

Baptist Faith and Practice

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"We desire to hear from thee what thou thinkest, for as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against." Acts 28:22

Paul had been brought to Rome, a prisoner in chains; he was poor and friendless, and charged with being a ring-leader in "the sect of the Nazarenes." His enemies had inveterate prejudices against him, because he was an abettor of the claims of Jesus. Still, knowing also his great intellectual power, his refinement of manner, purity of motive, and spotlessness of character, they professed a willingness to hear him plead the cause of Christ before they condemned it, or judged him. This seemed manly. There is an air of equity, fairness and candor about their words, "we desire to hear from thee," which commends the men who uttered them.

And this was all that the Apostle asked. Give him an impartial hearing, in order to a right judgment in the matter, and then, if they rejected both him and his religion, he could do no more. A man of one religion pays a poor compliment to a man of another, and a poorer to his own, when he cannot, or dare not, investigate

the religion of his fellow man; but to refuse him a frank hearing, betrays conscious weakness.

The Christians held tenets and practices in wide distinction from both Jews and pagans, but what difference did that make to either of them? These "Nazarenes" injured no man, friend or foe, in his property, character or person. They were gentle in spirit, and harmless in life. They were not "fornicators, or covetous, or railers, or drunkards, or extortioners." They were poor but not morose, and instead of being dangerous, or even burdensome to the community; they went about doing good, and at the same time, "ministered to their own necessities" by hard labor.

Why, then, were they "everywhere spoken against?" Could not calumny and reproach let them alone? Why should hate be stirred to its depths, because truth and its supremacy sanctified the heart and life of its disciples? Certainly, there was no cause here for the hiss of proscription, and men reproached them, either in ignorance of their principles, or despite their better knowledge. In either case they were inexcusable. If they were ignorant, they could have had light by asking for it, and if they knew better, then they did violence to their own manhood. The fact is that they were not so ignorant as they seemed to be, but the evidences of Christianity had silenced their reasoning, and overwhelmed them in shame; so that, in malice they came to berate that to which they could not reply.

This trick was considerably older than them and has long outlived them. Since the days of Paul, Christians are divided into sects quite as much as the Jews were in his day. These in some principles and practices, are wide apart. The lamentable consequence is, that alienations have sprung up, which subject, sometimes one sect and sometimes another, sometimes one doctrine and sometimes another, to denunciation.

Then follows the unlovely and unlicensed charge of "bigot" and "fanatic", "heretic" and "schismatic." All this is followed in turn by the unmitigated evil of misrepresenting and distorting each other's views and positions; of subjecting each other to unfounded reports and misrepresentations of opinion and practice, descending sometimes, even to caricature, greatly to each other's prejudice, if not to the point of direct falsehood. In all charity, this renders it pretty evident that one body of Christians is content to remain willfully ignorant of the tenets and practices of others, and of their reasons therefore.

Indeed, it is a very rare thing to find a man of one sect, who could, if he honestly tried, write a formula of the faith of another sect, which his Christian neighbor would be willing to subscribe to, as a correct exhibit of his own principles and practices. Nor can you wonder at this, when you consider how few there are who can give an intelligent exposition of their own principles, and their reasons for cherishing them.

So, then, I am sorry to say, most of the Christian denominations speak of each other, either in ignorance, or prejudice, in something, or somewhere. Now, is there any sense or manliness, not to say true religion, in this state of things? Can we not frankly, without ill-natured controversy, calmly, without disturbed passion, and freely, without restraint, explain to each other what we hold, and why? And then, if we fail to see alike, we shall mutually respect each other's convictions. Let me make an honest attempt to do this, on the Baptist side of the house. Of course it will be impossible for me to give you all the reasons for what we believe and do, in one address; this would require volumes. I must be content, therefore, with telling you what we believe and do, without giving the reasons.

You all know, to begin with, that as a sect we have the unenviable distinction of being "everywhere spoken against"; for we are not honored in one place, and subjected to obloquy in another—the detraction is pretty evenly spread. Perhaps it does us no injury, as "a prophet has no honor in his own country," but that makes it easier to bear; rather a little harder, because a Baptist prophet has none either there or anywhere else. This may be a true sign of prophethood; I do not deny that, but I do deny that we enjoy proscription because we find that it is refreshing. Even this prejudice makes us the more anxious to be understood by others, as we understand ourselves.

We hold, then, to these three great foundation principles, namely:

1. That the book called the Bible is given by the inspiration of God, and is the only rule of Christian faith and practice. The consequence is that we have no creeds, nor catechisms, nor decretals, which bind us by their authority. We think a creed worth nothing, unless it is supported by Scriptural authority, and if the creed is founded on the Word of God, we do not see why we should not rest on that word which props up the creed; we prefer to go back directly to the foundation itself and rest there alone. If it is able to sustain us, we need nothing else, and if it is not, then we cannot rest upon a creed to support us when that creed has no support for itself.

Some of our churches have what they call "Declarations," or "Articles of Faith," which are mere statements of what they think that the Bible teaches, but they are not put forth by any theological or ecclesiastical authority, and therefore do not bind the consciences of the churches. Some of our churches have no such "Articles" or "Declarations" because they find no need for them, and those who use them do not all use the same.

Our churches hold that Jesus Christ is the only Law-giver, and the only King in Zion; that his law is laid down in the Scriptures, and is perfect, and, therefore, they refuse to follow all forms of tradition and ecclesiastical ordinations whatever, bowing only to the behests of inspired precept, and the recorded practices of the apostolic churches, as their record is found in the Scriptures.

2. Baptists hold that God has given to every person the right to interpret the Scriptures for himself. As we cannot be Baptists without the Bible, we must know personally for ourselves, what order of obedience it requires at our hands. To

give up one of these positions is to give up both. But do not mistake me here, as to what we mean by private judgment, as a divine right.

We do not think that men are at liberty to think of the Bible or not, to obey it or not, just as they please. But we think that they are bound to use their judgment, and to govern it, by the facts and truths of the Bible. The liberty that we claim, is not to follow our own fancies, or predilections, in investigating the Bible, not merely to speculate upon it, and then diverge from its teachings if we choose to do so, because that would be criminal trifling.

The right to investigate the truth does not carry with it the right to disobey it, or to doubt it,—that would convert the doctrine into rebellion against its author, which is an evil, and cannot become a right. God allows every man to interpret the Bible for himself, in order that he may discover its facts and truths, and then honestly follow them in obedience. Hence, no church, or class of men in the church, can step in between the personal investigations of the man and the Bible, or to interpret it for him by authority.

3. That a man is responsible to God, and to him only, for his faith and practice, so far as the infliction of any punishment for disobedience to God is concerned. Right here we deny the right of the civil magistrate, or the State, either to prescribe a form of religion for us, or to punish us for not following any religion they may prescribe.

This we call soul-liberty, a freedom which we have obtained at a great price; the rack, the dungeon, the "bloody tenet," the stake and the gibbet. Baptists have ever resisted the right of the State to establish the church by law, to tolerate the conformists of that church, and put its nonconformists under pains and penalties—or to interfere with the free exercise of a man's religion, be it what it may. We may regret that all men are not Christians, and wish that they were, and we may wish that they held Christian principles as we hold them, but we have no right to enforce our doctrines by law, and others have no right to force their doctrines upon us by human statute.

We hold that if a man chooses to be a Mohammedan, a Jew, a Pagan, a Roman Catholic, a Protestant or an Infidel, he has a right to be that, so far as the civil law is concerned. Therefore, all persecution for the maintenance of this or that religion is radically wrong. And where Baptists have founded a State, or been the most numerous in a State, there has never been an act of persecution inflicted. The State of Rhode Island was founded by Baptists 240 years ago, and in that State no man has yet been persecuted for his religion by the civil power.

And the same liberty which we claim for ourselves, we are bound to claim for others, for if their rights can be taken away, ours may be also. When a Baptist shall rob one man of soul-liberty, by statute, penalty and sword, he will cease to be a Baptist for that reason. Baptists have ever sealed this great doctrine of soul-liberty with their blood. Their bones are bleaching everywhere in the Alpine valleys, amongst the eternal snows; their ashes have flitted over the pavements of Smithfield, on the winds for centuries.

The sighs and sobbings of Baptist sufferers haunt the "coal hole" of Lambeth Palace, and the dungeons in Lollard's Tower to this day. In the long list of martyrs, Arnold of Brescia, the star of Italy, Jerome of Prague, the most accomplished man of his day, and Hubmeyer of Ratisbon, sealed this doctrine with their blood. And then there followed them men in humbler walks, the good Hans of Overdam, the beautiful young Dosie of Leeuwarden, and Richard Woodman, the sturdy yeoman; all these shed their blood as its witnesses.

Baptist women also have sent up their shrill cry of martyrdom, till the blood of humanity has curdled at the heart. One sharp shriek after another comes, rending the air of the ages, from these brides of Christ, Maria of Monjon, Ann Askew, from the nobility of the British realm, Elizabeth Gaunt, a mother in Christian charity, and Joan Boucher, the heroine of Canterbury. Out of their very ashes, which crumbled at the stake, joint by joint and limb by limb, God has raised up modern Baptists, as from the dead, to re-assert the doctrine of soul-liberty.

