

# Fulton County Gospel News

"The Churches of Christ Salute You"

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## The Inspiration Of The Bible

By Hubert Plumlee

### III. IT NEVER DODGES ANY GRAVE QUESTION.

1. The Bible never gropes for an answer nor does it ever leave man wondering as to what the answer might be. There are many questions asked men today that they can not answer and there are many things that man can not explain. However, whatever the question may be that is of any importance at all, the Bible gives him an answer and readily so. Let's look at three or four of these questions that the Bible gives an answer to.

2. WHAT IS MAN THAT THOU ARE MINDFUL OF HIM? Hebrews 2:6. The Bible gives you an answer to that question and yet man himself can not explain really what man is. God says that he is a creation in the likeness of God. He is created in His own image. Thus man is like God in that man never dies but always lives. Man can not explain in a long, long time what man is and yet the Bible through the mind of God is able to give an immediate answer to this grave question.

3. NEXT, WHAT IS SIN? The Bible says, "All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God," Romans 3:23. When you think what problem sin really is to man in the fact that it separates from God, it is a reproach to man, it is a complication, it is a destructive force, and it becomes difficult for man to answer this question. In fact, without the Bible, man couldn't answer that question. And yet the Bible gives us an immediate answer and never leaves us wondering under any circumstance as to what sin is. God says that "it's a transgression of the law," 1 John 3:4. "All unrighteousness is sin," 1 John 5:17. "It is doubt created in the minds of man," Romans 14:23. "And the man that knows to do good and fails, is a sinner," James 4:17.

4. Another grave question is WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED? Man has no idea as to what the answer is and yet the Bible does not leave man wondering what he needs to do to be saved. It does not dodge this grave question but to the man He says, "Believe," John 8:24. To the believer He says, "Repent," Acts 2:38. To the penitent believer He says, "Be

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## Forgetting Things Behind

By James D. Jarrett

"But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Phillipians 3:13, 14)

The apostle Paul was an individual who had made a great mistake. Before he became an apostle he was a strict Jew, Saul of Tarsus. As a Jew, Saul believed that Christians were heretics. We remember him as the one who watched over their garments while Stephen was stoned to death. Saul went about doing great harm to the Christian cause in all good conscience. (Acts 23:1) When Saul finally learned that Christianity was right, he came to the sudden realization that he had helped to cruelly persecute God's people.

If Paul had been like many individuals he would have become so miserable, he would have hated himself so much that his life would have been ruined by remorse. Or, if he were like others, he would have rejected Christ and remained a Jew with selfish ambitions. But Paul knew that remaining out of Christ was wrong and that brooding over past errors would do no good. He immediately began to rectify his past mistakes by living for the future.

The work of a congregation can be severely hindered when we fail to forget that which is behind. The Lord's work must progress. We must not allow mistakes made by leaders in the past cause them to fail to follow the leadership of today. Elders must not feel that because members have failed to respond to some challenges in the past that they will not accept challenge today. Ministers must forget grievances of yesterday. Your present minister must not be suspected because of what some minister may have done in the past. If we press forward as a congregation, we must forget that which is behind.

Everyone makes mistakes. He who does most in life is oftentimes the individual who profits most from his mistakes. Others allow past errors to hinder spiritual growth.

There are two ways we can deal with our past mistakes. We can do like Judas did and in remorse, give up, or we can decide as Paul did that mistakes of the past can help us to better our future. Which attitude is ours?

## Does It Matter What I Believe?

By Glynn Purdy

### BELIEF BASED ON TESTIMONY

Often it is said in religious circles, "It does not matter what you believe, just so you do believe something". This of course sounds broad minded and reasonable to man's way of thinking. But remember, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death", Prov. 14:12. Therefore, if we are told a lie, or led in any way to believe a lie, we shall be damned, II Thes. 2:10-13. If we believe a lie and it leads us to believe we are saved, when we are not, we will still feel good, safe, and have a clear conscience! This is what is so sad. Millions of honest and sincere people have been led to believe a lie and because they do believe it they think they are doing God's will, when all the time God does not "know" them and they will be so told at the judgment, Matt. 25. In the case of Jacob, when Joseph was sold into Egypt, he was not told a lie, but WAS NOT TOLD THE TRUTH, and thus by withholding the truth, and presenting certain evidence led Jacob to believe a lie; that Joseph was dead! Jacob felt all the sorrow that he would have felt if Joseph really had been dead! So if the evidence is FALSE, the feelings can still be real, but the results of salvation will not be the same.

