

Voice of Baptists

"The Voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." **Isaiah 40:3**

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NO. 1



THE CRUELTY OF PRIVILEGE WITHOUT RESPONSIBILITY

By Calvin Perrigo
Indianapolis, Ind.

"And every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor." **1 Cor. 3:8**

We live in a place and time where there is a lack of equity in many aspects of life. The older segment of our society are probably more aware of this situation than the younger group. Many basic, natural laws of justice have been discarded in favor of some promise of a dream or an illusion that will provide us something for nothing. Eve's action in looking at the tree is the first indication of this human characteristic.

There have been many recent contributing factors in this great deception but installment purchasing and the generosity (so called) of our governments must share the majority of this burden. What is our interest in such things, seeing we are in the world but not of it? Simply this; many, too many of God's people believe that God too will give privileges without the attached fee of responsibility coming along with those liberties.

We sincerely desire that you give prayerful, honest consideration to the truths contained in this composition. We will attempt to show that God has always expected his creation to return something for the privileges that has been granted unto it. The created things, (Satan and his influence upon it excepted) of God have responded to God's request. What happened when God said, "Let there be light"? There was light. God classified the light as good and in turn called it Day. Has not Day followed Night ever since light was called from darkness? Yes, light has been responsible ever since it became such to make things manifest. The beauty of the

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LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

Dear Sirs:

Thank you all so much for printing "Voice of Baptists." It is a blessing to read. The Lord truly needs more people who will be submissive to his work. The Lord has a work for every born again believer to do. I pray the paper will be of help to many people.

Mrs. Danny Hutcherson
Westport, Tenn.

We would all like to see the circulation double - **MORE PEOPLE NEED IT!** Thank God for "Voice of Baptists." May the Lord bless in the work there.

Bethel Baptist Church
Corvallis, Ore.
Mrs. W. T. Swanson, Clerk

I sure feel the paper is doing a great work. So keep it coming.

Billy Ray Gregory
Indianapolis, Ind.

The articles are so strengthening to me. So thankful for each staff writer of this paper. I pray it will go in many more homes as time goes on. May God richly bless you and the staff in this work.

Mrs. Otis Berry
Flint, Mich.



SOVEREIGN GOD

By Rex Hunt
Fountain Run, Ky.

Webster's definition of "sovereign" is: 1. above or superior to all others, chief, greatest, supreme. 2. supreme in power, rank or authority.

My purpose is to speak of God as the triune Godhead - consisting of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, or any one of these in His respective office.

The omnipresence (present everywhere at the same time) of God places Him in a position to be sovereign. "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him, saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord" (Jer. 23:23-24). "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15:3).

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SPECIAL THANKS

The Colorado Missionary Baptist Church would like to thank everyone that has supported us financially. We have written each one that has sent financial help since we started keeping a record, but there are so many that are praying for us that cannot help us with a love offering. We want you to know that your prayers are both felt and very important to our work here. It seems so slow and sometimes we feel very alone but we know you are there and it means very much to us.

Yours in Christ,
COLORADO MISS. BAPTIST
CHURCH
Elder Ottis Jones, Mod.
Mary Brown, Clerk

VOICE OF BAPTISTS

(USPS 423-350)

P. O. Box 572
Huntingdon, Tenn. 38344

EDITOR:

Kenneth W. Massey
123 Skyline Drive
Huntingdon, Tenn. 38344
Telephone (901) 986-9048

STAFF WRITERS

James H. Smith
1169 Hunters Lane
Nashville, Tennessee 37207

W. T. Russell
1125 Magnolia Ave.
Bowling Green, Ky. 42101

F. W. Lambert
Route 4, Box 75
Westmoreland, Tenn. 37186

Second-Class postage paid at Huntingdon, Tenn. 38344

ONE MAN'S OPINION

By Ray Smith
Camden, Tenn.

QUESTION: What is Christ referring to in the statement made to Nathanael in John 1:51?

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."

ANSWER: First, we should explore the idea of angels literally and physically lighting upon Christ in the presence of Nathanael at a future date. Did that happen? Is that what Christ meant?

I do not think so. He is probably saying to Nathanael you haven't seen anything yet. Just telling him that He had seen him under the fig tree startled Nathanael, but Christ says, "thou shalt see greater things than these."

Using this statement in the same mystical sense as God had used to Jacob many years ago, Christ was just saying, you Nathanael, are going to see heaven pour its blessings upon me and my ministry. You will see water turned to wine, the dead raised, sight restored, lepers healed, sins forgiven and all manner of wonderful works. Every blessing comes to us through Jesus Christ.