You will readily see that out of these three great principles, spring up:

1. The doctrine of church independency. Hence, the Baptist denomination is not a church, but a body of churches. That is to say, each church or congregation is entirely independent of each other church or congregation, in all that relates to its

government. Every separate Baptist church chooses its own minister and other officers, receives and dismisses its own members, makes its own rules and regulations, and is sovereign in its self-control throughout.

Baptists have no legislative, judicial, nor executive body, known as a convocation, conference, council or synod. A body of churches voluntarily organize themselves into an association, but simply for fraternal and missionary purposes. Associations have no power over the churches, each church governing itself on democratic principles, and being as free from outside interference as so many private families, in this or any other city.

The next result of these principles is:

2. A regenerated church membership. No person can become a member of a Baptist church, till he professes to have found the remission of his sins, by faith in the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ. Many fall into the mistake that, in some way or other, we are sacramentarians; that is, that we associate the moral renovation of the soul with baptism and the Lord's Supper. This is a sad mistake.

We believe that man cannot be "born from above, or made a new creature," excepting by the sovereign influence of the Holy Spirit on the heart, leading the sinner to accept the benefits of Christ's atonement, by faith, to the free justification of his soul. Then, when he is regenerated, or as the word means, generated again, we accept him as a fit subject for baptism. In that act, he professes his faith in Christ as his present Saviour. So far from baptizing a man, in order that his soul may be regenerated thereby, we administer it to him because he is already regenerated by the Spirit of God. We say to him, "You have no right to baptism till you are born again," till you have a new heart, and are made a temple of the Holy Spirit.

All the waters on the globe, and all the religions services that may be used in connection with water, cannot cleanse your soul of one stain or blot which sin has left. But now that you are regenerated from above, it is your duty to be baptized, and your privilege to be baptized, and by that act to declare that you are already a renewed man, And because you are now "dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto righteousness," you must be buried with Christ in baptism: just as Christ was first buried in the waters of the Jordan, and then in the tomb of Joseph; that like as he was raised again by the glory of the father, even so should ye walk in newness of life." This is the doctrine of baptism as Paul preaches it in the sixth chapter of Romans, and this is the reason that we immerse men, because when men are "buried," they are covered in the tomb. This is what we understand by burying a believer "with Christ in baptism." You will see therefore, that we must

3. Reject infant baptism. An infant, we think, cannot be brought to the Lord's baptism, any more properly than it can be brought to the Lord's Supper. It cannot discern the import of the Lord's baptism, any more than it can discern the Lord's body; therefore, it cannot show forth the significance of one, any more than it can the significance of the other. It is a subject for neither ordinance.

On this point the *North British Renew* exactly expresses our views when it says: "Scripture knows nothing of the baptism of infants. There is absolutely not a single trace of it to be found in the New Testament. The recognized baptism of the ancient church was that of adults."

But we do not rest there, on this subject. Professor Lange, of Jena, who is not a Baptist, expresses our views more fully, when he says: "Would the Protestant church fulfill and attain to its final destiny, the baptism of infants must of necessity be abolished." Now this learned man thinks that infant baptism should be abolished, if Protestantism would reach its "final destiny." But he does not give us his reasons for thinking so. Our own views on the same subject are these: It seems to us that infant baptism is in conflict with the great doctrine of the atonement of Christ.

We believe that if an infant dies, it is saved by the virtue of Christ's blood shedding, and not by a few drops of water, nor an ocean full. It looks to us, therefore, to be laying a great stress on water in salvation, to be christening the child in death, as well as to foster superstition; as if the death of Jesus were not enough to save it, whereas in heaven, the ransomed babe will sing glory, and ascribe salvation "unto him who has washed us in his blood," and not to him who christened us. Then we think that infant baptism is a great evil and should be "abolished," because, if the christened child lives, his christening has introduced him into the visible church, and thereby corrupted the gospel simplicity of the church relation.

The whole of the State churches of Europe are made up of persons who were christened as infants. No wonder that they are corrupt churches. When infant baptism makes all the population members of the church, that act blots out all lines of distinction between a converted church, and an unconverted world. But in those churches which are not established by law, but who still think that "the church is composed of believers and their baptized children"; infant baptism corrupts the church relation. They do not pretend that the christening so renewed the child's moral nature as to make him a saint. But they do claim that it introduced him into the church. Yet, he is not under church obligations and discipline, and he does not share church privileges, such as the Lord's Supper.

So that infant baptism, as we see it, corrupts the church by introducing another sort of members into its fellowship, beside those who are converted to Christ. Then we hold that the christening of a child inflicts a serious injury upon him. It leaves the impression upon him, as he grows up, that in some way, he cannot tell how, he is sealed in a covenant to Christ, as other children are not; whereas, he finds himself just as wicked as other children. And then, if he ever wishes to make a profession of religion himself, it robs him of the right to that religious freedom, by which he can follow his own convictions of personal duty in baptism, without violating the covenant which his parents made for him, by repudiating their act of infant baptism. These principles lead us to put forth the ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper.

4. Just where the Lord Jesus left them. There is no point on which we are more grievously misrepresented, and on which we are more severely spoken against, than that of the supper. Scarcely any form of denunciation against us, on this subject, seems to be thought too severe, even by otherwise lovely Christian people. And we are sure that these same persons would treat us very differently if we could get them to listen long enough to our views to understand us. At any rate, they would respect both our integrity and self-consistency in the matter, whether they adopted our views or not.

What are our views on this point?

1. The same as those of all regenerated churches, namely: that the supper is to be received only by those who have been converted and baptized. This is exactly our ground in common with them. But what they call baptism, we call a substitute for it, unless it be the burial of a believer upon his own confession of faith.
2. We hold that the eternal salvation of a man depends no more on the supper than on baptism. Bread and wine, taken in the supper, can bring no blessing to the soul that water in baptism fails to bring, and neither of them has anything to do with the bestowment, of special grace from God. They are both of equal authority, both of equal solemnity, both of equal benefit, both symbolical acts, and nothing more.

The first preaches Christ's burial and resurrection, the second "shows" his death till he comes. As we obey him in submitting to the first, so we preach him in partaking of the second. They are monuments of Christ's great work, but not renovators of the soul. Only the blood of the Lamb, and the Holy Spirit, can do that, and neither of the ordinances has anything to do with it—they are both for other purposes. The thief on the cross was saved without either baptism or the supper.

3. We hold that regeneration is the test of Christian character, and that that proves the unity of the real people of God, and not a place together at the Lord's Table. No man could do a Baptist greater injustice, than to say that he unchristianizes all those with whom he cannot sit down at the table.

A true Baptist believes that thousands and millions of his brethren, who belong to other churches, are holy in heart and life, nay, may be better than he is, in that respect. But he finds nothing in the Scriptures making a common seat at the table either as a proof of love amongst brethren, or a test of Christian character.

There have been thousands, from the days of Judas Iscariot down, who have taken a seat at the table, without either love to Christ or his people, or the possession of Christian character. If I believed that the supper was intended to be a test of Christian fellowship between regenerated men, then I would go to the table with any converted man, whether he had been baptized or not. But I believe nothing of the sort.

So far from it, I neither regard it as a duty or privilege to sit down at the supper table with any other Baptist church, but that under whose watch-care I live. If we held the Lord's table to be what other Christian brethren who are not Baptists seem to regard it, we should practice what they do in regard to its observance, but we do not believe as they do about the question.

As we understand the matter, we neither Christianize those that we sit down with, nor unchristianize those that we do not sit down with; but we simply preach Christ's death by a symbolical act, as a church, just as an individual would preach Christ verbally. Christian unity is shown when believers come to the "unity of the faith," not the table. When they are baptized into one body"; and called in "one hope of their calling" —by regeneration, which adopts them into the family of God—or as Paul puts it, when they become members of Christ, "of his flesh, and of his bones"—and not when they sit side by side, and partake of bread from a harvest field, and wine from a vineyard.

That is a very easy way of showing your love to each other. Two strangers may sit side by side at the table who never saw each other before, and never pass a word to each other, and will never meet again on earth. But what love have they shown to each other? That is a very cheap sort of love, I think.

But the Christian love that the Bible talks about, as the test of Christian character and fellowship, is, according to James, to feed and clothe "a destitute brother or sister"; according to Paul, "to distribute to the necessities of saints, and in honor to prefer one another, "for the strong to bear the infirmity of the weak," "to bear each other's burdens," and so fulfill the law of Christ,—to "pray for each other," "to forgive each other," "to edify each other," "to weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice"—in a word, to "do good of every sort to them who are of the household of faith."

John puts the test even higher than that, when he claims that we "ought to lay down our lives for the brethren," if need be. When a man can push these divine truths aside, and measure his love to Christians by his willingness to take a sip of wine and a morsel of bread with them, it seems to be worth his while to ask on his knees, whether it is setting up Christ's standard of discipleship and fellowship, or his own.

