

Fulton County Gospel News

Good News About Christ And His Church For All Of The World

"...Christ is the head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body." - Ephesians 5:23

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No. 1

MURDER OF THE INNOCENTS! IT'S NOT JUST FOR THE PRE-BORN ANYMORE

by Lenny Santee

Back in 1973 when the U.S. Supreme Court made abortion legal in the United States, many were sounding an alarm. They stated that not only was abortion (killing a pre-born) humanly immoral, but in the future the same people paid to kill the pre-born, would also be involved in killing children after they were born. We were assured that such a thing would never happen. Fast forward 25 years and read the following from the October issue of the Reader's Digest, pages 45-46 under the heading, "Not Wrong At All."

Australian philosopher Peter Singer has been appointed to an endowed chair in bioethics at Princeton University's Center for Human Values. In his 1993 book, *Practical Ethics*, which he says he will assign to students for a course on "Questions of Life and Death," Singer asks the following: "Suppose that a newborn baby is diagnosed as a hemophiliac. The parents, daunted by the prospect of bringing up a child in this condition, are not anxious for him to live. Could euthanasia be defended here?"

If killing their defective child induces the parents to have another child who is born without hemophilia, Singer writes, "The loss of a happy life for the first infant is outweighed by the gain of a happier life for the second." In addition, "Killing a disabled infant is not morally equivalent to killing a person. Very often it is not wrong at all."

Those wise folks that were sounding the alarm back in 1973 were right! We have gone from killing the pre-born to advocating the killing of "defective children that could live happy lives." There are several things wrong with Peter Singer's thinking. First, Mr. Singer asks us to suppose the parents of a newborn (who is a hemophiliac) are not anxious for him to live. Could euthanasia be defended? Let me ask a few questions. How long do they get to decide? Must the baby be killed within the first hour? Could they wait a

day? How about waiting a week to decide? Could they be given 10 days to do research on hemophilia? What if after one month they decide this is just too great a burden for them, could they have the baby killed then? What if they have another child who is normal after 2 years and decide that the first "defective" baby should not live? Could they wait until the child reaches puberty? If not, why not? No distinction is made in the Bible between a new-born and a pre-born baby! Notice Luke 2:12, "And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." Then read Luke 1:41, "And it happened when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit."

Second, who would determine the criteria for which "defects" we could kill the newborn? What would they include and exclude, if anything? What if one leg was longer than the other? What about a blind child? What about blind in one eye? What if the child were deaf? If we could do genetic testing and find problems that would present themselves later on could we kill the newborn? We are told alcoholism is a disease. We are also told that people are born with a predisposition to this disease. So, would it be wrong to kill a child who is found to have this predisposition? We are also told that people are born homosexual. What if the parents are not anxious for their little homosexual baby to live? (I am not saying these things are true, just asking what if?) God would have us treat all humans with dignity and respect. Notice Leviticus 19:14, "You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling block before the blind, but shall fear your God: I am the Lord."

Third, if the parents were not anxious for the child to live but someone else would step forward and agree to raise the child and give him a good home, would the parents still be allowed to pass the

death sentence on their newborn? After all, many people would gladly adopt a hemophiliac or Downs baby.

Fourth, Mr. Singer says that the "loss of a happy life for the first infant is outweighed by the gain of a happier life for the second." Is Mr. Singer going to decide who is happiest? I have seen children with Downs Syndrome that appeared to be much happier than philosophers like Mr. Singer. Does that mean that it would be okay to kill Mr. Singer? How are we to know whether a baby will be happy or not? How could we know that the parents could ever produce another child? If they were able to produce another child who was "normal," how could we know it would be happier than the child that was killed? Could you even imagine the parents saying, "Honey, I am so glad we killed that first newborn baby that was bald and got this happy baby with hair!"

Fifth, Mr. Singer says that "killing a disabled infant is not morally equivalent to killing a person." What? "Disabled" infants are not persons? Is Mr. Singer going to decide who is a person and who is not? If the "disabled" newborn is not a person, what are they? A plant? An animal? A rock? 1 Cor. 15:39 tells us we are human or non-human: "All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds." Surely Mr. Singer is not suggesting that humans can give birth to non-humans?

