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EDITORIAL

Who Is Reverend?

Readers, did you know that the word reverend is found in the Bible only once, in Psalm 111:9, the psalmist, David, referring to God said: "He sent redemption unto His people: He hath commanded His covenant forever: holy and reverend is His name." Very clearly we observe here that the writer is saying that God's name is holy and reverend. The word for reverend, in the original Hebrew language, actually means the most fearful name. When the commonly known "King James Version" of the Bible in English language was published, the translators at that time had translated from the Hebrew Psalm 111:9 as "holy and reverend is his name." A few years ago when the New King James Version was made available, it reads: "Holy and awesome is His name." The same is true with all other translations/versions of the Bible, including the New International Version. The word Reverend describes one's character, not one's function. Holy, reverend, awesome, these are the attributes of God. Now, while people are worthy of respect, is it not obvious that some have presumptuously assumed a type of respect that is due only to God? Think!

Christ said, at Matthew 10:28, "And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him Who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." What Christ was teaching here is that the kind of reverence, fear and honour that belongs to God alone, should not be rendered to any man any where. It is very interesting to note in the Bible that men like Paul and Peter used words about themselves

which describe their function such as minister or preacher or servant. Or where in the Bible do we read of "Reverend Paul", or "Father Peter", or "Padri Jacob", Or "Pastor John"????

The word who was in the beginning with God, and was God, became flesh and dwelt among men, and they saw His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:1,14). Jesus Christ, the Son of God, says the Bible, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men. (Philippians 2:6,7). Our Lord Jesus Christ on earth was a minister or a servant. And, even, when someone called Him "Good Teacher", as we read in Mark 10:17, Jesus promptly corrected him by saying, "Why do you call me good? No one is good, but one, that is, God." (Mark 10:18). "Let this mind be in you," says Philippians 2:5 in the Bible, "which was also in Christ Jesus."

What Does It Mean To Be Pentecostal?

J.C. CHOATE

All Bible students are familiar with the name Pentecost. In Acts 2 we read of the day of Pentecost. Pentecost itself was a Jewish festival practiced under the law of Moses. It is not a Christian festival or some celebration that is to be observed under the law of Christ.

The only significance that Pentecost has to the Christian is the fact that God chose this day to be the day on which the Holy Spirit would be poured out upon the apostles, the gospel would be preached for the first time in fact, and the Lord's church would be established. That didn't mean that the apostles became Pentecostals, or that those who obeyed the Lord on that day would receive the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, and would henceforth be known as Pentecostals, or that the church would be a Pentecostal church. There is no indication whatsoever on this occasion that such would be the case, or that the Lord's people would be known by this name in the years that would follow.

Why then did the Lord choose Pentecost to be the day on which such a momentous occasion would take place? Jerusalem of course

was the most important city in the world in relation to religious activity. Jesus himself was crucified here, and more importantly was resurrected and ascended back to the Father in heaven from this great city. As for Pentecost, it was an annual Jewish festival that attracted Jews from all over the world. It would be a good day for the gospel to be preached, for converts to be made and to be prepared to return to their respective homes throughout the earth. In other words, the Lord would use this day, and these masses, to begin to spread his gospel throughout the whole world. This was not something that just happened but it was planned and carried out on schedule.

The apostles had been trained by the Lord for this occasion, and knowledge that they would still be men and in need of guidance, especially since he would not be with them physically, then he had promised to send the Comforter or the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth, to call to their remembrance all that he had taught them, to enable them to perform miracles to convince the people that they were of God, and to empower them to speak in other languages so they could preach to the people in their own language. (John 14:26; Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:8).

So the apostles are at Jerusalem and the people are there because it is the day of Pentecost, the first day of the week. The Holy Spirit is poured out upon the apostles, the ones to whom the promise was made and the ones who would proclaim the gospel on this day. As a sign of this, they began to speak in the languages of the people, and those that heard were amazed. They tried to come up with some solution, such as being drunk, "But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh . . ." (Acts 2:14-17). And he did. The apostles received the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit that they were promised and all others who obeyed the Lord received the gift of the Holy Spirit, the non-miraculous gift of the Spirit. (Acts 2:38). Later the apostles chose 7 men to lay their hands upon that they might have the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit to enable them to help in the work, but one of the qualifications was that they should be full of the Holy Spirit. Had they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, as did the apostles, then they would have already had the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit and there would have been no need

for the apostles to lay their hands on them so that they might receive this power. But they did not have the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit since they had not been baptized with the Holy Spirit, but rather they had obeyed the Lord and as a result had received the gift of the Holy Spirit which was the non-miraculous measure of the Holy Spirit.

But getting back to what happened on the day of Pentecost, the record tells us that the apostles preached the gospel to the people and "when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:37, 38). Continuing, we read, "Then they that gladly received the word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." (Acts 2:42). Then the record says, "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:47).