These are the views that Baptists hold. What is there in all this to justify men in speaking against us everywhere? I put that question to you in candor. I am happy to say to you, that there are some men who do not speak against us, and they are not Baptists. John Locke ought to know what he was talking about, when he said, "The Baptists were from the beginning, the firm advocates of absolute liberty—just and true liberty, equal and impartial liberty." Sir James McIntosh says, "The Baptists suffered more than any other, under Charles II, because they professed the principles of religious liberty."

Jeremy Taylor says, "Freedom of conscience, unlimited freedom of mind, was from the first the trophy of the Baptists."

Our own Washington used words just as affectionate; and in August, 1789, at the request of the Baptists, he recommended to Congress that amendment to the Constitution which says that "Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the exercise thereof."

Bancroft, our great historian, and Judge Story, our great jurist, speak of us in the same manner. I can assure you that we never blush, when we remember that Milton and Bunyan, Sir Harry Vane and John Hampden, and Roger Williams, were all Baptist laymen; neither when we think that John Gill and Andrew Fuller, Adoniram Judson and William Carey, Robert Hall and Charles Spurgeon, Horatio Hackett and Thomas Conant were Baptist missionaries, scholars and ministers.

And as to other denominations; I only wish that we used the Bible more in public worship, as Episcopalians do; that we had as learned a ministry as our Presbyterian brethren have—as much pathos and zeal as our Methodist brethren—as much simplicity as the Society of Friends—and as much self-sacrifice as the Roman Catholics—and a good deal more heart-felt religion than either we or they have at present.

God knows I love them all, and if they would stop scolding us, and pray for us twice where they speak unkindly of us once, they would be happier and we should be better. God bless them all, I say. Amen.



The Devil's Gospel

J. R. Burrows, D.D.

From the book, *What Baptists Believe*, 1887

"Hath God said?"—Gen. 3:1

I take my text to-night from the devil's gospel; for the devil brought to man what man received as a gospel long before Christ announced his blessed evangel. Indeed, it was man's infatuated faith in the good news the devil proclaimed that rendered necessary the gospel of Jesus and all its sacrifice and agony for the redemption of man from the effects of his besotted credulity, and from the domination which Satan gained over him through his foolish faith.

And there are many men now who prefer the devil's gospel to Christ's, and lend a willing ear to the same strains which he whispered in the ear of Eve, "What was it that God had said?"... "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Now look at the cunning insidiousness of the tempter. He dare not intimate that God had no right to make such a prohibition, that it was unjust and arbitrary, and urge her to rebel against such capricious and unreasonable authority.

But he slyly insinuates a doubt, the first germ of unbelief. "Hath God said?" Now are you not mistaken? Have you not misunderstood? "Hath God said?" Are you sure? Could he have intended such a check upon your natural appetite? Could he have hung out this beautiful fruit before your eyes and then forbidden you to taste it? Hath he so fettered your freedom in this magnificent Eden?"

What a subtle insinuation is concealed under these words, implying that God had no right to give such a command and that our befooled mother would do well in disregarding it. You know how sadly successful was this first temptation of the wily liar. Of the father of lies this was to man the first-born of a horrible and numberless progeny. This first subtle falsehood proved so successful that he has repeated it in all generations and perhaps to every individual of our race. Has not the echo of it sounded within your own soul? Look at a few of the many phases which this cunning question takes in the thoughts of men.

"**Hath God said?**" Now hath he really *prohibited indulgence* of these craving appetites of our nature? Is it, after all, certain that the good Lord requires us to abstain from pursuits and amusements that seem so attractive and desirable? Will he condemn me for these little violations of the very strict laws he has written in his commandments? It is such a small disobedience that surely it cannot be very wrong, just a taste of the sweet fruit that hangs so temptingly within my grasp. And so you yield to the suggestion of the tempter within and open your soul to further influx of evil. You puncture as with a thin needle the dyke that holds back the sea of sin from your soul, and drop after drop trickles in, each enlarging the breach, until the flood rushes in, and your heart, deluged with the defilement of guilt, becomes "like the troubled sea which cannot rest, casting up mire and dirt." Questioning God's truth is the beginning of pollution and woe.

"**Hath God said?**" Does he indeed *notice* such trifling transgressions of such an insignificant being as I? He has a universe to look after, and I must be lost to his observation amid these larger cares. Though he has said, "The eyes of Jehovah are in every place beholding the evil and the good;" "I the Lord search the hearts and try the reins of the children of men," yet somehow this minute scrutiny may not be literally fact, and I may escape through God's ignorance of my true character. So doubt of God's omniscient observation encourages sin.

"**Hath, God said?**" Would it not be *harsh and cruel* for God to impose such severe restraints upon man's inclinations? He is good and loving, desires the happiness of his creatures, and could he so interfere with their happiness as to impose such rigid restrictions upon their cravings? And thus God's very love is made a subterfuge under which unbelief may hide.

"**Hath God said?**" Has he the *right*, the authority to utter such prohibitions? Here stand I, and there, bending to my touch, is the tempting apple. He has given us the whole garden and transferred to us dominion over all the earth, and thus of all fruits that grow therein and of all living creatures that move there on, there over and there under, the beasts of the field, the birds of the air and the fish of the sea. And now will he retract his grant by making an exception of a single tree? There

was a questioning of his supreme sovereignty. And this questioning has swelled into universal rebellion from every heart uttering its impious defiance: "We will not have this God to reign over us." Not his law, but our own desires, shall govern us. There was wrapped up in this subtle question the germ of a world's enmity to God. It infused the poison drop into one heart, whence it has been transmitted by heredity to taint the blood of all her posterity.

"Hath God said?" Does he *mean* all that his words imply? "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Did God say that?" asks the devil. "He could not mean that. Ye shall *not* surely die!" You cannot suppose that he could be in earnest in uttering such a terrible threat for such a trifling offense. And ever since and everywhere men have caught up the doubt and questioned the sincerity of the divine threatenings. They never were meant to be fulfilled. They are only like the grotesque stuffed watchmen which farmers set up in their cornfields to scare off the birds. There is no power in them to hurt.

And men are preaching this devil's gospel today and announcing to bad men the good news that God's threatenings are nothing but theatre thunder, and they need not fear that it will ever seriously hurt anybody. Take care, my friend there are lightning bolts, hot, quick and death-dealing, flashing amid the peals of God's thunder. Do not indulge the delusion that the Great Jehovah deals in shams and tricks and that he does not earnestly mean what he says: "The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment. They shall be cast into outer darkness." "Hath he said and will he not do it; hath he spoken and will he not make it good." "When I say the wicked shall die, he shall surely die in his iniquity." Do not risk your soul on a doubt of God's sincerity.

"Hath God said?" Hath God *ever said anything at all* to man? Has he made any revelation to our race? Even this phase of unbelief was infolded in this germ insinuation to be evolved in these latter days. Men grow bolder in their depravity and deny that the Lord has ever revealed a sentence for man's instruction or guidance. And though the best and truest men that ever blessed the world have hundreds of times affirmed "thus saith the Lord," yet all these men were cheats or crazed and the Lord never spoke by them. The Bible is a myth and all its pretended divine revealings are but "cunningly devised fables." That is the outcome of the devil's gospel. Do you believe it? Are you willing to hazard your soul upon the doubt whether the Bible is the word of God?

"Hath God said?" But deeper even than this has this deadly umbellifer seed, ever multiplying seed of its own kind, and these growing ranker and more deadly in the dank swamp of human depravity; deeper still, I say, has this baneful seed thrust down its roots and spread out its shoots. We hear men whose hearts have furnished soil for the growth of this pestiferous seed blatantly denying that there *ever was a God* who could have spoken to man. And this is the final development of the devil's first whisper in Eden. Surely there is truth in this phase at least of the doctrine of progressive evolution. It has "evolved" Jehovah out of his universe and left the world without a Creator, and all its magnificent, accurate and orderly mechanism without a Maker. Listen to Carlyle's indignant utterance in his characteristic terse style:

"Ah! it is a sad and terrible thing to see nigh on to a whole generation of men and women professing to be cultivated looking around in a purblind fashion and finding no God in the universe...And this is what we have got. All things from frog spawn. The gospel of dirt is the order of the day. The older I grow (and I now stand on the brink of eternity) the more comes back to me the sentence in the catechism; Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. And the older I grow the fuller and deeper its meaning becomes. No gospel of dirt, teaching that men have descended from frogs through monkeys can ever set that aside."

There is a God who hath spoken to man.

From this temptation and triumph of infernal strategy over our first parents and the fearful results which followed in the Lord's vindication of his character and authority we may learn the truth of the following doctrines.

That God is in earnest when he threatens.

The intimation of the devil in the text is, there is no need to trouble yourself about what God has said. He will never execute such a threat. And this is the slender hope upon which many a poor sinner is expecting to escape the denunciations of the Almighty. Yet our first parents found to their anguish and shame that the warning was a sincere one. They died the day they

sinned, not indeed a physical dissolution; that came later. But they died out of God's favor. Their innocency died. Their happiness died. Their hope of eternal blessedness through obedience died. In its strictest sense the threat of the Lord was fulfilled.

