

THE BIBLE TEACHER

Pleading for the Restoration of Pure New Testament Christianity

Vol. 28

May 1997

No. 1

EDITORIAL

What Does The Bible Teach?

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”

These are the very first words of the Bible, which tell us of a beginning of the heavens and the earth; a God who created them in the beginning, implying that He existed before the beginning; and that the world, heavens and the earth and everything in them were created by Him.

There are some who believe that the universe is a result of some inexplicable and unknown chance combination of interacting forces. They say that billions of years ago there was a great explosion that resulted in the formation of universe! How absurd it is to believe something like that! We have heard of many explosions, and may be witnessed some. What do they produce? Do they produce beauty, design, order? They don't create or build anything, in fact, they destroy everything. On the other hand, the universe is by purpose and design; there is beauty and order in it. It is most certainly inconceivable to imagine that the vastness, the order, the magnificence, the complexity that we observe all around us, just happened by some blind chance of interacting forces! How can life evolve from nonlife? Can something come out of nothing? How wonderful it is to know and believe that in the beginning there was a God, who has always existed, and that the eternal God is the Creator of

heaven and earth and whatsoever are in them!

There are the evolutionists who believe in what is called "continuous creation." Of course, by this they do not mean that something was made out of nothing, but rather, as making something shapely out of shapelessness. But this theory of continuous and progressive creation presupposes that each state of the material world was preceded by a previous state. Therefore, evidently, such presuppositions would make it impossible for the universe ever to have had a beginning, for each state must logically have been preceded by a previous state. There must be a beginning! What was that in the beginning? Where did it come from? How and when did that start evolving? Again, they say that man has evolved from monkey, which had evolved from another lower state, and that from another lower state, and that from another, and that from another . . . But the question is from where did that first one come from which the process of evolution began? Why is monkey still a monkey, why monkey has not changed into something else? And, why man is still man, who has supposedly evolved from the state of monkey? Why is man not evolving into another being? Certainly, "The fool has said in his heart, "there is no God". (Psalm 14:1).

What is most important? Mind or matter? Of course, it is the mind. Therefore it is most logical to believe, that this wonderful and beautiful and orderly universe was created by the living, almighty wise God, than to believe that lifeless and mindless matters have given birth to life and mind, and the orderly universe. The Bible, at Psalm 19:1 states, "The heavens declares the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork." One of the writers of the Bible said, "I will praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." (Psalm 139:14). In Genesis 1:1 we do read that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, but in the remaining of the chapter we read how God created everything in the heavens and on earth. In Genesis 1:26 & 27 we read: "Then God said, Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. So God created man in His own image;

in the image of God. He created him male and female. He created them." Thanks be to God! Praise His name! Because He has created man, you and me, in His likeness and in His own image! When we were born, as little babies we were pure and sinless like Him, as Adam and Eve were in the beginning; and like Him we are Spiritual and eternal being. Like God we will have an eternal existence, because we have been created by Him in His own image.

Quite recently I was listening to a discussion, over the television, with a cosmologist, who was, amongst other questions, asked to explain the destiny of galaxies. His answer was that they will all slowly be eliminated, and how much time it would take he didn't know! When asked about the destiny of man, his answer was, man probably will find other civilizations on other planets. What does the Bible teach? Peter, the apostle, guided by the Holy Spirit of God wrote: "But the heavens and the earth which now exist are kept in store by the same word, reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is long suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the element will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness" (2 Peter 3:7-11) Christ taught, "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation." (John 5:28 & 29). Paul, the apostle, wrote: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he had done, whether good or bad." (2 Corinthians 5:10).

The Bible contains the words of God; the will of God for man; He has communicated His mind through the Bible to man.

We must listen to our Creator our Maker; who has given us the body and soul, our life. Christ also taught that we can lose our soul in hell on the day of reckoning, if we trust in the things and in the wisdom of the world. (Matthew 16:26). But, if we listen to God through His revealed will in the Bible and trust in Him and do what He has asked us to do then He will save us from all sin and will welcome us in His beautiful heaven, the eternal home of the righteous.

Nothing Has Changed

J.C. CHOATE

In recent times a lot has been said about change in relation to politics, communications, and just about every phase of life, even religion. But when it comes to God and his will, nothing has changed, and neither will they change. As for the basics, they are always there for us to build on and to give us hope for the future. This we can have confidence in.