Sixth, Mr. Singer says that, "Very often it is not wrong at all" (to kill a newborn baby). To say, "Very often it is not wrong" implies that there are times, however few in his mind, that it would be wrong! Who decides when it is wrong, Mr. Singer; the parents, the doctors, a panel of "experts"? Perhaps we could find some direct descendents of Hitler to form a group who could decide when it is right and wrong to kill another human they think is "defective." We are not God. God gave life and it is up to Him to take life. Joseph's brothers thought he would get revenge on them after their father died. Joseph said, "Do not be afraid, for am I

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in the place of God?" (Gen. 50:19). The answer is no, and neither is Mr. Singer or any other individual.

It is hard to imagine that someone could have such immoral ideas. It is even harder to imagine Princeton University, or any other school, appointing such a person as chair in bioethics in the Center for Human Values. Then again, all one has to do is read Romans 1:18-32 to find out what happens when man gets away from his creator.

By the way, those wise men back in 1973 also said that this kind of killing of the helpless would extend to the aged and sick also!

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**GOD REGARDS THE
 DIGNITY OF MAN**

by Israel Crocker

The psalmist David reveals some extraordinary facts concerning mankind, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest

him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth" (Psalm 8:4-9)! This psalm concerns the glory of God and the dignity of man. To God, man is His crown.

There are several reasons why God would reveal this. First, God sent His Son to die for sinful man. What a tremendous price He paid! The Son left the riches of heaven to live a humble life upon this earth. The King of kings was born in a manger, making His entrance into this cruel, undeserving world. Yet, our Lord still came. Why? Because God thought enough of man to do so.

Second, God made man a little lower than the angels, and over the remainder of God's creation. Men are not created from angels, but are the sons of God Himself. Man was made in the image of God, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:27). Man was given an eternal spirit similar to God. "The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and *formeth the spirit of man within him*" (Zech. 12:1). God considers the dignity of man, because man is made in His image.

Man is a marvelous creature, and it would be wonderful if murderers realized this. What about the "legalized" murderer, the abortionists and their clientele, those who want to live an irresponsible life at the expense of innocent blood? God's wrath is storing against them. "Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the LORD shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them" (Psalm 21:9). God's wrath is storing against the murderer, because man is precious in His sight.

Let the Christian ponder this point as well. If we would consider the dignity of man, would it be a motive to preach the Gospel to the lost? Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). We would have more consideration for the erring brother or sister (Gal. 6:1, James

5:19-20). This should cause one to give more consideration to the feelings of our brethren in regard to the things we do and say. "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. 2:4). We would not say to the needful, "be ye warmed and filled" (James 2:16). We would act courteous upon the highways instead of cursing someone's bad driving. We would remember we make mistakes too. "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things" (Romans 2:1).

God expects us to act like His children, like dignified human beings, the wonderment of God's creative power. Job was told by God, "Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me" (Job 38:3). God knew that Job could stand up like a man, because His creation withstood the test to defeat Satan. He maintained his dignity, and he did so by his faith in the Redeemer to come (cf. Job 19:25). God thought enough of His creation to say to the devil, "...Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil" (Job 1:8)? Paul said, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong" (1 Cor. 16:13). Christians can stand strong against error, debauchery, worldliness, etc., because we love God and our moral standards are higher than these. "...Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:37-39).

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[Editor's Note: Israel Crocker is one of two fine young men that the church in Mammoth Spring, AR is happy to be supporting as he trains for full time work at the Memphis School of Preaching. This article is a favorable indication that Israel will make an excellent gospel preacher and writer. The elders of the Third and Bethel congregation and I are happy to recommend to you the work that is being done at the Memphis School of Preaching to train preachers for the future of the Lord's church. MSOP is under the direction of Curtis A. Cates and the oversight of the elders of the Forest Hill Church of Christ at 3950 Forest Hill Irene Road, Memphis, TN 38125. Phone (901) 751-2242.]

Life is tragic for the person who has plenty to live on, but nothing to live for.

TIPTOEING INTO HELL

by Ted J. Clarke

Rudolf Nureyev died this month in 1993. He had been recognized as absolutely the greatest male ballet dancer the world has ever known. His style and grace was unequalled by any male dancer in the history of ballet and it is not expected that any other will ever match or surpass his ability. All of these praises were heard on the "Today" program the Friday morning after Nureyev's death was announced.