### FAITH ONLY

Does it really matter whether I believe that faith only will save? Does it matter if I do not believe God's word? Will God hold me responsible for ignorance? Is ignorance not a safe excuse? First, those who BELIEVE the Gospel will be saved (Mark 16:15-16), for the Gospel is God's "power" to save (Rom. 1:16), and all those who do not obey the Gospel will be LOST (II Thes. 1:7-9). We must believe the Gospel as was stated in Mark, but we must also OBEY it as stated in Thess. "Faith without works is dead", James 2:24. So if I must OBEY God (Matt. 7:21) in order to enter the kingdom of heaven and God teaches that faith must "work" (obey) to save and I believe in faith only, this is contrary to God's will. So if this is contrary to God's will and I must DO God's will to be saved this should be plain that without complete

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## The Fulton County Gospel News

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EDITORS: Clovis Ragsdale  
and James E. Henley.

## This and That ...

We would like to call your attention to a number of gospel meetings that will be coming up. Sitka, Ark. with Ron Bryant of Mondak, Ill. doing the preaching. June 29-July 5. Boyd Morgan will be in a meeting at Delhalf July 20-26.

Editors of our larger religious papers are making mention of increasing activity on the part of some church members who believe and advocate that the church needs to be "made over." For the most part they are young and college trained. The term "liberals" is used to describe their thinking. Now Webster defines liberal as being an advocate of freedom from restraint in politics and religion.

When God gave the law to Moses he placed many restraints on this chosen nation. When the Christian age came into being it also placed many restraints on personal conduct and in manner of the work and worship of the church. Paul said in Gal. 1:8 though we or an angel from Heaven preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed. Other passages teach that man is not permitted to change the gospel once revealed. It seems that youth, having acquired concentrated learning, sets about to change the established order. Their zeal and willingness to work must be admired and the church needs their enthusiasm and desire to progress but this must be done the way the word outlines. The church is under the oversight of Elders. An elder must be a man of age and experience among other things. The church will look to its elders to keep down rebellion against the plan that is given in the New Testament for worship in our time. Strong action may in some cases be required to keep down false teachers but we have plenty of advice given us in the Bible as to how this is to be done.

Sunday evening attendance remains a problem with many congregations. Only about one half of the morning attendance

will show up for the evening attendance. After taking into consideration that some of our elderly have a reason to not go out at night we still have a goodly number who pass up the evening service. If we love the Lord's work as we should we would be glad to have an opportunity to be with brethren and to be further instructed in the scripture. The story is told of a family who attended faithfully the morning services but never the evening. One Sunday evening the father loaded his family in the car and started to the other side of town to visit friends. It so happened that they drove by the church house where the evening worship was in progress. One of the children saw the lights on in the building and excitedly cried for the father to stop and turn out the lights in the building thinking some one had left them on from the morning service. The embarrassed father resolved to start taking his children to Sunday evening services.

This is the season of the year when many take vacations. We should not leave our religion at home when we set out on a trip. It should be an enjoyable experience to worship with brethren in strange country and to observe their work and to get acquainted with kinsfolk in the spirit.

**DOES IT MATTER (continued)**  
obedience I am lost. Therefore, it makes the difference between heaven and Hell as to whether I believe in "faith only" or not.

### CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Again we hear so often such as "The church will not save you, you can be saved out of the church as well as in it." Or, it does not matter which church you "join", one church is as good as another." Does it matter what I believe about church membership? Did it matter what Noah believed about ark "membership"? God saved Noah, but the ark was the "place" where God PROMISED to save him. God saved, but ALL THE SAVED WERE IN THE ARK! Today God saves! But ALL THE SAVED ARE ADDED TO THE CHURCH. If all the saved during the flood were IN the ark, what about those who were NOT in the ark? If all the saved today are ADDED to the Lord's church (Acts 2:47), what about those who think they are saved, and the Lord has not added them to the church? Jesus is the "saviour" of the body (Eph. 1:22-23) and the body is the church (Col. 1:18), therefore Jesus is the saviour of those who are in his church only! When Jesus comes again he will come for the church (Eph. 5:26-28) which is His kingdom (Matt. 16:18-19), which he will "present to God" at the end of this world (I Cor. 15:24). Many other things could be mentioned, but surely this is enough to make all honest men consider OBEYING God in all matters of religion!

