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Editorial

What Does the Bible Teach?

“Let Your Women Keep Silent In The Churches”

CHRIST BUILT THE CHURCH, and He authorized His chosen apostles to bind and to loose in the church all things God expects His people to know and to do. (Matthew 16:18-19; 18:18; John 14:25-26; 16:12-13). The apostle Paul wrote the church at Corinth, “Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church.” (1 Corinthians 14:34-35). Again, in another epistle he wrote, “Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.” (1 Timothy 2:11-12). In the next two verses the apostle also gives the reason why women should not speak, teach, lead, or exert authority over men in meetings of the church by saying, “For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.”



But what about women being appointed as elders (or bishops or pastors) and evangelists in churches today? Are they going to keep silent? Are they going to sit in the assembly of the church in submission? And what about women who are publicly preaching and teaching, both men and women through the television, from

the same Bible which forbids them to teach or to have authority over man? **Evidently, those who are making such appointments and those who are accepting such positions are doing so in direct contravention and violation of God's written will.** The apostle Paul did not permit women to be public teachers of men or to exercise authority over men. She is not permitted to teach men, since this action assumes role of authority as a teacher of God's word in doctrinal matters. It implies women cannot lead in any manner in the assembly where both men and women are present. They cannot preach and teach, lead singing, wait on the Lord's table, since that would be usurping authority over men present in the assembly. Of course, this does not mean that women cannot sing in the public assembly or take part in the informal Bible study, under the leadership of a man. What is being forbidden is taking the role of leadership in any manner in a mixed assembly, where both men and women are present, like leading a prayer, singing, teaching, etc. Women cannot be elders or pastors, or deacons, since an elder or pastor, and a deacon, according to 1 Timothy 3:2 and 12, "Must be the husband of one wife." There were twelve apostles, Christ had chosen, and all of them were men. (Matthew 10:2-4). When Judas fell, he was replaced by not another woman disciple, but by Mathias, a man. (Acts 1:26).

Just because women cannot speak or lead in the assembly, however, is not to suggest they cannot serve at all in the church. They can teach women and children and serve Christ and His church in any other manner that would bring glory to God. Women are as valuable to Christ and His church as men. The question here is not about value but about roles. The roles of men and women in the church are not to be decided by men or human traditions or cultures, but their roles must be decided by the Scripture. A woman could speak or teach in a private setting, she can teach and admonish other women and thereby exercise her spiritual gift without violating the clear scriptural prohibition laid by the apostle. The public assembly of the church is not mentioned at all in 1 Corinthians 11:5, as well as in Acts 21:9, and one must assume what the text does not say in order to make out a case for women praying or prophesying (Speaking) in the assembly.

In 1 Corinthians 11:3 the apostle wrote, "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God." This is the scriptural order of authority of God, Christ and man. Is there anything wrong about it? If God

is the head of Christ, does this mean He is going to mistreat and demean Christ? Some have assumed that because man is the head of woman, this makes woman inferior to man and contradicts Galatians 3:28, which says, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ." What is being taught here is that with respect to salvation in Christ both men and women and as well as all others are fellow heirs of God. Being in subjection does not mean being less than equal. (Philippians 2:5-8). Just because a woman is to be in subjection to a man does not make her less than his equal. When the Bible says, "Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says" (see Genesis 3:16); and "Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence," this does not mean that women lack intelligence, spiritual sensitivity, talent or faithfulness to God. But it is just a stated order of God for men and women in the church. And the basis for saying women cannot preach or teach in the assembly arises from the beginning with Adam and Eve, not a cultural bias from Paul himself. As it says, "For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived fell into transgression." (1 Tim. 2:13-14).

So whether it is the home or the church, God has specified how men and women should live in their respective spheres. (Ephesians 5:22-33). At home, woman is the home maker, and man is the head. He is responsible for looking after the welfare of the wife and children, protecting them and guiding them in the fear of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:1-4) And, in the church, men ought to take the leadership, to lead worship services, preach and exhort, lead prayers, singing, and serve the Lord's supper. But let women keep silent in the assembly of the church, for they are not permitted to speak.

The Great Judgment Day

J.C. CHOATE

WE ARE ALL FAMILIAR WITH the courts of our land where the one who breaks the law is taken to be tried before a judge and jury. If that person is found guilty, he or she will have face some type of punishment.



Maybe we are not as familiar with the great judgment day that the God of heaven has planned for all of us at some point in the future. If we are not aware of it, we need to learn more about it so that we can become prepared.

Please consider the following questions and answers that will help us in our preparation for that day:

1. When will the great judgment day take place?

Certain specific things will occur before the judgment, but no one knows just when those things will happen. For instance, Christ will return before the judgment takes place. He promised His disciples that He will come again (John 14:1-3). He has not said, however, when that particular date will be. Rather, we are told that He will come as a thief in the night. Peter wrote, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night..." (2 Peter 3:10). That is, Jesus will come at an unannounced time. We are also told in 2 Peter 3:10 that at His coming, "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Also, at the coming of the Lord, all the dead, both good and evil, will be resurrected. Christ himself said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28,29). Those who are righteous and who are still living at the Lord's return will be caught up in the air to meet Him in the clouds (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17).

2. Who will be there?

All will be there—all who have ever lived, both the righteous and the unrighteous. Paul tells us that "we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (Romans 14:10).

