

# Fulton County Gospel News

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## And Then Some

By T. Pierce Brown

When I was growing up on a little farm in Walling, Tennessee, I accidentally learned something from my father that has been of value to me ever since, and which I have tried to teach my children, grandchildren and students.

Until I was about 6 years old we were share-croppers. We did not get much of the share, but we did a lot of "cropping". But when we would load a wagon load of corn to take to the owner's barn, my father would always raise up the sideboard on the wagon bed by sticking an ear of corn under it so the land-owner would always get what was due him, and then some. When we would throw shocks of hay on the wagon to take to his barn, I would notice that we always threw and extra shock or two on the wagon that went to the barn of the land-owner. I never asked my father why. But I knew he always gave the owner all that was due him and then some.

When I was about 7 years old, I began to read the New Testament through and found that Jesus had said in Matthew 5: 40-41, "And if any man should go to law with thee, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go one mile, go with him twain." I do not know that my father was deliberately practicing that principle, but I began to deliberately practice it.

When I finished eighth grade, since the cost was \$5.00 per month to ride the bus to Sparta to high school, I did not have that much money, so I went back to the 8th grade. My report card usually only showed "B" or "C" grade. But I began to use the principle of "and then some" in my school work. If we had ten words to learn how to spell, I would learn 20. Guess who won every spelling "bee"? It worked so well, I began to do it when I got to high school. If my math teacher assigned 10 problems, I would do 15 - not for him, but for me. I did not make the

honor roll because I was smart. As they said in those days, "I didn't know from nothing." I made it because I practiced the principle I had learned from Jesus and from my father.

When I got in the Air Force, I knew that I was mentally and physically inferior to many who were trying to be officers. So I would arise an hour before they did, run around the track 5 miles before the rest of them got out of bed. I do not know that it ever made any difference in how far or how fast I advanced in rank, but it made a difference in me.

This principle was what made the Macedonians praiseworthy as indicated in 2 Corinthians 8:3, "For according to their power, I bear witness, yea and beyond their power, they gave of their own accord, beseeching us with much entreaty in regard of this grace and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints: and this, not as we had hoped, but first they gave their own selves to the Lord, and to us through the will of God." They gave what they might have been expected to give, and then some.

Any Christian who truly follows Christ in his example and teaching will never be satisfied to do only what all Christians are normally expected to do, but will find himself doing all that may be expected, and then some. One reason is found in Luke 17:10, "Even so ye also, when ye shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do."

When we look at any truly great men, in or out of the Bible, we will find that they practiced that principle. If we can teach our children those three little words, and get them to practice them, they will always excel in whatever they do. Though they may not have brilliant minds, they will be classed among those who do have. So always strive to do what you can,

where you are, with what you have - and then some. If you do that, you will discover another fantastic truth. God will enable you to do what you can not do, as he enabled Peter to walk on the water. And he will enable you to do it with what you do not have, for he will provide what you need but do not have, as he did with the little lad with 5 loaves and 2 fishes with which 5,000 were fed.

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#### CHURCHES

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EDITOR . . . . . Eddy Gilpin

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## I Have Finished (Part 1)

By Eddy Gilpin

In the fourth chapter of John there are two incidents recorded that quite often obtain the spotlight of observation from this chapter. One of these is Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. Herein was made the oft-quoted statement, "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (vs. 24). The other occurrence from John 4 is the miraculous healing of the nobleman's son by Jesus, his second miracle (vss. 43-54).

However, between these two events (vss. 31-38) lies a discussion between Jesus and his disciples. His followers had bidden him to eat. He replied by saying, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of" (vs. 32). Confused, those around him began to inquire where he had obtained food. Jesus then revealed to them the meaning of his statement and his mission on earth. He said, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and TO FINISH HIS WORK" (vs. 34). Thus, Jesus came to "finish" the work of God, the work of redeeming mankind; and "finish" that work he did. Later, in his prayer just prior to being arrested, Jesus stated: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I HAVE FINISHED the work which thou gavest me to do" (Jn. 17:4). Having thus finished God's work and completed his plan, Jesus left no room for any future fulfillment of the scheme of redemption.

Numerous are the religious groups and individuals in the world today who teach that Jesus is going to return to the earth and establish an earthly kingdom. With so many stating such so emphatically,

one would think there would be an abundance of Biblical evidence for the doctrine of premillennialism. However, this is simply not the case. Premillennialism is not taught, either implicitly or explicitly, within the pages of God's word. It shall be the task of this series of articles to address some of the key tenets of this insidious doctrine and to answer them biblically, based on the aforementioned statement of Jesus concerning his work; that is, it is "finished." The first of these notions to be addressed is the idea that Jesus will return to the earth.