## Church News

There will be a gospel meeting at the Church of Christ in Banner, Arkansas June 15th through the 21st. Ralph Wallis will be the speaker. Services will be each evening at 8 p.m.

The Church of Christ in Mammoth Spring, Arkansas has just completed a V.B.S. with record attendance, the average attendance was 194 each evening.

The Church of Christ in Mammoth Spring, Arkansas will have a gospel meeting beginning July the 13th and continuing through the 19th. Brother Glynn Purdy will be the speaker. Services will be at 7:30 each evening.

The Church of Christ in Thayer, Missouri will have a gospel meeting beginning July the 20th and continuing through the 26th. Ray Chester will be the speaker.

### CONTRIBUTIONS:

Doris Weaver .....	\$ 1.00
Ring Church of Christ .....	5.00
Agnos Church of Christ .....	5.00
Viola Church of Christ .....	5.00
Franklin Church of Christ .....	30.00
Sturkie Church of Christ .....	5.00
Elizabeth Church of Christ .....	5.00
Purdy Church of Christ .....	11.00
Myrta Phillips .....	1.00
Viola Church of Christ .....	5.00
Mrs. Felix Davis .....	2.00

### The Old Man With Two Sacks

A traveler one day met an old man who was carrying two sacks. One was suspended from his neck in front and the other was strapped to his back.

"What have you here?" asked the traveler. "Let me see the content of your sack."

"I shall be glad to do so," replied the old man, "for I have a goodly assortment. The sack which I carry in front is filled with good reports and the good deeds of others. Whenever I hear or see of good that others do I put into this bag and carry it where I can look upon them."

"Your sack seems to be very full. It must be quite a burden," said the traveler.

"There you are mistaken," said the other. "Though the sack is so full, it is not heavy. Far from being a burden, it helps me onward like sails to a ship."

"And what do you put into the sack which you carry on your back?" asked the traveler.

"All the evil I learn of others I put in there," said the old man, "so that it will be out of my sight."

"It appears to be empty," said the traveler, as he examined the sack more closely, "and no wonder, for there is a hole in the bottom."

"I made it there on purpose," responded the old man, "So that the evil I hear will fall out and be lost." It cannot then weigh me down nor pull me back."

## 'Led By The Spirit' To Do What?

In a great "campaign for Christ" in Madison Square Garden in New York, as thousands crowd the aisles to make their "decision" and "commitment," we are told they are being "led by the Spirit." The "leading of the Spirit" was given as reason for people groveling in the dirt and jabbering in "unknown tongues" at many brush arbor meetings I attended as a boy. Then was read the passage from Rom. 8:14, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." This was bona fide proof that these exhibitionists were the children of God! But as I older grew, I read the words of the aged apostle, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 Jno. 4:1). I began to ask, How is one led by the Spirit, and what does this leading do?

It is well documented that the Spirit leads and guides. To His apostles Jesus said, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come." (Jno. 16:13). This guiding, or leading, is done by the teaching which the Spirit did: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (Jno. 14:26).

It is also well established that the Spirit came upon the apostles to lead and guide them as the Lord promised. When assembled in Jerusalem on Pentecost, awaiting the promised power, the apostles received the Spirit. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:4). The Spirit not only led them into the truth, but gave them the exact words in which the truth was delivered! The apostles were so guided in all deliverance of truth. Paul wrote, "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory; which none of the princes of this world knew... But God hath revealed unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2:7-10). Never minimize the importance of the work the Spirit accomplished in delivering God's Word! It led and guided inspired men into all of God's revealed truth, by which man is saved!

There has always been a close affinity between the Spirit and God's revealed will to man. Jesus expressed it this way: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the flesh

profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." (Jno. 6:63). Paul wrote of the "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." (Eph. 6:17). It is impossible to separate the word of God from the Spirit that delivered it. As was spoken by David: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." (2 Sam. 23:2). This was the experience of every inspired prophet of God. It was God's Spirit that gave prophecy. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. 1:21). This means that every man inspired of God spake what the Spirit delivered to him to be revealed. Paul could then say, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Which assures us that we, even today, can be unerringly led by the Spirit, who speaks through inspired words!

But we want to get down to specifics. Just how are men led by the Spirit of God, and how do they behave when thus led? Just what does this "leading of the Spirit" cause them to do? Surely such important, and intriguing, questions should engage our interest and occupy our thoughts.