3. Who will be the judge?

Christ Himself will be the judge (Acts 17:30,31). Paul wrote, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in the body, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10).

4. How will He judge?

He knows us, He knows everything we have ever done, every thought we have ever thought, and everything we have ever said and desired. He will judge us without partiality, without being a

respector of persons. Peter could see that God was no respecter of persons in dealing with Jews and Gentiles, and Judgment will be even further proof of that fact (Acts 10:34). Paul said “For there is no respect of persons with God” (Romans 2:11).

5. What will follow the judgment?

The wicked will “go away into everlasting punishment: but righteous into life eternal” (Matthew 25:46). This will be final. There will be no second chance. The soul will live forever either in heaven or hell (Luke 16).

My friend, are you prepared to stand before the Lord at the judgment, to give an answer for all you have done in this life? Will you hear Him say, “Well done,” or will you hear him say, “Depart from me”? Eternity for each one of us will be determined by the preparations we make now for that day.

God sent His Son into this world to die on the cross that we might be saved in this world and in the world to come. If we will believe in Him, repent of our sins, confess Christ as the Son of God, and be baptized for the remission of our sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38), then He will save us and add us to His spiritual family, the church (Acts 2:47). If we will then remain faithful to Him unto death, we will receive a crown of eternal life (Revelation 2:10), and live with God forevermore. (Revelation 22:14). If we refuse to believe in Him, or to obey Him, or to live the faithful Christian life, then we will be lost for all eternity (Matthew 7:21-23; Matthew 7:13,14). The decision is up to you and to me. The judgment day will come for all of us. May God help us to prepare for that day.

OBSERVATIONS

JAMES D. BALES

Preaching In an Unknown Tongue

THE APOSTLE PAUL SAID ONE should teach in an understandable language for otherwise edification does not take place (1 Cor. 14:6-28). We do not have the gift of tongues today, but we should try to be understood by those to whom we are speaking. Richard Baxter thought that occasionally a preacher should “preach ‘above’ his people so that they would continue to respect him as their teacher.” James H. Blakemore told a member of his church that he could not spare the time to do this. This person replied that the preacher had

lost him many times (*A Preacher's Temptations*, Raleigh: Edwards & Broughton Co., 1966, p.43)

Blakemore quoted Luther's statement that: "If in my discourses I were to be thinking about Melanchthon and the other doctors I should do no good at all: but I preach in plain language to the plain, unlearned people, and that pleases all parties. If I know the Greek, Hebrew, and Latin languages, I reserve them for our learned meetings, where they are of us, for at these we deal with such subtleties and such profundities, that God Himself, I wot, must sometimes marvel at us."

Of course, the "unlearned" is not without learning. They may learn in other aspects of life but are not students of the Bible. Furthermore, all students of the Bible are unlearned concerning some things in the Bible for no one has mastered it all.

It is not wrong to expounds in the pulpit on the meaning or meanings of some Greek or Hebrew word.

You may be very familiar with the meaning of the new birth but some in your audience may have many misunderstandings about it. You may understand the meaning of justification by faith through grace, but there are likely far more people who are confused about it than understand it. I think it is wise to have different approaches to the same subject so that one may deal with the subject again in order to instruct the unlearned and to give additional insights to at least some of the learned.

Disadvantaged

The disadvantaged include more than some realize. Wilmont Robertson went so far as to write: "The most truly disadvantaged are those who are hated for their virtues, not their vices, who insist on playing the game of life with opponents who have long ago abandoned the rules, who stubbornly go on believing that a set of highly sophisticated institutions developed by and for a particular people at a particular point in time and space is operational for all people under all circumstances." (*The Disposed Majority*, Cape Canaveral, 1976, p.xi). He was speaking of the principles on which our country was founded and modern attacks on them.

There are those who assume that if one does right, everyone will like them. Jesus did right but not everyone liked Him. Why be surprised that there are those who will hate His disciples? (Matt. 24:9). Of certain disciples He said: "I have given them thy word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even

as I am not of the world” (John 17:14). Not everyone wants to hear the truth taught or see it practiced. Paul said, “So then am I become your enemy, by telling you the truth?” (Gal. 4:16).

There are some who will rend those who try to teach them. If we know we are faced with such a one it is better not to cast pearls (Matt. 7:6). However, let us sow the seed of the kingdom when not dealing with swine and there will be those who accept it, be saved by it, and love God and us. Let us sow the seed of the kingdom to please God and out of gratitude for what His loving grace has done for us.

IMPROVEMENT of the MIND

J.L. LEIFESTE

“Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.”—Col. 3:2

MUSCLES, OTHER TISSUES, and even the brain grow stronger as they are used correctly. They grow weaker when not used. Different types of work or play strengthen various parts of the body. However, our beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions affect every part of our life. Therefore, we should mentally exercise in moral and optimistic values to strengthen our mind.

In Col. 3:2, the phrase *“set your mind on things above”* is translated from Greek, which contains the idea of exercising the mind. It means mentally pointing oneself toward, and intensely interesting oneself in, godly things. It involves concern, obedience, decent reflection, and moral attention, not mere opinions. We can find the correct method for this improvement of the mind in the surrounding scriptures and other related scriptures in the New Testament.

