



Bible Believers' Bulletin

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“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17)

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The Worship of God

By Brian Donovan

The bringing in of another year is one more reminder of the mercies and longsuffering of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. As sons of God, **“in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation”** (Philippians 2:15), we have reasons for being so thankful that we can enter another year with more chances to worship Him. The true worship of God is done from within our spirits, toward the God of truth, who is a Spirit (John 4:24). When the Lord Jesus spoke those words, He was speaking to the woman at the well of Samaria, trying to teach her that she did not have any idea what is involved in true worship (**“Ye worship ye know not what”** John 4:22). The poor, ignorant Samaritans, as all heathen, had a superstitious, sentimental idea of worship. They thought that their Mt. Gerizim was a holy place (their traditions taught that Noah’s ark landed here, and also where Abraham built an altar to offer up Isaac). The same superstitions are around today with the Buddhists clinging to a lock of the Buddha’s hair, the Muslims venerating

a turban of Joseph and a bowl that Abraham supposedly used, while the Roman Catholics pray before John the Baptist’s skull, the Shroud of Turin, or the spear of Longinus (the lance that supposedly pierced the Saviour’s side), or even a splinter of the Cross of Calvary.

In colonial New England, the Puritan leaders thought that they could legislate worship and passed a law that enforced everyone to attend their worship services. The Massachusetts Bay Colony became as oppressive as the very church and state setups that they were supposedly fleeing from in Europe. Roger Williams and John Clarke knew that a lost man was **“dead in trespasses and sins”** (Ephesians 2:1), and could no more worship God than a corpse in the cemetery. Williams preached that “An unbelieving soul is dead in sin”...and to try to force him to worship “was like shifting a dead man into several changes of apparel”.

The worship of God has four main elements to it that are often joined together at the same time. Those elements are Our Meditation, Our Obedience, Our Faith, and Our Words. The first, meditation, is the control of our thought life. The Bible student can immediately recognize three of the

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The First Commandment

By Dr. Peter S. Ruckman

Every few years I preach a series of messages on the Ten Commandments. The main reason is the importance of the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments were written by God Himself and not by Moses (Exod. 31:18; Deut. 9:10). The purpose of the Ten Commandments is to give you a **“knowledge of sin”** (Rom. 3:20). Moreover, the law is a **“schoolmaster”** to lead us to Christ (Gal. 3:24). You can see from all those things why Americans don't want the Ten Commandments in their public school system. They make people aware of the true nature of God, and it doesn't fit the one they made for themselves.

The Ten Commandments are an absolute standard by which to go, where the exception *proves the rule*; it doesn't overthrow it. The modern teaching in the American educational system is that the exception overthrows the rule; that way the Marxists and libertines have an excuse for doing whatever they want to do. But if you are *sane*, you know that the occasional exceptions would not be exceptions if there were no rule; the exceptions prove the rule. In the case of the Lord's rules for mankind, they are the Ten Commandments.

“And God spake all these words, saying [the Ten Commandments were spoken before they were written down—cf. 2 Peter 1:21], I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME” (Exod. 20:1–3).

That commandment implies that other **“gods”** do exist. Those **“gods”** are found in Psalm 82:1, and it is God

who calls them **“gods”** (Psa. 8:6); not the Canaanites, the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Norse, the Aztecs, the Mayans, the Incas, the Mormons, et al. In the Old Testament, God is called the **“God of gods”** (Deut. 10:17; Josh. 22:22; Psa. 136:2; Dan. 2:47, 11:36). He is called **“the true God”** (2 Chron. 15:3; Jer. 10:10; John 17:3; 1 Thess. 1:9; 1 John 5:20). That means that whatever those other **“gods”** are that God called **“gods,”** they are not the One who **“made the heavens and the earth”** (Jer. 10:11). They aren't on any par with that God, for they aren't eternal, nor are they omniscient (Isa. 44:6–8). The Book is clear: there is only one God worthy of your worship, and it is not **“the god of this world”** (2 Cor. 4:4).

“Jesus saith unto him, 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” (Matt. 22:36–37).

To start with, let us look at some things which the God who gave this commandment is *not*. First of all, He is not an *Epicurean*; that is, He is not an “eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die” kind of a God. He is not a God like that of Hugh Hefner (*Playboy* magazine), Larry Flynt (*Hustler* magazine), SIECUS, and the militant queers and lesbians—whose only goal in life is to find a way to do what they want, when they want, with no repercussions for doing it. The God of that Book is not a hedonist who gives only positive commandments that al-

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low you to enjoy yourself and have a good time in your sinful flesh. That Bible tells you **“that in the last days”** (2 Tim. 3:1), men will be **“lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God”** (2 Tim. 3:4).

The God of that Bible is a *holy* God. He isn't concerned with you having a good time; He's concerned with you being holy like He is (Lev. 11:44–45; 1 Pet. 1:15–6). God wouldn't break one of His holy commandments to get you out of hell. You say, **“But ‘God is love.’”** Yes, He is (1 John 4:8), but He is also *holy* (Isa. 57:15). If God had to do something wrong to save you, He would let you burn in hell. Yeah! Like really!

