

What Saith the Scriptures Volume One Parts I – III

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PART – III

ARTICLE #39
This is the Eighties #1

It would not be an easy task to compare the eighties with the twenties, thirties, forties, fifties or even the sixties. No, we today see, experience and enjoy many wonderful things which were unknown unto the people of those and previous times.

Yet, it may be that they possessed some marvelous values, principles and life styles which many of the eighties have forsaken.

Some people of today who have embraced these changes attempt to justify their having done so by saying, "THIS IS THE EIGHTIES."

Now if their statement "THIS IS THE EIGHTIES, pertains only to the non-Biblical traditions and customs of men, then I have no quarrel with it. Their opinions are as good as mine.

However, I do strongly reject their statement ("THIS IS THE EIGHTIES"), as justification for the changes which are at variance with the values, principles and life styles as established by the word of God.

Yes, my readers, we may (as many have), set aside truth, trustworthiness, honesty, faithfulness, dependableness, concern and care for others, commitments, responsibilities, God's rules on divorce and remarriage, sex, drunkenness, submissiveness unto others and many other things and still be accepted as an ALL RIGHT PERSON by the majority of others who will just shrug their shoulders and say "OH WELL, THIS IS THE EIGHTIES."

Now if the approval of others is our only goal, then we may cast away all of these Biblical standards without suffering this loss.

However, if in the EIGHTIES, NINETIES or any other FUTURE PERIOD OF TIME, we forsake the God established standards we find recorded in his Book, we will stand condemned in his sight.

My dear readers, please consider with me carefully the following (what I believe to be), confirming evidence.

Fifteen hundred years before the coming of Jesus and the beginning of his dispensation of time, God made a covenant with the people whom he had delivered from Egypt (Ex. 3:20, Je. 31:31-34).

The terms of this covenant or agreement between God and those people is found and only found in the Old Testament portion of the Bible.

One of the terms of that agreement was, that the people were not to add unto, diminish ought from or alter in any way, the conditions of the contract (Nu. 4:1-2).

According to Je. 31:31-34 and De. 18:18-19, God later said he would some day make a new and different covenant with the people.

All Bible scholars agree that it was about fifteen hundred years from the time the first covenant was given until the giving of the New Testament. Now I ask was there ever a time during the course of that fifteen hundred years that the above cited term (of not adding unto or taking away from), that covenant became obsolete? Or in other words did God (because of changing times), decide that he would allow the people to add unto, take from, or change the conditions of the contract so that it might be compatible with the changing customs and traditions of men?

The Old Testament itself gives us a history of the life of those people in their serving God under that covenant for about one thousand years. And it says loud and clear that such was not the case.

If one should read from the book of Exodus through the book of Malachi, he would find hundreds of examples of where some of them did add unto, take away from and change many of the rules and regulations of that covenant. Howbeit, as he read the accounts of these examples, he would also read that God, without any exception, condemned each and everyone who dared to do so.

So we know that for one thousand years, time and changes did not justify the doing away with one single term of the contract they had with God.

Now, what about the next five hundred years?

Just about thirty three years before this covenant was to be replaced by the second, God sent Christ into the world to become a man, who was to live under that covenant; who only a very short time before its giving away unto the New Testament, said as long as this law is in force not one jot or one tittle shall be nullified (Matt. 5). Then he said whosoever therefore shall set aside one of the least of these commandments shall be least in the kingdom of heaven.

Again in speaking of those who had substituted some of their own terms for the ones given by the Lord, Jesus said, "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matt. 15:9). No time with its many changes did not make void one single term of the Old Testament covenant.

However, we are not serving God by the terms of that covenant, but according to the conditions of the New Testament (Heb. 1:1-2). So, may the terms of our covenant be altered to the changes that have come with time?

No, such is not true, because the writers of the New Testament many times refer unto Old Testament examples and then warn us that we will also be condemned if we dare change the terms of our contract (I Cor. 10, Heb. 2, 3, 4 and 10).

To be continued.

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #40
This Is the Eighties #2

Does the expression, THIS IS THE EIGHTIES, overrule what the scriptures say about any values or principles or life styles?

In last week's article, I presented scriptural evidence which

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declared that the Lord did not allow one single term of the Old Testament Covenant to be deleted or changed in any way.

It was fifteen hundred years from the time that the covenant was given until it was replaced by the New Testament covenant. From its beginning until its end, God condemned all who tried to change it.

Then I called to your attention that many of the New Testament writers said time and time again, that if we attempt to set aside or change any of God's terms of the New Testament we also shall stand condemned in the site of God.

It seems to me this should be all the proof we need in order to know that God's conditions as found recorded in the New Testament shall not disappear nor change to accommodate the customs and traditions of any generation.

However, inasmuch as I am persuaded that so many are prone to decide what is right or wrong by that which is practiced by the majority of people of their time and since there is so much evidence which proves otherwise, I have decided to devote one more article to this topic.

Review with me please, the following facts.

- 1) God through Christ gave unto us the New Testament (Je. 31-34, De. 18:18-19, Acts 3, He. 8, He. 2:1-2).
- 2) Jesus gave unto us that which he received through the Holy Spirit (Jo. 14 and 16).
- 3) The Holy spirit gave unto us that which he received from Jesus through the apostles and prophets (Jo. 16:12-16, I Cor. 2:6-13, Eph. 3:1-5).
- 4) The apostles and prophets gave unto us that which they received from the Holy Spirit. This they did, first by preaching, and then by the New Testament which they recorded (Matt. 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-16, Luke 24:45-49, I Cor. 14:37).
- 5) What is truth? The word of God (Jo. 17:17).

The Holy Spirit revealed unto the apostles all the truth for this dispensation of time (Jo. 14, Jo. 16). They gave unto us all the truth (Acts 20:26-27). So the people of the first century had no more nor no less than what we of this, the twentieth century have. So, we of the EIGHTIES cannot say all things are not with us as they were in the past because we have received additional revelations.

Again the apostles received all the truth (Jo. 16:8-12). The apostles and prophets gave us all the truth (Acts 20:26-27). The Apostle Paul in Gal. 1:8-9 said God will curse both men and angels if they dare teach anything which we have not taught.

Therefore, if we of the EIGHTIES teach that something is all-right which is condemned by the New Testament scriptures, we will be accursed.

Yet, hear ye more! Scriptures such as Isa. 2:1-2, Mi. 1-2, Joel 2:28-30, Acts 2:15-18 and He. 2:1-2, say the teachings of Jesus (the New Testament portion of the Bible), is to be God's will for the last days or last dispensation of time. Then other scriptures teach we must do God's will without adding unto it or taking away from it (Rev. 22:18-19).

So, you can see my readers if we of the EIGHTIES want to be acceptable in the sight of God then we, just as the people of the first century, must look unto the New Testament and ONLY unto it as the standard by which we are to determine what is right or wrong.

Colossians, chapter two, teaches that any teaching in

addition to the teachings of Jesus are to be designated as the commandments and doctrines of men. In verse twenty-one we are commanded touch not; handle not nor taste (or have absolutely nothing to do with), that which is nothing more nor less than the traditions of men. Then in verses eighteen and nineteen, it is said if we allow some men to deceive us into embracing a teaching which is not of Christ, we will be allowing him to rob us of our reward.

All-right, inasmuch as we have already considered scriptures which say God has ordained his will from the first century until the end of the world, will be the teachings of Jesus as found recorded in the New Testament and inasmuch as he has demanded that we are not to add unto or take away from these teachings, then you tell me how we of the EIGHTIES can hope to please God by following the crowd who are involved in things unique unto this time.

Now finally, let us consider this. The scriptures teach that when Christ returns there is to be a Judgment (Acts 17:30-31, Matt. 25, II Cor. 5:10, II Thes. 1:5-10, Rev. 20:12).

If there is to be a Judgment there must be a standard by which to judge. So what shall that standard be? Shall it be the customs of the people of the EIGHTIES?

This is what some would like to believe. Although this is not what the scriptures have to say. Acts 17:30-31 affirms God will judge the world by Jesus. How though, will the world be judged by him? In Jo. 12:48, Jesus says we shall be judged by his words. But where are his words? They are to be FOUND and ONLY FOUND in the New Testament portion of the Bible.

So, my dear readers on the Judgment Day our eternal destiny shall not be determined by the customs of the EIGHTIES but by what is written in God's Book.

I once heard a great vice-principal say to an unruly student. "The rules of this school shall not be adjusted to you but you must adjust to its rules." Even so, God's rules shall not be adjusted to us, but we must adjust our way of living to his New Testament proclaimed way.

May God help us to reject and condemn every man made way which can only be justified by saying "THIS IS THE EIGHTIES."

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #41 Impossible Things

Ones being successful and happy in this life, depends a lot on his being able to recognize and accept what is and is not possible for him to accomplish.

The scriptures have much to say about things which are and are not possible with man. In this article, you are invited to consider a few of these with me.

In I Cor. 2:11, it is declared that it is impossible for one to know the mind of others. Therefore we know that there is no such thing as mind readers. Likewise, we know that we should never conclude we are capable of judging the minds of others. A knowledge of God's word gives us an awareness of what is right

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or wrong. So we may judge that some of the things which others are doing are wrong, however, we dare not assume we know why they are doing those things.

Again, when one person teaches that which contradicts what is taught by another, we know that one of them is a false teacher. Yet because it is impossible for us to know the mind of others, we must not judge the sincerity of either of them.

