

"... The church of the living God,
the pillar and ground of the truth."

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1 Timothy 3:15

THE BAPTIST PILLAR

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REPUBLICAN BACKWARDS

Taken from "The Great Iron Wheel," 1860
By T. R. Graves

And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth." Rev. 13:11.

The system of Methodism cannot justly claim to be a Church of Christ, because of human origin, an invention of men.

DEAR SIR: Were you asked if the economy of the Christian Church is of divine origin and appointment, you, in common with every other Christian, would answer, most emphatically, Yes. Nor would you recall the decision to qualify it, unless the ruin it brought upon your own system of church organization might occur to you. That the Church of Christ is of divine origin, and, as a visible Christian institute, was set up at a definite time in the Christian era, every sect on earth feel forced to admit. Why, sir, in what light would a Protestant Christian be regarded in our day, who held and taught that the Christian Church was merely a human institution, a man-invented society or organization, like the institutions of Odd Fellowship and Masonry, and like them, subject to all the modifications of man's ever fluctuating and capricious fancy! Would not Christendom unite in a holy crusade against the sentiment? Would not Christians regard such a doctrine as degrading the Church, and depreciating Church relationship to a level with membership in those societies?

Now, Methodism, considered as a church or a

society, is purely and clearly of *human origin* and device, and of a very recent date, indeed, it cannot boast of as an illustrious a founder as Masonry, nor of as high antiquity, by some thousands of years. Solomon is claimed (I do not pretend to say it,) as the inventor of Masonry, and the cause of its organization, the building of the Temple; while John Wesley, when an unconverted man, is the boasted founder of Methodism, and the cause of its being organized into a Church was the *Revolutionary war!!*

Masonry has equal, yea, far superior claims to Methodism, to assume the title, and demand the regard and consideration of a Church of Christ; and this cause, i. e., its *human origin*, constitutes my second objection to accord to Methodism the title and regard of Christian Church.

My position may, and doubtless will be regarded by some unreflecting minds, as uncharitable in the extreme. But charity rejoices in the *truth*, and, I ask you, sir, and every candid man, to detect a flaw in the reasoning that forces me to this conclusion. *Hate, if you will, but hear me.* If Methodism is a mere human contrivance or "*scheme*," (for so some of your first writers have denominated it,) as are the above-named institutions, then, this fact of itself, decides that it can lay no claims to the regard and authority of a Christian Church, superior to them. Methodism may do good, and so do they, many Methodists may be good men and Christians, and so are many Masons and Odd Fellows. Many sinners may have been converted under preachers in Methodist societies,

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FOUR "I'S" FOR THE PREACHER

By Rev. Joseph Weston,
"The Watchman Examiner," 1916

One: I must be impartial

It will never do for me to be hand and glove with this clique or clan or coterie. I belong to the church, and not to a few people in it. I am the pastor of Mrs. Careworn as well as Mrs. Cardcase. I belong to the little child on the back street whose father is a drunkard and whose mother is a washerwoman as well as to little Georgic Giltedge who lives on the avenue and whose father is the president of my board of trustees. My heart must be big enough and my sympathies must be wide enough to take in everybody in my church and parish without regard to social standing, age, color or previous condition of servitude. I am as good as the best, but I am no better than the poorest, and, God helping me, I will be kind and sympathetic to all the people all along the way. I'll be a friend to the blasted as well as to the blessed, to the man who is "down and out" as well as to the man who is clad in purple and fine linen and who fares sumptuously every day.

Two: I must be interesting

It will never do for me to let people yawn and sleep in my church if I can help it. I will be interesting, and that will make the people interested. I will be as bright and cheery as a sunbeam, as straight as an Alpine arrow and as keen as a Damascus blade. I will bring out of God's Treasury things new and old. I will keep my body in the best physical condition and my mind so well stored with the fairy tales of science and the rich results of time that my manner and my message will grip people like the Ancient Mariner, the wedding guest whom Samuel Taylor Coleridge tells us about in such interesting numbers. I have a gracious message and a gladsome salvation, but that will not help people if they do not come to church or do not listen to me when they do come. "The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark when neither is attended."

Three: I must be instructive

For me to appear before my congregation with nothing more than pious platitudes would be a disgrace and shame, and if I do it I ought to be ashamed even if my people do not remark about it. I will pack my sermons full of interesting, helpful and instructive material from all the fields of literature, science and art that I may be master of or familiar with, but especially will I fill my sermons with the Word of God, for that is able to make men wise unto salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus. Any man who has a volume as rich and racy, as varied and vigorous and victorious as the Bible must be a poor kind of fellow who cannot say things that will make people sit up and take notice.

Earnest seekers of the best,
Returning weary from the quest,
To find that all the sages said
Is in the Book their mothers' read.

Four: I must be inspiring

It is not enough to be impartial and interesting and instructive. I must be inspiring. I must not only point to heaven, but lead the way, and for Jesus' sake I must not be weary or discouraged until he shall set judgment in the earth and the isles shall wait for his law. I must get people to go along to Canaan. I must so preach and love and labor that many from all classes will be glad to travel *my way*. I must do all these things and more, for "I am a minister according to the dispensation of God, which is given unto me for you to fulfill the Word of God; even the mystery which hath been hidden for ages, but is now made manifest to his saints, which is Christ in you the hope of glory whom we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man perfect in Christ."