Now notice some things that happened here on the day of Pentecost. The Lord chose this day to be the day for the gospel to be preached as fact for the first time and for the church to be established. The apostles were there, they received the power of the Holy Spirit, preached the gospel to the multitudes, some 3,000 obeyed the Lord and were saved, and the Lord added them to his church. So, we have the beginning of the Lord's church on this occasion and after this the gospel spread throughout the world with congregations of that one church being planted wherever the gospel was preached and obeyed.

Next, notice some that are not said here in Acts 2 and afterward. Nothing is said to indicate that those who obeyed the gospel became Pentecostal. No where else in the scriptures do we read where the Lord's people were called Pentecostal. We do read, however, where they were called Christians, (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). The church was not called Pentecostal on the day of its beginning or any time thereafter. It was called the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27), speaking of congregations as being the churches of Christ (Romans 16:16), the church of God (1 Corinthians 1:1,2), etc.

Today all of those people who claim to have the baptism of the Holy Spirit, to be able to speak in an unknown tongue, who say that they can perform miracles, or that the Lord speaks directly to them, are generally known as Pentecostals. In other words, they claim that they have had a Pentecostal experience, or that they believe the Lord has given them the baptism of the Holy Spirit as he did the apostles, and so

on. They openly call themselves Pentecostals and some churches are even known as Pentecostal churches. Other churches are known by other names but still profess to be Pentecostal.

The word Pentecostal as used by the masses today is an unscriptural name. It cannot be supported by the scriptures. Furthermore, those who claim to be Pentecostals have not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, cannot perform miracles, and do not speak in other languages as did the apostles. They do not accept the Bible as being complete since they believe that God continues to reveal his will today through them and others. They belong to churches that are man-made, worship in ways unlike to the scriptures, and teach many things that are contrary to God's will.

For one to say that he is Pentecostal, he is saying that he is following the ways of men and is therefore deceived and lost. (Matthew 7:21-23; 1 John 4:1).

The foregoing is not said to be mean and ugly but to encourage one and all to think seriously concerning what you believe, who you are, and what you teach. Search the scriptures concerning these matters. Be true to God's teaching rather than to allow your emotions to be your guide in religious matters. Remember it is the truth that makes us free, not our feelings, what we think, what others say, and what we want to do. Jesus is our saviour but only when we believe in him enough to obey him and to follow him in all things.

Especially For Women

Jealousy Among Brothers And Sisters

BETTY BURTON CHOATE

"Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children . . . but when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him." (Genesis 37:3,4).

Peter was about to go out to the market. "James," he called, "would you like to go with me to the shop?"

James came running, hoping to get an ice cream while they were

out.

Anthony watched James leave with their father. "Why does Daddy always take James with him, Mommy? Why does he not take me too? Does he like James best?"

"No, Anthony, your Daddy loves all of you children the same. Maybe the reason he takes James is because he is the youngest. Don't feel bad about it."

Later, after the children had gone out, Mary said, "Peter, I want to talk to you about something that is important. Today when you took James with you to the shop. Anthony asked me if you love James more than you love him, because you don't take him along. Maybe you show more attention to James because he is the youngest, but you need to be careful because you are hurting Anthony."

Peter was thoughtful. He remembered the times he had taken James and had not even thought about Anthony's feelings. "Why have I done that?" he thought to himself. "Do I love James more? He is much like me, and I am proud of him. But I am proud of Anthony and Aseema too. I don't want to hurt them or to cause them to be jealous of James or to feel hurt and rejected. I will explain to them."

That night when Anthony and James were going to bed, their father came and sat down with them. He said, "I want to tell you boys something. I have been doing a wrong thing. I have been taking James out with me and leaving Anthony at home. If both can't go, I should take one of you boys and then the other the next time, because I am proud of both of you and I love both of you. I am sorry I have hurt you, Anthony."

Then Peter hugged both boys. "Let's pray about this," he said. So Peter, along with Anthony and James knelt beside the bed, and Peter prayed, "Our Father, thank you for letting us be Your children. And thank You for loving all of us the same. Forgive me, Father, for showing favoritism toward James. I didn't want to hurt Anthony, and I don't want to cause bad feelings between James and Anthony. Please help me to be a better and wiser daddy to them, Father. In Jesus' name we ask Your help. Amen."

Perhaps the reason God gives human parents the years of having our children small is so that we can have time to train and mold them into the kind of adults we know they should be. Childhood, in this way, is parallel to the human life itself as being a time of training and preparation for our eternal existence with God!

Because we do not occupy this planet alone, it is important that all of us learn how to live in peace and harmony with our fellow men.

Children are in a time of training, learning how to love and respect other humans, and how to behave properly toward them.