No place in the Scriptures can give us a clearer and more definitive answer than that in the second chapter of Acts. Remember the apostles were waiting for the power Christ promised (Acts 1:4-5, 8). Then the Holy Spirit fell on them (Acts 2:2-4). In preaching the first gospel sermon, Peter stated they had received the Spirit (Acts 2:33). When men "were pricked in their hearts," they asked Peter and the other apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (verse 37). Then as the Spirit still gave him utterance, Peter told them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38). Now, all must agree that the Pentecostians were being led by the Spirit as they heard God's word being spoken "as the Spirit gave them utterance." But what were they led to do? How did they behave? The Holy Spirit also reveals this unto us. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." (Acts 2:41). They had heard the gospel which the Spirit delivered. They were led by the Spirit to be convicted of sin, righteousness and judgment, as Christ had promised (Jno. 16:8). They asked

what to do, and being told, they then obeyed the terms of the gospel. Who can argue against that?

Do you think this an isolated case? Check every conversion in Acts, and you will not find an exception! They heard the gospel, believed in the Son of God, repented, and were baptized into the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27; 1 Cor. 12:13). This, without variance, is what the Spirit led men to do to become sons of God.

As some were led by the Spirit, there were some who resisted the Spirit. When Stephen had preached the gospel to the biased and prejudiced rulers of the Jews, he then cried out, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." (Acts 7:51). For this they put him to death, but they could not absolve themselves of guilt. They rejected the word presented by the Spirit, and thus resisted the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit delivered terms of pardon in revealing the gospel. Any who reject the terms of the gospel resist the Spirit, and shall be damned eternally! Paul wrote of the terrible plight of some "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thes. 2:10-12). Without a doubt, some have sought fanciful experiences and hallucinations rather than rendering obedience to that which the Spirit has revealed; and because they held no love for revealed truth, God gave them delusions, that believing a lie they might be damned! They were not willing to be led by the Spirit to become sons of God. Undoubtedly, some have related "experiences of salvation," but have received delusions only because they were unwilling to become obedient to the form of doctrine the Spirit delivered (Rom. 6:16-18).

Among the sand hills of Western Oklahoma, I have watched as people wallowed in the dirt, under a tent, pleading for God to give "measures of the Spirit." Some begged for "the second blessing," (power to speak in tongues and work miracles), while others were asking for "the third blessing," (sinless perfection). Yet, if anyone had approached those mourners with the same words Ananias spake to praying Saul of Tarsus (Acts 22:16), he would have been charged with "disturbing the peace." Well has Jeremiah written: They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace." Friend, are you willing to be led by the Spirit? Or do you resist the Spirit by rejecting the gospel plan of pardon? — Dillard Thurman.

## What Must I Do?

By Guy Couch

"Go dip seven times in Jordan" was a command given to Naaman only. II Kings 5, Lk. 4:27. Naaman's Chariot Driver and others who accompanied him, no doubt played an important part in his obedience to God's command. With great difficulty Naaman was finally persuaded to go dip in Jordan. It is doubtful that he would have obeyed without friends and servants to plead with him. Even after the plain simple command is given, in many cases, it is necessary to encourage, reason and plead with folk, then, many times fail. "Come, let us reason together."

"Go sell your possessions, distribute it among the poor, come follow me," was a command given only to the rich young ruler of Matthew 19-Luke 18. Many so called Christians are represented by this man. Perhaps not rich nor rulers, yet as one who feels that he has always obeyed God's command and if there was a command he had not complied with, he is certainly ready to do so as soon as he learns what it is that he lacks. Our Lord gave a command that would try this rich man's faith and prove if he was as pious as he claimed. The rich ruler claimed he had kept all the ten commandments, (implied), from childhood. The first of the ten is, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." The man evidently had a god more precious to him than the One who gave him his goods. The tenth command is "Thou shalt not covet." But, when this rich man was asked to give the widow's mite, (all she had) he flunked out. Most all of us want eternal life but are we willing to pay the price? "The love of money is the root of all evil." (all kinds of evil) (I Tim. 6:10).

"Go wash in the pool of Siloam," was a command given only to the blind man of John nine. This man needed no prodding. His faith brought sight to him. Not vice-versa. This man is ready to announce to the whole world. He is anxious for all to know and is not ashamed to claim his Lord when he learned who He was.