BEFORE EXERCISING

Prior to any exercise, we should know our present condition. This gives us a starting point and helps us plan for improvement. **Colossians 2:8-13** tells us to be careful and not follow the ways of men or the ways of the world. It reminds us that Christ is the authority (Isa. 9:6-7; Matt. 8:27; 28:18; Eph. 1:19-23; Col 1:18-19; 1 Pet. 3:22). The New Testament teaches that our salvation depends on believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Mk. 16:15-16; Jn. 3:16; 8:24; 20:31), repenting of our sins (Lk. 13:3; 24:46-47; Acts

2:38; 17:30; 2 Pet. 3:9), confessing our belief before others (Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:10; Phil. 2:11; Acts 8:37), and being baptized (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 16:32-33; 22:16; Gal 3:27; 1 Pet. 3:20-21).

Verse 12 shows that being *“buried with Him”* in baptism is part of becoming a Christian: *“buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.”* Coming up out of the water of baptism, we are *“raised with Him,”* which is a spiritual parallel to Christ’s resurrection from death. At baptism, we receive spiritual life as a free gift from God. See Rom. 6:3-6, 23.

So we must first make sure that we are Christians as taught in the New Testament. Yet, after becoming Christians, we should not allow that spiritual life to grow weak. We must exercise for spiritual growth.

OUR BASIC GOAL

Colossians 3:1-4 presents our main goal: *“If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. (2) Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. (3) For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (4) When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”*

The Christian sets his or her mind upon godly things because spiritual life rests with Christ in God (Eph. 1:3; 2:4-7). Christians should consider themselves dead to the worldly ways of sin (Rom. 6:2-5; 2 Cor. 5:17). Having spiritual life in Christ, we will appear with Him in glory when He returns (1 Jn. 3:2). This is the aim of which we must constantly remind ourselves. It is the most important goal of a Christian’s life. Its reward surpasses imagining. Achieving it, through the grace of God, is well worth our every effort (see Phil. 3:12-14; Eph. 3:20-21).

EXERCISES OF ELIMINATION

In exercising the mind, we must rid ourselves of some things. Many people of the world may give little thought to committing sins. They may think of some sins as simple actions that affect nothing. But **Colossians 3:5-7** lists some of the evils that we must avoid: *“Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. (6) Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, (7) in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.”*

Verse 5 mentions sexual activities between people who are not married, evil desires, and coveting—desiring things owned by others. **Verse 6** then warns that God's wrath will come to those who do these things (see Prov. 11:19; Rom. 1:18; 2:8; 6:23). **Verse 7** reminds the readers that they once lived these ways before becoming Christians. Every Christian needs to remember that he or she has changed. Verses 8-9 resume by listing things Christians must avoid: *"But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. (9) Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds."*

By becoming a Christian, we put off the "old man" of sin (Eph. 4:22-24). Therefore, we now avoid ungodly thoughts and actions. Also see Rom. 8:1; 2 Cor. 7:1; Gal. 5:19-21. When a Christian sets his or her mind upon the "things above," it is easier to resist temptation and elude sins. However, exercising the mind also includes adding certain favorable attributes to our lives.

EXERCISES OF INCORPORATION

Colossians 3:10 reminds us that, as Christians, we have put on newness or *"the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him."* To have that knowledge, we must study the New Testament, where we continue to find and understand all Christian traits. We then add each trait to our own character. For example, see Rom. 5:3-4; 6:10-13; Gal. 5:24-6:10; Eph. 2:10; Titus 2:11-12; and 2 Pet. 1:5-7.

Verse 11 emphasizes the equality of all Christians: *"where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all."* See also Gal. 3:26-29. God wants **all** people to hear and obey the gospel of Jesus (Mk. 16:15-16; Rom. 3:21-23; 10:8-13). Separations between Christians, which would exist in the eyes of worldly people, do not exist in Christ. All of us have sinned (Rom. 3:21-26), and all of us depend on Christ for our spiritual life. So, there is true equality among all Christians. This concept of equality should help motivate us to set our mind upon the things above.

Verses 12-16 list many of the qualities we should add to improve ourselves: *"Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; (13) bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. (14) But above all these things put on love, which is*

the bond of perfection. (15) And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. (16) Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

The terms "elect, holy, and beloved" show how special a Christian is to God. The verse then lists the Christian qualities of compassion, humility (mental modesty), gentleness, and longsuffering (patient endurance). **Verse 13** adds our responsibility of endurance and forgiveness, especially toward other Christians. See also Gal. 5:22-23.

Verses 14-15 begin a conclusion of mental improvement. We must include godly love, the uniting link of being spiritually complete. The peace of God (Rom. 5:1, 8:6; Phil 4:7) must govern our hearts because He "*called*" (invited) us to obey the gospel of Christ and become part of the one body, the church of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4; Rom. 16:16). Having become Christians, our response should be continuous thankfulness to God. **Verse 16** urges us to let the word of Christ richly live in us so that we may wisely teach and admonish each other through songs. This is part of godly love. See Eph. 5:19-20.

Finally, in **verse 17**, we are given the summary of mental improvement. "*And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*" We must allow the authority of Christ to discipline our words and actions, with all credit and thanks pointing to God the Father through Christ. Therefore, prayer is also a vital part of improving of the mind (Rom. 12:12; 1 Thess. 5:17).