We read of various children in the Scriptures. Cain and Abel were the first brothers. Abel's longing to please God was greater than Cain's. Cain was not inspired to be more spiritual by the good example of his brother. Instead, he was jealous and angry. One day his anger caused him to kill Abel. (Genesis 4:1-8) Parents sometimes tolerate attitudes of anger and ugliness among their little ones, reasoning, "They are only children. They will grow out of this." But children must be taught that tempers are to be controlled, and that God expects brothers and sisters to love each other.

Ishmael was half-brother to Isaac, having the same father but not the same mother. Such mixing in families can cause great problems and serious consequences. In this case, Ishmael was mocking his young brother and laughing at him. Isaac's mother insisted that Abraham send Ishmael and his mother out of their home, because she would not allow him to treat Isaac in that way. (Genesis 21:8-10) Often one child in a family will tease another, deliberately provoking quarrels in a sly, sneaking way so that the parents may not easily realize just what the problem is. Sometimes it seems that the mother or the father prefers not to "see" what is happening, but it is important that children learn that bad behaviour will bring correction and that they cannot sneak behind their parents' backs to do mean things to smaller ones in the family.

Jacob and Esau were twin boys. Isaac was partial to Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob more. This is another family situation which will cause disastrous problems, and parents should avoid it. (Ephesians 6:9; Proverbs 28:21) In this case, the partiality led to deceit (Genesis 27:5-29) and to lying. This resulted in enmity so strong between the brothers that Esau would have killed Jacob, so Jacob had to leave home (V. 41). Though these things happened after the brothers became men, the attitudes which brought the problems would have developed over many years, from childhood. How sad it is when parents feel love for one child over others in the family. In such instances, the parents themselves are very wrong in their attitude, and they need to learn that showing partiality is condemned in the Scriptures, because of its disastrous effect on the family.

Partiality led to deceit, lying, hatred, and murderous anger. All of these trait can be detected by parents and should be checked while the children are very young, before they become habits of a lifetime.

Though "children will be children", they can be trained to grow out

of poor attitudes if parents teach, correct, and discipline them properly. These are behavioural problems which parents should be very careful to note and deal with:

- Selfishness, unwillingness to share one's things.
- Temper tantrums when the child doesn't get his way.
- Whining and crying when displeased with another child's behaviour.
- Fighting with brothers and sisters or with visiting children.
- Lying.
- Deceit, especially intended to get another child into trouble.
- Greediness.

A child has the time of "growing up" with brothers and sisters to learn how to live in peace and contentment with the larger outside world. Parents should look on jealousy and its resulting behaviour as a very serious problem, and they should be careful to correct these attitudes. These things are immature and wrong even among children, but if the children are allowed to grow to be adults with these same selfish and grasping attitudes, there will always be bad feelings and problems among the brothers and sisters.

"Shall We Sing?"

GARY COLLEY

Though some do know that the churches of Christ do not use mechanical instruments of music in worship to God, because there is no authority for the practice, many do not know why we sing and the great importance of singing as a part of worship. Some have never studied the commands of inspiration to learn "all truth" on this matter (Matthew 26:30; Acts 16:25; Romans 15:9; I Corinthians 14:15; Ephesians 5:19; Colosians 3:16; James 5:13). Some have never known the personal responsibility given by God which each faithful Christian has to discharge in singing. This is just as out of harmony with "truth" as those who have never considered, or else lightly consider, the fact that an addition to any act of worship given to us by God is sin (Matthew 28:20; John 4:24; Matthew 15:9).

But those who do not see the great importance of singing are often among Christians! If extra time for singing is set aside during our worship or a special time is suggested where mostly singing will be

rendered in worship, some are heard to excuse themselves from participation for that worship period with, "Oh, this is singing night."

This attitude goes back it seems to the time when the singing was ignored by those who remained outside the building until "the worship starts," meaning of course the preaching and the Lord's Supper. Most places have overcome one of the flaws in attitude but not both.

Singing Has A Divine Purpose

God has certainly done nothing by accident or lack of divine wisdom. There is purpose and value for man in all of His instructions. Among the values and purposes, there are four that are basic:

1. Instruct and teach: One of the avenues by which we dispense the spiritual food, and through which we grow, is to be gained by singing. It is an exercise in praise that brings strength and gives strength. The church is greatly benefited. Singing has the power to lift the downtrodden as it communicates the truth of God. The world is also helped to greater appreciation of the will of God through singing. It has been the spring-board of teaching by which many have given serious thought to God's love, and kindness, as well as His justice toward the lost.

2. Communicate Ideals: Singing sends out a strong fellow-feeling that is hard to express as well in any other way. The expression of heart, venting itself through the lips, is tender, sweet, and elevating to the good thoughts and morals of all. Children can learn greatly the real important things of life by observing and hearing good singing. They are also aware when our singing is only lip service and not sincere. One of the controlling influences of life is in the music we are accustomed to, either for good or evil. God desires that we should communicate ideals that will draw men unto Him.