O Lord, help me to remember and practise all these "I's," and then my ministry will be a blessing, and I shall say, "Not I, but Christ." "Not I, but Christ that dwelleth in me." □

HOW TO OBTAIN PEACE OF MIND

Taken from "The Baptist Tract," Dec. 1832

I once knew a boy who was entrusted with a letter to be carried to a distant place. On his way, or just after his arrival, in attempting to take the letter out of his pocket suddenly, he tore it completely in two. He was in consternation. What to do he did not know. He did not dare to carry the letter in its mangled condition, and he did not dare to destroy it. He did accordingly the most foolish thing he could do; he kept it for many days, doubting and waiting, and feeling anxious and unhappy, whenever it came in his sight. At last he thought that this was folly, and he took his letter, carried it to the person to whom it was addressed, saying,

"Here is a letter which I was entrusted with for you, and in taking it out of my pocket, I very carelessly tore it in two. I am sorry for it, but I have no excuse."

The receiver of the letter said, it was no matter, and the boy went home suddenly and entirely relieved.

My reader will say, Why this was a very simple way of getting over the difficulty. Why did he not think of it before?

I know it was a simple way. The whole story is so simple, that it is hardly dignified enough to introduce here, but it is *true*, and it exactly illustrates the idea I am endeavoring to enforce here, that in *little* things, as well as in *great* things, the *confession of sin restores peace of mind*.

I will now mention one other case which illustrates the same general truth, but which is in one respect very strikingly different from all the preceding.

A merchant was one morning sitting in his counting room, preparing for the business of the day, when his boy entered with several letters from the post office. Among them was one in a strange hand-writing, and with the words, "*Money enclosed*," written upon the outside. As the merchant was not at that time expecting any money, his attention was first attracted to this letter. He opened it and read somewhat as follows

Jan. 4, 1831.

"SIR:

"Some time ago I defrauded you of some money. You did not know it then, and I suppose you never would have known it, unless I had informed you. But I have had no peace of mind, since it was done, and send you back the money in this letter. Hoping that God will forgive this and all my other sins,

"I am,

"Yours, _____"

I remarked that this case was to be totally different from the other in one respect. Reader, do you notice the difference? It consists in this, that here not only was the sin confessed, but *reparation was made*. The man not only acknowledged the fraud, but he *paid back the money*. If any of my readers are but little acquainted with human nature, they may perhaps imagine, that it was the *reparation*, and not the *confession* which restored peace of mind. But I think I can show very clearly, that making reparation is not effectual. Suppose this man, instead of writing the above letter, had just come into the store and asked to buy some article or other, and in paying for it, had managed dexterously to put in the hands of the clerk, a larger sum than was due, so as to repay, without the merchant's knowledge, the whole amount of which he had defrauded him. Do you think this would have restored his peace of mind? No, not even if he had thus secretly paid back double what he had unjustly taken. It was the *confession*; the *acknowledgment of having done wrong*, which really quieted his troubled conscience, and gave him peace.

It is not probable, that this confession was sufficient to make him perfectly happy again, because it was incomplete. The *reparation* was perfect, but the *acknowledgment* was not. The reader will observe that the letter has no name signed to it, and the merchant could not by any means discover, who was the writer of it. Now if the man had honestly told the whole, if he had written his name and place of residence, and described fully all the circumstances of the original fraud, he would have been much more fully relieved. All confession which is intended to bring back peace of mind when it is gone, should be *open and thorough*. There are, indeed, many cases where, from peculiar circumstances in such a case as this, it is not the duty of the individual to give his name. This, however, does not affect the general principle, that the more full and free the confession is the more perfect will be the restoration of peace.

So strongly is this principle fixed by the Creator in the human heart, that men who have committed crimes to which the laws of the land annex the most severe public punishments, after enduring some time in secrecy, the remorse which crime almost always brings, have at last openly come forward, and surrendered themselves to the magistrate, and acknowledged their guilt, and have felt their hearts relieved and lightened, by receiving an ignominious public punishment, in exchange for the inward tortures of remorse. Even a murderer has been known

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and so have many sinners been converted under ministers who are members of Masonic and Odd Fellows' lodges, but bear it in mind, that neither *Masonry* nor *Methodism* ever saved or ever will save a soul.

If a stream cannot rise higher than its source, then I cannot impart that of which I am not myself possessed. No more can a man clothe an institution or religious system of his own creation with authority superior to that of which he is himself possessed. The days of inspiration have passed, consequently one man has as good a right to invent a religious system as another, and to gain supporters to it as another has to his, and so each man, or each dozen men, might invent a dozen new "Churches," but each Church would possess no more authority or sanctity than the man himself possessed, and to repudiate these Churches would only be rejecting the works and *inventions of men*. For Christians to support such inventions or religious schemes, and observe the traditions and commandments of men for religious duties, is to be the followers and servants, yea, worshippers of men, for we are the servants of those whom we *obey*, and the worshippers of him whom we *serve*. Man has most violently felt the force of this in all ages. Those who have arbitrarily given laws, civil or religious, to communities or nations, have either been inspired as Moses, or have pretended to be so, as did Minos, Lycurgus, Numa, Mahomet, down to Ann Lee and Joe Smith. "because," as said Milton, "they wisely forethought that men would never quietly submit to such a discipline, as had not more of God's hand in it than man's." Do not all monarchs and despots claim a "divine right" to rule?

Indeed, was revelation silent as the grave upon the question, our reason, the intuitive convictions of our consciences, our sense of the moral fitness of things would decide the question beyond appeal. The arguments they, one and all, bring up, are weighty and conclusive, that the discipline of government of the Church of Christ is of *divine appointment*.