Colossians 3:1-17 gives us a wonderful plan and abundant help for improving the Christian's mind. However, an essential part of improvement lies in our applying these principles. Each exercise requires practice. Just as we can strengthen our physical bodies, we must continue and practice the Christian characteristics of these and other scriptures to remain mentally strong and continue to improve (Rom. 12:9).

"Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy —meditate on these things" (Phil. 4:8).

The CHURCH in their HOUSE

ROYCE FREDERICK

IMAGINE A “CHURCH BUILDING” inside a large house! Several Bible verses mention the church **in** someone’s house. But the word “church” refers to the group of Christians, **not** a physical building:

In Ephesus, about A.D. 59: “...Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with **the church that is in their house**” (1 Cor. 16:19).

In Rome, about A.D. 60: “Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus...Likewise greet **the church that is in their house...**” (Rom. 16:3, 5). Two other greetings in Rom. 16, to brethren in Rome, suggest that the church was meeting in their houses also, in other parts of the large city of Rome: “Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and **the brethren who are with them**” (Rom. 16:14); “Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and **all the saints who are with them**” (Rom. 16:15).

In the area of Corinth, about A.D. 60: “Gaius, my host and **the host of the whole church**, greets you... ” (Rom. 16:23).

In the area of Laodicea, about A.D. 64: “Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and Nymphas and **the church that is in his house**” (Col. 4:15).

In Colossae, about A.D. 64: “...To Philemon our beloved friend and fellow laborer, to the beloved Apphia, Archippus our fellow soldier, and to **the church in your house**” (Philemon 1-2).

Outstanding among these are Aquila and Priscilla. They first met Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:1-3). Later, they went with Paul to Ephesus, where they stayed, while Paul went on to Jerusalem (18:18-19). After Paul returned to Ephesus, we find the church meeting in their house at Ephesus (1 Cor. 16:19). Still later, Paul returns to Corinth and sends greetings to this Christian couple, who are now in Rome. Again, the church is meeting in their house (Rom. 16:3-5).

Priscilla and Aquila did not leave the church behind! “*For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them*” (Matt. 18:20). These two Christians **were** the church wherever they went. They taught others (Acts 18:24-26), and the church assembled for worship in their house.

A “church building” can be a helpful **tool** for a large group to learn and worship together. But the church multiplied rapidly in the

first three centuries without church buildings! When persecution came, they scattered and established more churches! (See Acts 8:1-4.)

Even today, thousands of churches of Christ throughout the world meet in houses of Christians — five or six Christians here, thirty there, etc. And their numbers keep climbing! **Like the first century Christians**, they partake of the Lord's Supper on the first day of each week, sing praises to God without musical instruments, give on the first day of the week, pray together, and listen to a message from God's word (Acts 20:7; Col. 3:16; 1 Cor. 16:1-2; 14:15-16).

With the help of God and His written word, you can establish the church of Christ wherever you are. When sinners obey the gospel of Christ, wear the name of Christ— "Christian" (Acts 11:26; 1 Pet. 4:16) — and practice the doctrine of Christ, they are the church of Christ (see Rom. 16:16). He promised, "... *I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it*" (Matt. 16:18)!

DO NOT TOUCH

ALFRED A. MEEKS

AFTER BEING FREED FROM SLAVERY in Egypt, the Israelites, under the leadership of Moses, crossed the Red Sea, and entered the "Wilderness of Shur" (Ex. 15:22). Three months later they came to Mount Sinai, where they camped (Ex. 19:1-2). At Sinai, God gave them a law to direct them throughout their generations.

Among the things God commanded Israel at this time was the construction of a beautiful tent. This tent (called a tabernacle) was the place where the High Priest could commune with God, the other priests could offer sacrifices, and the people could meet to worship.

Inside the Tabernacle were some pieces of furniture necessary for conducting their service to God. Among these furnishings was a box made of acacia wood and covered inside and outside with gold. This box was called "The Ark of the Covenant." The Ark had four rings made of gold (one at each corner) through which two poles could be put, and the Ark was to be **carried by priests** (Num. 4:5-15). **NO ONE WAS TO TOUCH THE ARK** (Num. 4:15).

After David became king of Israel, he wanted to move the Ark from the house of Abinadab to the city of Jerusalem. They loaded

the Ark **on a new cart** with two men, Uzzah and Ahio, driving the oxen. We are told in 2 Sam. 6:6-7, *“And when they came to Nachon’s threshing floor, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. Then the anger of the Lord was aroused against Uzzah, and the Lord struck him there for his error; and he died there by the Ark of God.”*

Two errors were made on the occasion of Uzzah’s death: 1) They tried to move the Ark in a way God had not commanded. 2) Uzzah disobeyed God when he touched the Ark.

Since God had described the way He wanted the Ark moved, it was wrong for them to try to move it in some other way. Today, when God tells us in the New Testament how He wants something done, it is wrong to try to do it some other way. For example: the New Testament tells us how to finance the work of the church. The Apostle Paul told the people in Corinth, *“...as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come”* (1 Cor. 16:1-2). It is clear from these verses that the work of the church is to be supported by freewill contributions from the members (see 2 Cor. 9:7). That means if a church supports its work by selling groceries, or by showing movies, or by sponsoring bingo games, it is not acting according to God’s word.