And every threatening he has spoken will be accomplished.

Unbelieving mortal! you are imagining that in some undefined way the denunciations against sin will be modified or averted; that this gospel of the devil will somehow come true. Let me exhort you not to depend upon such a contingency. "The wicked shall be turned into hell." "He that believeth not shall be damned." This is what the Lord hath said. Do not allow yourself to be deceived by the subtle question, "Hath God said;" as though there were some doubt about it, some insincerity, as though it were some manufactured shape of a ghost constructed only to scare. "I am the Lord. I will speak and the word that I speak shall come to pass. The word that I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord God."

Another doctrine taught is that *disobedience in minutest matters is a great evil*. Perhaps, as viewed by man's judgment, there has seldom been a smaller sin committed in this world than this transgression of Eve. But it contained within it the elements of rebellion, unbelief and positive disobedience. And these can be shown as really in a small as in a great transgression. If God directly forbids it, breaking a twig is breaking a law of Jehovah. The sin is not so much in the act as it is in the spirit, the motive that prompts the act. The Lord said, "Of the fruit of that tree thou shalt not eat. In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Here was a plain law, easily understood, with penalty annexed. Now what, with this in view, was really the character of this act of our first parents? It was as if they said, "We comprehend precisely what the Lord means, but we will not regard it, we *will* take and eat this fruit." This was renouncing his authority. It was throwing off his government. It was saying God's law shall not govern us. In this thing we will not be controlled by a divine mandate.

We rebel against his rule. We know better than God what is good for ourselves. Here, then, is *rebellion* against a rightful and beneficent government. Here is *selfishness*, which is the very essence of sin. Here is *unbelief*, which doubts the sincerity and wisdom of the Lord. Here is *ingratitude*, which forgets manifold, unconditioned blessings in the selfish longing of the hour. And all these elements of sin may mingle in a small disobedience as really as in a great one. There is contagion in a small pustule of small-pox matter as virulent as in the whole mass of bedding and clothing in which a small-pox victim has died.

There is death as sure in a drop of prussic acid as in all the waves of mid-ocean beneath which the wrecked sailor is whelmed. Sin is not to be measured by its bulk, but by its nature and properties. It is said that the Borgias had poisons, an invisible smear of which, on the hem of a glove or the rim of a cup, wrought sure death to their foes. Such is sin in its nature and elements. Of such character is every sin you commit against your Creator and Sovereign. It repudiates God's authority. It strikes at his throne. It thrusts itself into Jehovah's rightful place. It abuses his goodness. And it need not be what men call enormous sins to work out ruin and death. A puncture small as a needle's point may be large enough to convey the venom from the adder's fang and send it coursing through all the veins.

Then no sin is little. It is to be measured by its effects. If it estranges the soul from its Maker, if it destroys the communion between man and his God and puts enmity in the place of love and unbelief in the place of faith and willfulness in the place of dependence, it is, in itself, without reference to magnitude or multitude, a dreadful evil. And just this is what your transgressions have done for you, sinner! Your spirit is not in harmony with the spirit of your Father in heaven. You do not love his laws; you do not desire reconciliation with him; you can live and enjoy life without his favor, and would rather not have his favor if it is to be obtained only at the expense of entire submission to his will and obedience to his commandments. You are hardly sorry tonight that you have sinned against such a God. O! what wreck sin has made of human souls, so utter as to destroy man's consciousness of his own ruin.

And now listen to a word of the true gospel of Jesus. While sin is to the Lord "that abominable thing which he hates," yet he has made provision for cleansing the heart polluted with it and healing the heart poisoned by it. He has devised a method by which he can arrest its ruin and forgive its guilt. Need I tell you once more, that it cost his love; the heaviest sacrifice that even a God could make, even the offering up of his only Son for our redemption? The penalty righteously

denounced against you Jesus took upon himself that you might be delivered from it.

He poured out his blood that it might cleanse out the pollutions of your soul. Now will you love Jesus for this, for his redeeming and renewing grace, or will you add to the guilt of breaking God's law the guilt of rejecting Christ's love? If you do, all resources for your salvation are exhausted. To-day O! sinner, come as a weeping, penitent child to your Father's feet, through Jesus, and be pardoned, purified and saved.



Novatians or Novatianists

David Benedict

From the book, *History of the Baptists in America and Other Parts of the World, 1848*

As this is the first party of importance who were acknowledged to be sound in doctrine which withdrew from the established church, it is proper to give, a full account of the reasons which led to the separation, and also some of the leading facts of their history while they continued as distinct and independent churches.

Robinson, in his *Ecclesiastical Researches*, has given ample details on this subject, and my first selection will be from that work.

"The history of Novatian is long, and, like that of all others in his condition, is beclouded with fables and slander. The case in brief was this. Novatian was an elder in the Church of Rome. He was a man of extensive learning, and held the same doctrine as the church did, and published several treatises in defense of what he believed. His address was eloquent and insinuating, and his morals were irreproachable. He saw with extreme pain the intolerable depravity of the church.

"Christians, within the space of a few years, were caressed by one emperor, and persecuted by another. In seasons of prosperity, many rushed into the church for base purposes. In times of adversity they denied the faith, and ran back to idolatry again. When the squall was over, they came again to the church, with all their vices, to deprave others by their examples. The bishops, fond of proselytes, encouraged all this, and transferred the attention of Christians from the old confederacy for virtue, to vain shows at Easter, and other Jewish ceremonies, adulterated too with paganism.

"On the death of bishop Fabian, Cornelius, a brother elder, and a vehement partisan for taking in the multitude, was put in nomination. Novatian opposed him; but as Cornelius carried his election, and he saw no prospect of reformation, but on the contrary a tide of immorality pouring into the church, he withdrew, and a great many with him. Cornelius, irritated by Cyprian, who was just in the same condition, through the remonstrances of virtuous men of Carthage, and who was exasperated beyond measure by one of his elders, named Novatus, who had quitted Carthage, and had gone to Rome to espouse the cause of Novatian, called a council, and got a sentence of excommunication passed against Novatian.

"In the end Novatian formed a church, and was elected bishop. Great numbers followed his example, and all over the empire puritan churches were constituted, and flourished through the succeeding two hundred years. Afterward, when penal laws obliged them to lurk in corners, and worship God in private, they were distinguished by a variety of names and a succession of them continued till the Reformation."

"Novatian was the first anti-pope; and yet, at that time, there was no pope in the modern sense of the word. They call Novatian the author of the heresy of puritanism; and yet they know Tertullian had quitted the church near fifty years before for the same reason; and Privatus, who was an old man in the time of

Novatian, had, with several more, repeatedly remonstrated against the alteration taking place and, as they could get no redress, had dissented, and formed separate congregations.

“They tax Novatian with being the parent of an innumerable multitude of congregations of puritans all over the empire; and yet he had no other influence over any than what his good example gave him. People saw everywhere the same cause of complaint, and groaned for relief; and when one man made a stand for virtue, the crisis had arrived; people saw the propriety of the cure, and applied the same means to their own relief.

“They blame this man and all these churches for the severity of their discipline; yet this severe moral discipline was the only coercion of the primitive churches, and it was the exercise of this that rendered civil coercion unnecessary. Some exclaimed, it is a barbarous discipline to refuse to readmit people into Christian communion because they have lapsed into idolatry or vice.

“Others, finding the inconvenience of such a lax discipline, required a repentance of five, ten or fifteen years; but the Novatians said: ‘If you be a virtuous believer, and will accede to our confederacy against sin, you may be admitted among us by baptism; or, if any Catholic has baptized you before, by rebaptism; but, mark this, if you violate the contract by lapsing into idolatry or vice, we shall separate you from our community; and, do what you will, we shall never readmit you.

“God forbid that we should injure either your person, your property, or your character, or even judge the truth of your repentance and your future state; but you can never be readmitted to our community without our giving up the best and only coercive guardian we have of the purity of our morals.’ Whether these people reasoned justly or not, as virtue was their object, they challenge respect, and he must be a weak man indeed who is frightened out of it because St. Cyprian, the most intolerant of all saints, says they were the children of the devil. (*Ecclesiastical History*, Vol. I. p. 233)

Mr. Orchard's account of the origin and early operations of the Novatians goes more into detail, and will give a more distinct view of them to those unacquainted with ecclesiastical history than any which is before me:

“When Decius came to the throne, in A.D. 249, he required, by edicts, all persons in the empire to conform to pagan worship. Forty years' toleration had greatly increased professors, and they were found in every department of the government. They had been so long unaccustomed to trials, that the lives of many were unsuited to suffering. Decius' edicts rent asunder the churches, multitudes apostatized, and many were martyred. In two years the trial abated, when many apostates applied for restoration to Christian fellowship, and sanctioned their application by letters written by some eminent Christians who had been martyrs during the persecution.