There is still one God, the creator of all things, the one who made us and gave us a living soul. He is still all powerful, all knowing, and the sustainer of life. Without him we cannot survive. How can we deny him and refuse to obey him?

There is still one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom all things were made, born of the Virgin Mary, the Son of God, who died for us and became our Lord and saviour. He is a resurrected Lord who reigns today at the right hand of God and has promised to return to judge one and all and to take the faithful to heaven. How can we help but believe him, confess him before men, obey him, wear his name, and to faithfully serve him all the days of our life?

The Spirit is still the Spirit, the third person in the Godhead, the one who has given us the Lord's word, and all who obey the gospel receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The Bible is still God's word and given by the inspiration of

God. It is the truth and completely furnishes man to every good work. Heaven and earth will pass away but the Lord's word will stand forever. It is not to be added to or subtracted from. One day we will all be judged by it. We need to read it with reverence, believe it, and obey it.

There is but one gospel based on the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection. There are the facts to believe, commands to obey, and promises to receive. It is the power of God unto salvation unto everyone that believes. It is the good news of salvation.

There is still but one church, the church of Christ, the spiritual body and house of Christ. Jesus is the founder, the head, and the saviour. It is the one that Christ will return for and take to heaven. Why would anyone in his right mind entertain the idea of being a member of some man-made church when he can be a member of the one and only church that belongs to the Lord, the church for which Christ died and the one he shed his blood for? There is no body or organisation that can compare to it. The Lord's church will stand forever.

The name of Christ is still above every name. Salvation is in that name. We have been baptized in that name or by the authority of that name and take that name as being the family name of the church and are known by the name Christian as we follow Christ. We are to do all in that name.

There is no other name under heaven given by men whereby we may be saved.

There is still one way to worship God and that is in spirit and in truth. It is to be done on the first day of the week, every first day of the week. God still wants us to sing and make the melody in the heart. The Lord is the one to be pleased, not man. We are to pray, study God's word, partake of the Lord's Supper, and give of our means as the early saints did. That has been clearly defined in the scripture and not left to man's judgment. This kind of worship can not be improved on.

Man will still die, appear before the judgment bar of God, and spend eternity in heaven or hell. There is no way to escape these realities.

Sin is still sin. It is missing the mark, failing to do God's will.

If continued in, it will bring death. Man must repent or turn from it and obey God to be forgiven.

Man and woman are still male and female. Each has a soul that needs to be saved, and each have been given roles in life and in the church. Man cannot be woman and woman cannot be man. In marriage man is to be the husband and the father of his children and woman is to be the wife and the mother of her children. In the church man is to give leadership, preach God's word, and if qualified to serve as an elder or deacon. Woman cannot be the husband of one wife or the father of children, and therefore cannot be the husband of one wife or the father of children, and therefore cannot serve as an elder or deacon. Neither has she been given authority to publicly preach, lead singing, say prayers and wait on the Lord's Table. Does that diminish her role in the church? Certainly not. She has more work to do than she will ever be able to do. We should never question the Lord or the work that he has given us to do.

We must remember that God's way is not man's way and man cannot take God's place. We are human, the creation of God, and as sinners we need the salvation the Lord offers. We follow, not lead. We serve, not command. We submit, not demand. Therefore we are not in position to tell God what we will do or not do. We, rather, strive to please the Lord in all that we do, putting his will above our will, being desirous always of doing his will in all that we do and say. That is the way it has always been and the way it will always be. Why would we want it to be any other way?

In spite of all we strive to do to please the Lord and to comply with his will, we are still dependent on the grace and mercy of God to save us in this world and in the world to come. But as important as that is, still the grace and mercy of God will not save us if we refuse to do what the Lord has asked us to do.

Is A Woman Required To Cover Her Head While Praying?

BETTY BURTON CHOATE

There are those who say that a woman must cover her head with a hat or a veil whenever she prays and in worship. Others say this is not necessary. This confusion results from mis-translation and misunderstanding of the discussion of headship and coverings in I Corinthians 11:3-16.