One other thing which is impossible for us to know is the mind of God (I Cor. 2:11, Rom. 11:34).

Will Rogers was often heard to say "All I know is what I read in the papers."

My readers, inasmuch as the scriptures say it is impossible for us to know the mind of God, then let us say "All we know about God is what we read in the Bible." To say otherwise would be to say we are capable of judging.

When we dare speak of God let us (as is commanded in I pet. 4:11), speak as his oracles. Or in other words, let us say "God will or will not, do this or that, because this or that scriptures says, "HE WILL OR WILL NOT."

Again according to Ma. 19:26 and many other scriptures, it is impossible for people to save themselves.

In order to understand why this is so, we only need to recall these two scriptural facts. It is impossible to live a sinless life; and those guilty of sin cannot enter heaven (I Jo. 1:8-10, Jo. 8:21).

Yes, these two scriptural facts explain clearly why we cannot save ourselves. True, there are scriptures which say it is impossible for us to save ourselves, but thanks be to God, there are no scriptures which say it is impossible for us to be saved.

Those of us who believe in and have read, the New Testament scriptures, know God sent Christ into the world to do all that he did in order that we who were hopelessly lost might be saved.

However, let us not conclude that the scriptures which teach it is impossible for us to save ourselves also teach we have no part at all in our being saved.

There are many groups of scriptures which teach otherwise. If people have no part in their being saved, they would never be told, "SAVE THY SELF." Yet, in Acts 2:40 and I Tim. 4:16, we hear inspired men make this statement unto them.

Again, if our being saved has absolutely nothing to do with what we DO OR DO NOT DO, then why do we hear scriptures such as Acts 2:36-38, Act 10:1-6, Acts 16:19-34, and I Tim. 4:16 say if we are to be saved, WE MUST DO THIS AND THAT and hear others such as Matt. 7:21-27, Matt. 25:31-46, Jo. 5:8, Rom. 2:1-11, II Cor. 5:9-10, Rev. 20:12-15 and Rev. 21:3-8 say that on the Day of Judgment, some will be allowed to enter heaven and others will not, based on what THEY DID OR DID NOT DO.

Now once more, there is one group of scriptures (a few of which are), Eze. 18:29-32, Jo. 3:16, Rom. 5:8, I Jo. 4:9-10, II Pet. 3:9 which declare that it never has been and is not now, the will of God, that anyone be lost. Yet in spite of the fact that God sent Jesus into the world so all might be saved, there are numerous scriptures which state all people will not be saved (Matt. 7:13-14, Matt. 7:21-27, Matt. 25:31-46, Jo. 5:28-29, Rom. 2:6-8, II Cor. 5:9-11, II Th. 1:6-10, Rev. 20:12-16, Rev. 21:7-8).

So you see dear readers, when these two groups of

scriptures are considered together they also say that we (in some way), have a part in saving ourselves.

Oh, yes, the above referenced scriptures beyond a doubt teach that we have a role in the saving of ourselves.

Why then (some may say), do some scriptures say it is impossible for man to save himself?

It was impossible for Naaman, the leper of II Kings 5, to heal himself, but this task was not impossible with God. However, since God saw fit to grant him this blessing on a conditional basis, then Naaman (by complying with the demanded conditions) had something to do with saving himself. Yes, his part was to dip seven times in the River of Jordan.

The afore considered scriptures in this article, teach that the salvation, which God through Jesus has provided for us, is not granted unconditional.

This condition is to comply with all of God's will as found recorded in the New Testament portion of the Bible (De. 18:18-19, Matt. 7:21-27, Rom. 2:6-8, II Th. 1:7-9, Rev. 22:14, James 2:8-12).

Yes, it is an absolute impossibility for us, OF OURSELVES, to save ourselves; but since salvation is granted on the condition of our doing the will of God, then if we are to be saved, we must do this.

It is in this way and only in this way, that we have anything to do with our being saved.

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #42
Blessed Are the Persecuted

Inasmuch as the persecuted (in one form or another) are punished by those who persecute and since none of us can honestly say we desire to be punished because it would bring us great joy, then on first thought it is not easy to understand why Jesus (according to Matt. 5:9-12) taught that it is a blessing to be persecuted for righteousness sake and that those who are thus persecuted should rejoice and be exceedingly glad.

It is sometimes impossible to understand what is taught in one portion of God's Book without taking into account additional scriptural facts revealed in other portions of it.

So let us now (as it were) go for a stroll through the Bible and see if we can find some other teachings which will help answer some of our questions about what Jesus meant when he said "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake."

Now notice Jesus did not say blessed are they which are persecuted, period, but he said "Blessed are they which are persecuted FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS SAKE."

So, I believe our first question should be, what is righteousness? I Jo. 3:4 says sin is disobedience unto God's commandments. Then I Jo. 5:17 declares that all unrighteousness is sin.

It has always been true that things which are equal to the same thing are equal to each other. So since the above cited scriptures say that disobedience and unrighteousness are both equal unto sin, then unrighteousness is without question the

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same thing as disobedience. Therefore when Jesus said "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake," he was saying blessed are they who are persecuted because of their obedience to the commandments of God.

This though brings us to another question. Who persecutes the people who live in obedience to the commandments of God?

There are many scriptures in both the Old and New Testament which say there has always been some who would and some who would not obey the commandments of God. Then some of these same scriptures and others say it has been the disobedient who have persecuted the righteous or obedient. Those who have even casually read the scriptures know this is true.

Even so, I ask is it possible for one to live a life of righteousness without (in some way), being persecuted? WHAT SAITH THE SCRIPTURES? II Tim. 3:12 says "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." In saying this, God through Paul was as much as saying EVERY ONE in this the last dispensation of time who lives in obedience to the commandments which I have given through my Son Jesus shall suffer persecution.

The scriptures considered thus far help to clarify much of what Jesus meant when he said "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake." However, there is still one question for which we need a scriptural answer and that question is, why are they who are persecuted for righteousness to be considered blessed?

My judgment (based on scriptural study), is that the answer to this question will be known, when and only when it is considered in the light of three other scriptural facts.

These three scriptural facts are:

1) In order to be saved we must be willing to live in obedience to the teachings of God which he has given us through Jesus his Son. That this is true (I believe), is substantiated by many scriptures.

Scriptures such as I Cor. 6:9, Rom. 2:6, Ga. 6:19-21 and many others teach that the unrighteous will not be saved.

Many others (a few of which are) Jude 15, I Pet. 4:17-18, and II Pet. 2:1-9 say the ungodly or disobedient will not be saved.

Then there are scriptures which proclaim the wicked or disobedient will not be saved (Mal. 4:1, Matt. 13:8-9, Matt. 18:32). Likewise there are scriptures which say that evil doers or the disobedient will be lost (Jo. 5:18--29, Luke 12:42-46, Ro. 2:6-9).

Another group of scriptures say that only the doers of God's word shall be justified (Matt. 7:21-27, Rom. 2:13, Ja. 1:21-25).

Now finally, there are many scriptures which declare in no uncertain terms that the obedient will be saved and the disobedient will be lost (Jo. 8:51, Rom. 2:6-11, II Th. 1:7-9, Heb. 5:8-9, Rev. 22:14).

2) Another scriptural fact revealed by the scriptures is that we must live in obedience unto ALL and not just SOME of God's commandments (De. 18:18-19, Ma. 28:18-20, Ja. 2:8-12, Rev. 22:18).

3) That we must live in obedience unto all of God's commandments, even if persecuted, is also a scriptural fact (Matt. 10:22-25, Matt. 13:18-23, Matt. 24:12-13, Acts 5:40-42,

Acts 14:21-22, I Th. 2:13-16, I Th. 3:1-5, Rom. 8:16-17, Rev. 2:8-11).

My dear readers, inasmuch as we now know that the Bible as a whole teaches that all who live in obedience unto all the commandments of God shall be PERSECUTED and since we also know that we must do this even though it will (in one way or another), bring persecution our way, I hope we have been made to understand why Jesus in Matt. 5 said, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake for their's is the kingdom of heaven."

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #43
Blessed be the Poor

Once Jesus in one of his sermons said "Blessed be ye poor" (Luke 6:20). Then according to Luke 5:24 (in another sermon), he said, "Woe unto you that are rich! For ye have received your consolation."

Again according to Ja. 2:5, he (by the Spirit through James said "Harken my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"

Inasmuch as money (in one mode or another) has become the worldwide accepted medium of exchange for the things people need and desire, then on first thought, it seems strange to hear Jesus in these scriptures say blessed be those who are poor, or have very little money and woe unto those who are rich or have a great amount of it.

Now those of us who believe in the authenticity of the scriptures accept all statements of facts recorded in the Bible as being true, even if we do not always understand why. However, in most cases if the reason why, is not given in either the statement itself or its context, it can be found by analyzing it in the light of other Biblical facts.

So let us see if we can discover other scriptural statements which will help us to understand why and more fully appreciate the above quoted statements made by Jesus.

Question #1 - Why is the possessing of only a reasonable amount of money as opposed to having an enormous amount, USUALLY a blessing for us even in this life?

a) Many who are not rich have a great desire to become rich and most of those who are rich long to be richer. The Lord through Paul in I Tim. 6:10 says many of those who so covet riches "Pierce themselves through with many sorrows."