"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."



CRUELTY OF PRIVILEGE

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heavens and the privilege to be so have also the responsibility to declare the glory of God. Seedtime, harvest, cold, heat, summer, winter, day and night have not ceased since they had a beginning. Just as sure as the earth is watered by rain and snow from heaven it will bring forth and bud and give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, therefore responding to the blessings of moisture from the heavens and the ability that God gave it to produce for us. The privilege that Adam enjoyed, living in the garden and fellowshiping with his Creator, carried with it the responsibility of dressing and keeping the garden and staying away from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Adam enjoyed those privileges as long as he was responsible but when he became irresponsible to God's command, having eaten of the tree he lost those privileges that he once enjoyed. Man is responsible to God, whether he ever enjoys the privileges of soul salvation or not; "Every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." (see Isaiah 45:23; Romans 14:11 and Philippians 2:10-11).

Now let us consider some privileges that we have and see if we are also responsible to return something for our many benefits or not.

Is there any greater privilege afforded to man than the plan of salvation? I know of no greater. What is man that God would be mindful of him? All have sinned and come short of his glory, yet Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. These truths along with numerous others also carry a message of responsibility into the heart of a lost sinner. The modern messenger and sometime sincere brethren fail to present the responsible side of the gospel message. Is there some responsibility on the part of a lost sinner? Yes, the power of God in the gospel message demands a response from the lost soul before salvation is granted. To hear the message is one requirement on the part of a lost sinner. A lost person that sleeps through a gospel message and is awakened to go to the altar is an unlikely candidate for salvation in that service. The lost sinner is required to repent toward God. We realize that no one does this within their own power or choice but it is an event that happens after godly sorrow has really gripped the very being of a convicted sinner. Anyone that has experienced the squeeze of the sorrows of death, the pains of hell and the other anguishes of true conviction know how cruel the

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SOVEREIGN GOD

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The omniscience (ability to know all things) of God, gives Him the wisdom and knowledge to be sovereign. "Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite" (ps. 147:5).

The omnipotence (ability to do all things) of God, gives Him the power to be sovereign. "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and the voice of many waters, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" (Rev. 19:6).

Our God is everywhere all the time, knowing all things, and has all power to do all things. There isn't anyone or anything that can prevent Him from carrying out His will. The purposes of God have been, are being, or will be carried out. "Yea I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass, I have purposed it, I will also do it" (Is. 46:11). The purposes of God in judgment are altogether just and righteous. There is perfect harmony in all the purposes of God, and all of them will be carried out with equal consideration.

The sovereign God cannot be prevented from exercising His will. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. 1:11). God's purpose to offer mercy to fallen man is seen in many scriptures, viz. John 3:16, 1 Tim. 2:6, 2 Peter 3:9. The following quotation expresses God's provision for each one of Adam's race. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man" (Heb. 2:9).

That God may permit man to receive or reject His overtures of mercy, may be seen in the following scriptures: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not" (Matt. 23:37), "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your father did, so do ye" (Acts 7:51), "When once the master of the house is risen up, and shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying Lord, Lord, open unto us, and he shall answer and say unto you, I know ye not whence ye are;" (Luke 13:25). The sovereign God opened the door of opportunity and mercy to each individual sometime prior to His

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"WHAT SHALL I RENDER?"

By Kenneth W. Massey
 "....and ye are not your own"

I Cor. 6:19b

Heaven is our eternal home; earth is our present field of labor. God is our Master; we are His servants. He owns the universe, each nation, every acre, you and me along with all our combined tangible assets. "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." I Cor. 7:23

If God owns His children, then surely all that we possess actually belongs to Him. **SOLD UNDER SIN**

Being born of corruptible seed into this world a sinner not fit to live, unprepared to die, and facing an endless eternity. Enlightened on the stigma of sin and the consequence after death, the gospel brings us to cry in the affliction of conscience stricken conviction. "Lord, here I am, save me, and I'll do anything for you the rest of my life." Oh, how soon is that commitment forgotten? Some actually renege before ever following the Lord in baptism! No saved person can expect to have the approbation of God who fails to perform the initial command. "What shall I render unto the Lord?"

Please consider your promise, your duty, and yet your privilege, and place your life's light on the candlestick of a local and scriptural church. The church needs you, and you need the church!

AT EASE IN ZION

"I've been saved; Lord, I joined the church and was baptized like the preacher said you wanted us to do, and now I have to work to provide for my family. I can't make it to church every Sunday, but you said Lord, 'if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel'" (1 Tim. 5:8).