"But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

- At the very beginning of the passage, Paul defined the primary question under consideration: **authority**. The discussion of coverings is only secondary, being a means of expressing *subjection to the designated authority*. In God's system the *physical* head, in its very appearance, can bring honor or dishonour to its *spiritual* head. Thus, a man's head—covered—dishonors his spiritual head, Christ. A woman, on the other hand, whose head is uncovered dishonors her head, her husband.
- Whatever else this passage is teaching, we must never lose sight of the reality of the **order of authority** God has established. We may debate the question of *exactly what type of covering was under discussion* and we may honestly and sincerely come to a wrong conclusion, for which God will surely forgive us. But *we cannot miss the clear teaching that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. To ignore or defy this truth strikes at the very heart of God's system.*

"Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head. But every woman who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonours her head, for that is one and the same as if her head were shaved. For if a

woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man . . .

“Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonour to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her [instead of] a covering.”

It is not only God who says that the manner of dressing the hair makes a visual statement concerning the heart and the relationship of the individual. All cultures have used hair in a similar way. It is interesting, and most revealing concerning the importance of this study, to note how the hair has been used historically to indicate one's lifestyle, convictions, morals, and often even one's religious beliefs:

- Throughout the Old Testament, and in the Jewish background of the New Testament, to “uncover” the head meant to shave it. In Leviticus 10:1, when Nadab and Abihu were killed for their sin, God forbade Aaron to “uncover” his head in mourning; he was not to shave his head, as was customary. Job 1:20 records that when Job received the news that his children had been killed in a violent storm, he tore his clothes and shaved his head.
- In the catacombs of Rome are numerous carvings and drawings representative of first-century Christianity. None of those drawings indicate that women during that time wore veils during the worship assemblies of the church. Their hair was their covering of modesty and glory.
- It was not until the Middle Ages, when the Roman Catholic Church had come into existence, that paintings and sculpture began to show women with the covering of a veil in worship. Some denominations, growing out of Catholicism, retained the practice as religious law.
- In the very pagan culture of the city of Corinth in the first century, however, women—priestesses and religious prostitutes—of the goddess Aphrodite commonly cropped their hair or shaved their heads, symbols of their profession. For a Christian woman to “uncover” herself in such a

fashion was "shameful" because of the conclusions she would cause others to reach regarding her and her relationship to her husband.

- in a parallel today, the "punk" hair styles worn by some women of that rebellious and degenerate element of society would say shameful things about a Christian woman who might dare to dress her hair in such a way. The hair styles of the "hippies" were also used to make visual statements of rebellion toward authority and rejection of the established system.

"For man is from woman, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. For this reason the woman ought to have [a symbol of] authority on [her] head, because of the angels.

"Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. For as the woman was from the man, even so the man also is through the woman; but all things are from God.

- What does it mean, ". . . because of the angels . . ."? It was a fallen angel—Satan—who came to Eve and led her into disobedience to God. Because Satan and his evil angels are still in the world and are still tempting humanity, the covering of a woman's head is a symbol which says to all in the physical world as well as in the spirit world that she is living under the authority of her husband.
- Further discussion of the relationship between man and woman defines the interdependence of each upon the other: though originally woman was made from the man, in the system of procreation ordained by God, it is through woman that all subsequent generations of men have been brought into the world. The conclusion is, therefore, that there is an interdependence, that both man and woman are important, yet all things ultimately are from God.

"Judge among yourselves. Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given

to her for a covering. [In the original Greek text, this phrase reads. "For the long hair instead of a covering is given to her."]

"But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God."

Another rendering of these verses reads: "Every man who prays or prophesies with long hair dishonors his head. And every woman who prays or prophesies with no covering of hair on her head dishonours her head—she is just like one of the "shorn women." If a woman has no covering, let her be for now with short hair, but since it is a disgrace for a woman to have her hair shorn or shaved, she should grow it again. A man ought not to have long hair." (The Narrated Bible, F. LaGard Smith).

This entire passage discusses "covered," "uncovered," and "covering"—that the woman's head is to be fully covered. But the original Greek language does not speak at all of a *veil* as the covering a woman is to wear. An artificial covering—a garment—has been "read into" the text because of an awareness of various religious customs through the centuries. We would do well to put those customs out of our minds in studying this question, and to give close attention to what is actually written in Scripture.