1. Because it is the most important of all the external of the Church or religion. No one thing so determines the destiny of a nation or community as its government. A good government will conduct a nation to prosperity, and secure the welfare and happiness of its subjects, while a bad one will sooner or later overwhelm it in ruin, and entail wretchedness and woe. Nothing, more than the laws and regulations of a society concerns and influences a people's happiness and well-being. No nation or community can be truly prosperous with an ill-regulated government. Well said the immortal Milton "Some do not think it for the ease of their inconsequent opinions, to

grant that church discipline is platformed in the Bible, but that it is left to the discretion of men. To this conceit of theirs I answer, that *it is both unsound and untrue*; for there is not that thing in the world of more grave and urgent importance throughout the whole life of man, than is discipline. What need I instance? He that hath read with judgment, of nations and communities, of cities and camps, of peace and war, sea and land, will readily agree that the flourishing and decaying of all civil societies, all the movements and turnings of human occasions, are moved to and fro as upon the axle of discipline." (Milton Works)

You will admit, sir, that the unity of all Christians, in faith and practice, is of the highest importance, since the world will never be persuaded to believe the gospel until Christians are one, (see Christ's prayer, John 17.) Now a diversity of *adverse* forms of Church organizations separates Christians, and this engenders strifes, discord, emulation and hatred. They become identified in feeling and interest with the peculiar form of polity they have selected, and they are tempted to resort to all means to preserve it, promote its extension, and to resist the encroachments of a different one, and thus these diverse forms of Church polity precipitate all Christendom into a fierce and deadly antagonism. This state of things will never improve, infidelity be driven from the world, nor the heathen receive the gospel, until Christians "see eye to eye and speak the same thing," and there is but "one FOLD and one shepherd." Now if Christ left the form of church polity to the discretion of man, one man or society of Christians has an equal right to frame a polity as another, and as each will see something to mend, we will, in the course of time, see as many different churches as there are ambitious men, able to draw off a party. It is this horrible God-dishonoring and Christ-rejecting doctrine that has already given birth to the 640 sects that have arisen, and it now stands forth, offering a free charter and encouragement, saying to unhalloved ambition that covets self-aggrandizement and notoriety, "You can found a church, and fix places of honor, authority, rule or profit for yourself and coadjutors!"

2. If Christ appointed any of the externals of his church, we are compelled to conclude he fixed *the most important*. To say he did not is to impeach his wisdom.

The government of his Church is the most important of all externals, from every conceivable consideration, He must then have appointed it, by giving principles that would determine it, or giving a pattern of government in an organized body.

3. It would be not only an impeachment of his wisdom, to suppose he left that part of his Church to

be devised by man, which if badly devised, would prove the subversion of his whole design, but it would reflect upon his goodness. "How can we believe that God would leave his frail and feeble, though no less beloved Church here below, to the perpetual stumble of conjecture and disturbance in this our dark voyage, without the card and compass of discipline?" (Milton Works)

4. Such a supposition would make Christ a less desirable and less faithful lawgiver than Moses! and Paul tells us he was more faithful. (Heb.3:2, 4) Did not God charge Moses to make every part of the old tabernacle, which was only a shadow of the new and true house, according to the heavenly pattern, and is the glorious and really true house left to be shaped and patterned according to the thousand varying fancies of men, and like Methodism, subject to be changed by every General Conference?

Well said Milton, when he lifted his warning voice against the Episcopal Church framers of his day, "Did God take such delight in measuring out the pillars, arches and doors, of a material temple? Was he so punctual and circumspect in lavars, altars and sacrifices, soon after to be abrogated, lest any of these should have been made contrary to his mind? Is not a far more perfect work, more agreeable to his perfections in the most perfect state of the Church militant, the new alliance of God to man." "God never intended to leave the government of his Church, delineated here, to be patched afterwards and varnished over with the devices and embellishings of man's imagination." No, the beneficent Saviour left this work not to the inventions or desecrations of men nor angels, but came down himself "to set up his kingdom," and not only published the principles of its constitution, but gave an example, and when leaving, solemnly charged his disciples, and through them his ministers in all ages, to see it, that they taught his followers to "observe all things whatsoever he *had* commanded," and this forbids the observance in religion or the Church, of any thing he has not commanded!

5. The government must of necessity be a definite character to promote the highest welfare and happiness of the membership. All governments do not do this equally. All governments, save one, actually destroy the very inalienable rights with which the God of nature endowed man, and thus contravene the wisdom of God in man's creation. Who, better than God, knows the character of government that would be the best and certainly calculated to secure the greatest good of his children?

6. No man, or class of men, has the wisdom and prescience to devise such a government. It, of necessity, should partake of the character of the doctrines of religion, it needs to be a perfect one, and

who but God is equal to this work? Let the history of human governments illustrate the weakness and inability of man to devise governments or organizations that have the strength to endure, and at the same time respect all the natural rights of man.

7. If left to men, they would devise it so as to promote their own ends. Where is there an organization framed by men, civil or religious in which places of distinction, power or emolument, are not found? Look at Monarchism, Episcopacy and Presbyterianism. What do we see? Kings, bishops, and ruling elders, superior orders, lording it over God's children and Christ's heritage. They have made "*right* and *left* hand seats," because they wished to occupy them. "Of what excellency and necessity then Church discipline is, how far beyond the faculty of man to frame, and how dangerous to be left to man's inventions, who would be every foot turning it to sinister ends; how properly also it is the work of God as father, and of Christ as husband of the Church."