Many christian fathers across our land work various shifts on Sunday, but the faithful ones manage to attend service sometime on the Lord's Day. A regular job is a blessing! Health sufficient to perform your occupation is provided by God's goodness. Getting into the membership of the church is just the proper location for finding "what shall I render unto the Lord." Don't think, once enrolled on the book of life and the church roster, this is the end of your christian duty. It is the dawning of a new

day that will open doors of opportunity for consecrated service to God.

GOD'S CALLED ME TO PREACH

After much rebellion (which is unnecessary sin), you may have torn the church door off its hinges and knocked over a few people to stand and announce in the altar, "I'VE GOT TO PREACH!"

Then, the church and the pastor arrange for an appointment, and you make your first effort standing behind that sacred desk. The relief of burden is so great that it's almost like getting saved over again. But another burden comes and you prepare for another occasion to stand for Jesus. You promised the Lord as a preacher, "if you will take this burden and help me bear it, I will preach anywhere and everywhere you send me." The next sermon is painfully rendered, but His grace is proven sufficient again. Now you are on your way to becoming God's whole man. But there's the group that announced their call though never committing themselves to the ministry. What about those? Judgment is not in my hands, and neither do I pass it upon any individually. Yet I must believe that God will not be denied executing His eternal purpose. Those He chooses will go, even if they go as did Jonah. Could it be that some men living disorderly lives may have used this as a key to get back in the good graces of the church without a public confession of their guilt? Knowing away at their deepest soul, repentance came rushing out in the words, "I'VE GOT TO PREACH."

AND AS YE GO, PREACH

Churches are crying for pastors, and preachers are working in domestic fields to earn a living. Preachers say, "I must work;" churches say, "we can't afford a full-time pastor." Elder F. L. Ray often made this statement, "if every preacher that God has truly called to preach will prepare himself with necessary tools for that work, he will never want for a place to serve."

I really feel that we should preach as we earn our living, and look forward by diligent preparation to the day that God will use us in a greater way. Most of us pastors have miserably failed to teach the churches "what they should render" unto the treasury of the church, which sponsors the ministry, church expenses, and missions.

SEEK YE FIRST

Sinner, put salvation at the top of your list! New creatures in Christ, heed the commandment of Jesus, "be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Church members, give the first-fruits of thy life and substance to the Lord through the

INDEPENDENT CHURCH



PURCHASES PROPERTY

The members of INDEPENDENT MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH of Huntingdon, Tennessee have purchased a 1.7 acre tract of land adjoining the present property on the north side.

This purchase takes in Jim's Grocery and also a dwelling house. The longitude boundaries are the same as the original property.

The present house of worship was built for a membership of 50, but present attendance has exceeded that number four times. Plans for the future include expansion, and that as soon as the Lord provides.

Your prayers are always welcomed in behalf of the work here.

"EXCEPT THE LORD BUILD THE HOUSE, THEY LABOUR IN VAIN THAT BUILD IT." Psalms 127:1

REVIVAL

APRIL 3

TRUE HOPE MISS. BAPTIST CHURCH - Springfield, Missouri Pastor Joe Sprague will be assisted by Elder Kenneth Massey. EVERYONE is invited to these services!

"O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy."

Habakkuk 3:2

WHAT SHALL I RENDER

church, local and visible. Some members say, "I don't have anything to give." That's true probably because they have failed to give when they had something, and God came to claim that plus interest not leaving them anything. Start giving; you will have more to give. Soldiers of the cross, may we seek to first do something for God, and if you can't find any need where you are, come to West Tennessee tomorrow. Go to Michigan, Oregon, or any of those areas where God's people are begging for help. DO ALL THE GOOD FOR EVERYBODY YOU SEE EVERYWHERE YOU GO! "What shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward us?"

Psalms 116:12

CRUELTY OF PRIVILEGE

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privilege of a mere acceptance of Christ for salvation would be. How cruel is it to invite the Holy Spirit of a divine God to come and live in a sin blackened soul without the washing of regeneration? (see Titus 3:5) Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." No privilege of heaven, although the works were there, the Lord never knew them.

