lord in giving it to his true churches. May we observe it remembering his broken body and shed blood as we eagerly look forward to his coming again.



Bouquets and Brickbats

MISSOURI: I've just finished reading the Sept. 1, 2001 issue of the **The Grace Proclamator And Promulgator**. I had to write you and let you know how much I enjoyed it. The articles on Islam were very good and I'll be sharing them with some in my church. I especially enjoyed the article by Brother Settlemoir. Thanks so much for this ministry of you and your church and thank you for sending your paper to me.

LOUISIANA: Thanks for the paper. This is actually the first hard copy of it I have ever seen, and I do like it. Keep me on your list.

TEXAS: Greetings in the name of our gracious Saviour Jesus Christ. I am writing to thank you for your continued witness through "**The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator**." I find this publication to be sound in doctrine, unwavering in the truth, informative, and indicting. It is also interesting to note that many of the postings found in "Bouquets and Brickbats" are quite defensive regarding the Promise Keepers. I have found that people find it difficult to leave their false gods and cleave to the God of the Bible. Yet it is often easy to blame people for their ignorance when in fact they are a mere product of their pastor. It is as though they are puppets of false teachers; dummies that are manipulated by ill informed or just plain ignorant ministers of the gospel. I salute you for the continued effort to bring light into the lives of

those that have been deceived by darkness.

WWW: The website states:

JESUS COULD NOT SIN BECAUSE WHEN HIS HUMAN NATURE WAS ASSUMED AND UNITED WITH HIS GOD-NATURE, HIS HUMAN NATURE WAS IMBUED AND PERMEATED WITH THE FULL MEASURE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WHICH MADE THAT HUMAN NATURE IMPECCABLE

James 1:13-which says that God can not be tempted by evil-is used to explain that Christ-as God-could not be tempted. The bible is also clear in that God can not hunger tire feel pain or die-yet Christ did do all these things. Doesn't that disprove the hypostatic union as we know it?

WWW: I just have only one question, after reading your text on James Dobson, that I ask in love. Have you talked with Dr. Dobson to confirm these "accusations?" Because if you haven't you are guilty of gossip, and I believe that your intentions are based from a deep love for God. I, too, have a deep love for God and so that is why I ask.

WWW: read your opposing article about PK...very interesting..I shall pray for you.

WWW: Beware of the half truth--you may have gotten the wrong half. Salvation is by atonement—not by attainment. It is impossible to drive in the wrong direction and arrive at the right destination."

TENNESSEE: Hi I live in Nashville and really enjoy your webpage... that said, do you know of any like-minded churches near-ish me?

WWW: I've SEEN FATHERS TAKE THEIR SONS TO PROMISE KEEPERS WHEN THEY WOULD NOT GO TO CHURCH WITH THEM AND IT CHANGED THEIR LIVES SEEING OTHERS PRAY FOR ARE COUNTRY. WHY FIGHT CHRISTIANS WHEN HARRY POTTER WICCAN BOOKS AND NOW A MOVIE, IS TAKING OVER SATAN IS NOT HIDING ANY MORE HE IS GETTING TO THEM RIGHT IN FRONT OF US, I PUT THE WORD SATAN IN MY COMPUTER SEARCH AND ALL KINDS OF

SIGHTS CAME UP THOUSANDS OF THEM, I PUT THE WORD JESUS IN AND NOTHING CAME UP, I HAD TO GO BACK AND PUT IN JESUS CHRIST, I JUST WANT TO SAY IF YOU BELIEVE THAT JESUS DIED FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF YOUR SINS, THAN LETS PULL TOGETHER AS LOVERS OF OR LORD JESUS, AND HELP OR YOUTH AND CHILDREN BEFORE ITS TO LATE.

WWW: You are to be commended for realizing that the winter solstice is not the birthday of Jesus; and if it was the day was never celebrated until that fatal day Constantine stood as absolute authority over the reorganized Christian church.

I cannot understand your acceptance of another pagan doctrine amalgamated into the new unified church of Rome. You can find a study of this subject on either the site: "www.ApocalypseAndArmageddon.com," or "www.GospelOfChrist.org".

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Tim. 2:15)

WWW: Your article scared me. I so far cannot substantiate your claims on DObson. HOWEVER I will be cautious, more so than in the past. It is a very scary thought that there will be those who leave the faith, sometimes it makes me wonder if I am on the right path. HOW would you respond to what the right path is? I know the MOrmons and Jehovah's witnesses to be False, and I know many catholics to be false, I do know some true christian catholics who know it is by Gods' grace, yet they feel that they can lose their salvation if the do really bad sins. But they understand that nothing that they can do can earn heaven.

WWW: Hi, I am a concerned mother of a 20 year old daughter who has gotten involved with a so called non-denominational church but affiliated with what they call the Restoration Movement. Now her boyfriend is attending promise keeper meetings with the men from this church. What can I tell my daughter to help her see this is not where they should be?

FLORIDA: I enjoy your paper and don't want to miss any copies so please change my address in your files. You and yours are continually in our prayers....May our Sovereign Lord Bless and Keep you

MISSISSIPPI: I want to thank you for your articles on the Promise Keepers. I belong to a Southern Baptist Church in Pearl, Miss. A few months ago, my pastor was an ardent supporter of the Promise Keepers. I told him about the Promise Keepers and he investigated the organization. I gave him your website.