This no doubt is true because many in their quest for greater wealth not only fail to attain it but finish up loosing all their previous accumulations.

Then too, the seeking and acquiring of riches does not become the fulfillment of our dreams. Because all the carrots, riches dangle before us are only allusions. Oh yes, my friends this is why Jesus in Matt. 13:22 referred to riches as being deceitful.

We often see and hear reported an itemized list of the ten or one-hundred richest people in the world. If it were possible to truly measure happiness and someone after so measuring, would

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make a list of the one-hundred happiest families in the world, I wonder how many of the one-hundred richest families would also be on that list? This question is based and only based on what I have found recorded in God's Book.

Question #2 - Is it possible for rich people to be saved?

Yes, Ge. 13:2 speaks of Abraham as being a very rich man. Then Jesus in Matt. 8:11 says he will be in heaven.

The Church we read about in the New Testament is made up of saved people (Acts 2:47), I Tim. 6:17 (by way of necessary inference), proves there were rich people in the church.

So when Jesus in Luke 6:24 said "Woe unto you that are rich! For ye have received your consolation," He was not saying it is impossible for the rich to be saved. However, according to other scriptures he did say it is a very difficult thing for them to be saved (Matt. 19:23, Matt. 19:24, Luke 12:16-21, Matt. 13:22, I Tim. 6:9-10).

Question #3 - Why is it almost to the point of being impossible for the rich to be saved?

a) If we are to be saved we must become as humble as a little child (Matt. 18:3-4). Great wealth might serve as a hindrance to our accomplishing this.

b) None of God's people are to be served but they are to serve (Matt. 20:25-28, Matt. 23:11, John 13:3-17). If we were rich, we would have a large staff of servants and their job would be to serve us. With all this, would we in the Lord's church or his family be able to be a lowly servant ourselves???

c) In previous lessons I have, I believe proven the scriptures teach that if we are to be saved, we must live in obedience unto all of God's commandments. If we were rich and thus involved in all the things that the holding on to and increasing of our wealth would demand, would we have time to fulfill all the responsibilities and do all the good things, and all the teaching of God's word which so many of the scriptures demand of us???

d) Many of the scriptures which we must obey in order to be saved, teach that we must turn away from all evil. Paul in I Tim. 6:9-10 strongly implies that generally speaking those who desire to be rich and those who have riches and desire to both keep and increase their riches, do so because of their love of money. Then in verse 10, he teaches that the love for money will lead people to do many evil things. If we were rich, would we be capable of coping with this problem???

e) In previous articles, I have proven by the scriptures that if we fall away and never return to the faith, we will be lost. Matt. 13:22 and I Tim. 6:10 says riches will be responsible for many falling away. Could we with riches avoid this falling away???

f) Without a great trust in God, who could be saved? I Tim. 6:17 teaches that the rich are in great danger of learning to trust in their money and forgetting God. Would riches cause us to do this???

My dear readers, now that we see that the scriptures as a whole say that in most cases those who are not rich are much happier in this life than those who are and that the odds against rich people being saved are about TEN THOUSAND TO ONE. I trust we are now able to understand better why Jesus said "Blessed be ye poor and woe unto the rich."

May I suggest to those of you who are not rich, that you

please read I Tim. 6:7-8 and Pro. 30:7-9 and to those of you who are, read I Tim. 6:17-19 and Matt. 16:25-27.

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #44
Blessed Are the Pure in Heart

In Matt. 5:8 we hear Jesus say "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God."

This passage will serve as the text for our study today. However, before we begin with this study, I believe it would be worthwhile to consider the Biblical meaning of two expressions (the heart and shall see God) found in this passage.

The heart spoke of in the scriptures is man's mind and not his blood pumping organ. This we know because they refer to our heart as being capable of understanding (I Ki. 3:9) and thinking (Pr. 23:6-7) and trusting (Pr. 31:10-11) and lusting (Matt. 5:27-28) and purposing (II Cor. 9:7) and pondering (Luke 2:19) and reasoning (Mark 2:6-8) and doubting (Mark 11:23) and rejoicing (Acts 2:26) and believing (Rom. 10:9-10) and obeying (Rom. 6:17-18).

Now as for the expression 'shall see God,' as used in this passage, simply means shall be saved (Rev. 1:7 and Heb. 12:14). Therefore, when Christ said "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God"; he was as much as saying "Blessed are the pure in mind for they shall be saved."

So by this statement Jesus declared that ONLY those who are pure in mind will be saved. However, in order to understand why this is true, we must take into account what is taught in many other scriptures.

There are many scriptures which teach that if we are to be saved, we must be pure in speech. Yes, they say that: All liars will be lost (Rev. 21:8, Rev. 21:27). We are to let no corrupt communication proceed out of our mouth (Ep. 4:29). WE are not to speak evil of others (Ja. 4:11, Tit. 3:2). If we are to see good days, we must refrain our tongue from speaking evil and our lips that they speak no guile (I Pet. 3:10). Foolish and filthy talking and jesting will bring down God's wrath upon us (Eph. 5:1-6). We on the Judgment Day must give an account unto God for every idle word we have spoken and by our words we shall stand justified or condemned (Matt. 12:36-37).

Oh yes, these scriptures say that one of the conditions of our receiving salvation is pureness of speech. However, there are many other scriptures, a few of which are Pr. 23:7, Matt. 12:34 and Matt. 12:35, which teach that the mouth speaks only that which it receives from the heart or the mind.

My readers inasmuch as the above cited scriptures reveal that we must be pure in speech in order to be saved and that which is spoken comes from the heart, then this must be allowed to stand as one reason why Jesus in Matt. 5:8 said "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

Again there are hundreds of scriptures which also teach that if we are to be saved, we must also be PURE in DEED. However, the truthfulness of this point may be confirmed by the presentation of only a few of these scriptures. One group of these scriptures says, God (on the Day of Judgment), will render

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unto all according to their deeds (Jo. 5:28-29, Rom. 2:6, II Cor. 5:8-9) and Rom. 2:9 says that the reward for those who have lived evil or impure lives, shall be tribulation and anguish.

Another group declare that those who live impure lives will not enter heaven, but will be cast into the lake of fire (I Cor. 6:9-10, Ga. 5:19-20, Eph. 5:1-6, Col. 3:1-6, Rev. 21:7-8, Rev. 22:14-15).

Oh yes, these two groups of scriptures say plainly, that if we live impure lives, we will be denied an entrance into heaven and will along with the devil and his angels be cast into the lake of fire.

Now, there is another group of scriptures which say that the center from which all impure deeds begin their flight, is the heart or mind (Pr. 23:1, Pr. 16:9, Matt. 15:18-19, Mark 7:21-23).

Once more, there are scriptures which teach that impure desiring thoughts, even when restrained by circumstances or reasons other than our love for God and our dedication unto his word, will result in condemnation (Ge. 6:5, Matt. 5:27-28, Matt. 15:19).

My dear readers inasmuch as we have heard all these scriptures teach that if we are to be saved, we must be pure in thoughts, words and deeds, and also say that only those who have pure hearts can so conduct themselves. Then the question of how may one keep his heart pure become very important.

The Lord in Phil. 4:8 gives us the answer for this question. Please read it!!

We cannot keep the birds from flying over our heads but we can keep them from building nests in our hair. Even so, we cannot always disallow impure thoughts an entrance into our minds, but we can remove them (Phil. 4:8) and this we must do; otherwise they will take root and produce all manner of evil fruit.

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #45
Blessed Are the Merciful

"Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy" (Matt. 5:7). A great poet (probably after reading this scripture) penned these words, "The quality of mercy is not strained; it droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed; it blesseth him who gives and him who takes."

Yes, as the poet wrote, those who receive mercy are indeed blessed, but Jesus in Matt. 5:7 speaks only of the blessing which God bestows upon those of us who show mercy unto others.

Therefore, the purpose of this article shall be to call to your attention a few of the many scriptures which explain why Jesus in Matt. 5:7 teaches that God will only be merciful unto those of us who are willing to show mercy unto our fellow human beings.

Jesus after declaring the command to love God as being the first and great commandment, says that the second greatest commandment is the one which commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matt. 22:35-39). In Luke 10:25-35, he teaches that one who loves his neighbor as himself is one who is

willing to help any one who is in need. Then in Luke 10:36-37, he speaks of this help as being an act of mercy.

In both Romans 13:9 and Gal. 5:14, the Apostle Paul commands us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves, or to be merciful unto those who are in need. Then James in chapter 2:8, says loving one's neighbor as himself is the fulfilling of the royal law. Gal. 6:10 teaches we are to do good unto all men. Eph. 4:28 commands us to work so that we may be able to both provide for ourselves and give to those that needeth. James in chapter 1:27, says "Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

Paul, in I Tim. 5, teaches that we should provide for our needy relatives. The writer of Heb. 6:10 promised the Hebrew brethren God would not forget their work and labor of ministering unto the saints. The Apostle John in I John 3:17 says, "But who so hath this world's goods and seeth his brother hath need and shuteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

Now that we know it is the will of God that we be merciful unto others, we should be able to better understand, why Jesus said those who are merciful shall obtain mercy.

When we study all the scriptures peculiar to prayer, we consequently become aware of the tremendous number of blessings which we may receive from God by this means. These blessings he bestows upon us because he is a merciful God.

However, let us not think that these blessings which come through prayer are available unto all.