8. If the government of the Church is left for the clergy, or any set of men to frame, then Christ put it in the power of men to oppress his children. They might, even *unintentionally*, frame a polity that would prove oppressive.

9. Such a power delegated to ministers, would tend to foster their pride, and inflate them with the idea of their superiority to their brethren.

10. If given to one man or class of men, it concedes the fact that there are superior and inferior classes or orders in the Church, those who determine the laws of the Church, and its regulations and practices, giving rites and ceremonies, etc.; and it would teach that there are Rabbis, i. e., authoritative "teachers" or "masters" in the Church.

11. Where, in the New Testament, has Christ or his apostles specified the person or persons who are to do this all important work? Whom has he empowered to determine the discipline, make and change laws for his kingdom? Angels might as well presume to fix the laws that regulate the worship of the Church of the first-born in heaven, as Ministers, Bishops or Popes, to make and change the laws of Christ's kingdom on earth! Your own Bascom has well said, "The right of deciding what are the will and mind of God, in matters of faith and *discipline*, by prescriptive interpretation, is conceded in the Scriptures to no man or body of men, exclusively." Bishop Bascom in this solitary passage, drives a dagger, through and through, the very vitals of Methodism. Does not a body of Methodist clergy, the General Conference, claim the right, exclusively, to interpret, and even legislate proscriptively, "matters of faith and discipline," for Methodism? Where then

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ARE THE HEATHEN IN A PERISHING CONDITION?

By Rev. E. A. Stevens, Missionary in Burmah,
Aug. 1875

Many do not believe that they are. Some even object, that missionaries going and preaching to them will be the means of insuring the condemnation of many, by giving them light, while failing to correct them. Others are in doubt, while yet they are not willing to neglect utterly the duty of aiding missions. The question is evidently, therefore, one of no small importance in its bearing on the missionary enterprise; for if any one denies, or only doubts its necessity, it cannot be expected that he will be zealous in its support.

As there is but one living and true God, who is the Judge of all the earth, and by whom the final state of the heathen, as all others, is to be determined, the answer to this question must evidently come from him alone. Whatever we may think, he will appoint the future condition of the heathen, according to his infinite wisdom. And of one thing we may be perfectly assured, he will do right; nor is it possible for any human being to be more alive to the demands of right, or yet more compassionate, than he is.

What, then, do the Scriptures say on this momentous subject?

The Scripture Testimony

Many passages may be quoted, but a few only will be adduced.

1. There is a class of passages which unequivocally declare that *no idolater shall inherit the kingdom of God*.

"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor. 6:9, 10. See also Gal. 5: 9-10; Rev. 22:15.

No language surely can be more decisive on the point in question. For, if idolaters cannot inherit the kingdom of God, there is only one alternative: *they perish*.

2. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews uses this solemn exhortation: "Follow peace with all men, and *holiness*, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 2:14). And the Apostle Peter urges, "It is written, Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:16). Evidently, therefore, in order that the heathen may

"see the Lord" (the meaning of which language undoubtedly is the same as entering into the kingdom of God), they must be *holy*. Now, although many are inclined to apologize for them, because they have been born and brought up in darkness, who has ever contended that they are holy? Is not their very name a synonym for wickedness? And here we have the word of God declaring in specific terms, that the unholy "shall not see the Lord."

3. We have the explicit declaration of the Redeemer himself, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3.

Is this true of those only who have heard the gospel? Does not the utterance rather indicate the moral condition of human nature, and the only way in which the natural man can become holy, and so enter the kingdom of God? We are not of those who believe in baptismal regeneration, but in regeneration by the Spirit, *through the word of God*; as said the Apostle Peter, "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (1 Pet. 1:23). Now, the word of God, in order to produce any effect, must evidently first be *heard*, or in some other manner *learned*. For it is addressed to the minds of men. After it has been learned, then, by the operation of the Holy Spirit in the mind, it is *thought upon*, it is *believed*, it is *received* and *obeyed* (1 Pet. 1:22); and *thus* the sinner is regenerated through it, and made holy, a child of God, and an heir of the heavenly inheritance. While, then, one class of passages declares that, because God is holy, man also must become holy in order to dwell with God, other passages teach us, that, through regeneration by the word of God, this holiness is to be obtained. Who, then, will presume to say, that, while men in Christian lands must be born again in order to be saved, the heathen may enter the kingdom of God without hearing the word, without being born again, and so without holiness? If this were so, would it not be better to be born and brought up in heathenism, rather than under the influences of the gospel?

4. One passage more, only, will be adduced, the language of the Apostle Paul in the first and second chapters of his Epistle to the Romans. He being the apostle of the Gentiles, sent to preach the gospel to the heathen, as Peter was to the Jews, travelled extensively among them, observing

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THE TEST OF CHARACTER

Taken from "The Watchman Examiner," 1916
By Frederick B. Greul

No one ever thought iron could be displaced by another metal. Aluminum, made of clay, is, however, the competitor of iron. A boat made of this new material and capable of holding six persons weighs only about sixty pounds. How many men would pass for ordinary men were it not that some trial had brought out their hidden mettle! The grit of character showed itself in resistance and endurance. The time may come when hard pressed men will thank God for the rough handling they have had. Roger Williams came upon appalling times. He was brave and true before his banishment, but his fourteen weeks of poverty and pain furnished the material to build his monument for all time. He was not alone, however. A study of faces in an ordinary car will be productive of material for reflection.