When it was announced that Nureyev died of AIDS, I jumped to the conclusion that he was "gay," or bisexual. Then I thought to myself, "That isn't right to judge like that. He may have become infected by contaminated blood." Then they interviewed some people that knew him. One gray-haired, balding man (I forget his name) was asked about his first contact with Nureyev. He chuckled and said, "That isn't a very happy memory for me. The first time I met Rudolf he stole one of my boyfriends." Although he was gay, he fought to the end to keep people from knowing what his illness was. Evidently he was not too proud of his lifestyle or the way he was dying. The newscast ended by saying that Nureyev did not believe in life after death or a hereafter.

It may be considered by some rather crude for me to say so, but the Bible says that "unbelievers...shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Revelation 21:8). All of the praise, all of the awards, and all of the ability in the world will not change that fact, as sad and as harsh as it may appear. Given the Bible's description of what hell is like, Rudolf would have reason to be tiptoeing, spinning and jumping in the coals and fires of hell. But hell is

more than that concept; much worse. It is also eternal separation from God and everything good and holy (2 Thessalonians 1:8-10). Nureyev's abilities won't matter a snap of the fingers in hell. Our Lord has pointed out that even if we gain the whole world and lose our souls, there is no profit. He also told us that nothing, **nothing**, comes close to the value of our souls. Wealth, fame, pleasure and power in this life are not a fair exchange for our souls (Matthew 16:24-27). Nureyev will be judged, not for his dancing skills, but by his spiritual qualities. As long as our profession is honest, it matters not to God whether we dig graves or pirouette with the greatest ease. Did we believe in Christ and truly obey His will? See John 3:16; Luke 6:46. That matters now and eternally!

My personal appreciation for grace and style leans to Michael Jordan, gliding in for a slam-dunk from the top of the free throw circle, or Jerry Rice one-handing a touchdown pass from Joe Montana. But it makes no difference - none of these men will be saved by their physical abilities either. What matters with them and you is - what is your relationship with Jesus Christ? He alone will save us from hell (John 14:6).

**STRANGERS ARE FRIENDS
WE HAVEN'T MET**

God knows NO STRANGERS. He loves us all, the poor, the rich, the great, the small... He is a friend who is always there to share our troubles and lessen our cares... No one is a stranger in God's sight, for GOD IS LOVE and in HIS LIGHT May we, too, try in our small way to make NEW FRIENDS from day to day... So pass no stranger with an unseeing eye, for God may be sending A NEW FRIEND BY.

- Selected

**GOODBYE AND THANK YOU:
To Our Friends at Williams Printing**

With this issue we bring to a close a long and beneficial relationship with Bill Williams and his staff at Williams Printing. For most of the history of the **Fulton County Gospel News** (1953 to the present), Williams Printing has been the printer for our little paper. Mr. Williams has decided that he has reached the age when he wants to retire and spend more time with his wife and grandchildren and do some traveling.

We can hardly blame Bill for his decision, but we shall miss him and his staff of Lorene, Patrick and Jamie. They have all been very good to us in their work of typesetting, printing and folding **FCGN**. Mr. Williams has been more than fair in setting the price for all this work and it is only fair that we extend a huge thank you to him and his employees. **THANK YOU, Bill, Lorene, Patrick and Jamie!**

Now we are faced with finding a new printer whom we hope will be as courteous and helpful as those at Williams Printing. Pray for us in this endeavor.

[Ted J. Clarke, Editor]

**GOD NOW SPEAKS THROUGH
HIS SON**

Bible Lesson Number Five

by Richard England

Hebrews 1:1, 2

"God, who at sundry times and in diverse manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

In the garden of Eden, God walked and talked with Adam and Eve personally (**Genesis 3:8ff**). God spoke directly to Noah and warned him of the flood (**Genesis 6:13**). God spoke to Abraham through messengers (**Genesis 18**). On one occasion, at least, he spoke to him by an angel calling out of heaven (**Genesis 22:11**). God spoke to Jacob in a dream (**Genesis 28:12-15**). Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, received a message from God through dreams interpreted by Joseph (**Genesis 41:16**). It was out of the burning bush that God spoke to Moses (**Exodus 3:1-6**). The children of Israel heard God out of the fiery, smoky, thunderous mountain (**Exodus 19:16-25**). Elijah heard God in a still small voice (**1 Kings 19:12**). On and on the list goes of how God did indeed speak to people in the past at many times and in various ways. But, the writer of the book of Hebrews says: "God...hath in these last days spoken unto us **by his Son**."