Verse 15 explains, *"But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given to her [instead of] a covering."* Her long hair is given so that she can be fully covered, as God requires! And her hair provides a natural covering *instead of* "a covering" The Greek word for "covering" in this particular verse is *paribolaion*. The definition in Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon is "a covering thrown around, a wrapper." Interestingly, this word which means a covering of a garment is *used only in this verse*—and this verse states clearly that the woman's long hair is given *instead of the paribolaion!*

If the Holy Spirit had intended to convey the teaching that a woman must be covered with a *veil*, why did He not use that very definitive word in all of the other verses? Instead, He used only "covered," and then specified that the woman's hair was given for her covering. He further defined that her hair—not a veil—is a glory to her.

In contrast, the man's head is not to be covered. Eldred

Echols wrote regarding this,

"Having his head covered" is a commentary, not a translation. Lenski translated the sense correctly, "having something down from his head." What the something is is neither stated nor implied in verse 4.

In his commentary on 1 Corinthians, Burton Coffman said,

The logical understanding of this would refer it to "long hair", being long enough to hang down from the head, as clearly indicated by the apostle's words a moment later: "If a man have long hair, it is a dishonor to him" (v. 14).

Clement of Alexander, writing on this subject during the second century A.D., said concerning the length of men's hair:

The hair of the head may not grow so long as to come down and interfere with the eyes . . . cropping is to be adopted . . . let not twisted locks hang far down from the head, gliding into womanish ringlets. (quoted from *Ante Nicene Fathers*, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.).

Certainly, throughout history and throughout the world, it has generally been true that men have worn hair *identifiably* shorter than women, a fact which can have its basis only in nature itself. This does not mean that a man cannot have any hair, or that scissors can never be used on a woman's hair. "Long" is not defined in centimeter or inches. Rather, since this is the one alterable part of our bodies, the length of the hair is to be used to help maintain a physical distinction between man and woman.

The sense of the passage is this: God does not want men to dishonor Him by coming before him in worship with a womanish appearance; neither does He want a Christian woman to dishonour her husband by being "uncovered," having her hair cut short in fashion as a man.

This particular question of "covering" as is discussed in the Scriptures is not the result of the changing whims of "culture." It is based on God's rules of authority and male-female roles and appearance which go back all the way to the time of Adam and Eve.

But the question concerning the wearing of an artificial

covering, a veil, in addition to the natural covering of the hair is a matter of local culture and can change with the times, without being sin.

- When Rebekah saw Isaac coming across the field to meet her before their marriage, Genesis 24:65 says, "*So she took a veil and covered herself.*" Evidently the local custom prescribed the wearing of a veil for modesty in an unmarried woman.
- Yet, in Genesis 38:14, we read that when Tamar wanted to seduce Judah, "... *she took off her widow's garments (which evidently did not include a veil), covered herself with a veil and wrapped herself . . .*" In that culture, the veil had become the symbol of prostitution.
- We read of Sarah and of Rebekah being taken by force into the harems of the king of Egypt and king of the Philistines, "... *because she is beautiful to behold*" (Genesis 12:14; 26:7). Obviously, the culture did not require that women of that day and place wear a veil.
- Today, if the culture is such that a woman who is not covered by a veil is considered to be immoral or showing disrespect for her husband, it would be wise to honor the local custom rather than to defy it. Or if some other "symbol" is used in a particular custom to show a woman's submission to her husband, then it would be preferable to follow the custom, so that she "... *give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully*" (1 Timothy 5:14).

In conclusion, let us look again at the over-all points that are being made:

- The entire passage is dealing with the order of authority, as established by God. The head of Christ is God; the head of man is Christ; the head of woman is man. Man was not created for woman, but the woman was created for man. Man is the image and glory of God; woman is the glory of man, having been made from a part of man.
- The second major point being made is that there must be a visible distinction between the appearance of a man and a

woman: nature itself teaches that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him, but if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her.

- The woman's hair is given to her instead of [*peribolaion*] a garment for covering.
- The covering of hair is regulated by God. An additional covering of a veil would be based on observance of local and varying customs, not on Scripture.

The Model Prayer

JIM E. WALDRON

INTRODUCTION

In the early days of our Lord's preaching work He gave a model prayer to his disciples. He said, "In this manner, therefore pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors, and do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen" (Matt. 6:9-13).

I. General Observation:

1. Observe this prayer was a model for His followers before His death and resurrection. Matthew tells us the Lord said, "In this manner, therefore pray." On another occasion Luke tells us He said, "When you pray say," then the prayer followed (Luke 11:1-4). Just before the Lord uttered the prayer in Matthew He warned in 6:7 against "vain repetitions." The Lord was not giving a prayer for continuous recitation over and over, but a model.