Secondly, the God who gave the Ten Commandments is not a *pantheist*, nor is He a *panentheist*. That is, He is not identical with the universe (pantheism), nor is He in everything in the universe and everything in the universe is in Him (panentheism). Now it is true that He fills **“heaven and earth”** (Jer. 23:24), and it is true that **“in him we live, and move, and have our being”** (Acts 7:28). But that is *geographically*, not spiritually. Listen, if God didn't hold this universe together, it would disappear in one cosmic mushroom cloud (Heb. 1:3; Col. 1:17). You talk about a “Big Bang,” that would be it (2 Pet. 3:10). But that doesn't mean that God is in an unsaved man *spiritually*. An unsaved man is the temple of the *unholy ghost* (Eph. 2:2; 1 John 5:19). You may be the **“offspring”** of God by creation (Acts 17:28) or a bastard by pretense (Heb. 12:8), but you are *not* a child of God (John 8:44). God doesn't even know you as one of His

children (Matt. 7:23).

For God to be in you spiritually, you have to be **“born again”**; that is, the Holy Spirit of God has to come inside of you and give you a *new birth*—a *spiritual birth* (John 3:5–7). That occurs when you believe the word of God as preached to you by the gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:23–25; Rom. 10:9–17). When that happens, you become a son of God **“by faith in Christ Jesus”** (John 1:12 cf. Gal. 3:26). The Holy Ghost takes up residency in your body (1 Cor. 6:19–20, 3:16), and you are in Christ (1 Cor. 6:15; Eph. 5:30), and Christ is in you (Col. 1:27; John 14:20; Gal. 2:20).

Naturally, though, you weren't born with Christ in you; you don't have that “spark of divinity” on which the liberals always harp. You came into this world **“dead in trespasses and sin”** (Eph. 2:1), a child of wrath and a child of disobedience (Eph. 2:2–3).

God is not a part of this degenerating universe, degenerating along with it. The modern philosophers believe God is the electromagnetic force field of the universe and that He is evolving all the time right along with us. That's the god of the Antichrist (Dan. 11:38); it's not **“the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”** (2 Cor. 11:31; Eph. 1:3).

Primitive tribes practice what is called “animism”; that is, they believe that inanimate material objects are inhabited by spirits and the gods. I am sure there is some truth in that. That Bible says that the sacrifices Gentiles make to idols of wood, stone, and metal are actually sacrifices made **“to devils”** (1 Cor. 10:20). So while the idol may not be able to speak,

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see, hear, smell, feel, or move (Psa. 115:4–7, 135:15–17; Deut. 4:28), it is nevertheless connected with an unclean spirit (see, for example, Dagon in 1 Sam. 5:1–5). That is why the very next commandment in the “Ten” is not to make **“any graven image”** (Exod. 20:4). But the **“God of gods”** is not a part of His creation: *He existed before it* (Gen. 1:1) and dwells, geographically, outside of it (Isa. 57:15). He can’t be stored in a little box down at the altar of a Catholic church, where He is taken out once a week to be eaten by the congregation (the Mass). Solomon said, **“Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded”** (1 Kings 8:27; 2 Chron. 6:18).

God is not a part of His material creation. He runs it and holds it together, but He Himself **“is a Spirit”** (John 4:24). The reason Jesus Christ is called **“the true God”** (1 John 5:20) like God the Father (John 17:3) is because He is part of the Godhead (the Trinity: *one God*, three persons—1 John 5:7), who existed with the Father before Genesis 1:1 (John 1:1–3, 17:5). He took on the body of a man at His incarnation (Phil. 2:7) and was **“the fulness of the Godhead bodily”** (Col. 2:9) as **“God . . . manifest in the flesh”** (1 Tim. 3:16).

Did you know people go “shopping” for gods? Sure they do. Before I got saved, I professed to be seeking God. I tried Protestantism, Buddhism, transcendental meditation, philosophy, and Roman Catholicism before I got a Bible and read it and found out who the right God was. There are nearly seven billion people on this planet just

like I was. Do you know the difference between us Bible-believing Christians and the Moslems, Hindus, Buddhists, Greek Orthodox, Protestants, Roman Catholics, “wiccans,” satanists, atheists, agnostics, snake worshipers, “native” religions, pagans, etc.? It’s that we found *the right God*.

“As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him” (1 Cor. 8:4–6).

When the Bible says, **“there is none that seeketh after God”** (Rom. 3:11), it doesn’t mean that men don’t seek after *some* god; it means that men don’t seek after the God of that *Book*. Sinners look for a god that will satisfy their “lifestyle.” That is why you see the Frisco fruity faggots holding up signs saying, “God, she is gay.” They want a god that will accommodate their abomination (Lev. 18:22; Rom. 1:26–27). Some wit once said, “God made man in His own image; then man returned the favor.” That is, man creates gods in *his* image—the image of sinful man.

Now I am not a Calvinist: I don’t believe in “Irresistible Grace.” But I do believe that if you get saved, it was by the Holy Spirit of God taking the word of God and showing you your need of Christ. It is God Almighty who makes

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the first move in getting us saved; otherwise we would go on our way straight to hell (Matt. 7:13–14).