Uzzah did something that God did not allow when he touched the Ark. He, no doubt, intended to keep the Ark from falling, and maybe being broken. His intentions were good, but disobeying God is a serious matter, regardless of our intentions. In the end, we will pay for our disobedience. The New Testament says, *“Do not lie to one another...”* (Col. 3:9). What happens if we lie? *“...and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death”* (Rev. 21:8).

What happens when we commit adultery, fornication, idolatry, envy, or jealousy? The word of God says, *“...those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God”* (Gal. 5:19-21).

But remember: regardless of what our sins are, they can be forgiven by our obedience to the gospel of Christ. He died that our sins might be forgiven if we are willing to obey Him.

LOVE OF THE WORLD

T. PIERCE BROWN

PROBABLY ONE OF THE BEST known verses in the Bible, even for those who do not believe in God, is John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Fewer are familiar with the statement we find in 1 John 2:15. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." I do not recall ever hearing anyone discuss in any detail this interesting paradox. We are supposed to be like God or like Christ. Yet they loved the world and we are not to do so, even though the same words are used in both cases.

NOT A CONTRADICTION

In order to understand more completely what atheists would call a contradiction, let us be aware that words have different meanings in different contexts, regardless of what language we use. In fact, they may mean exactly the opposite in some cases. Take the word "fast" for example. A fast horse will run. A fast color will not run. (Even the word "run" means something different in those two sentences. A fast woman may or may not run. You may stand fast, or run fast. You may fast and not eat, or you may eat fast. We can do the same kind of analysis with hundreds or thousands of words. In some cases there is a basic or root meaning of a word which may help, but in some cases that will do very little good, if any. One needs to use all the information he can get, and then try to determine the exact meaning by the context. This is sometimes impossible to do with absolute certainty. However, with that understanding, we can at least better understand how God can love the world, but we are not to do so.

According to the lexicons, the basic meaning of the word world ("kosmos") has to do with order, system and arrangement. This is the word translated "adorning" in 1 Peter 3:3, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel." When a woman is orderly, or has arranged herself modestly, she will not be calling attention to her dress or hairstyle. Some have thought this means she must not plait the hair or wear gold. If it means that, it also means that she

must not put on apparel! It should be apparent that the meaning in that sentence has to do with the fact that she is not to try to call attention to herself by any order or arrangement of her life or clothes.

It should be evident when we examine every expression where the word “kosmos” is used that it has at least two primary meanings. First, it means the whole universe, including the earth, and all things and persons thereon. Then it may mean any portion of that, which is determined by the context. When Jesus said, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15), it should be evident that he did not mean we should go to Mars or Venus and try to find creatures there to which we should preach.

TWO THINGS IN ONE SENTENCE

The word may even mean two different things in one sentence. In John 1:10, we are told, “He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.” The whole universe was made by Him, but the world that did not know Him refers to persons, not the sun or moon.

When we come to John 3:16, we may inquire, when it says that God loved the world, does it mean his created universe? We may be able to prove that God loved all his universe, but the context shows that he is speaking of those who may believe in Him, and that does not include the sun, moon and stars, but persons. We have extensive writings from a man who claims to be a Bible scholar who says that in John 1:29 when Jesus was to take away the sin of the world, he is not speaking of our sins, but the sin principle (whatever that is) that caused the curse to come on all the created universe, and especially the ground that was cursed and brought forth thorns and thistles. So, when John 3:17 says that “the world through him might be saved” that man claims that it means that the earth will be rejuvenated, the desert will blossom like a rose, and there will not any longer be any part of the earth not fit for habitation. So the fact that God loves the world is presumed to mean that he loves the created universe. He even suggests that the ice will disappear from the North and South poles! I presume that the fact that they are now frozen suggests that God does not love them as much as he does the temperate zones. It is not my purpose to deal with all such theories, but merely to show how we can love the world in the sense that God did, and hate the world in the sense that John commands.

When Jesus says in John 7:7, “The world cannot hate you; but

me it hateth," it should be evident that he is talking about people, not the earth or the material things which make up the universe. It should not be strange that he uses words like that, for we do it, and are not confused by it. If we should hear someone say, "This is a beautiful city," as they drove around and saw the buildings, sidewalks and parks, we would understand they were talking about things. If they should say, "The whole city turned out for the parade" we would understand that they were talking about the people, not the buildings.

"THE WHOLE WORLD"

When the Pharisees said in John 12:19, "The whole world is gone after them," surely no one would assume that they meant that the physical world had gone after him. When Jesus said in John 15:18, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you," no one would assume he was talking about the things in the universe. When Jesus wept over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41), he was not crying about the houses and streets, but the people whom he would have gathered as a hen gathered her chickens under her wings.

So, when we find that Jesus spoke to the world, the world heard or refused to hear, the world rejected him, we know he is talking about persons. When we are told in 1 John 2:15, "Love not the world, neither the things in the world" it should be evident to any thoughtful person that he is talking about our loving the arrangement or order that men have created, and the things that are so appealing to us which cause the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life. Surely, verse 16 plainly shows that. When we are told that God loved the world, he is not speaking of God loving those things, but the people who can believe in him and be saved. We are supposed to love the world in the same sense God did. There is no more a contradiction than there is in Paul saying in 1 Timothy 5:6, "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." We may say, "A person cannot be dead and alive at the same time" but Paul says that one can. When Jesus said in Matthew 22:32, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, God is not the God of the dead, but of the living," they all knew that Abraham was dead. Yet Jesus said he was living. One does not necessarily contradict himself when he uses a word in two different senses, even in the same sentence. So we may love the world in the same sense God did, so that we sacrifice for the salvation of the people, but love not the world in the sense of being unduly concerned with the things and arrangements of the world.