It is a study one can pursue every day with endless profit. Watch the care-drawn face of some woman. It is hard and fixed. No brightness glistens in the eye. The woman is alone in the crowd. It is then that the care-worn life looks natural. Little is known of the storm she faces with a steadfast character. Why does she not give up? One can tell when that takes place. The trouble is the loom on which that soul is stretched will be the means of her character development if she has the grit. She usually has.

What about the minister of the Gospel? Does he have cares hidden beneath the surface that wrench and burn his soul? No finer men walk the earth than ministers. These quiet, loyal men are like a bedrock underlying the character and stability of the church. They are neither understood by the church nor justly estimated by the multitude. As a class they have character. Character is not disclosed in or developed by physical gyrations or emotional distortion and intoxication. Character is the product of some Gethsemane, in most cases. The crowd likes to hear the minister criticized. The more public and scandalizing the criticism the better the crowd

DARKNESS AND LIGHT

By Rev. Frank O. Cunningham

How dark the night! The rock-hewn tomb is sealed!
There lies the One, who yesterday did seem
The Lord of power and heavenly grace, revealed
To show the way of life and truth supreme.

How dark the night! For feeble faith has died,
And all the hope of Israel's joy has fled;
Redemption waits; disciples have denied;
And on the hill three crosses lift their head.

How dark the night! But o'er the Eastern hills
God's radiant angels hasten to the tomb;
They break the seal; their thrilling presence fills
With hope and glory those who bowed in gloom.

How bright the morn! For heaven's resplendent Son,
In human form bursts wide the bars of death.
Darkness departs! Surprised disciples run
To find a triumph "even as he saith."

How bright the day! For, radiant with the gleam
Of truth victorious and redemption sure.
A risen church, thrilled with the life supreme,
Circles the earth with gospel message pure.

The night is gone! The "Dayspring from on high"
Shows "children of the day" the paths of peace;
While ransomed sinners ever find him nigh
To break temptation's thrall with prompt release.

The eternal day with its supernal light
Hastens apace; the time for work is short.
Christians, awake! Hold high the banner bright!
And win the wanderers whom his blood hath bought.

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likes it. When some gifted spirit feels that he is the "sledgehammer" of the Almighty he picks the minister as a popular target. He hits to smash. One is led to think that usually he has felt less of the agony of Gethsemane than has the men he beats with a merciless hand. The crowd likes it and applauds. The minister goes quietly about his Master's business. Why? Because he is a man of character. Character can stand the test. Long after the freaks and foible traducers are forgotten the men who visited Gethsemane and waited on the Lord will be remembered and be enshrined in the hearts of those they led Godward. □

## THE PROBLEM OF THE EMPTY PULPIT

By James A. Maxwell,  
"The Watchman Examiner," 1924

It is a serious thing for any church to face an empty pulpit. Wisely to choose a spiritual leader is a task for prayerful, careful people. If the recommendation of a successor to the retiring pastor is committed to a committee that group should be composed of the most sane, most spiritual, most level-headed members of the church. Theirs is a responsibility that requires calm deliberation and clear judgment. Haste, rashness, sentimentality or self-confidence can work havoc here. Connection must be made with the work of the previous pastor. Sometimes this connection has in it correction, because few men have all the powers needed for a full, symmetrical development of a church. One's successor should supplement his work. One man is strong in organizing, edifying, solidifying a church, but while he has been pastor a harvest of unsaved has gathered in the Bible school and congregation. He is not strong evangelistically. Evangelism should be a prime consideration in the choice of a successor. A man is needed to supplement, not to supplant him. Strength is to be fitted into weakness. The extraordinary is to follow the ordinary. Qualities and inequalities must be evened up.

It does not follow because a retiring pastor is greatly loved that the church must have a man just like him to follow. The whole need of the church must be considered. Nor does it follow that the desirable man is the man available, at least on first sight. Desirability comes before availability. Churches must not be tempted by the fact that a man is easily available. Ability to carry on the work and supplement the retiring pastor is a thing for first consideration.

To discover the right man the church needs to take wisdom. It does not take much wisdom to discover a man who will accept the call, but to know the man who meets the needs, that calls for inquiry, care and judgment. That also takes time. Haste in choosing a spiritual leader may be disastrous. It takes time to find out where the man is who is doing the kind of work that the pastorless church needs to have done.

The securing of a stated supply, an interim pastor, one who has no designs upon the pulpit, has much to commend it in our present situation. It gives time for the making of inquiry concerning the men from whom the church can make wise selection. It is a superior plan. But

running men through the pulpit Sunday after Sunday, then choosing the one who has made the best impression for a day—that is inferior, shamefully inferior, and in many instances disastrously inferior. It is a very poor man who cannot preach two good sermons and be desirable for a day. This plan has not one thing to commend it, but has many things to condemn it. Many divided and wrecked churches bear witness against it.