I tell you something else God is not: He is not some *inscrutable neuter*. If I pick up a book on theology or philosophy, I can go to the last chapter and tell you whether or not the author was saved. Do you know for what I look? I look to see what he recommends as the remedy for what he is talking. Any author has to justify his reason for writing his book, and when he gets to the last chapter and the last page, if he recommends some *thing* as the solution, THROW HIM OUT! Why? Because “things” can’t do anything for anybody. You need *someone*. The old saying is: “It’s not *what* you know; it’s *who* you know.”

“He that hath THE SON hath life” (1 John 5:12). So it’s *who* you know that saves you. A *thing* like a religion or a sacrament is just that: a thing; and *things can’t save you*. They may be good things, but *things can’t save you*. Back in the Old Testament, those Hebrews made the mistake of equating the ark of God with the God of the ark. When they were being attacked by the Philistines, the Israelites said, **“Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when IT cometh among us, IT may save us out of the hand of our enemies”** (1 Sam. 4:3). After that battle was over, the Hebrews had “lost their shirt,” and the Philistines had captured the ark. Why? Because those Jews had trusted in a *thing*, and a thing couldn’t save them.

Before Jesus Christ was born, He was called **“that holy thing”** (Luke 1:35), but that was as a babe in the

womb. After He was born, He wasn’t a **“thing”** anymore; He was **“called the Son of God”** (Luke 1:35). The Son of God is not a thing; He’s a person. Salvation is in a *person*. If an author says the solution to this world’s problems is integration, welfare, sacraments, a religion, prayer, loving everybody, getting along, etc., that author is *unsaved*. **“Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for HE shall save his people from their sins”** (Matt. 1:21).

The God of that Book is a *person* who showed up on this earth as a *man* (John 1:14). He is said to be love *personified* (1 John 4:8). Love is a *thing*, but it requires a *person* to exercise it. For love to be manifest, there has to be a person doing the loving. Non-living things don’t love. For God to be love, He has to be a person with a will to choose to love someone. Electromagnetic force fields don’t “love” anyone or anything.

Next, the God who gave those commandments is not a *humanist*. Just because **“God is love”** doesn’t mean He’s going to let you off scott free if you break His commandments. And if you think that just because **“God is love”** that it will be easy to keep His commandments, how are you doing at that? Have you ever checked yourself to see just how well you do? Take that first one—since you got up this morning, have you put God *first* in everything you do? You’ve loved Him with ALL your heart, ALL your soul, ALL your strength, and ALL your mind, have you? For how long? A few minutes? An hour? Half the day? No lapses there at all?

You say, “I love God, Ruckman.” I didn’t ask you that. I asked you if you

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 loved Him with your WHOLE BEING—no reservations. That's not easy at all because we're not holy, and we don't love like God loves. That's why men exalt the second great commandment to love their neighbor as themselves over loving God first. That's subtle, isn't it? I mean, what could be wrong with doing unto others as you would have them do unto you? Isn't that the solution to all the world's problems? After all, that's what students are taught in school; that's what is pushed by the UN; that's what your senators, congressmen, presidents, and judges say: just love everybody and get along.

That's *humanism*. Why don't they talk about loving God first and supremely? Because they are exalting loving your fellowman over loving God. That's Marxism. Every communist in the world believes in the second great commandment. All they're doing is trying to fix things up so there is no inequality and they can end man's inhumanity to man. They will kill 100 million people (Mao Tse-Tung) to "make the world a better place to live in." Sure, man, they're just trying to help folks out. If you don't believe it, just ask them.

In John 21:15, Jesus said to Simon Peter, **"Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?"** What are the **"these"**? The other disciples. How one answers that question shows whether he believes in humanism or believes in the God of that Book.

The Bible says to give honor to whom honor is due (Rom. 13:7). Do you know what is wrong with this country (among 20,000 other things)? People are always giving honor to

those who don't even deserve respect.

Even Christians aren't exempt from honoring people to whom no honor is due. Paul said, **"Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine"** (1 Tim. 5:17). There is nothing these Christian scholars and Bible revisers and professors at Christian colleges, universities, and seminaries would rather have than double honor from the body of Christ. They don't deserve it. They don't **"labour in the word and doctrine"**; they labor in getting rid of the Book (AV 1611). How do you know that? Over 323 different versions of the Bible since 1880.

I give them no honor for that, and I give them no respect. I would spit on them one time and drown the whole bunch. If I had them all in the same room together (Oxford, Cambridge, Tübingen, Stuttgart, Harvard, Yale, Berkeley, Chicago, and Princeton; and the seminaries at Dallas, Louisville, New Orleans, and Denver; and Bob Jones, Pillsbury, Piedmont, Southwestern, Northwestern, Maranatha, Cedarville, PCC, etc.), I would fall asleep talking to them. I have more respect for the Mafia than I do for that bunch. That's what these self-professed "Christian scholars" don't like about me: I'm not polite to them. *I don't intend to be polite to them.* I don't think they deserve any respect; I think they deserve a kick in the shorts.