In the above cited scriptures we are commanded to be merciful unto others and John 9 and (John 3:22 teach that God will not answer our prayers if we are living in disobedience to his commandments. So, this is one of the reasons why Jesus said "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."

Now consider these scriptural facts with me, please.

ONE -- God will not forgive our sins unless we forgive those who sin against us (Matt. 6:12-15, Matt. 18:32-35).

TWO -- It is impossible for us to live a sinless life (I John 1:8-10).

THREE -- Forgiving is an act of compassion or mercy (Matt. 18:32-33, Luke 18:9-14).

Inasmuch as these three groups of scriptures teach the impossibility of living above sin and that the forgiving of sin is an act of mercy and that God will not forgive our sins unless we forgive those who sin against us, then it necessarily follows that this is one more reason why Jesus said "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy."

All right, let's take a look at a few more scriptural facts.

ONE -- The people who are keeping the commandments given through Jesus are the only people who are doing the will of God (Deut. 18:18-19, Heb. 1:1-2).

TWO -- Only those who do the will of God will be saved (Matt. 7:21).

THREE -- Regardless of how hard we try, all of us will from time to time disobey a commandment of God (I John 1:8-10).

FOUR -- If we will repent and pray unto God, he will forgive these sins (I John 1:10, I John 2:1-2, Acts 8:22).

FIVE -- God will not hear the prayers of the unmerciful. In

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this article I have already proven this in two different ways.

Now my friends, since these scriptures teach all these facts which when considered together, say the unmerciful will not be saved. Then I submit unto you that we have found yet another reason why Jesus said, "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy."

Sure Tit. 3:5 says we are saved by the mercy of God. However, the many other scriptures which we have considered prove that God's mercy is only available unto those of us who are willing to show mercy unto others.

This is why James in chapter 2:13 teaches judgment will be without mercy unto those who have shown no mercy. This is also why that in the Matt. 25 account of the judgment day word picture, we see the unmerciful being denied an entrance into heaven and cast into the lake of fire.

So let us never forget the words of Jesus as found in Matt. 5:7 which say "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy."

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #46 Evaluating the Scriptures

HAS GOD GRANTED UNTO US THE PRIVILEGE OF EVALUATING HIS COMMANDMENTS?

Scriptures such as Luke 15:11-32, Luke 18:29-30, and I Tim. 4:8 teach that obedience to the commandments of God as a whole, is profitable both in this life and the life to come. So (when thinking ONLY of the ways by which such obedience is profitable for us in this life), we may truly speak of some of God's commandments as being more important than others.

According to Matt. 5:19 and Matt. 22:36-40, Jesus spake of the least and the greatest commandments.

Yes, from this point of view, we may evaluate the scriptures; but as to whether we are pleasing and acceptable in the sight of God, is not determined by obedience unto just the GREAT commandments, but by our obedience unto both the GREAT and the SMALL.

Now I realize that my saying this neither makes it so, nor behooves you to accept it as the truth. Yet, if you will consider with me carefully the following scriptural facts you will (I believe) see that this is indeed what the scriptures say.

Those who have only casually read the Old Testament covenant which God made with the children of Israel, know that the refusal to comply with the LEAST, as well as the GREATEST of its terms brought down the condemnation of God upon its subjects.

This is why Jesus just a short time before the passing away of this covenant said "Whosoever Therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

Shortly after the death of Christ, the Old Testament covenant gave way unto the one found in the New Testament;

but this change did not take away man's obligation to live in obedience to both the least and the greatest of God's commandments.

There are many scriptural facts which teach this.

ONE -- Before God through Christ gave this new covenant, he declared he would hold us accountable for its every word (Jer. 31:31-34, Deut. 18:18-19, Acts 3:22-23).

TWO -- Teachers are commanded to teach all of the words of Jesus (Matt. 28:18-20).

THREE -- Only the teachers who have declared all the counsel of God are free from the blood of those whom they have taught (Acts 20:25-26).

FOUR -- To rebel against one of God's commandments is the same as rebellion against all of them (James 2:8-12).

FIVE -- If we take away from the words of God's Book, he will take away all our spiritual blessings (Rev. 22:19).

My dear readers, since these five scriptural facts teach we are to obey all of God's commandments, it necessarily follows that they also teach we must obey the least, as well as the greatest.

God by the grouping of small and great commandments, has also shown we must obey all of them (Rom. 1:21-32, "Eph. 5:1-6, Col. 3:1-9).

Let's consider closely the group found in Eph. 5:3-6 which say "But fornication, and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not once be named among you, as becometh saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."

This scripture enumerates about six of God's commandments which demands that we refrain from both small and great sins.

Jesting is probably the least of all the sins in this group. However, it is not classified as an exception to the consequences of condemnation, as stated in Eph. 5:6.

I am sure that God does not look upon the circus clown or any other innocent pretender, as being a sinful creature. So when does jesting become sinful? When we pretend to be sinning; or making use of sinful things for the purpose of teasing or joking.

Drunkenness is sinful. Therefore to either act as if we were drunk or tease others about their having been drunk would be the jesting which God forbids.

The little boy may play cowboy and the little girl may play house; but God does not want us to play sin. So before we pretend to be this or that or tease others about having done this or that, we should make sure that nothing sinful is involved.

Yes, comparatively speaking, some of God's commandments are small. Nevertheless, the afore cited scriptures say we must obey them.

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #47

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Christ Is not God

In previous articles, I have been stressing the fact that faith in both God and Christ is essential unto salvation. This I have done because I do not believe (as some do) that God and Christ are one and the same spiritual being.

Now the purpose of this article shall be to present a few of the many scriptural facts which I believe prove that Christ is not God the Father of all.

ONE -- In Gen. 1:26, we read that God said unto some one, "Let us make man in our image."

The words US and OUR in this scripture, prove beyond a doubt that some spiritual being was working with God in creation. All right, who was he? Heb. 1:2 says he was Jesus. So these two scriptures say Christ is not God and God is not Christ.

TWO -- Scriptures such as John 3:16, I John 4:9 and I John 4:10 state that God manifest his love for us by sending Jesus into the world. Then according to John 8:29, John 8:42 and John 12:49 Jesus said God sent him from heaven into the world.

The very fact that these scriptures say God SENT Christ, proves God is not Christ because one sends others and he goes.

THREE -- Christ while here upon earth, often spake of God as being in heaven (Matt. 7:11, Matt. 16:17, Matt. 23:9).

Please observe that Christ in these passages did not say God who was in heaven or who will be in heaven, but he said God who is in heaven. So inasmuch as it is impossible for one to be in two places at the same time and since these scriptures say God the Father was in heaven while Christ was here on earth; well it necessarily follows that Christ is not God.

FOUR -- Again while Christ was here on earth, he often spake of going back to the Father (John 13:1, John 17:11, 13).

My dear readers, if Christ was God, there was no God the Father in heaven unto whom he could go.

FIVE -- Also while Christ was here he declared over and over that the things he was doing and teaching were not his own; but God's who had sent him (John 5:30, John 6:38, John 7:16, John 8:26).

Now friends, if Christ is God and God is Christ, tell me why and how could he have said that which he taught and did was not his?

SIX -- Jesus as an inhabitant of the planet earth, many times prayed unto God the Father (John 11, 17, Matt. 26).

If Christ were God, then tell me please to whom was he praying? Was he praying unto himself?

SEVEN -- According to Matt. 3:16-17 and Matt. 17:5, twice the voice of God the Father was heard to say of Jesus, this is my Son in whom I am well pleased.

My readers, since while Jesus was here on earth, God the Father was heard to speak these things from heaven about him, do you not see how unreasonable it would be to say they both were only one spiritual being?

EIGHT -- Once Jesus after being called good Master said "Why callest thou me good, there is none good but one, that is God."

If he were God, then why did he say I am not to be called good because only God is good?

NINE -- John 14:28 states that Jesus said to his disciples

"My Father is greater than I." How, I ask, could he say my Father is greater than I, if he were the Father? Was he greater than himself?

TEN -- In John 8:54 we read this, "Jesus answered, if I honor myself, My honor is nothing: It is my Father that honoreth me of whom ye say, that he is your God." Notice Jesus said if I honor myself, I have no honor and then declared it was God the Father who honored him. Again, I ask how could he have made a statement like this, if he was God the Father in person?

ELEVEN -- If Jesus were God, well why in John 14:1 did he say to people who already believed in God "Believe also in me?"

TWELVE -- According to John 16:23 Christ taught his disciples to pray to God in his name. Now if Christ is God and God is Christ, why did he teach them to pray to God in his name?

THIRTEEN -- Paul in Romans 8:34 declares that Christ is at the right hand of God and that he is also making intercessions for us. Can one be at his own right hand and would he be making intercessions to himself? If one is to believe that Christ is God, he must also believe these impossible things are possible.

FOURTEEN -- In I Cor. 15:24-28, Paul wrote that after Christ returned to heaven God put everything under him but himself and that in the end Christ will also be in subjection unto him that put all things under him that God may be all and all. Again, I say if Christ is God and God is Christ, then these things which Paul wrote just cannot be. However, since we dare not say Paul was wrong about what he wrote, we have only one other choice and that is to say that the contention that Christ is God is wrong.

My friends, even though these fourteen scriptural facts are by no means all the available evidence they will (I believe) suffice to prove beyond a doubt that Christ is not God.