To choose from a bundle of letters one whose recommendations seem to be the strongest has perils also attending it. This may mean that a man has marshalled his friends to write the church in his behalf. It may mean the effort of friends to locate one who wants to move. A church is bigger than a man. The interest of the smallest church comes before the interest of the largest man. A church's need of a man comes before a man's need of a church. The locating of men, who wish a change, very often results in serious misfits. Would that all of us could work into our convictions that our strongest recommendation is the work we are doing where we are, work that we ourselves do not need to prove. It must, however, be admitted that men are doing excellent work in obscure places, without receiving much notice. There is justification for some men to seek the recommendation of others. But after this has been admitted the recommendation business is overdone. Churches are bewildered by the flood of letters that pour in upon them when they are pastorless. Some are even puffed up from the sense of their church's importance, which the many letters seem to prove. They lose their opinion that ministers are scarce. All this is confusing and misleading.

Responsibility rests upon those whose position of acquaintance with and knowledge of churches and pastors enables them to direct churches to the men they need. In our policy this is essential. But helping pastorless churches to choose suitable men is more than the locating of pastors who wish to move on. Though we are in a restless period, yet every one of us should prove his ministry right where he is. We must make ourselves desirable just where we are. We chase the rainbow when we look to other places in which more easily to prove our worth. Difficulties are as many and as stubborn there as here. There are few peculiar fields. Human nature is full of sameness. □



(Heathen in a Perishing Condition continued from page 6)

their lives, reasoning and disputing with them, and striving to persuade them to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, *that they might be saved*. After delineating their frightful wickedness, and proving them to be "without excuse" (Rom. 1:20-32), he convicts them of being exposed to "the wrath of God, which is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Rom. 1:18); "then, leading us forward to the judgment seat of Christ, the apostle declares that God will render to every man according to his deeds; . . . indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile," that is, as we well know, of the heathen. Known unto God is the true condition and character of the heathen world; and here we have the explicit declaration, how he, the righteous One, will judge them at the last day.

The plain teaching of the above passages is, that the heathen, being idolaters and unholy, cannot, continuing as they are, be admitted into the kingdom of heaven; that they need to be born again instrumentally, through the preaching of "the word of the truth of the gospel." And so appears the *reason* for the loving and gracious command of the Redeemer, "Go ye unto all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature."

#### Illustrative Missionary Testimony

But, while this will be admitted to be the plain teaching of the New Testament, many sincere minds will still painfully inquire, "How can this be right, and consistent with the goodness and compassion of God?" As this inquiry probably arises from a lack of accurate information with respect to the character and condition of the heathen, for the purpose of illustration a few facts will now be adduced, drawn from actual observation of missionaries residing among them.

In every part of the world, where missionary effort has been persisted in for a considerable time in the vernacular tongues, it has been found, that the human family *have a sense of right and wrong, and a capacity to know God, and to look into the future*; such a nature, indeed, being the essential groundwork on which to labor for their salvation, and constituting their chief difference from the brutes. And, wherever man is found, he is manifestly *depraved; living in sin, and knowing the fact*.

But in this paper our illustration will be drawn from the Buddhists of Burmah, where the writer has passed more than thirty years in direct mis-

sionary work, prosecuted, not in his native tongue, through an interpreter, but in the language of the Burmans, among whom he has labored.

1. The Burmans *have much correct knowledge of God*.

It is true, their land is full of idols, and their hill-tops on every side are covered with pagodas. It is true, They call these idols and these pagodas *gods*, and bow down to them, and worship and make offerings to them. But, when questioned particularly, they readily admit, that these are not *truly gods*; that the idols are but *images* of the God they worship, and the pagodas are but *repositories* of his relics. And they say that worship paid to these his *substitutes* is equivalent to worship paid to the God himself. As to him, his name was Gaudama. Originally he was a mere man; but by persistent endeavors to keep the moral law, through countless ages, in different states of being, he gradually increased in virtue, subduing all the evil propensities of his nature, until, finally, he attained to perfection. Simultaneously with this attainment, he also obtained infinite knowledge and infinite power. These attainments he made at the age of thirty-five years, and became God; in this state of divinity he continued forty-five years (being contemporary with the Prophet Daniel); then, at the age of eighty, he died and was annihilated. Since then there has been no God in the world. Before him there had been gods innumerable as the sands on the seashore; but since the world came into being in the form we now behold, there had been three other gods of the same kind, whom they denominate Boodhs; and before the world shall come to its end, which is to be by fire, another Boodh will make his appearance, continue his allotted time, and like his predecessors pass away into annihilation. This is the Burmese idea of God.

Now, with all the error involved in this idea, let us observe, that they believe in God, as *the greatest and best* of all beings. In direct terms they are accustomed to ascribe to him *infinite power, infinite intelligence, infinite love and compassion*. He has the *profoundest regard* for the *moral law*, and in *heart and life is perfectly conformed* to it. This being their understanding of the character of God, the Burmans and the Buddhists generally (who are supposed to number not less than four hundred millions of our fellow-men), are perfectly aware that, when they do wrong, they act in *direct opposition to the mind of God*. When they sin, therefore, they do so knowingly, just as men do in Christian countries. And we see that their character agrees with that given by the Apostle Paul to the heathen of his day: "that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath

(Heathen in a Perishing Condition continued on page 10)

(*Republican Backwards continued from page 5*)

do you get your authority for your proscriptive interpretation and legislation, if not from Christ? From John Wesley? How dare the General Conference change, add to, and take from the statute book of Jesus Christ, and the law book of his church and kingdom, every four years, if they do indeed consider the Methodist Episcopal Society the Church, or a part of the kingdom of Christ, and the Discipline its laws and polity? What insolent presumption! What daring impiety! That discipline, and history, is a dark mountain of condemnation to Methodism!