It stands to reason that if Jesus came to earth to redeem mankind, establish his kingdom and "finish" the work of God, that if he claims to have "finished" that work and accomplished those things, then either: 1) Jesus has thus "finished" that work and accomplished those things, or 2) Jesus was mistaken about having "finished" said work, or 3) Jesus lied about having accomplished God's task. Since Jesus has said that he "finished" the work of God (Jn. 17:4), then if (as per premillennialism) he must return to earth in the future to accomplish some of that work, then either the second or third choices of the foregoing conclusion must be true. Are any of those of this persuasion willing to admit such? Yet, their doctrine infers it! If Jesus "finished" the work of God (and he did), there is no need nor reason for, nor logic behind his returning to earth to accomplish more. To say that he finished his task but must return to finish it further is utter confusion. And, since God is not the author of confusion (I Cor. 14:33), it takes but little thought to see the origin of the doctrine of premillennialism (Mt. 15:9).

Nowhere does the Bible state that Jesus will set foot on the earth again, popular songs and teachings to the contrary notwithstanding. As his disciples stood peering into the clouds which had enveloped their ascended Lord, two men (angels) stood by them and asked, "Why stand ye gazing into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). Just how was the "manner" in which he had gone and the "like manner" in which he would return? "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, HE WAS TAKEN UP; AND A CLOUD RECEIVED HIM out of their sight" (Acts 1:9). As he had gone in the clouds, so will he return. The words of Paul make this abundantly clear. To the Thessalonians he stated, "For the Lord himself shall DESCEND FROM HEAVEN with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive

and remain SHALL BE CAUGHT UP TOGETHER WITH THEM IN THE CLOUDS, to meet the Lord IN THE AIR: and SO SHALL WE EVER BE WITH THE LORD" (I Thes. 4:16, 17). Peter declared that on this notable occasion "the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (II Pet. 3:10). How then could Jesus return to and the redeemed remain on an earth that would be destroyed by fire?

Further, the Bible reveals through prophecy that Jesus would serve as priest simultaneously with his reign as king (Zech. 6:12, 13). The record also states, however, that Jesus could not serve as priest were he on earth (Heb. 7:14; 8:4). Thus, he can neither serve as king on earth. Why, then, would Jesus want to return to earth, a place where he has already been and accomplished his task, a place where he has no more work to accomplish, and establish a kingdom over which he could never reign as king? The answer is obvious. The doctrine of premillennialism is not in accordance with Bible teaching and is, thus, a doctrine to be rejected by God's people.

Jesus truthfully stated "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." His mission of redemption is complete (Eph. 1:7-10). His revealed word to mankind is complete (Jude 6). His authority is complete, having received all "in heaven and on earth" (Mt. 28:18). He has been made "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion," and set as head "over all things to the church, which is his body" (Eph. 1:20-23). His kingdom stands complete possessing all its constituent components (a king, subjects, territory and law). Many of New Testament times were said to be "in" it (Col. 1:13; Rev. 1:9). His kingdom is spiritual in nature (Jn. 18:36), and stands complete with his having been made "both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). With such solid evidence against the Lord's returning to earth, the lack of reasoning and logic behind his so doing, and the fact that he himself said he had "finished" his work, why would anyone contend otherwise?

"For a parent to require a child to wash his face and keep his body clean, and not require him to learn and obey the Bible, is to teach him that the body is worth more than the soul . . . For a parent to require a child to learn spelling and reading and not require him to study the Bible is to teach him that it is much more important to be qualified to live in this world than to be fitted to live in heaven."

David Lipscomb

# Gambling at the County Fair

By Eddy Gilpin

Large scale gambling is a way of life for many in this "Get Rich Quick" society. Horse and dog racing, state lotteries, open casinos, card playing and bingo "for charity" are just some of the many ways that Americans "try their luck". For many, gambling is a serious problem that has them just as "addicted" as any illegal drug. This, most will agree, is dreadfully wrong and poses an even greater problem to society. But, what about gambling on a smaller scale? Is it just as sinful as risking huge amounts and taking bigger and bigger chances?

Many of the modes of gambling are known by all. However, when one recognizes what constitutes gambling, other less conspicuous methods, which are often engaged in by those unaware, are seen to be cut from the same mold. Gambling by its very nature involves risk. Although risks are taken in many facets of life, the unnecessary risks that are made solely for the purpose of gambling cannot be justified by these. Gambling involves chance - a chance that one might lose what he has (whether it be fifty cents or fifty dollars) and a chance that he might obtain that which another has. The idea of obtaining another's investment is thus the luring power behind gambling. However, that which is obtained in such a manner is not obtained by honorable and ethical means. As such, it is in violation of Bible standards (II Thes. 3:10; Eph. 4:28; Rom. 12:17; Mt. 7:12).

There are some forms of gambling that have become acceptable to society, "religious" people and, through ignorance or apathy, to members of the Lord's church. One such form of wager is that found in many booths at the County Fair. This once a year extravaganza has become tradition in most communities in our nation. It is by and large a grand means of family enjoyment, display of craftsmanship, and community pride. However, some events cannot be engaged in by those who uphold Bible standards.

Along the famed midway of most (if not all) fairs and carnivals are various games and gimmicks that allow one a shot, toss, pull, or guess at just about anything. These devices are designed to challenge a person's "skill" and, in the process, take his material wager. The variable of chance

lies in every such transaction. A risk is created merely for the sake of chance. This constitutes gambling. Whether one is shooting baskets for a poster or throwing darts for a panda, the chance has been created and exists that he will walk away with nothing. However, should he be a winner, that still does not reconcile the means of attainment. Evil is evil whether practiced in the darkened halls of an illegal casino or in the open air of the County Fair.