2. Please note also, the prayer was given before Pentecost (See Acts 2), thus they were told to pray for the kingdom to come. Prior to Pentecost, Christ said to some of His disciples, "I say unto you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God come with power"

(Mark 9:11). Later, on Pentecost just fifty days after Jesus' resurrection when the apostles had received the power, which Christ had promised would come by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8) the kingdom was founded in Jerusalem with about 3000 converts the first day (Acts 2:33-41). Thus from that date (Pentecost A.D. 30) the time had come to pray for the kingdom to spread all over the earth. Not too long after Pentecost Philip, the evangelist, was at Samaria preaching the kingdom and both men and women were being born of water and the Spirit into it (Acts 8:12, cf. John 3:1-5). Later when John wrote the Revelation he affirmed that he himself was "in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 1:9).

3. Again, the Lord closed the prayer in Matthew with "amen", being with them personally. Later as He spoke of the time He would be back in heaven with the Father He said to His disciples, "In that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you" (John 16:23); and again, "in that day you will ask in My name . . ." (John 16:26). Thus, now we send up our prayers and petitions to the Father in the name of Jesus for He is our mediator, even as it is written, "for there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 2:5). It is blasphemy to say that Mary is a mediatrix. Also clergymen who address their prayers directly to Jesus show an ignorance of Christ's statement that prayer was to be addressed to the Father in His name. The example of Stephen in Acts 7:59 is not applicable to our own prayers, because the circumstances were very different as Stephen was granted a personal view of the Lord Jesus standing at the throne.

Jesus is also our high priest (Hebrews 8:1). In Christ's kingdom there is no clergy caste who must intercede for the people, for all are priests, even as it is written, "Jesus Christ . . . has made us . . . priests" (Revelation 1:6). That is, in the church of Christ, which is Christ's kingdom on planet Earth, we have the priesthood of believers, for it is again written, "you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood . . ." (I Peter 2:9). We are royal priests because we serve as priests in His kingdom. As such we may approach the throne of God directly through Jesus (Study Hebrews 4:14-16).

II. An Outline for Prayer:

1. Address the Father.
2. Honor the Father's name.
3. Pray for the kingdom to spread.
4. Pray for God's will to be done.
5. Pray "give us our daily bread."
6. Pray for forgiveness.
7. Pray for deliverance from the evil one.
8. Recognize God's sovereignty and glory.
9. Pray in Jesus name.
10. Say, "Amen."

BODY

I. ADDRESS THE FATHER: "Our Father in heaven". He is our Lord and God and we often call on Him in this manner (Acts 4:24); but with the Christian there is a more intimate relationship; even as it is written, "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God; and such we are" (1 John 3:1). Therefore Jesus has told us to call Him "our Father." All have fleshly fathers and we give them respect when we call them father in the physical sense (Hebrews 12:9), but only the true and living God is our spiritual Father. It is sinful and ungodly to apply the title of father to men in a spiritual sense, for it is written, "Do not call anyone on earth your father; for one is your Father, He who is in heaven" (Matt. 23:9). The clergy usurps God's title, father, because of tradition, but the Lord Jesus said, "all too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition" (Mark 7:9).

II. HONOR THE FATHER'S NAME: "Hallowed is your name." This word means to treat as holy. The seraphim (special angels) around God's throne say, "holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty," day and night (Revelation 4:8, Isaiah 6:3). The Levites in the time of Nehemiah spoke of God, saying, "blessed be Your glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise" (Nehemiah 9:5-6).

III. PRAY FOR THE KINGDOM: As noted in the introduction Christ's kingdom has come as He promised in Mark 9:1 and

fulfilled according to Acts 2:33-41. Further confirmation of its establishment in the first century was given by the Holy Spirit through the pen of the apostle Paul when he affirmed of himself and the Christian in Colosse: God "has delivered us out of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Colossians 1:13). We must now pray for the kingdom to fill the earth for it is written, 'since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Hebrews 12:28).

1. As we pray for the kingdom we must send up 'supplications, prayers, intercessions, and . . . thanks" (I Timothy 2:1) on behalf of all men. There is a special need for such in our time as there are about 6 billion people on our planet who need to know Jesus. Let us pray that the good news of God's kingdom may cover the earth in our generation. All men need to know the pure and unperturbed gospel of Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (See Galatians 1:6-9).