12. My twelfth argument is: Man seems instinctively impressed that the disciplinary laws of the Church which command his implicit obedience, on pain of his exclusion, are, and of right ought to be, as divinely appointed as baptism and the supper.

If the impression on every man's conscience is any proof of the existence of a God, (and all writers use the argument,) it is equally in proof of the Divine appointment of Church discipline.

13. But supposing the organization, discipline, laws, etc., of any given Church were of man's invention and enactment, no man could submit to them without serving man and rejecting Christ.

14. Finally and conclusively. If the visible organization of the Christian Church is of man's device, then it is not only of no moment what that form may be, but it is not necessary that there should be *one at all!* Admit it to be man's work, then like all his other creations it is his creature, it belongs to him, and he has a perfect right to do with it as he pleases, it is subject to his own caprices, he can change its form, every year, or abolish it altogether. Each religious society now in existence, has as good a right, to abolish its present polity as it had to create it, and suppose all should abolish their forms today, there would be no visible Church in the world, so far as they compose it. It is their privilege, whenever it is their pleasure to do so. God has no where commanded them to make governments for him, and he no where forbids them, but rather every where commands them, to abolish tradition.

Do you feel prepared to advocate the legitimate consequence of *Pedobaptistic* position upon this point? What are they? If Christ gave no principles of be observed, and no direction, but left it open for all to satisfy their likings in Church making, then any man or woman may at any time invent and set up a society with a polity and discipline, yes, and membership too, to suit their fancy, and call it a Church of Christ, and call upon you, sir, to acknowledge it as such, and to commune with it, and, as you are a warm advocate for open communion, you could not object! □

(*Heathen in a Perishing Condition continued from page 9*)

showed it unto them" (Rom. 1:19). And again, after describing their sinfulness, "*knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them*" (Rom. 1. 32).

2. The Burmans have much correct knowledge of the moral law.

Gaudama has taught them, that they ought to worship God with the profoundest reverence and sincerest love; that they ought to worship the law, which is the word of God; and the priests, who preach the law, and seek to practise it after his example. Hence, on regular worship days, which occur at least four times every month, the people are accustomed to assemble together for worship before the pagodas and the idols, and at the monasteries; and, the priest leading them, they all in reverent posture repeat after him in concert, "We worship God; we worship the law; we worship the priesthood." And, universally, they are accustomed to speak of their God in the most respectful language, "The excellent God."

As it respects their duties one toward another, the law prescribes five cardinal commands: 1. "Thou shalt not kill." 2. "Thou shalt not steal." 3. "Thou shalt not commit adultery." 4. "Thou shalt not lie." 5. "Thou shalt not drink intoxicating liquors." In all their regular assemblies for worship, the priest is accustomed to pronounce these commands, one after the other, in the most formal manner; and the assembly repeats them in concert after him. So that, throughout the length and breadth of the land, every one, men, women, and children, are familiar with them. It is perfectly manifest, therefore, that when the Buddhist lies, or steals, or commits adultery, or takes life (whether human or animal), or drinks intoxicating liquors, he knows that he violates the command of his God. Not only so: he has been instructed with respect to the many degrees and kinds of sins, with minute discrimination, so that he is accustomed to classify them into three principal divisions, sins of the *body*, sins of the lips, and sins of the *mind* and *heart*. It is not true, then, that when he sins he does not know better. Like men in Christian lands, his knowledge is better than his practice; "he knows his duty, but he does it not."

3. The Burmans have extreme views of the authority of moral law.

Gaudama evidently regarded it, like the law of gravitation, as one of the fixed laws of the universe, invariable in its operation. He taught, not only that actions are right or wrong, and that right actions will be rewarded, and wrong actions punished, but that these consequences are as certain, as that the "cart-wheel follows the tracks of the ox that draws it; "that there is, indeed, no power in the universe competent to



sever the connection between actions and their consequences. Hence the system of transmigrations, to give scope for the action of that law; the endless succession of births and deaths (until annihilation comes to the relief of the meritorious few), being necessary, to reap the rewards, and to suffer the penalties, inseparable from the actions which have been performed. Hence it was, that Gaudama passed through innumerable periods of enjoyments and of sufferings, sometimes on earth, sometimes in one or another of twenty-six heavens, sometimes in one or another of four hells, before he could reach the goal of divinity. In one hell alone, for destroying a widow's house, which jutted inconveniently into the street of the city in which he reigned, notwithstanding he built for her another and a better house in another part of the city, he was obliged to pass eighty thousand years in punishment for his sin. Despite all the virtue which he had attained, he could not escape the penalty due to one of his sins; so that even in the state of divinity he was obliged to bear the punishment of twelve or sixteen sins which had not yet been expiated.

Thus, in the estimation of the Buddhist, moral law is *before* God; seeing God is but a man who has attained to divinity by keeping the law, which, of course, he must first have known, in order to keep it. Moreover, the law is *above* God, seeing he is subject to it; so that he has no authority over it, and is not competent, therefore, to *forgive* any violation of it. From this extreme view of the authority of the moral law, although the Buddhist ever assigns in worship the first place to God, and speaks of the law as the word of God, and the law which they observe as the word of Gaudama, the law is Gaudama's only in the sense in which we speak of the law of gravitation as Newton's law; the law which he discovered and expounded, while he himself, as all others, was subject to that law.