God is not a humanist. Do you know what God's opinion of "man" is?

"Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity" (Psa. 39:5).

"For there is not a just man upon

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earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Eccl. 7:20).

"Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie" (Psa. 62:9).

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9).

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6).

God is not a *polytheist*. There may be spirit beings God calls gods (see the comments above on Psa. 82:6), but they aren't gods who created anything, nor are they on an equal footing with God. They are spirit beings created originally to be *servants* (Heb. 1:14; Psa. 103:20–21). When it comes to God Himself—an eternal, self-sustaining, uncreated, all-powerful, all-knowing, all-pervasive, immutable Being who created the universe and everything in it—He says, **"Is there a God beside me? yea, there is no God; I know not any"** (Isa. 44:8). God doesn't recognize that other bunch as Gods like Himself and says of them, **"The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens"** (Jer. 10:11).

When it comes to polytheism, America is just as bad as India with its 300 million gods. You are told in Colossians 3:5 that **"covetousness . . . is idolatry."** That being the case, America is overflowing with false gods because the whole economic system and the news media is built on creating covetousness in the hearts of every American so that he goes broke buying a bunch of junk he doesn't

need.

Americans worship the gods of Hollywood; they worship the gods of the media; they worship the gods of Wall Street. You can go into a teenager's bedroom and see what kind of gods he has. Some people wash and wax their god, or take him out to the river or the beach every Sunday. America has all kinds of gods, but the God of that Bible is not a polytheist.

Now what do men worship instead of God? Number one: men worship *themselves*. They consider themselves to be the supreme authority. It's the law of human nature: me first, you next. The Devil told the Lord back there in the Old Testament: **"Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life"** (Job 2:4). *Self* first: that's the law of nature.

Someone said once that there are two kinds of people in the world. There is the kind of person that when he comes into a room, his whole personality says, "Here *I* am." Then there is the other kind of person who, when he steps into a room, says, "There *you* are." The first is thinking of *himself*; the second is thinking of *others*. There are not many of that latter kind around.

Nearly everybody is kindly disposed *toward themselves*. They have a high opinion of *themselves*. Well, you can put yourself ahead of God at times, and sometimes we do. I say "we" because I include myself in that statement. I don't always put God over myself or my wants or my needs, etc.

"God, harden me against myself,

This coward with pathetic voice

Who craves for ease, and rest, and joys:

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"Myself, arch-traitor to myself,
My hollowest friend, my deadliest
foe,
My clog, whatever road I go.

"Yet One there is can curb myself,
Can roll the strangling load from
me,
Break off the yoke and set me free."
("Who Shall Deliver Me?" by Christina Rossetti)

The Lord is the only one who can deliver you from you. As a matter of fact, the first thing from which God saves a sinner is from himself. God can't save a sinner from hell without first dealing with the problem that is sending him there to begin with: himself. So God saves the sinner from his sin and his own self-righteousness, and the Holy Spirit gives birth to a new creature inside the man (John 3:5-7 cf. 2 Cor. 5:17) and cuts the new man in Christ away from the body of sinful flesh (Col. 2:11).

Some people worship self, while others worship *money*. Today there are only seven denominations of bills printed by the U.S. Treasury: the one, two, five, ten, twenty, fifty, and hundred dollar bills. But in the past, there were \$500 bills with President William McKinley's picture, \$1,000 bills with President Grover Cleveland's picture, \$5,000 bills with President James Madison's picture, \$10,000 bills with Chief Justice Salmon Chase's picture, and \$100,000 bills with Woodrow Wilson's picture. If you had those bills, you still legally spend them today, but they would probably be worth more as collectors' items.

I know one thing for sure about

money, though: **"the love of money is the root of all evil"** (1 Tim. 6:10. Jesus said, **"Ye cannot serve God and mammon"** (Luke 16:13).

You will either serve God or serve money.

"Walking down the Avenue
She scans the luxury shops—
Their rich display of beauty—
And now and then she stops
Entranced by mink and sable,
By pearls, or diamond-clip,
Orchids in florists' windows
Where scented fountains drip;
Baskets of fruit and candy,
Pale frocks of silk and lace,
Sheer hose and cobweb lingerie—
Of penury no trace . . .
Beyond the glittering windows,
Beyond the sumptuous fare
She sees the map of Europe
And the hungry children there."
("Window Shopping" by Mary Atwater Taylor)

A Christian lady would look at a map of India, Africa, China, South America, etc., and see the unsaved sinners there, dying and going to hell, many of them never having heard about Jesus Christ or the gospel. Ladies, do you spend as much money on missions as you do on clothes, shoes, and cosmetics? Men, do you spend as much money getting the gospel out as you do on dog food, fishing rods, shotguns, golf clubs, and cars?

People overseas know what god America has. That's why the Moslems flew those planes into the Twin Towers—America worships at the altar of finance and commerce; they hit America's god. By all rights we should

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have hit their god and bombed Mecca and Medina. (Yes, I know I'm a "bad boy" for saying that.)

Another thing men worship is sex. In America these days, it's always "sex o'clock." That started back in 1953 with Alfred Kinsey and his sex report, and Hugh Hefner publishing *Playboy* magazine.