2. As Jesus commanded, "pray the Lord of harvest to send laborers into the harvest" of souls (Matthew 9:37-38). For God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Timothy 2:4).

IV. PRAY FOR GOD'S WILL TO BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN: We must pray for kings, presidents, prime ministers and all who are in authority for this is good in the sight of God in order "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence" (I Timothy 2:2-3). We also must pray for God's will to be done in our own lives; even as our Master said of Himself, "for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me" (John 6:38). Again He prayed to the Father, "not My will, but Yours, be done" (Luke 22:42).

V. PRAY "GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD": We should not pray for riches, but for our needs as did the wise man: who said, "give me neither poverty nor riches . . . lest I be full and deny You, and say, who is the Lord or lest I be poor and steal, and profane the name of my God" (Proverbs 30:8-9). For "Godliness with contentment is great gain . . . but those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and

perdition" (I Timothy 6:6-9). Concerning material needs we must keep on "giving thanks for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:20).

1. While praying for our own needs let us remember the hungry in our own country and those in lands stricken by famine, drought and war. The nations of the Third world truly need our prayers.

2. We must "visit orphans, and the widows in their trouble" (James 1:27), and we must also remember such in our prayers. (cf. Psalms 146:9, Deuteronomy 10:18).

3. Let us pray for the sick and suffering (James 5:13).

VI. PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS: In doing this we must hold up a forgiving heart before the Lord for Jesus said, "If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:14-15).

1. The Holy Spirit tells us, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

2. We are told "confess your trespasses to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16).

VII. PRAY FOR DELIVERANCE FROM THE EVIL ONE: God loves and protects His people, but He allows us to be tested, even as it is written, "my son do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom he receives" (Hebrews 12:5-6). See the example of Abraham (Genesis 22:1-19) and Job, of whom it is written, you have heard of the perseverance of job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful" (James 5:11, See also Job 1:8-12, 2:4-10, 23:10). Remember also we live in a sin cursed world, Death and dying are in our world because of the Devil and the curse of sin (Genesis 3:1-17, Roman 8:21). We must, as Jesus did (Luke 13:16), blame Satan for afflictions beyond our control.

VIII. RECOGNIZE GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY AND GLORY:

As Jesus said to the Father, for "Yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever" (Matthew 6:13). Again it is written, "to Him be glory . . . throughout all ages, world without end" (Ephesians 3:21). The living creatures (seraphim) of the Revelation and the twenty-four elders representing the saints of the Old and New Testaments do not rest day or night saying: "You are worthy, O Lord to receive glory and honor and power" (Revelation 4:11). In our prayers we should praise the Father by ascribing to Him now such wonderful words.

IX. PRAY IN JESUS' NAME: As noted above our prayers are to be lifted to the Father through our high priest, Jesus, for it is written: "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:14-16). Shortly before our Lord returned to heaven (as noted above) He told the disciples concerning prayer, "in that day you will ask in My name" (John 16:26). In the governments of men one approaches a representative before he can see the president or prime minister. It is often the case even in villages of tribal people a protocol is observed for one to speak to the village head. How much more ought we to respect our eternal Creator's Son as our intercessor. The remembrance of the Savior as our mediator can be at the beginning or ending of the prayer, but let us not fail to acknowledge Him and His position as High Priest.

X. SAY: "AMEN": This word is from the Hebrew with a root meaning of "confirm". It means to confirm the truth or assent to it. The general sense being "so let it be," "truly" or "indeed". In the New Testament the apostle Paul shows an expectation of the congregation saying "amen" at the public giving of thanks (1 Corinthians 14:16).

The Thief On The Cross

FLAVIL NICHOLS

To the penitent Thief crucified with him, Jesus said, "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:43). A common religious error supposes that this proves (?) one can be saved without baptism. Here is the argument reduced to a syllogism:

1. Major premise: Jesus promised salvation to this penitent thief.
2. Minor Premise: This thief never had been baptized.
3. Conclusion: Therefore one can be saved without being baptized.

Jesus went to paradise, and promised the Thief would be "with me" in that place. Thus the Major Premise is easily established. But it is impossible to prove the Minor Premise. The man doesn't live who can prove it!