#### Such Knowledge Furnishes A Basis of Guilt

From the facts above presented, derived from the Burmese books, and from constant reasoning and disputing with people and with priests for many years, in endeavors to turn them from idolatry to Christ, we think it must be evident, that the Buddhists are not so much in the dark in the matter of religion, as many have supposed. It is plain, that they know so much of God and of his law, that they must be counted "guilty before God;" and, in the language of the apostle, are exposed to that "wrath of God, which is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who *hold the truth in unrighteous-*

*ness*" (Rom. 1:18).

Nor is this true of the Buddhists alone. It is true of the Hindoos, and it is true, in different degrees, of the heathen generally. Paul, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, uses very comprehensive language, when he declares them "without excuse," and gives his reasons for what he teaches. To his reasoning on this subject, we beg to call the earnest attention of the reader, and ask him to remember, while perusing the apostle's words, that Paul was not only inspired to teach the mind of God, but was an intelligent and eminently benevolent observer of heathen character and manners. For he lived and labored long among them, and had the best reason to say, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen."

#### The Consequent Argument For Missions

We see, then, the demand for missionaries to the heathen. Not to make known the law of God; for of that they already know more than they are careful to obey, so that they are "condemned already." It is to take to them the gospel, which is the gracious announcement from God, of pardon for the guilty. We have seen that Buddhists know that they are guilty, and *are expecting* punishment; ay, punishment in hell, and for thousands of years *at least*.

To this conclusion they admit themselves shut up by the teachings and the history of their God. He, by his vain philosophy, in ridding himself of God the eternal, the Creator and Lawgiver, and deifying man instead, has excluded from man the possibility of escaping the penalty due to transgression, and has doomed him to innumerable ages of suffering, as the just and inevitable demerit of sin. For the Buddhist, therefore, the missionary is needed, to undo this part of the work of Gaudama, by showing that God is not of man, but man is of God; that God is none other than the *Eternal First Cause*, "of whom and by whom and to whom are all things; " who made man, and gave him the moral law; to , whom man, therefore, is accountable; to whom pertains the prerogative to pardon; and who has so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. And this is just the knowledge which all heathen need.

Shall not compassion, therefore, as well as regard for the authority of our divine Master, urge us to haste with the gospel to the dying heathen? They *are perishing*, and they *know* it; but know *not* how they *may escape the penalty due to their sins*. □

## From Our E-mail

Date: 05/21/06

Subject: Thank God

Sirs, I thank God that He led me to your web site. I am a Baptist, currently living in New York but longing for more southern climes. I have been educated and uplifted by what I have read in the few entries I have had an opportunity to review, and I am thankful for all the work, love and devotion that you obviously put into its contents.

Thanks again, and may you always be captured by the love of god, as you surely are now.

P.S. If your pastor is available, and can send me an e-mail, I have several questions I would like to ask. But, at the same time, I fully realize just how busy he must be in your wonderful congregation.

L.L.

Date: 05/15/06

Subject: Baptist Bigots!!!

When will you Baptist bigots SHUT THE ...UP and let others live their own life. We all answer to only one, that is God, NOT a false church like the Baptist Cult.

D.H.  
GAY AND PROUD

Date: 06/09/06

Subject: question

Mr. Reaves, I have a question. Are you or your church affiliated with the Baptist Bible Fellowship? I graduated from BBC in 1962. Noel Smith warned us about the Fellowship going down hill at that time in 1962. Since then I have heard that this has happened. When the old hands died and the young folks took over with their new ideas of how to do things, it seems as though the fellowship has indeed gone down hill. Are you a graduate of BBC? I enjoy reading your material online at your website, I belong to an independent, fundamental, Bible believing Baptist church in Sierra Vista, Arizona My health has forced me to semi-retire. I am 81 years old. I publish a doctrinal newsletter in our church and for friends. It is getting very hard to find a sound Baptist church now days without contemporary music, dress code, etc. One that preaches the truth of the KJV.

S. N.

For the greatest message ever, John 3:16-21 in your KJV Bible

Date: 06/23/06

Subject: NASV perversion

I found a lot of information about what is wrong with different perverse versions but didn't find anything on the NASV. I don't bother wasting my money on "per"versions of the Bible. But sometimes when witnessing I do run across those who are using one and it's helpful to know what I'm up against. Thank you for all the information so far I've found on your website. Here's an interesting quote from one of the committee members for the NASV: "I must under God denounce every attachment to the New American Standard Version. I'm afraid I'm in trouble with the Lord...We laid the groundwork; I wrote the format; I helped interview some of the translators; I sat with the translator; I wrote the preface. When you see the preface to the New American Standard, those are my words...it's wrong, it's terribly wrong; it's frightfully wrong...I'm in trouble;...I can no longer ignore these criticisms I am hearing and I can't refute them. The deletions are absolutely frightening...there are so many. The finest leaders that we have today haven't gone into it [new versions of Hort and Wescott's corrupted Greek text] just as I hadn't gone into it...that's how easily one can be deceived...Are we so naive that we do not suspect Satanic deception in all of this?" Dr. Frank Logsdon, Committee Member, New American Standard Version

J.J.



*(How to Obtain Peace of Mind continued from page 3)*

to come forward to relieve the horrors of his soul, by confession, though he knows that this confession will chain him in a dark stone cell, and after a short, but gloomy interval, extend him in a coffin. □



### Editor's Note

*In The Baptist Pillar we use articles taken from many different publications and written by many different authors. Please realize that this does not necessarily mean we agree with the doctrinal position of the publication or the author of the article, but that the particular article presents a scriptural truth we do agree with.*

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