Now, why do we need to know this scriptural fact? Because the scriptures say that if we are to be saved, we must believe in both of them. Both Heb. 11:6 and John 5:24 teach we must believe that God is: and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him. According to John 8 and John 15, Jesus taught those who already believed in God that they could not be saved unless they believed in him also.

So yes, let us believe in Jesus as the Son of God and our Savior: but let us not believe in him as being God our Father.

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #48
God is Greater than Christ

IN past articles we have (I believe) heard the scriptures say that the little Jewish boy born in Bethlehem of Judaea was not God himself; but that he was the long promised Son of God.

In those articles, we also heard the scriptures say, if we are to be saved, we must believe in him.

However, in the world today, there are some who believe that even though God and Christ do exist as separate spiritual beings, they are in all ways equal. Then there are others who

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believe God is greater than Christ.

What saith the scriptures? Personally I believe many of them teach that God is Greater than Jesus his Son. So the purpose of this article shall be to consider a few of these scriptures with you.

First, I will present scriptures which state that in heaven God is the decision-maker.

Many scriptures such as John 1:1-3, Eph. 3:9, Col. 1:6, and Heb. 1:1-2 say God and Jesus worked as co-laborers in creation. Yet, Gen. 1:26 says it was God who decided what would be created and how it would be created.

Again according to a great host of scriptures found from the Book of Genesis through the Book of Malachi many years ago a decision was made in heaven; that Jesus some day was to leave heaven and come to the world as our Savior. By whom I ask was that decision made? In John 7:28-29, we hear Jesus say it was God. Yes, this is why John 3:16, and I John 4:9-11 declare Christ to be God's gift, and the manifestation of his love.

Also, it was God and not Christ, or anyone else, who decided what great works Christ would do (John 9:3-4; John 17:4).

Likewise, it was God and not Christ who decided what he would teach while he was here on earth (John 8:26, 28; John 12:48-49).

Then, too, it was God and not Christ who decided what words would be used in the writing of the New Testament (Je. 31:31-34, Deut. 18:18-19; John 16:12-16; Heb. 1:1-2).

It was God and not Christ who decided when the Old testament's promised kingdom would be established (Acts 1:6-7).

According to Acts 17:30-31, it was God and not Christ who decided what day and by whom he would judge the world.

Mark 13:22 says God and not Christ or anyone else will decide when Christ will come again.

Jesus declared that no one, yea not even he should be called Father or Good Master (Matt. 23:9; John 14:15-16). The word father implies the origin of and the words good master must be the one who gives good things. So these scriptures taken together show clearly that it is God and not Christ who decides what good things will be given.

Oh, yes, my friends, all these scriptures show (I believe) beyond a doubt that God and only God serves as the decision-maker in heaven.

All right, inasmuch as God makes all the decisions which are made in heaven, then I submit unto you that God is the greatest one in heaven.

Yet, there are many other scriptures which also teach that God is greater and I invite you to consider a few of them with me.

God ordained that Christ, for the last dispensation of time was to be its Prophet (Deut. 18:18-19), King and High Priest (Ze. 6:12-13). He has put all things under his feet and given him to be head over all things to the church (Eph. 1:22-23). He has seated him at his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all others (Eph. 1:23). He has given unto him all authority in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18). He has made him both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:37).

These scriptures say that God has indeed bestowed many

blessings upon Jesus.

Now let's read Heb. 7:7, "And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better."

All right, inasmuch as the scriptures say God so blessed Jesus and inasmuch as they make no mention of Jesus ever having blessed God and inasmuch as they also say that without exception the less is always blessed by the greater, well I submit to you that beyond a doubt they say God is greater than Christ.

We have many scriptural accounts of Jesus praying unto God but not even one of God praying unto Jesus. So who is the greatest?

The following scriptures also teach that God is greater than Christ. God is wiser than all (I Cor. 16:27). All things are of him (Romans 11:36). In God's vineyard; Christ is the vine but God is the husband (John 15:1). Christ is the head of man but God is the head of Christ (I Cor. 11:3). Christ, when this dispensation ends, will surrender all the positions of honor God has bestowed upon him and be subject unto God, that God may be all in all (I Cor. 15:24-24). Jesus said, "My Father is greater than I" (John 15:28).

My friends, my purpose for presenting this lesson was not to take anything away from Jesus but only to say the scriptures teach that God is greater than all.

Christ came to the world took on flesh, suffered and died for us. So let us never cease to be grateful for this.

Also, God has made him our Prophet, Priest and King. So we must and should be happy to accept him as such.

However, he is not our Father; therefore let us never try to force him to take his Father's place in our hearts.

Believe me, this will not be offensive unto the one who said, "Why call thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God" and again "My Father is greater than I."

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #49
Who can be Saved? #1

According to Mark 10:26, the disciples of Jesus once asked him, who can be saved?

If we were to seek the answer to this question from the religious world as a whole, we would receive many different answers. Even, by searching for its answer from that portion which believe in the Bible, we would receive at least four different answers.

One part of this group would say everyone will be saved. Then probably they would explain their answer by saying, "God is a God of love, who is too good and merciful to condemn anyone.

Is this in harmony with what the scriptures say? I think not. That the scriptures say God is a God of love and mercy, no one can deny. However, I believe they also say that we by wickedness can force him to become a God of terror. I also believe this same Book of scriptures reveals that all people will not be saved.

Many scriptures found in the Old Testament, declare that from the beginning of time until the coming of Jesus, God

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numerous times became a God of terror unto a great number of people. Yes, he as a God of terror poured out his wrath upon Adam and Eve, Cain, all the people of the earth save eight, all the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah except Lot and his wife, Pharaoh and his people, Korah and his followers, Nadab and Abidhu, Miriam the sister of Moses, the man who touched the Ark, Eli and his ungodly sons, the deceived young prophet, King Saul, King David, thousands and thousands of unnamed Israelites, angels in heaven, the cities of Babylon, Ashdad, Ninivah, and many, many more.

Likewise, the New Testament scriptures proclaim that after the coming of Jesus he continued to be a God capable of becoming a God of terror.

Scriptures such as I Cor. 10, Heb. 2:1-4, Heb. 3:5-19, Heb. 4:1-11, Heb. 10:25-30, and Heb. 12:25 say the God, who became a God of terror unto those of old, will also become a God of terror unto those of us who follow their example.

Again there are New Testament scriptures which refer to God as a God of vengeance, terror and severity (Heb. 10:30, II Cor. 5:9-11, Romans 11:22).

There are also New Testament scriptures which state that God on the Judgment Day will be a God of terror unto some. He will also be a God without mercy unto those who have shown no mercy (James 2:13).

Some on that day shall receive of him nothing but indignation, wrath, tribulation and anguish (Romans 2:8-9).

II Cor. 5:9-11, in no uncertain terms says, God on the Day of Judgment will be capable of being a God of terror. Paul in II Thes. 1:7-9 says on that day some shall be punished with fire.

Then Heb. 10:31 says, that it will be a fearful thing for some to fall into the hands of the living God.

Oh yes, my friends, the scriptures we have considered thus far prove (I believe) beyond a doubt that we may force God to become a God of terror. So, this completely takes away the reason for the position which says, all will be saved.

However, in addition to all these scriptures, there are many others which declare that all people will not be saved. The parable of the tares recorded in Matt. 13:24-43, teaches that on the Judgment Day some shall be cast into a furnace of fire.

Luke 16:19-31, proclaims that a certain rich man died and lifted up his eyes in hell. The parable of the talents as found in Matt. 25:14-30 says, the man with the one talent was lost.

John 5:28-29 says, when the Lord returns, all that are in the graves shall come forth; some to life and others to damnation.

The Apostle Paul in II Thes. 1:6-9 teaches that when the Lord returns he will bring rest to some but punishment with fire unto others.

According to Rev. 20:11-15, the Apostle John was (by way of a vision) permitted to see the Judgment Day and to behold its events. First he says he saw all who had ever lived and died, standing before God and being judged. Then he says he saw some of them being cast into the lake of fire.

In Matt. 25:31-46, we hear Jesus say when he returns, the people will be divided into two groups, and that one group will enter heaven, and the other the lake of fire.

Now finally, Jesus in Matt. 7:13-14 says, that more will be lost than saved.

My friends there are many scriptures, a few of which are

Eze. 18:23, 31-32; Eze. 33:11, John 3:16, I John 4:9-11 and II Peter which beyond a doubt prove that God truly wants all people to be saved.

Nevertheless, the scriptures which we have considered in this article, also beyond a doubt, prove that all the human family will not be saved.

So, the question (who can be saved) remains unanswered. Who then can be saved? Some say only the afore ordained. The Lord willing, we will consider this answer in next week's article.

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #50 Who Can be Saved? #2

"And they were astonished out of measured, saying among themselves who then can be saved?"

I wish I could say, "All the religious communities agree that the one and only answer for this question is such and such." Yet, this is not the case. Even the portion who believe in the Bible, set forth at least four different answers.

One of these groups say that all people will be saved. However, in last week's article, I believe I proved by the scriptures that this cannot be the right answer.

All right, there is another segment of religious people who say that only the afore ordained will be saved. By this, they mean that from the beginning of time (without taking into consideration any good or bad anyone would do), God just decided whom he would and would not save. They also contend that these numbers are so fixed, that they cannot be changed, by any amount of good or bad done by the individual.