Well, what he found out about the PKs blew his mind. He now is bitterly opposed to the organization and will keep it out of our church. He told me last night that the PKs were missing some French fries in their Happy Meals. The PK books really stunned him.

Thank you for your website. I printed every one of your articles on the PKs. You are to be praised for such excellent research and reporting. I thank God people like you are out there.

IDAHO: Monday morning now, I was really down, because of the previous Sunday in church. In Sunday school class a person, asked about Promise Keepers. I have been studying on it for the last 8 years, and had the answers and most in the class new I did. But as soon as I started to answer this person, the hatred started. I was cut off and not allowed to speak, and hatred was shown by all in the class.

Has Satan blinded the eyes, so that they not only can't see the wrong in PK, but don't want to find anything out about it? I find this all the time, anytime you speak about anything else, you can discuss it with no problems, but if you mention PK, they get hostile. The strongest defenders of PK are those, that never researched it, or been involved in it personally.

I have been kicked out of one church that was trying to bring it in to the men's group, and I objected. I was serving on the Church Board, teaching Sunday School, etc., but the pastor said I was a detriment to the Board and to The Church. In fact the Pastor called a special Meeting of the board to deal with me. Anyway after being put down in Sunday school, my

daughter who knew nothing about it, sent me your web site. And what an encouragement it was.

It was just what I needed, at the right time. It's great to know you're not alone on this battle. God bless you.

We can't send anything right now, but hope to in the future. We are on Social Security, and limited right now. When we were kicked out of the church, (Nazarene) we went to the Wesleyan; we are not members of either now.

The pastor, and assistant pastor, and several others are promise keepers. We tried several churches and found PK in most of them. We had some friends in the Wesleyan church so we attend there. God bless you and keep up your ministry, it's really needed.

WWW: Thank you for your web page about "the purpose of Christs sufferings", I was already a Christian, but it ministered to me today, & I needed that!

WWW: It appears that God is leading many in the body of Christ into all truth. I have just read your article why you do not celebrate Christmas, and I know you were lead by the Lord to write it. I have been seeking the truth for a while and I have been praying to the Lord his words Seek and yea shall find knock and the door shall be opened. God is opening the Door to all who Knock, I strongly believe this Holiday many will be blessed as they read your words. Continue to stand and be a blessing.

WWW: After reading your article... could you answer me two questions please:

1) How can you open bear such hate to the Cahtolic faith? It wrote the bible and gave early footholds to Chistainity. How can you not belive someone so selfless as mother Thresa did the work of the Lord?

2)Why is your interpretation of the bible correct? If you truly belive in the Holy Spirt of God, how so many interperet the Bible differently? The Spirit could not guide wrongly...

WWW: Since you kind of requested email response to your "Battle Ground" article, I thought I'd take you up on it.

You need to be encouraged on writing an excellent article... and you're right... the Total Depravity" issue is the battle ground, the "big buggaboo" as one Bible teacher said, in discussing it, and the so-called "free will" issue.

I've seen this for a long time, but certainly am not as articulate as you in penning it. The Arminianism in our fundamental churches is stunning... but why the surprise??... we're told this will be. (2 Tim 4).

Anyway, I wanted to let you know some are reading your excellent and encouraging article, I have it printed out and very often give them away... it's interesting how it's received. I'm convinced the way in which it's received is a direct

indicator as to the spiritual condition of the recipient.

How glorious it is to recognize that if God had left me to my own resources... I would NOT choose Him... that while I was YET a sinner, Christ died for me... and that I, He had quickened when I was dead in trespasses and sins. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me"... we were GIVEN to the Lord Jesus by the Father!!! I don't understand that, but He has said it, it is so. This loosens the tongue to give glory to Him!

When the time comes we will, no doubt, be looking at the Savior, but we'll cross paths one day, see you then. Meanwhile, preach the Word!

WWW: I just finished reading your article titled "I Don't Do Christmas.....". I was curious to know how you came to your conclusion on this matter and if you would divulge your "religion" to me. I am asking because my husband and I have been doing a lot of studying on this very subject and we were wondering if you are a Jehovah's Witness and that is why you feel this way. I understand if you don't want to respond but I would greatly appreciate it. **(Editor's Note:** I did respond to this writer and we have had a very cordial exchange of e-mail.

WWW: I totally agree with you about the customs of this pagan holiday. I have just researched this all in the last week. I am sick at this ignorant tradition, that man has handed down to us. I am trying to get through to one of my friends who is arguing for this so called holiday. She referred to several verses in the Bible as the Feasts and Hanukkah and how they exchange gifts for 8 nights. I am not sure how to reason with her about this subject, because I really no nothing about Hanukkah. I am wondering if you can help me out here. I know that gift exchanging are the characteristics of Xmas. I was raised Baptist and accepted this, because of it being handed down by my parents. I am familiar with most of the scriptures arguing against this so-called holiday. I do need help though with any information you can give me on the Jewish people and Hanukkah, and how I can clearly explain this to her. I told her, I feel in my heart and gut it is wrong. I was almost sick when I read all the information on the net regarding Christ Mass. Any additional information you can give me to help her to see this all more clearly would be appreciated. Thanks so much.

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