“The flagrantcy of some apostates occasioned an opposition to their readmission. In the time of peace many had entered the church without calculating on trials; and when persecution arose, such persons revolted easily to idolatry, and, on trials subsiding, gained but too easy admittance again to communion.

“One Novatian, a presbyter in the Church of Rome, strongly opposed the readmission of apostates; but he was not successful. The choice of a pastor in the same church fell upon Cornelius, whose election Novatian opposed from his readiness to readmit apostates. Novatian consequently separated himself from the church, and from Cornelius' jurisdiction.

“Novatian, with every considerate person, was disgusted with the hasty admission of such apostates to communion, and with the conduct of many pastors, who were more concerned about numbers than purity of communion. Novatian was the first to begin a separate interest with success, and which was known for centuries by his name.

"It is evident that many persons were previously in such a situation as to embrace the earliest opportunity of uniting with churches whose communion was scriptural. Novatian became the first pastor in the new interest, and is accused of the crime of giving birth to an innumerable multitude of congregations of Puritans in every part of the Roman Empire; and yet, all the influence he exercised was, an upright example and moral suasion. These churches flourished until the fifth century.

"There was no difference in point of doctrine between the Novatianists and other Christians. Novatian had seen evils result from readmitting apostates; he consequently refused communion to all those who had fallen after baptism.

"They considered," says Mosheim, "the Christian church as a society where virtue and innocence reigned universally, and none of whose members, from their entrance into it, had defiled themselves with any enormous crimes; and, of consequence, they looked upon every society which readmitted heinous offenders to its communion as unworthy of the title of a true Christian church. On account of the church's severity of discipline, the example was followed by many, and churches of this order flourished in the greatest part of those provinces which had received the gospel." (*Hist. Ch. 3*)

Learned men and historians have investigated the pretensions of these churches to puritanical character, and have conferred on them the palm of honor.

Dupin says: "Novatian's style is pure, clear, and polite; his expressions choice, his thoughts natural, and his way of reasoning just; he is full of citations of texts of Scripture, that are always to the purpose; and besides, there is a great deal of order and method in those treatises of his we now have; and he never speaks but with a world of moderation and candor." (Dupin, Ch. 3)

"Their manners," says Dr. A. Clark, "were, in general, simple and holy indeed, their rigid discipline is no mean proof of this."

We well know that the people called Pietists in Germany, and Puritans in England were, in general, in their respective times, among the most religious and holy people in both nations.

"They were," says Robinson, "Trinitarian Baptists."

These churches existed for sixty years under a pagan government, during which time the old corrupt interests at Rome, Carthage, and other places, possessed no means but those of persuasion and reproach, to stay the progress of dissent. During this period the Novatian churches were very prosperous, and were planted all over the Roman Empire. (Mosheim, Gill, Milner, Neal, Robinson and Jones, as quoted by Orchard, p.55)

"They were numerous," says Lardner, "in Phrygia, and a number of eminent men were raised up in the work of the ministry. It is impossible to calculate the benefits of their services to mankind. Their influence must have considerably checked the spirit of innovation and secularity in the old churches. Although rigid in discipline and schismatic in character, yet they were found extensive and in a flourishing condition when Constantine came to the throne (A.D. 306).

Their soundness in doctrine, evident unity among themselves, with their numbers, suggested to Constantine the propriety of uniting them with the Catholic Church, but this comprehension they refused. These churches with other dissenters, realized religious liberty in A.D. 313, from Constantine.

"In A.D. 331, he changed his policy towards these people, and they were involved, with other denominations, in distress and sufferings. Their books were sought for, they were forbidden assembling together, and many lost their places of worship. The orthodoxy of the Novatian party, with the influence of some of their ministers, is supposed to have procured some mitigation of the law. Constantine's oppressive measures prompted many to leave the scene of sufferings and retire into some more sequestered spots. Claudius Seyssel, the popish archbishop, traces the rise of the Waldensian heresy to a pastor named Leo, leaving Rome at this period for the valleys." (*Facts Opp. To Fiction*, p. 37)

"In A.D. 375, the Emperor Valens (this Valens, who required baptism for his dying son, sent eighty ministers into banishment; but before the vessel had got far from land, it was fired, and all of them perished) embraced the Arian creed. He closed the Novatian churches, banished their ministers, and probably would have carried his measures to extreme severity had not his prejudices and zeal been moderated by a pious man named Marcion. During this severe trial the benevolent feelings of the Novatians became so apparent as to extort admiration from their enemies.

"At the conclusion of the fourth century, the Novatianists had three, if not four, churches in Constantinople. They had churches also at Nice, Nicomedia and Cotiveus, in Phrygia, all of them large and extensive bodies; besides which, they were very numerous in the western empire. There were several churches of this people in the city of Alexandria in the beginning of the fifth century.

"In A.D. 412, Cyril was ordained bishop of the Catholic Church in this city. One of his first acts was to shut up the churches of the Novatianists, to strip them of all their sacred vessels and ornaments. One minister, Cyril, was deprived of everything he possessed. They experienced very similar treatment at Rome from Innocent, who was one of the first bishops to persecute the dissenters and rob them of their churches.

"In the fourth Lateran Council, canons were made to banish them as heretics, and these canons were supported by an edict in A.D. 413, issued by the emperors Theodosius and Honorius, declaring that all persons rebaptized, and the re-baptizers, should be both punished with death. Accordingly, Albanus, a zealous minister, with others, was punished with death for rebaptizing.

"The edict was probably obtained by the influence of Augustine, who could endure no rival, nor could he bear with any who questioned the virtue of his rites, or the sanctity of his brethren, or the soundness of the catholic creed; and these points, being disputed by the Novatianists and Donatists—two powerful and extensive bodies of dissidents in Italy and Africa—they were consequently made to feel the weight of his influence. These combined modes of oppression led the faithful to abandon the cities and seek retreats in the country, which they did, particularly in the valleys of Piedmont, the inhabitants of which began to be called Waldenses.

"The Novatianists had hitherto flourished mightily in Rome, having a great many places of worship and large congregations; but the rising power of the Catholic interests, its union with the sword, the ambitious character of its officers, with the tyrannical spirit of its bishops, prompted them to crush every opposing interest. They consequently robbed the Novatianists of all their churches, and drove them into obscurity.

"About this time some epistles appeared against them, written by different individuals, which had a baneful influence at this period on the interests of this people. One individual, whose hostility was felt by the Novatianists, was Celestine, one of Innocent's successors, A.D. 932. He took possession of all their churches in the city of Rome, and compelled them to worship in private houses in the most obscure places. A council was convened at Arles and at Lyons, in A.D. 455, in which the views of the Novatianists on predestination were controverted, and by which name they were stigmatized." (Mezaray, p. 19, Clovis, as quoted by Orchard, p. 61)

"These holy people now retired from public notice ; yet, it is pretty manifest that, while some of them sought asylums in other kingdoms, many of these despised people continued in Italy, and a succession of them will be found under another name." (Mosheim, *Hist.* in many places)

"In A.D. 476, on the twenty-third day of August, a period was put to all persecution in Italy by the subjection of that kingdom to the Goths, whose laws breathed the purest spirit of equal and universal liberty. The state of religion out of the Catholic Church is not made apparent. This civil and religious liberty continued for about three centuries, during which time the dissidents, no doubt, greatly increased.

"The accounts given of the Novatianists by Eusebius and Socrates in their histories are decided proofs of their extensive influence. That they subsisted towards the end of the sixth century is evident from the book of Eulogius, bishop of Alexandria. Dr. Lardner remarks, 'The vast extent of this sect is manifest from the names of the authors who have mentioned or written against them, and from several parts of the Roman Empire in which they were found. It is evident, too, that these churches had among them some individuals of note and eminence.'

"The rise of those puritans at so critical a period, their soundness in the faith, their regard to character and purity of communion, their vast extent and long success, must have had a powerful influence in all the vicinity of their churches, in checking the ambition and secularity of the established clergy, and in shedding a moral auspice on benighted provinces. These sealed witnesses (Rev. 7:3) were the first dissenters from assuming hierarchies; and it is most gratifying to be able to prove ourselves the successors of a class of men who first set the example of contending for the purity and simplicity of Christian worship, and a firm adherence to the laws of the King of Zion." (Robinson's *Ec. Res.*, Ch.8; Jones' *Lect.*, 25)



William Carey: Obeying the Christian Duty_____

William R. Williams

From the book, *Lectures on Baptist History, 1877*

The very first sheets—earliest in the date of their writing—of this entire New Testament are the story of missionary adventure, launching from one continent to evangelize another. They tell how Asia was quitted for Europe by primitive zeal, and how emphatically the European converts recognized the new brotherhood thus created, and that in their common Ransomer they, the kindred of Alexander's old legions, owned themselves the debtors to men of Palestine, the soil whose acres Christ had trod, and whose people had brought them this wondrous light of salvation.

If the Christian church in our day would forswear foreign missions as redundant, you will see how she must, in consistency, tear asunder the volume of the New Testament right through its very heart, rending the Book of Acts out of the New Testament histories, and shearing off the Epistles to the Thessalonians first, and then excising how many others, with these two, out of the Inspired Letters of the New Dispensation.