Some of you teenage girls just can't wait to show your legs or your belly to some young man. You can see mannequins in a lingerie shop with more clothes on than most women at the beach. There is stuff on billboards today that would have been considered *pornography* when I was growing up. In Las Vegas, the prostitutes will come up to a car stopped at a red light and proposition the male driver with his wife in the passenger seat right beside him. That's America, not Thailand or the Netherlands or Sweden.

Things have "progressed" in this country since Elvis Presley could only be filmed from the waist up on the Ed Sullivan Show because the gyrations he was doing with his hips were considered to be obscene. Some of these rock singers today are simulating sex acts right on stage. Some of these rap songs are so laced with vulgarities that they have to have a warning posted on them about the sexual content. You have women these days going to see *male* strippers.

Some men worship *power*. The goal of most politicians is not the welfare of the state or country they serve, but to get into office and stay there as long as possible so they can be the ones calling the shots. With Egypt "**destroyed**" (Exod. 10:7), Pharaoh was only interested in staying in power

and controlling those Jews. Even after losing his firstborn son, he still went after the Israelites and ended up losing his life because of it.

Doing anything to stay in office—in academic settings, it is called "tenure." It's getting beyond the probationary period and being on the faculty for so long that it is nearly impossible to be fired. These long-tenured apostates will do or say anything to stay in their positions. They will lie about what they really believe about the Book or hide their mockery of the Bible (AV 1611) in their classrooms. Why? Because if word got out what they really think of that Book, some of the big donors to the university would stop giving, and the professors would be fired for hurting the institution's income.

They won't tell you what they believe about the King James Bible. For literally *decades*, I have challenged those birds to step forward and tell us how, when, and where they lost their faith in the King James Bible as the infallible, inerrant word of God. I would print their testimony: it would be the "headliner" in the *Bulletin*. In all those years, I never had *one* faculty member take me up on my offer. I have had those who were talked out of it in a college classroom and later had their faith restored write me, but never any of those birds who correct it and make fun of it in front of their students behind closed doors where they aren't being "recorded." Why is that? Because they want to stay in their positions where they can control the young men training for the ministry. They want to turn out a bunch of infidels and agnostics just like them.

They want you to think the Holy

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Ghost showed them what was wrong with that Book. *They're a pack of professional liars.* The Holy Spirit didn't teach them that at all; they got it from a man.

Back when I pastored Brent Baptist Church here in Pensacola, Florida, one of our young men who was preaching on the street was approached by a graduate of Bob Jones University (who had attended Brent Baptist before he went up to BJU). That BJU graduate said, "You're a Ruckmanite!" Our young man said, "What's a Ruckmanite?" That Ph.D. from BJU said, "He's someone who doesn't believe there are any errors in the King James Bible. Ruckman taught you that." "Do you think there are errors in it?" asked our young man. "Yes," said the Ph.D. "Well, who taught you that?!" said the street preacher. That Ph.D. from "the World's Most Unusual University" *wouldn't say* He was just as crooked as a dog's hind leg. But he was not alone. There are at least 320 more just like him (see *The Christian Liar's Library*).

Some people make a god out of *music*. Every year we have young men who testify in our "Prep and Delivery" class here at the Pensacola Bible Institute that their god was rock music. When I have had to listen to some of that stuff for my History of Music class, I am surprised anyone can remember the tune or the lyrics to some of that stuff because it's so rotten.

Things have gotten so bad now with the music that you have to show pictures that change every five seconds to keep people's interest in what the band is singing or playing. Flip-

ping pictures, strobe lights—don't you know what's going on? You are being mesmerized to think something wonderful is going on when it is just noise from a group with no talent.

And if the Bible is right (and there is no doubt in my mind that it is), some people make a god out of their *belly* (Phil. 3:19; Rom. 16:18). Most Christian "fellowship" in America is built around *gluttony*. If you're on the evangelistic circuit, these women who host meals for the visiting evangelist will stuff you until it kills you, if you let them. When I was an evangelist, I finally had to limit my meals to two a day; otherwise three square meals would make one round preacher.

Other people worship *strength—athletics*. America is sports crazy. Sports broadcasting isn't just on Saturday and Sunday afternoons anymore. There are whole networks broadcasting nothing but sports morning, noon, and night, every day of the year. You have football now starting in baseball season; baseball running into football season; basketball starting in football season. The major networks now aren't just broadcasting football games on the weekends, but three nights during prime time during the week.

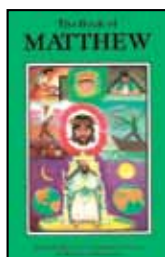
I saw a cartoon one time of a golfer putting on the green with a preacher and a bride chasing him down. The caption was the golfer telling the woman, "I told you only if it rained today." One guy was bewailing all his misfortunes and saying, "My wife left me, the car broke, my dog died, and the Dallas Cowboys lost in the playoffs thirty to nothing—THIRTY TO NOTHING!"