Anger ... Satan's Open Door!

CHUCK GLOVER

I RECENTLY REPORTED TO A parent an incident in which her child had threatened another child with a baseball bat. The parent's response was, "Well, that's just normal behavior for middle schoolers." You've probably heard (and may have even said) that anger is merely a normal human reaction. The insinuation is that people have no control over anger and, therefore, it is justifiable. How sad!

While anger may be a daily part of your life, it does not have to be and, the truth is, should not be. (Proverbs 16:32.) Joy and forgiveness are what God wants you to practice. (Isaiah 61:10.) But how? The following steps will enable you to greatly reduce the amount and intensity of your anger. (1 Corinthians 2:13.)

1. Realize that anger is a decision that you make based on information that you provide to yourself. Admit that, by thinking how other people or events "make" you angry, you are giving them control over you. God is the only one to whom you should give control. When feeling anger, think of your options before reacting. Think on the verses cited throughout this article. Decide which option to choose. Act on your choice. Then, evaluate your decision. Did you choose the option that garners the results that God wants (Colossians 3:8) or that you want? (Proverbs 16:2, James 1:20.)

2. Are you presumptuous enough to justify your anger, because God was angry? Don't be. God's emotions are holy, yours are selfish. God's wisdom is perfect, your's is ignorance. God's anger, since the beginning of time, has been motivated by human foolishness, ignorance, and unholy behavior coupled with His desire that all be saved. (Mark 3:5, 1 Timothy 2:3-4, 8.) He knows that anger is an invitation to Satan to enter into your life. (Ephesians 4:26-27, James 1:20.)

3. Change the information that you put into mind and you will change the output. (Colossians 3:2, 8; Matthew 26:41.) Think differently about things that anger you. Impossible? Hard, maybe, but nothing is impossible through Jesus. (Philippians 4:8, 13.) Self-control is a fruit of the Spirit and, therefore, from God. Let God be in control. (Galatians 5:22-23, 1 Corinthians 10:13.)

4. Work diligently to develop an attitude of gratitude. Be continually grateful that God has so richly blessed you far beyond

all that you deserve. (1 Thessalonians 5:18.) You deserve God's anger far more than others deserve yours, but He gives you forgiveness instead.

5. Understand that whomever is doing wrong against you is ignorant of God's message and does not have a godly perspective on life and its purpose. Pray for them, feeling love and hope for them. Set a Christian example of love by caring for and being kind to them. (Psalm 37:8-9.)

6. Keep a more accurate perspective on situations that create anger in your life. (Proverbs 19:11.) Focus on God's purpose for your life—to bring glory to God—then choose feelings and actions that demonstrate that God is active in your life. (2 Corinthians 3:3.) These actions include forgiveness, patience, kindness, and service, even for those working against you. Anger is most often motivated by ego and does not bring glory to God. (2 Corinthians 5:15.) Ridding your life of anger brings tremendous glory to God (Matthew 5:15), because it is He that enables you to do so. (Philippians 4:13.)

7. Put forth greater effort to build a strong personal relationship with God. (Isaiah 61:10, Matthew 6:33.) More frequent prayer and daily Bible study allow God to bring you a clearer understanding of your own intentions and deep motivations. (Proverbs 4:20-23, Matthew 12:35, 26:41.)

The bottom line is that you (and, indeed, all of us) must increase in faith. Lack of faith is manifest by anger, fear, doubt, worry, and offering excuses (self-justification). When you experience these things, bring to mind God's will, God's word, and prayer, in these you will grow by practicing the above strategies. Through a clearer understanding of God's word and desire to do His will, you can more consistently put anger away from you. (Ephesians 4:22-24.)

CONSEQUENCES OF GOING BACK TO THE LAW

ALBERT GARDNER

THE OLD TESTAMENT LAW WAS divine because it came from God through Moses, but even during that period they looked for a new law. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of

Judah.” (Jeremiah 31:31.) The first testament was not meant to be permanent.

The purpose of the law was to “bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” (Galatians 3:24-25.) It did its work well and ended at the cross. (Colossians 2:14.)

The law separated Jews and Gentiles, so Jesus “broke down this middle wall” (Ephesians 2:14), and made it possible for us all to be one in Christ.

There has always been the danger of people going back to the law, but there are serious consequences for those who do. Circumcision was the issue when Paul discussed this, because some were saying “Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses ye cannot be saved.” (Acts 15:1.)

“For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.” (Galatians 5:3,4.)

There are three main consequences if one goes back to the Old Testament to bind a part of it on people today.

First, we are debtor to do the whole law. The whole law includes killing animals for sacrifices, going to Jerusalem for major feast days, and the penalties for breaking the law. The whole law is not just the Ten Commandments. We cannot pick and choose what we like, but must take all of it.

Second, Christ is become of no effect to us. The law was taken away at the cross, and was no longer binding after that time. If one can return to the law and be justified by it, of what value was the cross? Jesus suffered and died in vain if one can be saved by the law that was taken away then.