Yet how strangely, and at a date comparatively how recent, have the Baptists been led to a recognition of this great Christian duty. Their churches, compared with others, of little worldly endowment, having lost in England the position of national influence which they had won in the days of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, they had yet been honored of God with faithful preachers.

From one of these, William Carey—a convert under the influence of the labors of Thomas Scott, the commentator—proceeded under God the impulse. The son of the parish clerk and parish schoolmaster, under great disadvantages he had acquired but the elements of learning, and was apprenticed to a shoemaker, in consequence of weakness that was thought to unfit him for the farm-work to which he would otherwise have passed.

Scott himself was brought from the mazes of Socinianism under the teachings of John Newton of Olney, the friend of Cowper; and Newton himself, the prodigal, was met at sea and amid the slave-trade on the western coast of Africa; how remote and how unlikely, at every link of good influence, was the long chain, that yet, in God's good providence, brought the old gospel down from the hammock, where Newton had at first swung as a profane and infidel sailor, to the humble shoemaker's shop, where Carey cobbled, studied, and prayed.

The conquests of Clive at the battle of Plassey had, in India, converted the traders' company into the beginnings of an empire. But the British rulers who won the subject tribes and territory little heeded the language of the people whom they subjected. Clive, it is said, never learned any of the Indian dialects proper of the various peoples whom he led to conquest or reduced to subjection.

Of one among the later great governors-general of India, the Marquis of Wellesley, the brother of Wellington, and a man of large intellect and wide statesmanship, it is told by an English writer on India, that, once passing through the streets of a great Indian city, a Brahmin, with the dignity of which some of their number are such masters, cursed the English viceroy in the name of all the gods of his country. Wellesley, though described by the narrator as the haughtiest of viceroys, knew so little of the language that he made the lowliest reverence to the Hindoo, in utter unconsciousness of the true meaning of the salutation.

It was the aim of the British to appropriate the revenues and treasures of the Indian colony; but, to secure this, it was matter of policy, in the minds of their agents generally, to avoid aught that should exasperate the superstitious prejudices of the people. Many, even of English settlers, gave offerings to the idol-temples; and some, attached to heathen mistresses, gave silent or eager aid to the pagan oblations of the mothers of their children.

The East India Company was bitterly hostile to all attempts to interfere with the faith of the Hindoos. Carey in his humble shop read the voyages of Cook; and the discovery of heathen islands, that only excited the curiosity of others, awakened his Christian sympathy and compassion. He constructed for his school-children a rude map of the globe, describing its population and its various and erring religions. Become a pastor, but with the smallest stipend, and a father with a growing family, his soul was drawn out to the desolations of ancient paganism.

He had the friendship of the elder Robert Hall, parent of the great scholar and orator, a pastor of strong mind and clear views; of Sutcliffe, another country pastor, devout, sagacious, and earnest; and of Ryland, who had baptized him; and of Andrew Fuller, a man of the clearest and strongest intellect, gravely, solidly pious, and yet of few literary advantages.

To these, Carey's suggestions for heathen evangelization seemed visionary, and, rather to evade the topic, they proposed his putting into written form his thoughts on the subject. He did so. Called to preach before his Association, he took as his theme a prophecy of Isaiah 54:2, 3, of the enlarged tent and lengthened cords that were to take in the Gentiles.

In 1792, he preached on it with the two great subdivisions, "Expect great things from God, and attempt great things for God." It led to the formation of a missionary society at Kettering, the seat of Fuller's labors, in October, 1792, and the contributions were £13 2s. 6d.

Fuller was its secretary, Carey was its offered missionary. The church of the devout Pearce of Birmingham added a sum of £70, quintupling the original funds. Yet how, to any other than the simplest, strongest faith, must the enterprise have seemed one of sovereign absurdity—that of attempting with these puniest means to assail the faith of pagan India and a population of, perhaps, one hundred and sixty millions.

But the churches enlisted were country churches. The London Baptists, when consulted, generally stood aloof. Stennett, to whose pulpit ministrations Howard expressed such warm gratitude and reverence, could not be brought to favor it.

The elder Ryland, the father of Carey's friend, a scholar and author, a man of genius and piety, and of whom the statesman William Windham makes respectful mention, had cried with some indignation when the project was by Carey named to him, "Young man, when God would have the heathen converted, he will do it without your aid or mine."

With small children, his wife averse to the voyage, his way shut up as to passage in one of the East India Company's vessels, Carey persisted, and secured, at last, embarkation in a Danish keel, his wife consenting finally to sail if her sister, who was, however, equally with herself, unbelieving as to the wisdom of the undertaking, would accompany her. Thus freighted with discouragement, Carey set sail.

When the question of permitting Christian missionaries in their possessions came up before the Board of Directors of that great mercantile body, one of the directors, depicting the tumult it would excite, said, that he would see a band of devils let loose in India rather than a band of missionaries.

Perchance eyes of keener and celestial vision already saw his wish at work; for the population of India counting hilt one hundred and sixty millions, its subordinate deities, according to their own Brahmins, were in number three hundred and thirty millions, or an average of two separate deities to every man, woman, and child of the teeming myriads of the vast region.

The East India Company was a most potent body in its wealth and its patronage and its parliamentary influence at home. Burke and Sheridan had assailed one of its favored governors, Warren Hastings; and after a trial of years, marked by the most resplendent exhibitions of talent and eloquence, and after fearful evidence produced of malversation and oppression, such orators, with such witnessings, had failed to secure his conviction.

Charles James Fox, a statesman of great powers and signal popularity, had devised, with the aid of Burke, a new charter by an India Bill. Not that Fox favored missionaries; for when consulted, he disapproved them. But the British Parliament and the nation and the Court were against the India Bill of Fox, however skillful its framing or vigorous its advocacy; and it failed.

On his arrival, Carey found himself shut up, after various experiments in indigo-culture, to a refuge in the small Danish settlement of Serampore, an independent region of small extent, but near the English capital of Calcutta. Here he set up a press, which in Calcutta even Wellesley would not then have permitted. His wife became insane; his fellow-laborer Thomas also insane. With these sorrows on either hand under the roof, he went forth to the baptism of his first convert.

Had not the faith of a present Christ and the power of an Almighty Spirit sustained the laborer, human zeal might well have faltered when in circumstances so forlorn, after seven years of toil, he led down his first convert to baptism in Christ's name. But as he said, he could plod; and plod he did, till God turned hearts toward him in the India of his chosen residence and in the Britain which he was no more to see.

He became a Sanscrit scholar, greater than Sir William Jones, who had been the first of Englishmen to lead in that new field. He completed, in the modern and feeblar language of the people around him, a Bengalee Bible, and its finishing was occasion to him of profound and devout joy. God gave him fellow-laborers, Marshman and Ward.

The favor of Wellesley, the governor-general, was drawn toward him. He received, though a Dissenter, an appointment as professor in the college which Wellesley set up, without the authority, and even against the protests, of the East India Company, under whom he acted. Strong in his own energy and in the friendship of the younger Pitt, Wellesley persevered, and brought forward also his more illustrious brother, afterward to be known as the Duke of Wellington, and who, on the field of Assaye, on Indian soil, began the fame so emphasized in Spain and on the field of Waterloo.

But besides the complications encountered thus in the East India Company, the opponents of missions in the Edinburgh Review, then the highest organ of British literature, by the witty Sydney Smith, commenced an attack on the whole evangelizing enterprise, as endangering the lives of every Englishman, and as one that ought to be forthwith and ruthlessly suppressed.

Some of the older of us may recollect a time when the ill words of that great journal stirred up the wrath of all our country, as it asked scornfully, "Who reads an American book?"

It was a blessed and Christian revenge on the maligners of missions, which, in God's good providence, the mission and mission family took upon these their priestly and Parliamentary revilers, when a son-in-law of this same Marshman, the gallant Havelock—"every inch a soldier, and every inch a Christian," as Sir Henry Harding called him —pushing his way against such overwhelming odds, relieved Lucknow, and saved to the British Crown, under God, an empire which Smith had said the missionaries were sure to overthrow. Putting to silence the ignorance of foolish men by patient continuance in well-doing is apostolic.

But it requires apostolic zeal and endurance to obey a precept so calmly brave. The number of versions of the Bible that in part or entire Carey and his coadjutors completed is wondrous. His brother-laborer, Marshman, framed a Chinese version of the Bible. These may be superseded, just as Wycliffe's and Tyndale's and Coverdale's have been, in our own tongue.

But they did a good work; and nations have been glad for them, and heaven has been made the richer in its tenantry by their means, in the converts they have won.



Burial or Cremation?

A Biblical Case FOR Burial and AGAINST Cremation ---

Dr. Royce Smith M.A., Th.M., Th.D.

From Bethel Baptist Church-Watchman Press, Lawton, OK

In Genesis 3:19 God declared to Adam, *"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou [art], and unto dust shalt thou return."* Exactly what did God mean by the statement: "For dust thou art, and unto dust shall thou return"? It means man's body which is of the dust of the earth (Genesis 2:7) is to return to the earth when he dies. These words have been historically taken by Jewish believers of the Old Testament and both Jewish and Gentile believers of the New Testament to mean the body is to be buried.