My goal in this article will be to prove this is not the correct answer for this question. This I will do by presenting the following scriptural facts which are not in harmony with it.

ONE -- This position sets forth God as being a respecter of person, but the scriptures say he is not (Romans 2:11, Col. 3:25, Acts 10:34-35).

TWO -- This answer says God does not want all people to be saved, but scriptures such as I Tim. 2:3-4 and II Peter teach it is not his will that any be lost.

THREE -- If this teaching were true, then it would follow that no one can have anything to do with saving himself; however, the Bible teaches over and over again that this is possible (Matt. 19:16-17, Acts 2:37-38, Acts 9:6, Acts 16:30-31, Luke 3:9-10, Matt. 19:29, Acts 2:40, Matt. 7:21, I Tim. 4:16 and many more).

FOUR -- If the lost were hopelessly lost, then praying for them to be saved would be in vain, but Romans 10:1 says Paul prayed that those who were lost might be saved.

SIX -- If predestination were true, then it would be impossible for one person to become responsible for another being lost, but this is not in harmony with what is taught by the scriptures (Matt. 23:13, 15, I Cor. 8:8-11, Romans 14:14-15).

SEVEN -- Those who take this position must agree that if it be true then God's Day of Judgment was in the beginning and that the standard by which he judged was nothing more nor less than his own unconditional free choice. However, the writers of

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the New Testament (who did their writing long after the beginning) spake of the Day of Judgment as a future event (Matt. 25:14-46, Acts 17:30-31 and of the Bible as the standard by which he will judge (Deu. 18:18-19, John 12:48, Rev. 20:11-15).

EIGHT -- Finally, if this position were true then it would contradict the following scriptures, which say we may and may not be saved, for reasons other than predestination.

- a) Both Eze. 18:25-32 and Eze. 33:11-20 say one may save himself by turning from wickedness unto righteousness and that the righteous may be lost by turning from righteousness unto wickedness.
- b) Eze. 33:1-9 says the teachers of God may be saved by warning the wicked and be lost if they fail to warn them.
- c) In Hos. 4:6, God said my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.
- d) Matt. 7:21 says one may enter heaven by doing the will of God.
- e) Scriptures such as Luke 13:5, Acts 2:38 and Acts 3:17-19 say we may be saved by repenting or perish if we fail to repent.
- f) According to John 3:18, 36 we may receive everlasting life by believing in Jesus and be denied the same, if we do not believe in him.
- g) John 3:16 says all who believe in Jesus will be saved.
- h) Matt. 25:31-46 teaches that those who help others will enter heaven and those who refuse to help the needy will be cast into the lake of fire.
- i) The Apostle John wrote in John 5:28-29 that those who do good will be resurrected unto life but those who do evil will be resurrected unto damnation.
- j) I Peter 3:10-11 teaches that if we are to have life and see good days, we must refrain our tongue from evil, speak no guile, turn away from evil and do good.
- k) According to Matt. 12:36-37 Jesus declares that we (on the day of judgment) will either be justified or condemned by our words.
- l) From Rev. 22:14, we hear it said that the people who will receive an eternal abode in the heavenly city, will be those who keep the commandments of God.

My friends, we accept the Bible as a book of truth, because we believe there is not one false statement in it. All right, inasmuch as this is true, then we must reject any doctrine which is inconsistent with that which is taught by the Bible as a whole.

I believe I have proven that the position of unconditional predestination is not in harmony with that which is taught by the Bible as a whole. So I submit unto you that it is not the answer for the question, who can be saved.

To be continued.

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #51
Who Can be Saved #3

"And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, who then can be saved?"

As I have said before, if we were to ask the religious world, who can be saved, we would receive at least four different answers.

Thus far, we have considered two of them; one, all will be saved and two, only those who from the beginning were unconditionally ordained to receive salvation.

In my judgment, we have found sufficient evidence in God's Book to prove both of these answers are wrong. Now inasmuch as this is true, and inasmuch as we know some will be saved and others lost, then it must follow that God has not UNCONDITIONALLY but, CONDITIONALLY ordained who will be saved.

Therefore, we may now reword our question, who can be saved, to be what God ordained conditions must we comply with in order to be saved?

All right, even though most of the religious groups agree God has offered salvation unto us on a conditional basis, they do not agree on what the conditions are. Some CONTEND and others DENY that faith is the only God ordained demand which alien sinners must comply with in order to be saved.

As for me, I believe with all my heart that the scriptures teach they must believe in both God and his Son Jesus (Heb. 11:6, John 5:24, John 3:16, 28). However, I do not believe that this is the only condition with which they must comply. So I shall use the remaining space for this article to present (by the question and answer method) scriptural evidence which I believe will substantiate my position.

QUESTION #1 - Are there any scriptures which say that a person is saved by faith only?

No. In fact, there is only one scripture in which both the words faith and only are found and it says MAN IS NOT JUSTIFIED BY FAITH ONLY (James 2:24).

Then too, there are other scriptures which teach we are saved by faith plus something else (Gal. 5:6, James 2:14-26).

QUESTION #2 -- Are there scriptures (which in one way or another) teach that the alien sinner is not saved at the point of faith?

Yes, Jesus in Matt. 7:21 says "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

My friends, anyone who says, Lord, Lord is a believer; but Jesus said that is not enough.

Again, in Acts, chapter 2, we have an example of a group of people who after becoming accepting believers, were not saved (Acts 2:1-40). Notice please, that after they became believers who were willing to accept Jesus as their savior, Acts 2:38 says they had not yet received remission of sins; and Acts 2:40 says they were not yet saved.

QUESTION #3 -- Are there any scriptures which say that alien sinners must comply with any additional conditions?

Yes, just as there are scriptures which teach they must believe, well even so, Luke 24:45-47, Acts 2:38, Acts 3:17-19, and Acts 17:30-31 teaches they must repent.

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QUESTION #4 -- Does repentance precede faith?

No. Because repentance is a change of mind which leads to a change of conduct (Matt. 21:28-29). Tell me, why would one who was not serving God have a change of mind, which would lead to his serving him before he believes in him?

Again, II Cor. 7:10 says godly sorrow worketh repentance. How, I ask, could one be brought to a state of godly sorrow before he believes in him?

QUESTION #5 -- Do the scriptures say there is any other condition which the alien sinner must comply with?

Yes, Acts 8:37 (I Tim. 6:11-13 and John 18:36-37) and Romans 10:9-10 teaches they must confess before others that they believe Jesus is the Son of God. When you read these scriptures you will see two of them give us apostolic examples of alien sinners making this confession; and the other one is a statment of fact, which says, it is made with the mouth unto salvation.

True the Book of Romans was written unto the children of God in Rome. However, when we read from verse one through verse ten, it becomes evident that Paul was not teaching them what they must do; but was explaining what the aliens of verse one and two must do. Then from verse eleven through verse seventeen he stresses the need for teaching the gospel of Christ unto the alien sinners. Did the children of God in Rome have need of believing that God raised Jesus from the dead? NO. This they had to believe; in order to become God's children.

So who can be saved?

What saith the scriptures which we have considered in this lesson?

ONE -- We are not saved by faith only.

We heard Gal. 5:6 and James 2:14-26 say this by declaring salvation is granted on the conditions of faith plus works. We also heard Matt. 7:21 (a statement of fact) and Acts 2:36-40 (an apostolic example) say the alien sinner is not saved at the point of faith. Then finally we heard James 2:24 say in plain words, yes, a man is justified by faith but not by faith only.

TWO -- Faith is not the only condition.

We heard Luke 24:45-47, Acts 2:38 and Acts 3:17-19 say the aliens must repent; and Acts 5, I Tim. 6:11-13 and Romans 10:9-10 say they must confess their faith in Jesus.

My readers, since these scriptures teach all these things I submit unto you, that the position which contends the alien sinners are saved by faith only is not the answer for our question.

To be continued.

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #52
Who Can be Saved #4

I believe that the scriptural evidence presented in the last three articles proved the following facts:

ONE -- All people will not be saved.

TWO -- God did not from the beginning unconditionally ordain who would be lost and who would be saved.

THREE -- God did ordain who would be saved on a conditional basis.

FOUR -- God ordained the conditions would be faith in him

and his Son Jesus, repentance and confession of faith in Jesus before others.

However, the purpose of today's article will be to provide you with scriptures, which (I believe) will show, that the same God who ordained alien sinners must believe, repent and confess their faith in Jesus, must also be baptized.

This I believe because:

ONE -- According to Eph. 1:3-7 and II Cor. 5:17, all spiritual blessings are in Christ. It is in him we have redemption through his blood; even the forgiveness of sins. When we reach the point that God considers us to be in his Son Jesus, we then and there become new creatures. The old things pass away; and all things becom anew.

My friends, inasmuch as these scriptures teach that salvation is in Christ and inasmuch as Romans 6:3 and Gal. 3:27 say it is baptism which puts us into Christ, then, how I ask, can the alien sinner be saved without being baptized?

TWO -- It is said in Acts 2:47 that God adds to the church daily those that are saved. So, those whom God has not added to the church are not saved. Then Acts 2:41 says the believing and penitent people on the day of Pentecost, were not added to the church until after they were baptized; and I Cor. 12:13 declares that it is the act of obedience to God's command to be baptized, which puts the lost into God's body, the church. So how can we say one can be saved without being baptized?