Moses prophesied that God would raise up a prophet to whom all were to give heed (**Deuteronomy 18:18-20**). That prophet is identified in the New Testament as Jesus (**Acts 3:22-26**), the Son of God (**Romans 1:1-4**). Just as prophesied, Jesus said he had come to do, not his own will, but, the will of the Father (**John 6:38**). To him God has committed all judgment (**John 5:22**), "and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man" (**John 5:25-27**).

When Jesus left the earth, he did not leave people without the necessary information about this great message he had brought and the salvation he provided by his suffering and resurrection. He sent the Holy Spirit to teach all the truth and remind those early disciples of everything he taught (**John 14:26; 16:13**). The

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Holy Spirit did not speak of himself. He spoke only what he was told to speak. To hear the Holy Spirit is to hear Jesus. To hear Jesus is to hear God.

The inspired message received by the Apostles and certain other early disciples of Jesus was written down as they were instructed (**Revelation 1:11**) so that we might know and understand what they had received (**Ephesians 3:3, 4**). This message, the New Testament (**Hebrews 9:15-17**), the gospel, the word, the faith, was "once delivered unto the saints" (**Jude 3**). These men were given miraculous powers to prove that they were speaking the very words (**1 Corinthians 2:13**) that God had revealed (**Hebrews 2:4**). When the revelation was complete ("perfect"), the miracles ceased (**1 Corinthians 13:9-13**).

In order for us to be saved, we must hear, receive, stand in the gospel of Jesus Christ (**1 Corinthians 15:1, 2**). As **Deuteronomy 18:15-22** teaches, we cannot speak anything which he, the prophet (Jesus) sent from God, did not speak. We are not to attribute something to him which he has not said, nor are we to speak by any other authority. Jesus has ALL authority (**Matthew 28:18**).

To receive the New Testament is to receive the apostles' teaching. To receive the apostles' teaching is to receive the Holy Spirit. To receive the Holy Spirit is to receive Jesus Christ. To receive Jesus Christ is to receive God. This is the way God speaks to man today!

The conclusion of this seems rather obvious: we must have a "thus saith the Lord" (a text from the Bible) for all we believe and practice religiously. This is the meaning of **Colossians 3:17**. "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

Questions

1. What are some of the ways God has spoken to men in the past?
2. What did Moses prophesy should be the attitude toward the prophet God would raise up?
3. Who is that prophet?
4. In what way did Jesus assure the apostles and early disciples that they would be able to remember all that he taught them?
5. Where is the message of Jesus found today?

6. What does it mean to "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus"?
7. Name some things people do religiously today that are authorized in the New Testament.
8. Name some things people do religiously today that are not authorized in the New Testament.
9. Does it matter whether or not we have a "thus saith the Lord" for what we believe and practice religiously?

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Loving means to love that which is unlovable, or it is no virtue at all; forgiving means to pardon the unpardonable, or it is no virtue at all; faith means believing the unbelievable, or it is no virtue at all. And to hope means hoping when things are hopeless, or it is no virtue at all.

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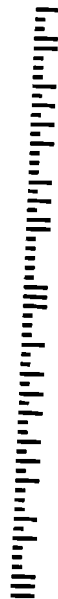


GOD'S AUTHORIZED WORSHIP - COLOSSIANS 3:17

1. **LORD'S SUPPER** - The New Testament and early church history record that Christians met on the first day of every week (Sunday) to worship God and remember Christ (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-34; 16:1-2).
2. **PRAYERS** - (Acts 2:42; Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18).
3. **SINGING** - God's word authorizes only vocal music and specifically singing (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:12). The New Testament shows no use of mechanical instruments of music in worship to God by the church Christ established. Church history notes no such use for nearly 700 years after the New Testament was completed. It is an innovation of men, not of God.
4. **GIVING** - Free-willed, cheerful, generous, and every week (Acts 20:35; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8 & 9).
5. **PREACHING OF THE WORD** - The gospel of Christ, not men's doctrines nor entertainment, saves and strengthens us (Acts 2:42; 20:7; Romans 10:17; 1 Corinthians 1:18-23).

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