May Have Been Baptized

The Thief was in the very area where vast multitudes were baptized by John (Matthew 3:5-6; Mark 1:5; Luke 3:7). So, the Thief may well have been one of John's disciples who had become unfaithful. Furthermore, after John's imprisonment, "Jesus made and baptized MORE DISCIPLES THAN JOHN" (John 4:1-2), and the Thief may have been included in that number. Hence the Minor Premise is an unproven assumption. He very well may have been baptized prior to his arrest and crucifixion. Therefore to say he had not been baptized is an assertion without proof—unproved and unprovable! Since the Minor Premise is incapable of proof, the Conclusion is unwarranted.

Not Under New Testament

Christ's "will" or "testament" did not become effective until after he DIED (Hebrews 9:15-17). But he was still alive when he promised the Thief a home in paradise. Therefore Christ's "will,"

or the New Testament, was not in force at that time. Truly, that Thief is no example of conversion under the New Testament—no example for people today.

His Faith Won't Save Us

The kind of FAITH he had in Jesus will not save a soul today! The Thief could not possibly have believed God already had raised Jesus from the dead, when he had not died yet! If the Thief had any faith at all in the RESURRECTION of Christ, it was something which WILL HAPPEN—three days from then! But that kind of faith will not save us today! Now, one who wants to be saved MUST believe “that God HATH RAISED him from the dead!” (Romans 10:9). The Thief on the cross could not possibly have believed that—for it had not happened yet!!! So, it matters not if he were baptized or not—for I must BELIEVE something about Jesus Christ that he could not possibly have believed. The kind of faith he had in Jesus won't save me! My salvation is predicated on faith in the accomplished fact of Christ's resurrection—which thing the Thief could not possibly have believed, for it was not then a fact.

At the risk of being monotonous. I repeat: The Thief is no example of how I can be saved, for I must believe something which he did not—and could not!—believe! Whether he previously had been baptized, or not, doesn't matter at all today—for faith in Christ's accomplished RESURRECTION is demanded of us (Romans 10:9), while it was not of him. Hence, the kind of FAITH he had in Jesus will not save any sinner today!

Thief Not Under The Great Commission

The Thief lived and died before the great commission of our Lord was given, hence before it went into effect. After Christ “died for our sins” (I Corinthians 15:1-4), he was “raised for our justification” (Romans 4:25). Not until then did he claim “all power” (A.S.V.: “authority”) “is given unto me, in heaven and in earth” (Matthew 28:18). He then ordered his apostles to “Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in” (A.S.V.: “into”) “the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost . . .” (verse 19). The Thief on the cross lived before this command was ever given. He was not under the great

commission!

Mark tells about several appearances of Jesus to his disciples after he was raised from the dead. On one such occasion, "He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved . . ." (Mark 16:15-16). The Thief on the cross lived before this commission was given to them. He never heard this gospel preaching, and was not subject to it. He is no example of conversion today!

Luke tells us about the Thief in chapter 23; but in the NEXT chapter he records the resurrection of Jesus—in which one today must believe in order to be saved (Romans 10:9). Jesus told his apostles, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46-47). Never before had such preaching been done "in his name." Hence, the Thief was not subject to preaching in the "name" of Christ. After his resurrection, Jesus said the great commission would begin "at Jerusalem," which proves it had not previously started or begun with the Thief on the cross! Verily, he was not under the great commission!

John's baptism was not "in his name." It was in no name at all, so far as I know. But gospel baptism, under the great commission, is "in his name," which means 'by his authority.'

Question: How did Jesus 'authorize' baptism to be done?

Answer: "Into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19, A.S.V.).

John tells us that after his resurrection, Jesus said to the apostles, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you . . . Whose so-ever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained" (John 20:21, 23). The Thief was not privileged to hear the apostles bind on earth what Christ already had bound in heaven, so man can have his sins remitted. This began at Jerusalem on Pentecost day (Acts 2), a month and ten days after the Thief died! Again I say, the Thief was not under the great commission, as all nations are today. He is no example of how to be saved now.

"Thousands To Nothing!"

In the book of Acts, literally THOUSANDS were covered under the great commission, which requires faith in the risen Lord, repentance and baptism in his name. Not one was 'saved like the Thief on the cross!' For example: on Pentecost, Peter convinced those who had crucified him that God has raised Jesus, and made him both Lord and Christ. He commanded them to "repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).