THREE -- It is declared by Deu. 18:18-19, Acts 3:22, James 2:8-12 and Rev. 22:19 that we must obey all of God's commandments; and Acts 10:48 says God has commanded us to be baptized.

FOUR -- Rev. 1:5 proclaims that sins are washed away by the blood of Jesus; but Acts 22:16 teaches that if the penitent bleiever (such as Saul was) is to receive this blood bath, he must be baptized.

My friends, sins which have been washed away cannot be washed away again. So why I ask, did Ananias (a man of God) say to Saul "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins"?

FIVE -- The scripture found in Mark 16:15-16 says that Jesus said unto his Apostles, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Now notice, Jesus according to this scripture, did not say he that believeth shall be saved, and as a saved person, he may if he chooses be baptized; but he said "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." True, after saying this, he said, "He that believeth not shall be damned"; but did not say he that is not baptized shall be damned. However, the fact that he did not say this, does not prove that baptism is not essential unto salvation. Acts 8:36-37 says that faith must precede baptism; and John 3:18 says "He that believeth not is condemned already." So after Jesus aid "He that believeth not is not condemned," it was not necessary that he say, "He that is not baptized will be condemned."

SIX -- In Acts 2:37, we hear a group of believers ask "What shall we do? Then in verse thirty-eight, we hear the Apostle Peter say unto them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

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I believe the best way to prove this scripture teaches the sinner must be baptized in order to receive remission of sin is, to consider one of the reason given to prove otherwise.

Some say the English word "for" comes from the Greek word "dia" which means because. Therefore they say "Peter in Acts 2:38 did not say to those people be baptized in order to receive forgiveness of sins; but be baptized because your sins have been forgiven."

Now this sounds reasonable, that is until we remember that it proves too much to be true. You see, if the word "for" in Acts 2:38 proves alien sinners are to be baptized because their sins have been forgiven, well, it also proves they are to repent because their sins have been forgiven. Yes, it says they are to both repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. However, there are many other scriptures which teach they must repent in order to receive remission; and all accept this.

Again, if this be true then it also proves Jesus did not shed his blood in order that we might receive remission of sins; but because we had already received remission (Matt. 26:28). This though would contradict more than one hundred other scriptures; and this would indeed be proving too much.

The truth of the matter is, the word "for," as found in the New Testament was translated from more than one Greek word. The word "for" in Rev. 16:10 and other scriptures was translated from the Greek word "dia"; and this word means because. However, the word "for" in Matt. 26:28 and Acts 2:38 was not translated from the word "dia"; but "eis" which means with a view to.

So just as sure as Matt. 26:28 teaches Jesus shed his blood in view of our receiving the remission of sins; well even so Acts 2:38 teaches alien sinners are to be baptized in view of receiving remission of sins.

My readers, just as scriptures in previous articles say the aliens must believe in God and Jesus, repent of sins, and confess their faith in Jesus; well even so, the above cited scriptures teach they must be baptized.

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #53 Who Can be Saved #5

This is the fifth and final lesson which will be devoted to the question of who can be saved.

I believe the scriptures presented in the past four articles confirms the following facts:

ONE -- ALL people will not be saved.

TWO -- God did not from the beginning UNCONDITIONALLY, BUT conditionally, ordain who would be saved, and who would be lost.

THREE - FAITH is not the ONLY God ordained condition.

FOUR -- The God ordained conditions for the alien sinner would be: faith in him and his Son Jesus, repentance, confession of faith in Jesus, and baptism.

FIVE -- When the alien sinners comply with these conditions they are forgiven of all their sins; and God adds them to his church (Acts 2:47). They have become the children of

God (I Tim. 3:15, Acts 2:47). However, they are not then and there translated into heaven. No, they must remain here on earth until they die.

All right, what about this period of time? Must they conduct themselves as God's word directs, in order to enter heaven?

If we were to ask the religious world for the answer to this question, we would not receive ONE but TWO very different answers.

One group would say, "Once the aliens become children of God they are saved; yea, so saved, that they cannot so sin as to lose their soul."

Another group would say, "If the children of God are to enter heaven, they must live in obedience to the commandments of God which are applicable to them."

Personally, I believe, the scriptures in more than a hundred different ways teach that the disobedient children of God will be lost.

Please consider with me the following few:

ONE -- The children of God under the first covenant (Old Testament) who refused to obey God will not be in heaven (Heb. 3:17-18, Heb. 4:1-9, Luke 16:19-31). Then I Cor. 10:1-12, Heb. 2:1-4, Heb. 3:1, 11, Heb. 10:24-31 and Heb. 13:38 say if we follow their example of disobedience, we also will be condemned.

TWO -- Romans 8:16-17 teaches the children of God are heirs of God; and that if they suffer with Christ they will receive their inheritance. Now what will cause the children of God to suffer? God through Paul in II Tim. 3:12 says all who live as he through Christ has taught them, shall suffer persecution. All right, if the children of God must suffer in order to inherit and if the keeping of the commandments of God will bring about the suffering then it necessarily follows that the children of God who refuse to obey God, will not inherit heaven. Yes, this is why Jesus said "Blessed are they, which are persecuted for righteousness sake for their is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:6). Again, this is why we read in Acts 14:22 that the PEOPLE OF GOD in Lистра, Iconium and Antioch were taught they must suffer much in order to enter the kingdom of heaven.

THREE -- In the Bible, we find the following facts:

1) Sin, unrighteousness and living after the flesh are defined as disobedience unto the commandments of God (I John 4:3, I John 5:17, Romans 7:5, Romans 8:5).

2) There is a first and second death (I Cor. 15:22-23, Rev. 20:14, Rev. 21:8).

3) The first death is physical (I Cor. 15:22-23); and the second is to be cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14, Rev. 21:8).

4) All people shall die the first death (I Cor. 15:22-23, Heb. 9:27).

5) CHILDREN OF GOD who live and die the first death in sin, shall also die the second death, or be cast into the lake of fire (Romans 8:12-13, Romans 6:23, James 5:19-20).

Likewise there are scriptures which say that the children of God who live and die the first death in sin, shall not be permitted to enter heaven (I Cor. 6:9, Gal. 5:19-21, Rev. 21:27). Also there are other scriptures which say God on the Judgment Day will pour out his wrath upon his children who have lived and died in sin (II Cor. 5:9-10, Romans 2:5-9, Eph. 5:1-6, Col. 3:1-6,

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Heb. 10:24-31).

Yes, when all these scriptural facts are considered together, they prove that the children of God must obey God's commandments which are addressed to them.

FOUR -- Now, let us consider the following two groups of scriptures:

Group #1 -- Twenty-one of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament were written unto children of God.

My dear readers, if the children of God may cast aside all of the commandments they have received from God, and be just as sinful as Satan, and even so, receive eternal salvation, then why did God inspire his writers of the New Testament to write twenty-one of its twenty-seven books for the purpose of providing them with all his commandments unto them???

Group #2 -- The following group of scriptures say we must obey all of God's commandments in order to be saved (Deut. 18:18-19, Acts 3:22-23, James 2:8-12, Heb. 10:24-31, I Cor. 5:1-5, Rev. 22:19).

All right, inasmuch as these scriptures teach we must obey all of God's commandments, and since at least eighty percent of all the commandments found in the New Testament, are addressed unto the Children of God, then I submit unto you, that if the children of God are to escape the lake of fire and live with God in heaven, they must obey the commandments of God addressed unto them.

FIVE -- The following brief statements also teach this:

The children of God who walk in darkness have no fellowship with him (I John 1:6). If we say we know God, but keep not his commandments, we are liars (I John 2:4), God will not hear the prayers of disobedient children (I John 3:22). The children of God are commanded to love one another (I John 4:7). If the children of God say they love God but hate their brethren they are murderers; and murderers have no eternal life abiding in them (I John 3:15). No wonder then, we read in Rev. 22:14 blessed are they that do his commandments.

WHO THEN CAN BE SAVED?

I believe the scriptures presented in the past few articles say the alien sinners who believe in God and Jesus, repent of their sins, confess their faith in Christ, are baptized; and then as children of God, live a life of obedience unto all of God's commandments, are the ones who will be saved.

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #54
What is Baptism

In the last article of this booklet, I believe I proved the scriptures teach that baptism is one of the conditions which the alien sinner must comply with in order to be saved.

Inasmuch as this is true, then it necessarily follows, that we need very much to come to an understanding of what it means to be baptized. Yes, this must be true, because how can one be baptized unless he or she understands what constitutes baptism? So when the Lord through the Apostle Peter commanded Cornelius and his house to be baptized, well what was he commanding them to do? Was he commanding them to be

buried in water, or was he commanding them to have a little water sprinkled on them?

Now on this point, as on many others, the religious world is divided. Some say that either sprinkling or immersion will suffice for baptism. However, others contend that if one is to be scripturally baptized, he or she must be completely buried in water.

So, again you and I must ask ourselves, what saith the scriptures?

All right, what do they say? In the New Testament, we have examples of people going down into the water to be baptized (Matt. 3:5-6, Matt. 3:13-16, Acts 8:26-39); but no examples of people being baptized down by a body of water.

If sprinkling is baptisms, then why did both the baptizer and the one being baptized go down into the water?

In Acts 16:25-34, we read of the conversion and baptism of the Philippian Jailer and his house. Verses 32, 33 and 34 say, after they were taught they left the Jailer's house and went to another geographical location to be baptized.