Before Jesus sent the twelve apostles to the lost sheep of the house of Israel they were equipped to do what he had asked them to do. Added to the basic things, (soul salvation, baptism and the call) was a special power given to them to cast out unclean spirits, heal sickness and disease. In the charge to these men, Jesus commanded; "freely ye have received, freely give." The privilege of having these gifts or power brought also the responsibility to give it to others. Paul exhorted the elders from Ephesus to also abide by this basic law; Paul asked them to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, "it is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35) How cruel is the privilege that a pastor takes when he flees at the appearance of the wolf? The privilege to pastor the Lord's church brings also the responsibility to feed and protect it with one's own life if called upon to do so, (consider John 10:11, 12 and 13 along with Acts 20:28-32). The cruelty of privilege without responsibility can be seen clearly in the statement that Jesus made concerning the scribes and the Pharisees: "For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers." Jesus told the disciples and also the multitude not to follow their works because they say, and do not. Pastors are to be ensamples to the flock, feeding and also eating the same diet. How cruel is the privilege that a wolf takes as it moves among the flock being camouflaged by an outer covering? The taste or appetite of a wolf is not the same as that of a lamb or a sheep, therefore they cannot be satisfied with the sincere milk or meat of the word. Paul charged Timothy to "preach the word: be instant in season, out of season: reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." (II Timothy 4:2) What hap-

pens when a pastor delivers a reproofing and rebuking message to a wolf dressed in sheep clothing? Proverbs 9:7 may contain the answer: "He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot." How cruel is it to allow an improperly clothed guest to remain at a wedding? (see Matthew 22:11-14). How cruel is it to allow one that has "Nothing to do with us" to help build an house unto our God? (see Ezra 4:1-3 for bible position). Pastors are expected to face the "Diotrephes" (III John 9-10) but it is cruel when they are not identified as such.

How cruel is the free spender today that gives sparingly or nothing, yet is forever ready to do big things with other people's generosity? How cruel is the privilege of stating an opinion without clearly identifying it as such? How cruel is the privilege to repeat information without being responsible for the report? How cruel is the privilege to exercise voting rights and other influences without being involved as a worker? How cruel is the privilege of speaking of having compassion and not to be of any help? (consider Mark 8:1-8 and James 2:14-17) How cruel is it to deceive others by advocating the winning of a race while not abiding by the rules, (II Timothy 2:5)? Paul expected a crown but only after fighting a good fight, keeping the faith and finishing the course. It is cruel to teach people (by word or example) that it is possible to take a short cut with God and receive the same benefits as those that run the race with patience. Paul instructed the Corinthian church; "So run, that ye may obtain." (I Corinthians 9:24). Paul taught the church of the Thessalonians that, "If any would not work, neither should he eat." How cruel is the privilege of eating and enjoying the fruits of others' labors? It is a shame to do so in the material realm of life but many have no conscience of shame. It has become a way of life for too many in our nation today. Do we dare add a spiritual application to this teaching? It would be utter folly to believe that God would feed a spiritual blessing to one who did not earn it. It is possible to enjoy seeing or hearing another receive a blessing but it is about like only smelling good food and not be allowed to taste it. Paul explains this in writing to Timothy, "The husbandman that labours must be first partaker of the fruits" and "if we suffer, we shall also reign with him:" (II Timothy 2:6 and 12). Paul also taught the Corinthian church the same doctrine: "And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the

sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation." (II Corinthians 1:7) There is a sworn promise from the Lord recorded in Isaiah 62:8-9. "Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast laboured: But they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness." And that is how it is with God's blessings!

We thus conclude: There is no place for a parasite to attach itself on to the church by Christ Jesus, seeing we are the body of Christ, and members in particular. To be given any privilege from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ brings the burning desire to return something to him. "INASMUCH AS YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE MY BRETHREN, YE HAVE DONE IT UNTO ME" (Matthew 25:40)

SOVEREIGN GOD

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closing it. "But time and chance happeneth to them all" (Eccl. 9:11).

Some disagree with the statement, "the sovereign God could offer mercy to someone who would not obtain it." I have heard it said that God's grace is compulsive all the way, or in other words, "one is compelled to be saved." I believe God's grace is the means enabling one to be saved, by the willing submission to God's offered mercy, through repentance and faith. "And the Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). The free moral agency of man is taught in the Bible as one of the purposes of the sovereign God toward man, exhibited through His mercy and grace.

The following quotation teaches that the will of man and the best efforts of man cannot avail anything, except it be in response to overtures of God's mercy and grace: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth but of God that sheweth mercy" (Rom. 9:16).

Our God's works are all perfect in wisdom, righteousness and judgement, and being so much higher than man, many times they are misunderstood by man. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements, and his ways past finding out" (Rom. 11:33). I am so glad that we have a just, holy, righteous, impartial, merciful, loving and sovereign God.