3. Admonish righteous living: Faithfulness to the cause of Christ will be the difference in Heaven and Hell. Singing has the power to bring back our thoughts to the proper place, remove our doubts, and re-establish our lives. We are reminded that we have started out in the Christian race and must work out our own salvation (Philippians 2:12) "with fear and trembling." We are encouraged to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is our spiritual service (Romans 12:1-12). Singing brings warning and caution for one who would turn his back on righteous living (II Peter 2:20-22).

4. Bring praise to God: All that is said in the scriptures points to the important purpose of man's existence. Why are we here is a question of great magnitude. The simple answer missed by so many is that we are

created to praise our Creator. Since "the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork" (Psalm 19:1), man cannot correctly deny God the rightful place in his own creation nor successfully put Him out of his reasoning (Romans 1:19-22). To "glorify God for his mercy . . . I will give praises unto thee among the Gentiles and sing unto thy name" (Romans 15:9; Psalm 18:49). "SHALL WE SING?"

"Where Do You Draw The Line?"

DON WILLIAMS

As I was reading the newspaper recently, a little article caught my attention. The caption read, Mail Carrier quits over "sinful news magazines." I read with interest about a substitute mail carrier from Merville, Iowa named George Yoerger. Recently, he decided against delivering issues of *Time* and *Newsweek* Magazines to his customers, because of their cover pictures. One magazine depicted two women hugging, with the headline talking about Lesbians and magazine depicted a prostitute, dressed very scantily. The postmaster told Yoerger that he would have to make a choice; deliver the magazine, or lose his job. He chose the latter, stating "that to deliver the magazines would have delivered his customers into the mind of Satan, by tempting them to sin."

I do not know what you think about the actions of this farmer and rural mail carrier. Some would say he acted improperly—others would applaud his actions. One thing is certain—you have to admire him for taking a stand, and *drawing* the *line* as to what he thought was *unacceptable for him to do*.

Where do you draw the line? In matters regarding morality, are there some things that you stand "head and shoulders" against? What about your selection of TV and/or video viewing? I know of some people who will attend church every time the doors are opened, and yet regularly watch soap operas and/or other shows that depict the characters engaging in adultery and immorality. God, in his Word, tells us to "abhor that which is evil; and cleave to that which is good" (Romans 12:9). In I Thessalonians 5:22, Paul writes; "Abstain from all appearances of evil." In matters like this, where do you draw the line?

Where do you draw the line regarding attendance of worship

services? Will you be in attendance everytime the doors are opened? regardless of who comes to visit, etc.? Do you allow holidays to interfere with your allegiance to God? Do minor aches and pains that *would not* keep *you* from going to work keep *you away* from worship with God and his people? Indeed, our attitude needs to be like that of the Psalmist—"I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psalm 122:1).

May we truly be seen as lights to the world. May we "draw the line" along matters of common decency and morality so as to show others how Christians ought to live.

Now, That's Shocking

GLENN COLLEY

What motivates people to consider repentance is a fascinating subject. Repentance (Greek words, "Metamelmai" and "Metanoeo"), means "to follow a different direction, especially in regard to pleasing God, by changing one's mind, one's will, and one's actions."

In this article we are concerned with the "shocks" which have been effective in bringing people to their senses, and have motivated them to seek repentance. It is important first to remember what actually brings about the heart of repentance. Romans 2:4 says, "Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the *goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance.*" Paul wrote in II Corinthians 7:10, "For *Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation . . .*"

We cannot deny however, that there are occurrences in the lives of sinners which put them in a better frame of mind to remember the "goodness of God," and to feel "Godly sorrow."

There was a time when King Saul, eager to kill innocent David, awakened to find a part of his robe cut off. From a distance, David held it up before Saul, proving that he could have killed him easily, but didn't. David meant him no harm. Saul's heart was melted, and he repented of his meanness toward David (I Samuel 24).

There was a time when David quietly listened to Nathan tell of a poor man with only one ewe lamb, who was robbed by a wealthy man in cruel selfishness. David's anger flamed. Then Nathan responded to David's question of the rich one's identity by saying, "Thou art the man."

David said, "Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord . . ." (II Samuel 12). Later he would write, "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow" (Psalm 51:7).

There was a time when Nebuchadnezzar thought only of himself, his power, and his riches. Then with the words, "Hew down the tree," God dropped him to his knees giving him the appearance and mentality of a wild animal. When God reversed the curse, Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed with the penitent heart, "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment; and those that walk in pride He is able to abase" (Daniel 4).

There was a time when Belshazzar, king of Babylon, mocked God by drinking from the golden vessels of the temple and worshiping the gods of Babylon. Suddenly, the laughter and noise of the party abruptly silenced, and the King's knees began to knock together, when they looked to see a man's hand writing "against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace . . ." (Daniel 5). He had a heart primed for repentance. He woke up and ceased his sinful practices.