Third, you are fallen from grace. No one could be justified by the law, and by its removal a way to be saved was opened up through the gospel. We have the favor of God; we are saved by grace.

If one attempts to return to the law, he has fallen from grace. Gospel obedience brings salvation, which is another way of saying one is saved by grace. When the gospel was first preached, the conditions of salvation were announced, and those who obeyed were saved by grace; not by the law. They had the favor of God, but would lose that favor by returning to the law.

The New Testament Church Is Divine In Origin

LOUIS RUSHMORE

THE ONE CHURCH OVER WHICH Jesus alone is head is divine in origin. Two factors primarily attest to the divine origin of the church, namely: (1) The first conception of the church is attributed by Scripture to the mind of God before creation. (2) The divine hand mandated and established the church by the power and authority of heaven. Especially after a careful examination of these points, the earnest student should experience little difficulty identifying the church of the Bible, in spite of abundant denominational confusion in the religious world.

ORIGIN IN MIND OF GOD

Many people mistakenly believe that the church was an after-thought of God, devised due to the Jews' rejection of Christ as their Messiah. Not aware that the words church and kingdom are interchangeable terms (Matthew 16:16-19), they also view the church as a substitution for the kingdom. This would defraud God and Christ of both their omniscience and omnipotence.

The apostle Paul explained to the Ephesians the unfolding of God's plan for man's redemption through the church (Ephesians 3:3-12). In verses three through five, he noted that God's plan had formerly been a "mystery."

This mystery provided for the inclusion of the Gentiles (verse 6). Though unnoticed by the Jews and men in general, several prophecies acknowledge that both Jews and Gentiles together were always intended to be the beneficiaries of God's plan (Genesis 12:3; 22:18; Isaiah 62:2; Joel 3:1-2; Luke 2:25-32).

The explanation of God's plan, first called a mystery, here said to be the Gospel, is charged to the church. Furthermore, the church is attributed to the "eternal purpose" (Ephesians 3:9-11) or mind of God. Titus 1:1-3 and 1 Peter 1:18-20 also address God's eternal plan for the redemption of man.

The church was God's idea, not man's idea. God planned to build the church from before the creation of the world and man. God determined Christ should be the Head and Savior of the church (Ephesians 5:23). It was always God's plan to redeem fallen man

through the church. Hence, the saved are added to the church by the Lord (Acts 2:47). The Lord's church is, therefore, the body of the saved.

ESTABLISHED BY GOD

Not only did God establish the church in His mind, but He chose a time suitable to Himself to establish that divine institution on earth. Fundamental to comprehending the transfer of the church from the mind of God to its establishment on earth, are: (1) The church and kingdom are synonymous terms for the same divine institution. (2) Therefore, all prophecies about the establishment of the kingdom equally pertain to the church, and (3) The kingdom (church) of prophecy is spiritual, not material in nature.

Jesus promised "the keys of the kingdom" to Peter, which keys (authority to bind and loose, Matthew 16:19) he used in the first recorded Gospel sermon (Acts 2). Acts Two chronicles the birthday of the church. From that point forward, all reference to the church is as a present entity, not yet future. Since Peter used the keys of the kingdom essentially to unlock the church, the church and the kingdom are the same institution.

Additionally, the apostles made no distinction between the church and the kingdom. Paul called Christians in Corinth "saints," comprising "the church of God" (1 Corinthians 1:2), whereas he addressed Christians in Colosse as "saints," members of "the kingdom" (Colossians 1:2, 13). The apostle John also matter-of-factly stated he was a member of the kingdom (Revelation 1:9). All these were unquestionably members of the New Testament church, yet they were members of the kingdom, too. They were members of "one body" (Ephesians 4:4), variously called "the church" (Ephesians 1:22, 23), "the temple of God" (1 Corinthians 3:16), "the house of God" (1 Timothy 3:15) and "the kingdom" (Colossians 1:13). Each different designation merely employs another descriptive term for the same divine institution.

The establishment of the church or kingdom in complete fulfillment of numerous prophecies is remarkable testimony of the establishment of the church by God. Churches, since Acts Chapter 2, that were begun by men were not established according to prophecies of the church. God caused the first church to be built and established the only church corresponding to age-old prophecies.

Isaiah 2:1-5; Joel 2:28-3:2 and Micah 4:1-3 identify the city of

Jerusalem as the place of the establishment of the kingdom or “house of the Lord.” Daniel 2:31-45 teaches the Lord’s kingdom was to be established during the days of the fourth world kingdom from and including the Babylonian kingdom. Universally, religious people note the Roman Empire was that fourth earthly kingdom. The establishment of the church in Jerusalem in about 33 A.D. corresponds to the time and place prophesied for the establishment of the kingdom of prophecy. Further, during His earthly ministry, Jesus told some they would not die before the establishment of the kingdom (Mark 9:1). This statement of the Lord corresponds to both the prophecies and the commencement of the church.