Others make a god out of their

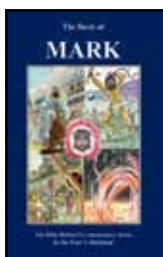
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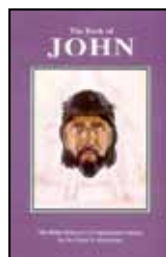
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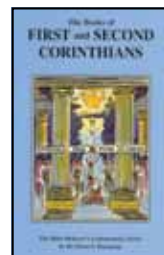
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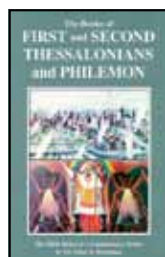
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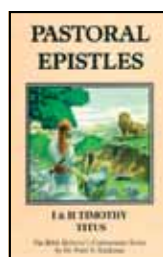
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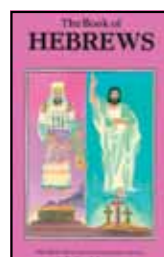
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(Plus postage—see page 18)

The First Commandment

Continued from 10
minds. The slogan for the United Negro College Fund says, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste." Liberals must not believe that; they've been wasting them for the past fifty years. After all, when the only way you can get through school is by social promotions, racial quotas, and "affirmative action," the minds of students have been wasted.

If television doesn't waste your mind, I would like to know what does. If you spend all your time in front of the boob tube, you will go down in history; you'll also go down in math, science, reading, and everything else.

Now, in closing, what are the proofs that a man loves God. First Corinthians 8:3, Paul says, "**if any man love God, the same is known of him.**" It's not hard to figure out if a man loves God. Just check him by how human love is shown.

If you love someone, you like to *think about him*. Well, do you think about God?

If you love somebody, you like to *talk about him*. Do you talk about the Lord?

If you love a person, you like to be *with him*. Do you like to spend time with God?

If you love someone, you will *avoid that person's enemies*. Do you like to hang around those who ignore or hate your Saviour? Are your companions people who mock Him or use His name as a cuss word all the time?

If you love someone, you will *love the person's friends*. Do you like being around God's friends?

If you love someone, you will bring gifts to him. Do you give to the Lord? Willingly? Cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7).

If you love someone, you *rejoice when he succeeds*. Do you get happy to see victorious displays of God's power and love?

If you love someone, you tend to *overlook the person's faults*. You say, "Ruckman, God doesn't have any faults." True, but sometimes it sure does seem like to us that He does. Aren't there some things you would have done differently if you were God? Did you know that sometimes you just have to "forgive" God for what He does. That may seem sacrilegious to some of you pious brethren, but if you have ever lost a child, you know exactly what I mean. There's no use getting angry at the Lord. You might as well just "forgive" Him and move on because you aren't going to change what He did. I'm not talking theologically; I'm talking *practically*.

If you love somebody, it is *hard to believe evil about him*. You folks who are saved and love the Lord, it ought to be hard for you to believe the Lord would do anything wrong. You look at the awful things He lets happen, and if you love Him, you figure He sees the "big picture" and had a *reason* for allowing it. You don't "blame" Him.

Walter Wilson, the Christian doctor who was a great witness for the Lord Jesus Christ, was invited to a New Year's Eve party one time. He told the man who invited him, "I believe I'll bring Jesus with me to the party." The man replied, "I don't think Jesus would like everything that's going to go on at the party." "In that case," said Dr. Wilson, "neither would I." And he didn't go.

"Would you take Jesus with you everywhere you go?

Continued on 13

The First Commandment

Continued from 12

Or would you maybe change your plans for just a day or so?

Would you be glad to have Him meet your closest friends?

Or would you hope they stay away until His visit ends?

"Would you be glad to have Him

stay forever on and on?

Or would you sigh with great relief when He at last was gone?

It might be interesting to know the things that you would do

If Jesus came in person to spend some time with you."

(Excerpt from "If Jesus Came"; author unknown)

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January 17-19

Bible Believers Baptist Church
3857 Hartley Road
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Pastor David Peacock
(904) 260-8370

February 7-9

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March 13-15

Red Lion Bible Church
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Red Lion, PA 17356
Pastor Steve Schmuck
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- Daniel Haveman

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The Worship of God

Continued from 13
elements of worship coming together in one passage, as found in II Corinthians 10:3-5. In these verses, Paul says that, **"though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh"** (Faith)... **"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought (Meditation) to the obedience (Obedience) of Christ"**.

First of all, every born again Christian can worship the Lord in his thought life by meditating on Him. Of course, that meditation is not simply our own thoughts of what we would like Him to be but guided by the scriptures. True worship must be **"in spirit and in truth"**. At least seven times in Psalm 119 alone (verses 15, 23, 48, 78, 97, 99, 148), David speaks of meditating on what the Lord said in His Book. The Psalmist of Israel says that the man is blessed when, **"in his law doth he meditate day and night"** (Psalm 1:2). The man after God's own heart would **"meditate on thee in the night watches"** (Psalm 63:6), as well as **"my meditation all the day"** (Psalm 119:97). The shepherd of Israel would look at the creation around him and, **"meditate on all thy works"**, and **"muse on the work of thy hands"** (Psalm 143:5). His thought life was turned to the worship of God as he would **"consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers"** (Psalm 8:3), and then **"meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings"** (Psalm 77:12).