—Not ONE of them protested, saying: 'I don't want to be baptized to be saved!—I want to be saved like the Thief on the cross! Not ONE!!!

Instead, we read: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (verse 41).

Kind reader, I plead with you to believe that God has raised Jesus from the dead, and by faith in him to repent and be baptized in his name for the remission of sins. This began to be preached "in his name" in Jerusalem (Acts 2), and is for "every creature" (Mark 16:15) in "all nations" (Luke 24:46-49), and will last "unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19-20).

Can One Afford Not To Be In Christ

W.A. HOLLEY

"Salute Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also have been in Christ before me" (Romans 16:7).

Just here it would be profitable for the reader to give special attention to Romans 16:5-16, in order to give the use Paul makes of the expression "in Christ."

To be in Christ and, to be in the world, refers to two different relationships (Ephesians 1:6-7; I John 5:19). If one is in Christ, he is under the power and dominion of Jesus Christ, and is entitled to those blessings which are said to be in him. We quote:

"Blessed be the God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ" (Ephesians 1:3).

To be in the world, one is under the power and dominion of Satan, and is in danger of being cast into the condemnation of the devil (John 8:44; I John 3:10; I Timothy 3:6).

Hence, we conclude that all responsible persons are either "in Christ," or "out of Christ," for there is no middle ground (Matthew 6:24; Romans 6:16-18). That we may be able to consider candidly our relationship to Christ, or our relationship to the world, we submit the following remarks.

(1) If one does not wish to be eternally lost, one must be in Christ. The apostle Paul wrote, "But now in Christ Jesus, ye that were once far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both" [Jew and Gentile] "one, and broke down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace" (Ephesians 2:13-16, ASV). To be out of Christ is to be alienated from Almighty God (Ephesians 2:19).

(2) We must be in Christ, if we are to be a part of God's heritage, Paul wrote of God's determination to "sum up all things in Christ, the things in heaven, and the things upon the earth; in him, I say, in whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will" (Ephesians 1:10-11, ASV). Of what significance is the term heritage? We have but to turn to the writings of Moses for a divine explanation. "Jehovah's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance" (Deuteronomy 32:9, ASV). Hence, those in Christ are God's "heritage," God's children, his possession. Those in Christ, in the church, are his special nation (I Peter 2:5, 9). Jesus adds the saved to his church (Acts 2:36-38, 47).

(3) One must be in Christ in order to establish and maintain contact with the cleansing blood of Christ. Listen to Paul, the apostle: "In whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7). According to the scripture, one is brought into contact with the cleansing blood of Christ when one

is baptized into Christ and into his "death" where the blood was shed (Romans 6:3-4; John 19:33-34). After baptism, if the Christian keeps on walking in the light, the blood of Christ will keep on cleansing him from sin (I John 1:6-7).

(4) One must be "in Christ" if one is to enjoy the blessings of redemption. "Who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love; in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:13-14, ASV). It is evident, therefore, that if one is not in Christ, he is outside that relationship in which "redemption" is found. When one believes, repents, confesses Christ, and is baptized into Christ, one's sins are forgiven—and not until then (Galatians 3:26-27).

(5) Unless one is in Christ, one cannot be in that "one body" or church, of which Jesus is the purchaser, builder, head, and Saviour (Matthew 16:18-19; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23). It is abundantly clear that no one can be "in Christ," and "out of the church" at the same time. Acts 2:36-38, 41, 47).

(6) If one is not in Christ, one is not a "new creature." "Wherefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature . . ." (II Corinthians 5:17). Thus, those who have not been "born again" cannot become "new creatures" out of Christ, and are, therefore, without the promise of eternal life (John 3:3, 5).

(7) The scriptures teach that salvation is "in Christ." ". . . I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (II Timothy 2:10). Hence, for one to share the salvation which is in Christ, one must hear, believe, and obey the commands of the Lord. No one can be saved out of Christ.

(8) "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow them" (Revelation 14:13, ASV). One cannot die "in the Lord" if one is not in the Lord. Romans 8:1-4 teaches that there is no condemnation in Christ, if one continues to walk after the Spirit.

We sincerely urge our readers to believe and obey the truth of God so that eternal salvation can be yours.