There was a time when Peter denied the Lord three times, the last time with a curse. What was he thinking? How could his heart permit him to do this? And then the cock crowed. Never has the shrill cry of the rooster gone so deep within a man. Peter's heart changed to one of repentance (John 18).

There was a time when the prodigal son "came to himself" and said, "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough, and to spare, and I perish with hunger. I will arise and go to my father and say 'Father, I have sinned . . ." (Luke 15). The shock of feeding the swine, and considering how low he had fallen, changed his heart to desire repentance.

There was a time when Zacchaeus, a tax collector lived up to the dishonest reputation of his profession, saw the Master. A conversation with Jesus produced a kind and honest heart within Zacchaeus, and he said, "Behold Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold" (Luke 19).

There was a time when a man was committing adultery with his father's wife. The church at Corinth was rebuked for not taking steps of withdrawal from that man in hopes of waking him up to his dangerous position (I Corinthians 5).

Who needs to repent? II Peter 3:9 says, "The Lord . . . is not willing

that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

What is the need of repentance? "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out . . ." (Acts 3:19). Acts 17:30 says, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Repentance is necessary because God commands it, and because we will perish without it.

It is an interesting, and sometimes disturbing thought to wonder what "shock" will be needed to bring our friends and loved ones to want repentance in their lives. And as frightening as it is, a good prayer is that they will face that "shock" before they are hurled into eternity without Christ. I would like to think that we will have hearts focused on Jesus that will need only quiet, gentle "wake-up calls" when we stray.

The Gainsaying Of Korah

NEAL POLLARD

In Jude three, the writer exhorts God's people to strive earnestly for the faith in view of some who sought to undermine it. In vivid imagery, Jude identifies them. They are *deceivers*. They are *distorters*. They are *disbelievers*. He goes on to compare them to the faithless Jews who were denied Canaan. They are compared to the angels that sinned. These individuals are placed along side the immoral inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. Then he labels them dirty dreamers, dominion despisers, and dignity defamers. Jude says they are brute beasts who corrupt themselves. Then, in verse eleven, he says, "Woe unto them! They are like the murderer, Cain. They have recklessly followed the crowd-pleasing Balaam. And, they "perished in the gainsaying of Core" (verse 11). Notice three things about this last phrase in Jude eleven.

Korah, The Gainsayer

("the gainsaying of Core")

Korah had a good heritage, for his great-grandfather was Levi. He had influential followers, princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown (Numbers 16:1,2). According to his resume, he was a natural leader. He could have been a faith builder in Israel. However, he had heart problems. He was jealous of Moses! He blocked out of his heart the fact that God had hand-picked Moses and

Aaron to lead the Hebrew wanderers.

By gainsaying, Jude is suggesting that Korah was "opposing," "contradicting," or "denying" Moses. Korah thought the way he had devised was better than God's way, despite the fact that God's thoughts and ways are higher than any man's (Isaiah 55:8-9). Korah should have seen that God was holding Moses' hand as he had at the Red Sea, at Mount Sinai, and at the watering rock. But, he could only see himself and his grand designs of being the "leader of the pack."

In mentioning Korah, Jude is putting his finger over the pulse of an attitude of heart present in the early church. As in the days of Korah, in Jude's day there were those who thought they had a better way than God's way. So, they contradicted the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. What motivates individuals to bemoan New Testament teaching and preaching? What causes people to challenge the plea for the old paths? When the doctrine of Jesus is being undermined, surely those responsible for such are guilty of having a heart like Korah's!

The Followers Of Korah

("Have gone after the way of . . .")

Who followed Korah? In Numbers 16, we see again the 250 princes of the assembly (16:2). It is not altogether improbable to believe that Korah was the ringleader of the whole uprising, more responsible for God's anger than his cohorts Dathan and Abiram (Numbers 16:1) were. The followers of Korah were willing to follow him all the way, despite the warnings of Moses (Numbers 16:9-11; 24-30). Because of this, the followers of Korah were equally guilty.

Who followed Korah? According to the book of Jude, they are those who speak evil of those things which they know not. The followers of Korah to which Jude refers in his writings are those who choose not to believe or defend God's wonderful words of life. False teachers are followers of Korah.

Who followed Korah? In the church of today, the followers of Korah are those who wish to scratch itching ears (II Timothy 4:3, 4). The followers of Korah are those who devise their own doctrine (Matthew 15:9). They are false teachers who deny the Lord that bought them (I Peter 2:1). They are the ones who deny the deity of Jesus Christ (I John 2:22). The followers of Korah are as guilty as he was.

The End Of Their Gainsaying ("Perished . . .")