But someone will surely say, "Doesn't the Bible say, 'dust to dust and ashes to ashes'?" No, it does not. This phrase is not found anywhere in Scripture. It is found in certain Pastors' Manuals often used by ministers as they officiate at burials, but it can be found nowhere in the inspired Word of God.

The phrase *ashes to ashes* is often appealed to as a justification for cremation. Cremation, which was hardly heard of in Middle America forty years ago, is increasingly being used for the final disposition of the body. This writer knew very little about such a practice until he moved to California in 1966. Shortly after moving to San Jose in 1968, he was asked on one occasion whether or not it was Biblical for Christians to cremate their bodies after death. Because he could not answer the question satisfactorily in his own mind, he asked for time to study and research this issue. After devoting some time to the study of this subject, he has come to the decided conclusion that burial, not cremation, is the only proper and Biblical practice for the final disposition of the body.

When one discovers that the origin of cremation is to be found in unbelief and paganism, he will abandon any notion of its being a *viable alternative* to burial which is everywhere in Scripture shown to be the proper disposition for the body after death. Cremation is a part of certain pagan and man-made religions. It is the choice of atheists, who do not believe in either God or resurrection, and all who would escape resurrection if they could, even though the cremation of a body will not and cannot prevent it from being resurrected.

CREMATION IS NOT THE PROPER METHOD FOR THE FINAL DISPOSITION OF THE BODY.

IT IS AN ANCIENT PAGAN PRACTICE.

Both the pagan Greeks and Romans practiced cremation, but are Christians to follow the practices of pagans or the teachings of the inspired Scriptures? Following pagan practices instead of the Word of God has always brought dire results upon those who have done so. Remember what occurred when David sought to move the Ark of the Covenant the way the Philistines had moved it instead of the way God prescribed in His Word to move it (II Samuel 6:1-11).

IT IS THE PRACTICE OF BOTH HINDUISM AND BUDDHISM.

Neither of these religions believes in resurrection, nor do those who practice these religions desire to be resurrected. Both of these ancient religions believe in achieving *Nirvana* in which the soul is released from its many reincarnations and

absorbed into nothingness. What a goal? To become nothing! Cremation is therefore compatible with that belief, but it is not consistent with a belief in resurrection. In India, for example, Christians bury their dead to demonstrate the difference the hope of resurrection gives the Christian in contrast with what is taught by Hinduism. Thus, Christians in India consider cremation to be a heathen practice and burial to be a Christian practice.

IT IS THE CHOICE OF SECULAR HUMANISM.

Between 1876 and 1884 there were only 28 recorded cremations in the U.S.

During the 1960's and 70's many changes in our culture began to occur in a time of social instability fueled by the doctrines of *secular humanism*, the basic tenant of which is *man is not accountable to any higher power or God*. From this doctrine of *human autonomy* have come both the acceptance of abortion and the practice of cremation. The right to do both of these barbaric rituals is claimed on the basis of the false concept that one's body belongs to himself and he can do with it whatsoever he pleases.

Consequently, by 1977, 7% of all human corpses were reduced to bone fragments and ashes by cremation in this country. By 1993 that percentage had increased to nearly 20%. That percentage will continue to increase as Americans reject Biblical Christianity and adopt the so-called *New Age* thinking which is nothing more than ancient and pagan Hinduism and Buddhism in new garb.

BURIAL IS THE METHOD OF DISPOSITION PRACTICED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

GOD COMMANDED ISRAEL TO BURY THEIR DEAD.

"His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged [is] accursed of God) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee [for] an inheritance." (Deuteronomy 21:23) The final disposition of the body is not a matter of indifference, notwithstanding the claims of even some ministers who say it really doesn't make any difference what is done to the body after it is dead. It mattered to God. He commanded the body to be buried, and the command to bury renders cremation totally unacceptable in His sight.

ABRAHAM BURIED SARAH AND HE HIMSELF WAS BURIED BY HER SIDE.

"And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah before Mamre: the same [is] Hebron in the land of Canaan." (Genesis 23:19) *"And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which [is] before Mamre."* (Genesis 25:9)

It is most significant that an entire chapter of the first book of the Bible is devoted to making burial arrangements. If God devoted this much of His Word to this subject, how can any Bible-believer treat the final disposition of the body with indifference? As one reads further in Genesis, he notes that Jacob buried Deborah, Rebekah's nurse who was but a slave (Genesis 35:8) and his beloved wife Rachael (Genesis 35:19). Both Esau and Jacob lovingly buried Isaac (Genesis 35:29). Before he died Jacob gave explicit instructions to his twelve sons to bury him (Genesis 49:29-31). Likewise, Joseph gave a similar command to the Children of Israel before he died (Genesis 50:24-26) which command was duly obeyed when Israel had conquered the land of Canaan (Joshua 24:32).

GOD BURIED MOSES.

"So Moses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the LORD. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day." (Deuteronomy 34:5-6) God could have burned his body as easily as He buried it (II Kings 1:10), but He did not; He buried it in keeping with His own commands and the principle of resurrection which coincides with burial. If the method of the final disposition of the body is a matter of indifference, why did God Himself bury Moses' body?

ELISHA THE PROPHET WAS BURIED.

"And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year." (II Kings 13:20) Even in a time of spiritual decline in Israel, burial was still practiced (II Kings 13:21). For one not to have a burial was considered a sign of extreme disgrace; something reserved only for the most worthless of men. *"They shall die of grievous deaths; they shall not be lamented; neither shall they be buried; [but] they shall be as dung upon the face of the earth: and they shall be consumed by the sword, and by famine; and their carcasses shall be meat for the fowls of heaven,*

and for the beasts of the earth.” (Jeremiah 16:4) *“He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.”* (Jeremiah 22:19)

JOB EXPECTED TO BE BURIED.

“And [though] after my skin [worms] destroy this [body], yet in my flesh shall I see God.” (Job 19:26) The patriarch obviously has his burial in view because there are no skin worms where cremation has occurred.

CREMATION IS EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED BY OLD TESTAMENT TEACHING.

GOD FORBADE THE BURNING OF CHILDREN AS A SACRIFICE TO MOLECH.

“And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through [the fire] to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I [am] the LORD.” (Leviticus 18:21) While human sacrifice is primarily in view in this prohibition, cremation is indirectly forbidden in this command. *“Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods.”* (Deuteronomy 12:31) The Law of God provided for the stoning to death of rebellious children, but never did it permit their bodies to be burned (Deuteronomy 21:18-21).

GOD PUNISHED THE KING OF MOAB FOR BURNING THE BONES OF THE KING OF EDOM.

“Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away [the punishment] thereof; because he burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime.” (Amos 2:1) If cremation is a matter of indifference, then why did God pronounce this punishment upon the king of Moab? It was because the burning of his bones erroneously declared the King of Edom was accursed.

The symbolism for a curse was the cremation of the body. *“And it shall be, [that] he that is taken with the accursed thing shall be burnt with fire, he and all that he hath: because he hath transgressed the covenant of the LORD, and because he hath wrought folly in Israel.”* (Joshua 7:15) Does this fact not explain why the Church of Rome burnt heretics at the stake?

Believing they were accursed from God, this harlot of Rome reduced the saints whom they hated to ashes to show their abhorrence for their doctrines, for the burning of something to destroy it remains a sign of the greatest abhorrence. *“The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold [that is] on them, nor take [it] unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it [is] an abomination to the LORD thy God.”* (Deuteronomy 7:25)

Because of burning being a sign of the greatest abomination, certain offenses were punishable by burning instead of stoning. Such was the offense of whoredom on the part of a priest’s daughter. *“And the daughter of any priest, if she profane herself by playing the whore, she profaneth her father: she shall be burnt with fire.”* (Leviticus 21:9) The same kind of abhorrence was to be shown toward any man who married a woman and her mother. *“And if a man take a wife and her mother, it [is] wickedness: they shall be burnt with fire, both he and they; that there be no wickedness among you.”* (Leviticus 20:14) Sins which were extremely flagrant and repugnant were to be punished by burning, not stoning. It is this truth which makes the burning of all things abominable more significant. *“The graven images of their gods shall ye burn with fire: thou shalt not desire the silver or gold [that is] on them, nor take [it] unto thee, lest thou be snared therein: for it [is] an abomination to the LORD thy God.”* (Deuteronomy 7:25)

Achan and his family were burned with fire. That was because they were accursed, and that curse was upon them because Achan took that which was accompanied with a curse, thus placing himself under the pronounced curse. *“And the city shall be accursed, [even] it, and all that [are] therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that [are] with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent.”* (Joshua 6:17) Thus, the punishment for him and his family was not mere stoning but burning of their bodies in accord with God’s command, as a sign of their being cursed. *“And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.”* (Joshua 7:25)

The association with a curse accounts for the burning of the bodies of Saul and his sons. *“And they put his armour in the house of Ashtaroth: and they fastened his body to the wall of Bethshan.”* (I Samuel 31:10) Since Saul’s body remained fastened to a wall after dark, he was considered to be accursed. *“His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; [for he that is hanged [is] accursed of God] that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD*

thy God giveth thee [for] an inheritance." (Deuteronomy 21:23) Thus, the men of Jabesh burned the bodies as a further sign of this curse (I Samuel 31:12), but buried their bones as a sign of their faith (I Samuel 31:13).