Naaman had this prestige to cope with and without the help of friends he would have died a Leper. The rich ruler had his money to cope with and he refused to pay the price. "Thy money perish with thee." The blind man had no wordly attraction to hold to. He was willing and ready to obey whatsoever the command might have been. This man's attitude represents the "good and honest heart" and will always bring forth fruit to perfection. Matt. 13. Speak Lord, and I'll obey. Not in word only, but in deed also. We should not ask, "Lord, what shall we have for our service, but rather ask, "Lord, what can we do to be of service to Thee and to Thy Kingdom."

Lincoln, Ark.

## THE INSPIRATION (continued)

baptized," Acts 22:16. To the unbeliever He says, "Believe," Acts 16:31. And so it is that the Bible gives a very different answer to such a grave question.

Next, it tells us about our savior in that man is a sinner, but he has a savior. We see our savior hungry, thirsty, sleepy, rejoicing, weeping, pure, holy. Yet no home was too unfit for Him to enter and no sin too vile for Him to forgive.

5. But another of these grave questions that the Bible answers is WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE? Uncle Elmers' Almanac never had it so good. The Bible speaks with the same certainty of the future as it does of the past and the present. The Bible deals with the same facts in the future as we talk about things that have past. Such expressions as, "It shall come to pass," and it did, "The day of the Lord will come." "Behold, I do come quickly." "But we shall all be changed." "For the Lord Himself shall descend." Thus we see that the Bible speaks of the future with all of the certainty of the mind of God because it is the mind of God. Paul declared in Galatians 3:8 and the scripture foreseeing preached before the gospel unto Abraham saying, "In thee shall all nations be blessed." God made a promise to a man that through his seed all nations will be blessed. God made that promise before that man ever had a son. God promised to Abraham that through his seed all nations would be blessed but Abraham later lived to see that God kept that promise. So the Bible speaks of the future with the same certainty that any historian could speak of the past and of the present. There is no doubt in the minds of any rational being today but that the Bible is the inspired Word of God.

6. Another proof of the inspiration of the Bible is found in the miracles that are found in the New Testament. Let's take a look at two or three.

Men today have been able to transplant a heart, to replace arms, and legs, and other organs of the body. Men are living longer today than they have ever lived before. And so it is with our technical know-how and the knowledge that we've gained through the study of medicine, men today have a better chance of living and living longer than ever before, and yet no doctor today has ever cried out, "Lazarus, come forth," and a man be resurrected from the dead. Man with all of his technical know-how has never yet been able to stop that thing which perplexed the minds of men and this is death.

Today men have built mighty ocean liners. They are able to carry not only hundreds of tons but hundreds of people across the ocean with all of the comfort of home and some even more so. One of the safest means of travel is to board our

mighty ocean liners to go around the world. They're able to go through all of the storms and almost everything that might bring them discomfort through their trip. But with all of this not one man has ever stretched out his arm and said, "Peace be still," and the waters of the ocean be calm to make a journey more pleasant.

Scientists today have helped crops to triple and sometimes increase as much as 8 and 10 times in some areas. Men today who have spent their time in the agricultural field have made tremendous strides in helping those who are less fortunate than we. And yet with all their know-how and their understanding of crops, not one of them has ever fed five thousand with a few loaves and fishes. And so it is that we see even the miracles themselves proclaim that the Bible is the inspired Word of God.

7. The next fact. WE SEE THAT ALL OF THE BIBLE IS HINGED ON ONE BASIC FACTS IN THE BIBLE.

We see that from Genesis through Revelation there is one fundamental fact that is an absolute most. If Jesus arose from the dead, He is God's son, He is deity, Romans 1:2, 4. If He arose from the dead, He is supernatural. If He is supernatural, then we must admit the very being of God. If we admit the very being of God, then we must accept everything else that is contained in the Bible. For it is this that gives man hope in everything. This one fundamental fact is the resurrection of Jesus. The resurrection is the only thing that gives man a hope and the very thing that he fears the most and that is death, for the Bible itself speaks itself of a life beyond the grave that is far greater than man could ever imagine. And so, we see from the Bible that it meets the needs of every soul. God talks about your manifold transgressions, Amos 5:12, but He also talks about the manifold grace of God, 1 Peter 4:10. So the Bible itself meets the needs of every soul today. If we believe in the wonderful God, we believe in the wonderful word. For surely it is a wonderful God who had a wonderful son who gave a wonderful life to purchase a wonderful church to bring about to us a wonderful salvation that we could live a wonderful life. There is no doubt in our minds that the Bible is inspired by the mind of God.

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