Back in Numbers 16, we read the end of the story about Korah. To determine who God was with, Moses challenged Korah to a test. Because Korah and the princes challenged the priesthood, Moses suggested that Korah take his censers, put incense in them, each of the 250 princes do the same, and Aaron also do the same. Moses said that God would show to all who was holy and acceptable. The next day, the challenge was issued by Moses. Korah and his princes made their offering at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. Noticing Numbers 16:31-35, we find, "And it came to pass, as he [Moses] had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them [Korah and the princes]: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them; and they perished from among the congregation. And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also. And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense." When the people murmured that Moses and Aaron had "killed the people of the Lord" (verse 41), the Lord readied to destroy the whole congregation of the people. Because the Lord sent a plague upon the congregation, Aaron had to rush to make an atonement for this crowd-swayed by the influence and Korah. Aaron stood between the dead and the living, making an atonement for the people. The plague spread no further, but "they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred, beside them that died about the matter of Korah" (Numbers 16:49). God made it clear that Aaron was his High Priest. Korah was merely a trouble-making gainsayer.

What did the story of Korah illustrate to Jude's audience? False teaching would cause both false teacher and followers to perish. As confident and smooth as Korah seemed to be, he led the people of God astray. Two hundred fifty men were consumed with fire because they followed Korah. Fourteen thousand and seven hundred Israelites were destroyed by the plague the Lord sent because they were swayed by Korah. How tragic! How heart-breaking! God's children were destroyed, not because they led an insurrection against Moses and Aaron, but because they followed the wrong leader. If they had trusted God and had known God's will, they would not have died. So, the inspired Jude could predict the same spiritual end for those who teach false doctrine and for those who are swayed by it. How sad to be lost because we

follow a teacher down the path of error! If only more children of God studied His will to know what truth is, fewer and fewer would go astray.

As Jude suggested, let us "build up ourselves in our most holy faith," "keep ourselves in the love of God," and "look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 20-21). As we look to God's word and the doctrine of Christ as our standard for religious authority, we will avoid following the path that Korah blazed!

The 24-Hour Creation Days

BRAD T. BROMLING

There is much confusion over the length of the creation days. Some people, intimidated by the pronouncements of evolutionary scientists, feel compelled to squeeze evolution's millions of years into the creation week. By doing so, they think they can accept both Genesis and evolution. This position is simply a compromise which will not work.

All available evidence shows that the days of creation were not long periods of time, but regular days of approximately 24 hours. First, whenever the Hebrew word for "day" (*yom*) is modified by a numeral (in non-prophetic verses) it always means a literal day. The same is true when the word occurs in the plural (e.g., Exodus 20:11).

Second, when God commanded His people to observe the Sabbath Day, He gave this reason: "*For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day . . .*" (Exodus 20:11). The Hebrews were to pattern their week after the creation week. The same terminology is used for both weeks. Did the Jews think they were to work for six "vast eons of time" and then rest one "vast eon of time?" Obviously not. Why should it be assumed that God did so?

Third, if the days of creation were long periods of time, how would the plants that depend upon insects for pollination have survived those vast epochs between "day" three and "day" five (when the insects were created?) They wouldn't; but they are here.

Fourth, if the day were vast periods of time, then man is a very recent newcomer to this planet. But Jesus and Paul indicate that man has been here "*from the beginning*" (cf. Mark 10:6; Romans 1:21). In reality, mankind is only about ninety-six hours younger than the world.

Enough with this compromise—we should simply take God at His Word!

The Virgin Birth

STEPHEN WIGGINS

By the phrase "virgin birth," I refer to the miraculous manner in which Jesus Christ came into the world as a human. The virgin Mary conceived the promised child, not by the ordinary procreative power of a human, but by the miraculous agency of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:34-35). Thus, the expression "virgin birth" is an adequate designation with reference to this profound and prominent teaching of the Bible.

The beginning chapters of Matthew and Luke are the two accounts of Christ's birth within the Bible. Luke records the angel Gabriel's appearance to Mary announcing her conception. Matthew relates how an angel presented himself to Joseph in a dream to quieten his confused anxieties concerning Mary's pregnancy. Both of these Biblical narratives relate the purpose of the approaching birth and are in complete harmony with one another.

The Old Testament had foretold the virgin birth some 700 years before its fulfillment. When rebellious Ahaz, king of Judah, refused to ask a sign of the Lord concerning his enemies, Isaiah announced that the Lord himself would give a sign to the house of David. Read it: *"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel"* (Isaiah 7:14).

The Holy Spirit then later guided the hand of Matthew as he wrote that this Old Testament prediction was fulfilled in the virgin birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *"Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us"* (Matthew 1:22-23).

As faithful Christians we accept without hesitancy the virgin birth of Christ as fact and truth. This is why: To deny or belittle this basic teaching of the Bible in any way whatsoever is to sacrifice the integrity of the Gospel authors. The virgin birth is a part of the New Testament scriptures. It is a part of God's inspired and authoritative word. Two

inspired writers give crystal clear accounts of the record.