Be not deceived, dear friend, "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). Although such games at the County Fair might seem innocent and trivial to many, the germ of risk-taking is planted and a chance that was not there before now is. Christian standards forbid such actions for those who would be pleasing and acceptable to God, offering themselves as "living sacrifices" (Rom. 12:1) and their example and influence as shining lights (Mt. 5:16). "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thes. 5:22).

## What Shall We Do?

Acts 2:36-42

By Joe Abbot

"What shall we do?" is the greatest question anyone could ever ask. About three thousand souls asked this question on the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2:36-42. Peter did not hold them in suspense when they asked this question but said unto them "... Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38).

Peter told his inquirers what they must do in order to receive the remission of their sins. They were already believers in God. They had just been told about Jesus Christ, God's Son, so they now believed in Him as well. Therefore they were told to repent, or change their minds and directions in life, and be baptized for the remission of their sins. The "baptism" under consideration here is the "one baptism" of Eph. 4:5; a burial in water for the purpose of remitting sins.

Friend, do you sometimes wonder, "What shall I do?" The same answer still applies today; "... Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." (Acts 2:38).

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## Innocence Took His Place

*Barabas, the criminal, was a fortunate man,  
Though as guilty as could be;  
For another was bound and shackled  
And he was allowed to go free.*

*Barabas should have paid the price,  
For the wrong that he had done;  
But he was released from judgment's grip,  
By the death of God's precious Son.*

*Barabas was discharged from wrong,  
As Innocence took his place,  
And was crucified between two thieves,  
Before His Father's face.*

*We sometimes think how wrong this scene,  
And of justice such a misdeed;  
As Purity took the face of shame,  
And the guilty party freed.*

*But if we dare to think again,  
Barabas is not unique, you see:  
For the story which is told of him  
Is the same for you and me.*

*We are indeed a fortunate race,  
Though as guilty as can be;  
For another was bound and shackled  
So that we could be set free.*

*Each of us should pay the price,  
For the wrongs that we have done;  
But we've been released from judgment's grip,  
By the death of God's precious Son.*

*Each had been discharged from wrong,  
For before His Father's face,  
Christ was crucified between two thieves,  
And Innocence took our place.*

-Eddy Gilpin

Concerning the Great Commission (Mt. 28:18-20) and each one's responsibility to obey it, remember: There are three things wrong with the statement "I'm gonna teach somebody someday." "Gonna" is not in the dictionary, "Somebody" is not in the telephone book, and "Someday" is not on the calendar. "Go YE therefore and teach all nations. . ."

People do not miss worship services because they live too far away from the building, but because they live too far away from God. (Heb. 10:25)

You can never do a kindness too soon, because you never know how soon it will be too late.

# The Existence of God

By Brad T. Bromling

Can I know God exists? This question is asked by almost everyone at some point in his life. God expects every Christian to be able to provide an answer: "... always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (I Peter 3:15). How shall we respond? The Bible makes it plain that the evidence is available for one to confidently affirm that he knows God exists. Romans 1:19,20 tells us: "... what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse". When mankind stands before God in the judgment, no one will be able to say confidently "but, I did not know!" God has effectively removed that excuse.

The evidence surrounds us. It is seen in the stars: "the heavens declare the glory of God ..." (Psalm 19:1). It is seen in nature. Paul taught a pagan crowd to turn from idols to the living God when he said: "... He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness" (Acts 14:17). It is seen in man's capacity to reason. Hebrews 3:4 affirms: "for every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God." Even a child can reason that no house ever existed eternally or came into existence of its own accord; he knows it was built by a man. This same God-given reasoning leads one to conclude from the universe-wide evidence that God exists. Little wonder that God wrote: "The fool has said in his heart, There is no God" (Psalm 14:1).

230 Landmark Dr.  
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## OUR PLEA

No book but the Bible.  
No creed but Christ.  
No name but the divine.  
No plea but the gospel.  
No aim but to save.  
In Christ -- Unity.  
In opinion -- Liberty.  
In all things -- Charity.

## THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

1. The Bible is its only guide (Romans 1:16; I Thess. 2:13).
2. Wears a Biblical Name (Romans 16:16).
3. Established at the right place (Isaiah 2:2, 3; Acts 2).
4. Established at the right time (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2).
5. Established on the right person (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:36).
6. Saved are in it (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 2:47).
7. Its members are enrolled in heaven (Hebrews 12:23).
8. Membership in it is obtained by obedience to God's commands including baptism (Acts 2:41-47; I Corinthians 12:13).

## GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

1. Hearing the word of God (Romans 10:17; Acts 16:32).
2. Believing what is taught (Mark 16:16; Hebrews 11:6).
3. Repentance (Acts 2:38; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30).
4. Confession (Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37).
5. Baptism (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; I Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3, 4).
6. After the above five steps, faithful Christian Living (I Peter 2:11, 12; Revelation 2:10).

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