Unlike humanly devised churches, the church of the Bible has Christ alone as its Builder (Acts 20:28). Prophecy spoke of a stone cut from a mountain without the hands of men (Daniel 2:45), which stone is the “rock” (confession that Christ is the Son of God) of Matthew 16:16-18 on which Jesus promised to build His church, and the foundation of the church which is Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11). Jesus, “a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God...” is “chief corner stone” (1 Peter 2:4-8; Acts 4:11), making Jesus also Head of the church, Head of the body, and King of the kingdom (1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

To the surprise of the Jews, and to the amazement of countless souls today as well, Jesus Christ did not come to establish an earthly or material kingdom (John 18:36,37). Had Jesus intended to establish an earthly kingdom in Jerusalem, Pilate as Caesar’s governor could not have openly declared of Jesus, “I find in him no fault at all” (John 18:38).

Churches of human origin were begun by mere mortals instead of by the Holy Son of God Himself. They were begun after the establishment of the Lord’s church, most of them outside the era and influence of the Roman Empire and in the wrong cities. Human churches are out of harmony with prophecies about the establishment of the Lord’s church.

The seed for harvesting a bumper crop of Christians and churches of Christ (Romans 16:16) is the Word of God (Luke 8:11). When something else is planted in the hearts of men, a much different crop results. Speaking of these different crops, not the result of the Word of God, Jesus said, “...Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.” (Matthew 15:13).

THE SECOND LAW OF PARDON

MAC LAYTON

GOD'S LAW FOR BECOMING HIS CHILD is very plain. We must hear the Gospel (Rom. 1:16), believe it (Heb. 11:6), repent of all sins (Acts 2:38), confess Christ as the Son of God (Acts 8:37), and be buried with Him in baptism where His blood cleanses us. (Rom. 6:1-6).

What if we sin after becoming children of God? Is there a second law of pardon? How can those who have gone to the "far country" return to the "Father's house?" Once we have transgressed God's law as a Christian, how can we be restored? (Gal. 6:1). God's second law of pardon is seen in action in Acts 8:18-24.

STANDING BEFORE GOD OF AN ERRING CHRISTIAN

1. He is not an alien sinner, but a son, an adopted child. Therefore, the law of pardon for the alien sinner is not binding upon him.
2. He is not an apostate, one who has denied and blasphemed, and become so hardened in sin he cannot repent. For the person fallen this far cannot be renewed. (Heb. 6:4-6).
3. He is an erring brother, on his way to eternal death. (James 5:19-20).
4. He is an unfruitful branch to be burned. (John 15:5-6).
5. He is walking in darkness, without the light of eternal hope. (1 John 1:6-7).
6. He is a foolish virgin, unprepared to meet the bridegroom. (Matt. 25:11).

WHAT HAS THE WAYWARD CHRISTIAN DONE?

1. He has fallen from grace. (Rev. 2:5; Gal. 5:4).
2. He has brought reproach on the church and his brethren. (Eph. 3:20-21).
3. He has put a stumbling block before others, and hindered the truth in unrighteousness. (Matt. 5:13; Rom. 1:18; Lu. 13:7).
4. He has yielded his members to satan, and failed to grow in grace. (Rom. 6:16-17; 2 Pet. 3:18).

THE SAD CONDITION OF AN ERRING CHILD OF GOD

1. He is worse than before he became a Christian, even as a dog that returns to its vomit, and a sow to wallowing in the mire. (2 Pet. 2:21-22).
2. He is perishing. (Acts 8:20).
3. His heart is not right before God. (Acts 8:21).

4. He is in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity. (Acts 8:23).
5. He is wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. (Rev. 3:16-17).

WHAT IS THE SECOND LAW OF PARDON FOR THE FALLEN CHRISTIAN?

1. He must remember whence he is fallen, and his first love. (Rev. 2:4-5).
2. He must repent and do the first works. (Acts 8:22; Rev. 2:5).
3. He must make confession of wrongs. (1 John 1:9; James 5:16; Psalm 32:5; Proverbs 28:13-14; Job 11:13-14). The confession of sins must be to the extent of their commission. To God if they are private; before the church if they are of a public nature.
4. He must pray and ask his brethren to pray for him. (Acts 8:24; James 5:16).

WHAT MUST THE CHURCH AND FAITHFUL CHRISTIANS DO?

1. We must speak plainly, admonish, and restore. (Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:14; Acts 8:20-24).
2. We must save these erring souls from death. (James 5:19-20).
3. We must receive those who are weak in the faith and penitent with loving forgiveness. (Rom. 14:1).
4. We must withdraw from the disorderly. (1 Cor. 5:1; Rom. 16:17).

WHAT ARE GOD'S PROMISES TO HIS FALLEN CHILDREN?

1. He will forgive without measure. (1 John 1:9; Isa. 1:18).
2. He will not cause His anger to fall upon. (Jer. 3:12-13).
3. He will rejoice that his son was dead but is alive, was lost but is found. (Lu. 15:32).
4. He will heal the backslidings, and graft them in again. (Jer. 3:22; Rom. 11:20-23).

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.” (Psa. 51:10-13).

Dear Christian Friend: If you have been an unworthy example of Christ before your loved ones and friends; if you have been unfaithful to the church and its services; if you have become entangled in sin again, will you be restored today? Now? Will you remember whence you have fallen, repent of sins, confess your wrongs to God, and your brethren, and pray for full forgiveness that fellowship with your Heavenly Father be yours again? Obey God's law of pardon for His erring children before the deceitfulness of sin and hardness of heart puts you beyond repentance!