The burning of the bones of the priests of Bethel on the altar of their idolatry signified the curse which God had pronounced on the altar and the priests who served there. *"And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Bethel: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee."* (I Kings 13:1-2) Godly King Josiah fulfilled this prophecy exactly. *"And as Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that [were] there in the mount, and sent, and took the bones out of the sepulchres, and burned [them] upon the altar, and polluted it, according to the word of the LORD which the man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these words."* (II Kings 23:16)

Thus, cremation is not an acceptable means of final disposition for Christians. It is a barbaric practice and totally unsuited for the disposing of the physical remains of a loved one. If people were to take the time to learn about the hideous process of cremation, they would abandon any idea of ever having their own bodies cremated or cremating the bodies of a deceased loved one.

The entire process is grotesque. As the fires engulf the body, it begins to jerk and twitch as if alive. Even though the crematory is heated to between 1500 and 2000 degrees Fahrenheit, some three to four hours are required to burn the body to a crisp. Even then the skeletal remains must be broken with a sledge hammer and then pulverized into bones chips before they and what ashes can be removed from the crematory are placed in a small box or urn.

Because ashes from different bodies become commingled in cremation, funeral homes publish a disclaimer in reference to this fact. In addition, this writer has seen the boxes of unclaimed ashes which are left at funeral homes by those too callous even to pick up what little remains of a loved one.

BURIAL IS THE ONLY METHOD OF DISPOSITION ADVOCATED BY THE NEW TESTAMENT. BURIAL IS TAUGHT BY EXAMPLE.

Biblical example is a strong argument in setting forth the ways of God, and it should never be dismissed as insignificant. Thus, New Testament example records the burial of Lazarus (John 11:31, 38), the burial of Jesus (Matthew 27:57-60), the burial of Stephen (Acts 8:2), and the burials of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:6,10) among others. In accord with these examples, Christians in every age have buried their dead. The Christians in Rome buried their dead among the Catacombs, and every church cemetery is a testimony to this universal practice among professing believers in Jesus Christ.

BURIAL IS REQUIRED BY TYPOLOGY.

Symbols teach truth which is lost when the symbols are corrupted. As those who profess faith in Christ abandon burial in favor of cremation, one can be sure the truth of the resurrection will soon be lost among them because the most obvious symbol of its certainty will have disappeared as a reminder of it.

Burial is taught in type by the planting of seed. *"[Thou] fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other [grain]: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body."* (I Corinthians 15:36-38) Why is seed planted? Is it not because it is to come forth from the ground? Who would ever think of burning a seed? Seed is buried for the purpose of coming forth in new form from the ground in which it has been buried or planted.

In exactly the same way, the body is to be buried because it is like a seed. *"So also [is] the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."* (I Corinthians 15:42-44) Why, then, would anyone who believes in the resurrection of the body ever cremate the body of a believing loved one or request that his loved ones cremate his body after he is dead? The very burying of the body is a testimony is one's explicit faith in the resurrection. Conversely, the cremation of the body is the denial of one's belief in resurrection however adamantly he may profess that faith.

Burial is set forth in type by baptism, for baptism is a vivid picture of burial.

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also [in the likeness] of [his] resurrection.” (Romans 6:3-5)

“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with [him] through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” (Colossians 2:12)

Nothing could be a greater contradiction than the cremation of the body of one who had been baptized on the profession of his faith. When this writer pressed this argument against the cremation a professing Christian was considering, he responded that cremation would not contradict his baptism. The problem was he had not been baptized; he had only been sprinkled, and he could see that no burial had been typified. However, one who has been properly baptized by immersion would contradict that testimony, were he to have his body cremated.

If baptism does, in fact, picture Christ's death, burial, and resurrection together with the believer's death, burial, and resurrection in union with Him and even the impending death of the believer's body, its burial and future resurrection, then every believer ought to be sure that his body is properly buried as an abiding testimony to this truth. This writer wants to bear witness to the fact of resurrection even when he is dead. To that end, his burial is prearranged.

BURIAL IS CONSTRAINED BY PRINCIPLE.

When one is born again and the Holy Spirit indwells his body, his body is at once a member of Christ and the temple of the Holy Spirit. *“Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make [them] the members of an harlot? God forbid.”* (I Corinthians 6:15) Realizing our bodies are the members of Christ makes a great difference now in the way we use those bodies. Should it not also make a difference in the way we dispose of those bodies after death? Have we any right to do otherwise with those bodies than what He has clearly prescribed in His Word?

Hear the compelling argument of the Apostle Paul: *“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost [which is] in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.”* (I Corinthians 6:19-20)

Not belonging to us but to God, our bodies are to be used and finally disposed of in strict accordance with His commands. They are His in origin and by design. This fact demands that we treat them with dignity, even to the final disposition of them.

“Ye [are] the children of the LORD your God: ye shall not cut yourselves, nor make any baldness between your eyes for the dead. For thou [art] an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that [are] upon the earth.” (Deuteronomy 14:1-2)

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, [which is] your reasonable service.” (Romans 12:1)

This principle is applicable in both life and death. *“For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.”* (Romans 14:8) Cremation shows no respect for God's way or the dignity of the body.

THE WORLD PROMOTES CREMATION AND OFFERS SPURIOUS REASONS FAVORING IT OVER BURIAL. THEY SAY THERE IS NO SPACE FOR CEMETERIES.

This is a false claim. A few years ago it was reported that the entire world's population could stand within the city limits of Jacksonville, Florida. The only places where space is restricted is in large, compacted cities, but there remains plenty of space in the world for burials.

THEY SAY CREMATION IS CLEANER.

This is another false claim. Ask any funeral director who has operated a crematory. The dust from the crematory is pervasive, to say nothing of the smoke which comes from it.

THEY MAINTAIN IT IS LESS EXPENSIVE.

Here is the real reason many in America are choosing cremation. They are afraid of spending the necessary money to give their loved ones a decent burial. Does not this objection to burial indicate such love their money more than they loved their departed loved one? Where there is a deep affection for one who has departed this world, the final disposition of that body will never be made on the basis of the cheapest way to do it. Talk about cheap!



Faith Promise

The **Faith Promise Offering** is a method of missionary giving by individuals or families through the local church. A **Faith Promise** is made to contribute a certain amount, either weekly or monthly, to the missionary fund of the local church over and above the usual tithe to the general offering of that church, trusting God to supply that extra amount

Some principles of the **Faith Promise Offering** are listed below. They are in no particular order. Please keep in mind that they are preached and taught in several messages and with appropriate illustrations. The **Faith Promise Offering** is not a clever gimmick of men, but is clearly set forth in the Bible in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9.

The **Faith Promise Offering** is the amount which you purpose to give to the missionary program of your church during the coming twelve months. The **Faith Promise Offering** is over and above your tithes. The **Faith Promise Offering** is not to be designated to any particular missionary. That decision is left to the church.

The **Faith Promise Offering** is not a pledge. A Pledge is an agreement to pay which is legally binding, such as a contract to pay a certain amount on a loan or time-payment purchase.

The amount of the offering is between you and the Lord. You are depending on Him to enable you to fulfill the promise. The **Faith Promise Offering** is not an indebtedness You will never receive a bill from the church.

You should give your **Faith Promise Offerings** just as you give your tithe—right off the top. It is the Scriptural offering God has promised to bless. Consider Luke 6:38, "Give, and it shall be given unto you..." Compare also the principle of sowing and reaping which Paul uses in 2 Corinthians 9 to illustrate Christian giving. The sowing always comes before the reaping. (This is the plan of giving our family has followed for many years, and God has always been faithful to meet all of our needs)

The **Faith Promise Offering** depends not on our ability to give, but on our faith in God to provide the means to give. In 2 Corinthians 8:3 the Macedonian believers were willing to give, not only what they could afford but what they couldn't therefore, they had to trust the Lord for His supply of their needs

The **Faith Promise Offering** is not based on a commandment of the Lord, but on the motivation of our love for Him (2 Corinthians 8:8).

The **Faith Promise Offering** is good for the believer and good for the church. Cf. "expedient" in 2 Corinthians 8:10. Also see Philippians 4:17-19.

Making a promise, vow, commitment, or whatever you wish to call it, is clearly seen in 2 Corinthians 8:10 and 9:2. We are encouraged to make vows to the Lord (Psalm 76:11). God not only encourages us to give, but supplies the gift (2 Corinthians 9:8-10).

While the giving in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 was benevolent, there were missionary implications (2 Corinthians 10:15-16). The Macedonian believers supported Paul in his missionary work (Philippians 4: 15-16).