Each one of us has a chance to worship the Lord daily as we go about our work and muse (think) on our great Saviour. We do not have to wait for a Sunday service to be gathered with

like-minded brethren to bring our worship to Him. Our worship of our Saviour is never restricted to a place. Isaac found worship in the field at eventide (Genesis 24:63), Peter found it on the housetop (Acts 10:9), John's worship came from within the salt mines on the isle of Patmos

(Revelation 1:9-10), Joshua's worship took place at Jericho with his sword drawn and ready to fight (Joshua 5:14), Hezekiah found worship when in deep trouble and put his face to the wall (II Kings 20:2), Jacob finally worshipped on his deathbed, leaning weakly upon his staff (Hebrews 11:21), and Jesus found worship of the Father comely on the mountaintop alone (Matthew 14:23). David reminds us that even our beds are a place to bring our worship, saying, **"Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah"** (Psalm 4:4).

The Lord receives worship from our private thoughts of Him, and He even asks for us to turn our faces and voices to Him as He says, **"let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely"** (Song of Solomon 2:14). It is not as if He needs our fellowship and worship, but the fact that He wants it and even seeks it (**"for the Father seeketh such to worship him"** John 4:23). This is a humbling thought in itself, and David acknowledges that, saying, **"What is man, that thou art mindful of him?"** (Psalm 8:4). This worship of God requires that we put off our self-absorbed flesh and think on Him, who is worthy. When one human being loves another, it is shown by thinking of them while apart.

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The Worship of God

Continued from 14

The Lord God created man with three parts to his being, a body, a soul, and a spirit (I Thessalonians 5:23). That is the reason that in the life of every human being there comes a time when the great questions arise in his mind, "Where did I come from?", "Where am I going?", and "Why am I here?" The desire of "**science falsely so called**" (I Timothy 6:20) is to squelch those questions and pretend they are not there. Those ideas are to be buried in the public education system, and the religious, fanatical, science fiction writings of Dawkins, Hawking, Asimov, Sagan, etc., decide what is acceptable to discuss. The Lord God Almighty is not an acceptable subject (except to ridicule) in the minds of these self-made gods. It perturbs them greatly that the vast majority of mankind continues to believe that there is a God, in spite of their attempts to educate them out of it. The branches of science can break down the human body into fine parts and yet find no soul or spirit. They look into the heart and find the aorta, the atrium, the ventricles, and pericardium, but no spirit. They break down the blood and find platelets, and plasma, with red and white blood cells,

but no spirit. They break down the cells and find ribosomes, nucleotides, mitochondria, and cytoplasm, but no spirit. In their ignorance, they declare emphatically that there is neither spirit nor soul, and their microscopes have proven it. They are angry because, with all of their studies, they still cannot expunge the spirit of man's longing to connect with his Creator. As the 1967 Nobel Prize winner George Wald once admitted, "When it comes to the origin of life, we have only two possibilities as to how life arose. One is spontaneous generation arising to evolution; the other is a supernatural creative act of God... There is no third possibility. Spontaneous generation was scientifically disproved one hundred years ago by Pasteur, Spallanzani, Reddy, and others. That leads us scientifically to only one possible conclusion—that life arose as a supernatural creative act of God... I will not accept that philosophically because I do not want to believe in God. Therefore, I choose to believe in that which I know is scientifically impossible, spontaneous generation arising to evolution"

These religious fanatics wish that God would go away from their thoughts

Continued on 16

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Brian Donovan

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All of November's sermons on one MP3

The Worship of God

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and they remind us of the old jingle, "As I was walking up the stair, I met a man who wasn't there, He wasn't there again today, Oh, how I wish he'd go away." But God will NOT go away. He is a person, outside of space and time, who is a Spirit, with a body that entered into space and time in the person of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and after paying the price for your sins with His own Blood, now wants your fellowship and worship. After being on this earth only a few years, a man begins to feel that there is something more to life than just the physical, which he can see. His soul yearns for more, and each time he obtains what the world offers and the body of flesh desires, he comes up with an empty aching inside. That aching is personally to know his Creator. The Lord has an empty place for Himself to fill in the heart of every living soul that He creates, and that is the reason the human heart begins to look around and ask himself those great questions. That is also the reason there is no peace until that place is filled by the love of God (Romans 5:1-5).

Our meditation is a form of worship as we think on our Lord's attributes of holiness (Psalm 96:9 **"O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness"**), mercy (Lamentations 3:22 **"It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed"**), forgiveness (Psalm 130:3 **"If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O LORD, who shall stand?"**), faithfulness (Psalm 36:5 **"...thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds."**), love (John 17:26 **"...that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."**), and powerful glory (Psalm 19:1 **"the heavens declare the glory**

of God"). Not only with the dawning of a new year, but with the dawning of each new day, the child of God can bring pleasure to his Lord through his worship as he thinks on Him.