Thus, to reject the virgin birth is to repudiate and discard God's word, the Bible. The authority of God's word is involved here. One cannot consistently accept the Bible as God's inspired word and at the same time reject its revelations to be false and spurious. Those who accept the scriptures as the authoritative word of God will in no way disclaim any of its teaching, the virgin birth included.

The deity of Christ is also involved in the virgin birth. Here's how. Be it remembered that Jesus was not just a mere man. He was not solely and only a human as you and I are only humans. Jesus was both God and man. He was God in the flesh. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth"* (John 1:1, 14). Then the apostle Paul expresses the incarnation like this: *"God was manifest in the flesh"* (1 Timothy 3:16). And again, *"But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law"* (Galatians 4:4).

If Jesus was not virgin born by miraculous conception of the Holy Spirit as the Bible affirms, then he must have had a human father. But if he had a human father then he was not divine. Thus, his deity is excluded and Jesus is reduced to the level of an ordinary man. And no man can save himself from sin, much less anyone else. This should make it clear to the average reader that to deny the virgin birth not only is a denial and rejection of God's word as being an inspired and true account, but such veto also robs Jesus of his divinity, reduces him to the level of an ordinary man, and implies he can no longer be the Savior of the world. In essence, to deny the virgin birth is to flat out deny Christ. All should know that for one to downplay or repudiate this fundamental doctrine of the Bible is to surely make a serious, soul-damning mistake.

Starving To Death

We are told that a bird can go nine days without food, a dog 20 days, a turtle 500 days, a snake 800 days, a fish 1,000 days and some insects 12,000 days. For man, however, two weeks is about the limit. Sooner or later nourishment is necessary for all God's creatures.

Have you ever noticed that we are not asked to "read" the Word of God? Rather we are urged to "study" it, "meditate" upon it and

"compare" spiritual things with spiritual. In other words, the Bible is too holy and sacred to "toy with." God wants us to put in some real consecrated effort when we approach the Scriptures, for in this way we will more readily assimilate its sweet nourishment and good doctrine.

But the sad fact is that many Christians are starving to death, not because food is unavailable but simply because they will not eat of it. What home does not have a Bible or opportunity to attend the services of worship? A Bible on the shelf is of no more value than food in the refrigerator. Don't starve your soul! Feed on the Word of God and grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior.

(Author Unknown)

Comfort In Death

DAN MURPHY

One of our greatest fears is death. It may be that we fear the unknown or the finality of never again being on this earth. It certainly is not the most comfortable subject to discuss. For the Christian, however, the Bible portrays a comforting picture of death. Paul wrote: "having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better." (Philippians 1:23.) How could dying be much better when it brings such loss, grief, and emptiness?

Death is better because, through Christ, it will be a victory. With death our battle will be over and we will have won. We will be victorious over death itself. (1 Corinthians 15:57.) The grave will not be the end of our life but rather the departure into another realm. (1 Corinthians 15:42-44.) We will go to a beautiful place that Christ has prepared for us. (Revelation 21:1f; John 14:1f.)

A second blessing found in death is that we will no longer experience worldly troubles. Death is not being put out of our misery but rather a passage into a better place—heaven. Heaven is a place where problems, suffering, and trials will not be present. John described heaven as a place of comfort, peace, and safety to Christians who were undergoing severe suffering. "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." (Revelation 21:4.)

Death's greatest blessing, of course, is that we will be with our

Lord. It was because he so desired to be with Christ that Paul longed to leave this life. (Philippians 1:23.) Paul reminded his brethren: "for our life is in heaven, from whence also we look for the savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." (Philippians 3:20.) He comforted the Thessalonians with the reality of the dead being resurrected to "meet the Lord in the air" upon his return and "so shall we ever be with the Lord." (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.) What a comforting thought!

God takes one of our greatest fears and gives us hope and comfort to face it. He takes the sting out of death, by giving us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:57).

"The Faith"

MAXIE B. BOREN

Jude urged Christians to "*contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints*" (Jude 3). Obviously, he was not referring to the personal faith of individuals in giving such instruction, but that system of religion which Jesus brought to the world. "The faith" is equated with "the Way" in the New Testament. And since the Scriptures plainly teach there is only ONE way, then there is no other logical conclusion but that there is only ONE faith! As Jesus said, "*I am the way. . .*" (John 14:6). Paul declared that there is "*one faith*" (Ephesians 4:5).

Therefore, people are in error when they think in terms of there being "many faiths." This fallacious concept is often manifested in conversations among people. Perhaps someone inquires of another, "What faith are you?" Actually, what they mean is, "Which church do you belong to?" Such terminology is employed because most people have been led to believe that there are many churches (and thus, many faiths), and that one is as good as another, and that it doesn't matter which church a person belongs to.