QUESTION -- Was there not enough water in the Jailer's house to sprinkle him and his house???

Oh yes, my friend, these New Testament examples of baptisms, by necessary inference proves baptism is not sprinkling but immersion.

Again, though, sprinkling does not require much water; whereas immersing or burying one does. Therefore John 3:23 by necessary inference proves that baptism is a burial. Because it says, "John was baptizing in Aenon near to Salem because there was much water there."

Paul, in I Cor. 10:1-4, says the crossing of the Red Sea by Israel was a baptism.

From Exodus 14, we learn that as Israel crossed the Red Sea they were completely surrounded by water. Yes, there was a wall of water on either side and a cloud, or water above them. Recall Paul, in I Cor. 10:1-4, said they were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

In Matt. 20:20-23, we hear the two brothers, John and James request positions of honor. Jesus ask them if they were able to be baptized with the baptism which he was to be baptized with? Then he told them they would indeed be baptized with this baptism.

All right, Jesus was not speaking to them about water baptism; but the baptism of suffering, which he and his apostles were to experience.

It is a Biblical fact that persecution and suffering did come down upon them like a great flood.

Now, inasmuch as Christ referred to this overwhelming suffering as baptism, then it necessarily follows that baptism means to be immersed or overwhelmed.

Did Jesus and his apostles receive only a little sprinkling of suffering??? The Apostle Paul in Rom. 6:1-5 and Col. 2:12-13 says baptism is three things; a burial, a planting and a resurrection.

My friends, I believe these two scriptures, as well as all the other above cited, proves beyond a doubt that baptism is not sprinkling but immersion.

Then too, this is exactly what those who are recognized by the world as being authorities on the Greek language say.

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Yes, many great Greek scholars have written what they call Greek Lexicons, in which they have given us the meaning of the Greek words from which our English Bible has been translated.

I have before me statements taken from twenty-seven of these Greek Lexicons, which say that the Greek word baptizo from which the English word baptize is derived, means to dip, immerse, plunge, submerge, sink and to cover.

These great works are: The Bagsten Greek Lexicon, The Bass, The Bloomfield, The Bullinger, The Cremer, The Dawson, The Donagan, The Greenfield, The Grim, The Groves, The Headercus, The Jones, The Liddel and Scott the Maltby, The Parkhurst, The Pickering, The Robinson, The Robson, The Thayer, The Wright, The Schrevellius, The Sophless and The Stephanus.

Recognized encyclopedias such as The American, Blaikies, Brandes, The Chambers, The Concise, The London, The Manafold, The Metropolitan, The New American, The Reese, The Edinburg and great Religious Historians and Theologians such as Bower, Homer Sham Cox, Dollinger, Holtzman, Proctor, Coleman, John Cunningham, Says, Pain, Moberly, Limbroch, Luther, Gibbons, Grisler, Hefele, Fisher, Venema, Stuart, Tomline, Trumbull and Calvin all agree with the above referenced Greek Lexicons that the Greek word baptizo from which the English word baptism is derived means to immerse or bury.

These authorities also say there is not a trace of evidence that sprinkling was ever practiced before late into the second century; and then only for those who were ill. This my friend was several years after the apostles and prophets had preached and recorded all of the New Testament. These authorities say that sprinkling for baptism was never accepted as the rule but only as an exception to the rule, even until the thirteenth century.

My friends, inasmuch as the inspired apostles never sprinkled their converts and inasmuch as reliable sources of authority say that sprinkling for baptism was not accepted as the rule by any religious group until the thirteenth century. Then I submit unto you that sprinkling for baptism is thirteen hundred years too late to be from God.

Shall we harken unto the voice of God or unto the voice of man?

By: Tommy Hodge

ARTICLE #55
Who Should be Baptized?

In this booklet, I have presented scriptures which teach two things peculiar to baptisms.

ONE -- The alien sinner must be baptized in order to be saved.

TWO -- To be baptized is to be buried in water.

So let us now consider who should be baptized. One portion of the religious world contends that both the accountable and the unaccountable should be baptized. However, another portion teaches that only the accountable should be baptized.

Personally, I could care less about what the religious community has to say, because it is wrong about thousands of

things. Now why do I say this? Because it contradicts itself thousands of times.

While on the other hand, I am greatly concerned about what the scriptures say. You see, my friends, the scriptures are the voice of God; and he has never been wrong about anything. All right, whom do the scriptures say should be baptized?

There are two exceedingly important reasons why we need to find the scriptural answer to this question.

REASON #1 -- Every year thousands of the unaccountable die, not having been baptized. So you see, since baptism (as we have seen in other lessons), is essential unto salvation, then these thousands died without salvation.

REASON #2 -- While on the other hand, every year thousands of these little ones are baptized. Now if the scriptures teach they are not to be baptized at this age, then God does not recognize their baptism. So if he does not honor this infant baptism, then those who are not later, as accountable baptized (as most of them will not), they will in God's sight die, not having been baptized.

Yes, finding the scriptural answer to this question is a matter of spiritual life or death for the little people. So I invite you to consider carefully the following scriptural evidence. Because I am persuaded to believe this evidence will convince you that the scriptures say ONLY the accountable are to be baptized.

If little children who die before they reach the age of accountability will be cast into hell (as great religious groups teach) because their parents neglected or refused to have them baptized, then they will be condemned, not because of what they refused to do; but because of what their parents failed to do. Yet many scriptures, a few of which are Ezekiel 18:19-20, Deut. 18:18-19, Rom. 14:12, II Cor. 5:9-11, and Rev. 20:11-15 teach that each of us either stand condemned or justified because of what we have or have not done.

I challenge the whole world to produce just one scripture which teaches otherwise.

Again, Acts 2:37-38 and Acts 22:16 say baptism is for the remission of sins. Another group of scriptures such as Rom. 3:9, Matt. 26:28, Isa. 59:1-2, Jo. 9:31, Jo. 8:21 and Rev. 21:27 teach that all who are guilty of sin stand condemned in the sight of God. Nevertheless, there is another group of scriptures which say that little children have never been unacceptable unto God (Deut. 1:39, Num. 14:3-31, Jonah 4:6-11, Mark 10:14). Since baptism is for the remission of sin and since little children are not guilty of sin, well why should they be baptized???

Under the Mosaic Law, children at the time of birth automatically became members of the Nation of God and were later taught to know him. However, now that the New Testament has replaced the old one, this is no longer true (Jer. 31:31-34).

Remember, he said that under the new those in the family of God or the Church of God would have no need of being taught to know the Lord, because said he all of them will know him.

All right, when does one become a member of the church? When he or she is baptized (Acts 2:40-41, I Cor. 12:13, Eph. 1:20-23).

My dear people since under the Law of Christ people must know the Lord before becoming a member of his church and

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since they become a member when they are baptized, then it necessarily follows they are not to be baptized until they are old enough to be taught to know the Lord.

Is it possible to teach an infant or small unaccountable child to know the Lord???

Consider this question with me, please. Did God command his apostles to baptize the unaccountable? No. According to Matt. 28:18-20 he commanded them to baptize those who were capable of being taught both before and after they were baptized. According to Mark 16:15-16, he commanded them to preach the gospel unto every creature and to baptize those who believed. Then according to Luke's account of the commission of Christ given unto his apostles, the message of repentance and remission of sins which they were to teach unto all nations, automatically eliminated their teaching and baptizing the unaccountable (Luke 24:45-49). So if they did baptize the unaccountable, they did so without any authority from Jesus.

My dear readers, if you will read the accounts of the following examples of baptism, you will find that it cannot be proven that the apostles either taught or baptized any little children (Acts 2:26-41, Acts 8:5-13, Acts 8:26-39, Acts 9:17-18, Acts 10:1-48, Acts 16:11-15, Acts 16:22-34, Acts 19:1-7, I Cor. 1: 14-16).

We now have considered each and every apostolic example of baptism found in the New Testament; but have not found one single case of infant baptism.

True, we found four examples of household baptisms, however, this does not prove there were any infants in those houses. Just as all must admit that in a household there can be infants, even so must all admit there may not be. I know many households in which there are no infants. WE read of Biblical households in which there were no infants (Jos. 24:15, Heb. 11:7).

In fact, when we read the four accounts of household baptisms, we find statements which prove there were no infants in those households (Acts 10:44-48, Acts 16:32, Acts 16:34, Acts 16:40, I Cor. 16:15).

No, dear people, there is not to be found in the whole of God's Book any scripture by which God has commanded that either infants or small children should be baptized; or that gives us an example of any being baptized. Neither is there any scriptures which gives any reason why they should be. So there is no scripture which (by anyway) authorizes the baptizing of infants.

Then too, these same statements have been declared by many great scholars such as Mr. Barlow Barclay, Baxter Beets, Bennett, Bislag, Bleso, Bonwitch, Baston, Burnett, Calvin, Dollinger, Dwight, Jacob, French, Godet, Hahn, Hana, Holsten, Alford, Bledsol, Cunningham, Neader, William, Jakoby, Thayer, Schmidt, Stanley, Mozley, Newman, Lutz, Meyer and Witsius.

Yes, all these great scholars with one voice, as it were, say: There is in the New Testament neither a precept for, nor an example of, infant baptism.

Oh, no, my friends it is not God but uninspired men who say the unaccountable should be baptized.

By: Tommy Hodge