The Bible teaches plainly that there is only "*one body*" and identifies that one body as being the church (Colossians 1:18 and Ephesians 4:4). The fact that many so-called "churches" exist today does not alter the truth that Christ established only one. He said, "*I will build my church, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it*" (Matthew 16:18). He purchased it with His own blood, giving His life for it (Acts 20:28 and Ephesians 5:28). It is His church, and God gave Him

to be the head of it (Ephesians 1:20-23).

When a person hears the Gospel of Christ, believes it, and obeys it (by repenting, confessing faith in Jesus Christ as God's Son, and being baptized), he enters into the body of Christ. He thus becomes a Christian, a member of the Lord's church. To be in the church is to be in the Way . . . it is to have embraced the faith . . . to be a child of God, and a citizen of the heavenly kingdom.

You, And Preaching

There isn't a word that a preacher can say,
No matter how lovely or true,
Nor a prayer that his eager lips may pray
That can preach a sermon as you.

You vowed to serve Christ, And men know that you did.
They're watching the things that you do.
There isn't one action of yours that is hid,
Men are watching and studying you.

You say You're no preacher?
Yes, but you preach a powerful sermon each day,
The acts of your life are the things that you teach.
It isn't the things that you say.

So Christians, remember you bear His name.
You are living examples, men praise you or blame,
And measure all Christians by you

—Author Unknown

10 Ways To Find Time To Read Your Bible

1. Wake up ten minutes earlier each morning and read.
2. Put a Bible portion under your pillow to read each night before sleep.

3. Talk less and you will find a few more minutes to read.
4. Keep a copy of the Bible in the kitchen, or at the telephone to "read while you wait."
5. Carry a copy of the Bible in your purse or pocket to read while waiting for doctors, unpunctual people, etc.
6. Never go on a trip without your Bible.
7. Keep a copy of the Bible in your car.
8. Remember, a Bible in your hand is worth two on the table.
9. Turn off the TV!
10. Read a verse or two at meal time when all the family is together.

A Home Prepared

TONY LALLI

In the English language some words bring a feeling of sadness. One is "alone." One that evokes much feeling of sympathy and compassion is "homeless." In the wake of disasters, the news media speak of those left homeless. What is even sadder is when there is a home available or prepared and those who need it don't know or don't care.

The Bible speaks of some homes that have been prepared. The Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:8-17) was prepared by God as man's first home. As someone has said, "To Adam, Paradise was home. To the good among his descendants, home is paradise." The Prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) had a home prepared, but he left it. George Moore, in *The Brook Kerioth*, wrote, "A man travels the world over in search of what he needs, and returns home to find it." I remember in the military marching to the cadence song, "You had a good home but you left."

Another home that has been prepared is spoken of by Jesus. He invites us to live with Him. "*In my Father's house are many mansions...*" (John 14:2). The greatest home one can imagine has been prepared for God's children. Paul speaks of being "*at home with the Lord*" in 2 Corinthians 5:1-9. The phrase "*at home*" comes from endemeo in Greek, and it literally means "to be among one's people." Ecclesiastes 12:5 says that "*man goes to his everlasting home.*" Isn't it great to know there is a home prepared and waiting!

A final word. Jesus says that we must prepare ourselves for this

home that has been prepared for us. In Matthew 7:24-27 He tells us to build our lives on the Rock that gives a sure foundation. He is that foundation. On what foundation are you building your house?

Saved By Grace

CLEON LYLES

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Sometimes the most simple statements in the Bible are the most difficult to understand. This is true because so much confusion has been heaped upon them. It is difficult to clear away the theories of men and grasp the plain statement of the Holy Spirit.

Grace means favor. Thus, if we are saved by the grace of God we are saved by the favor of God. God wants to save us. Every move that He made in the direction of our salvation was because of favor. We were not worthy of His goodness, hence grace is an unmerited favor.

We cannot save ourselves. It is impossible to accumulate merit before God. Regardless of what we may do that is approved of God, we are still saved by grace. Now this does not destroy the fact that there are certain things to be done. Accepting the grace of God requires obedience to His will. This will be true throughout our lives. But when we have done all, we are still unprofitable servants. We must be saved by God's favor. Therefore, doing what is demanded of us in no wise makes us earn the salvation God has provided for us.

When the heart is right everything else will be all right. Certainly we will do that which is required of us. But the heart cannot be right when we think in term of our own merit and forget that we are saved by the grace of God.

Notice in this verse that he says we are saved by grace through faith. Faith is something that works. The faith that pleases God does what God says. Having done what God demands, we lean upon His grace. He accepts us because the heart is right, and obedience to His commands demonstrates, or makes perfect, our faith. Thus, when we believe Him and obey His will, we are saved by grace. We do not merit salvation, but we have met the requirements of our faith.

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I Sunny David, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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