The second element of worship is obedience. Though the word may be used cheaply, another way to worship God is through repeated acts of obedience. The first mention of the word "worship" in the 1611 King James Bible is found in Genesis 22:5, where Abraham is taking his son Isaac to the top of one of the mountains of Moriah, in obedience to the word of the Lord, to offer his only son, whom he loveth. Before he tied his beloved son down on that altar, Abraham told his two servants to remain where they were, while "I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." This Old Testament event is probably the greatest illustration of what took place two thousand years later between God the Father and His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, on a hill called Calvary outside the city of Jerusalem. In both cases, the two sons (Isaac and Jesus), willingly laid down their lives on the altar of obedience.

We are given a chance to offer worship to our God through our obedience to His words. With our spirits, joined to the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:17), we are able to offer repeated outpourings from our inner man, the worship of God in our obedience. It is not always easy to offer our worship in obedience, especially in the midst of things going completely against our own will. David once left Jerusalem in shame as his son Absalom was usurping his throne and even attempting to kill him. As David reached the top of

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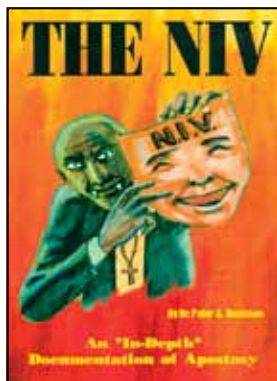
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The Worship of God

Continued from 16
the hill, barefoot and head hung low, weeping as he went, he was informed that his closest friend and counselor, Ahithophel, was also among the conspirators with Absalom. The Bible says that at that point, David came to the place **"where he worshipped God"** (II Samuel 15:32). This form of worship is what the Bible calls **"the sacrifice of praise"** (Hebrews 13:15) since it is completely contrary to our sinful and selfish nature. There will be times in the life of the Christian when worshipping God will not be the first thing on his mind as a natural reaction. When

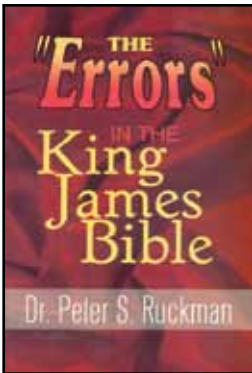
circumstances are hard, and the enemy is attacking, we want only deliverance and help, and the thought of worship is not often the thought of our hearts. Usually, our first thought is that God should be right there to fix our problem, and that right early. Yet it is mostly right here, when we are hurting, and we offer a sweet **"sacrifice of praise to God"**, instead of a bitter complaint, that our God is pleased.

Obedience to the word of God in times of suffering, opposition, or persecution, is a form of worship that even the man Christ Jesus learned

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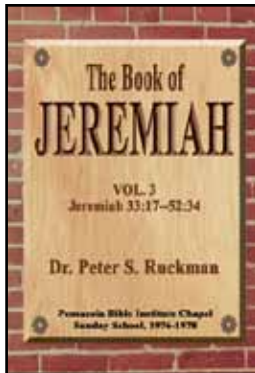
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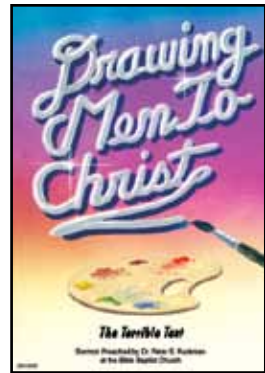
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The Worship of God

Continued from 19
when He walked this earth. It was when our Saviour offered **“prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death”** (Hebrews 5:7), that He learned **“obedience by the things which he suffered”** (Hebrews 5:8). This man Jesus submitted his will to the Father, and since the context of Hebrews 5 calls Him **“a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec”** (verse 6), his worship was connected to his obedience. It was in the garden of Gethsemane where we can see his perfect example of worship in obedience, as the man Jesus cried out, **“nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt”** (Matthew 26:39).

The third important element of worship is our faith. The Lord God Almighty is so far above our thoughts and our ways that He can do things and **“giveth not account of any of his matters”** (Job 33:13), while justly expecting His children to simply trust Him. The Lord receives our worship in the form of our faith when we do not have the WHY. In practice, this part of our worship should be the easiest to bring forth

for a number of reasons. For one, **“O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?”** (Romans 11:33-34). We cannot even fathom the very first verse of the King James Bible, and yet we would question and doubt our Father.

The Lord receives pleasure from our worship of faith when we simply trust Him with everything. He certainly has given us plenty of reason to trust Him, given the countless merciful and longsuffering manners in which He has treated us in the past. The aged saint of God can look back and rest under Him **“whose wings thou art come to trust”** (Ruth 2:12). There is no cause for alarm that He would ever abandon us in time of trouble, sickness, persecution, and even death, while He has already proven Himself to be faithful to His promises. **“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises”** (II Peter 1:4), and the child of God is to receive and

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The Worship of God

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trust these promises by faith, regardless of the circumstances. We have been given His word on these things, and that is cause for our worship of faith. **"I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name"** (Psalm 138:2).

The starting point of the worship of the Lord is our faith in what He has said. **"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked"** (Ephesians 6:16), for **"without faith it is impossible to please him"** (Hebrews 11:6). There will be times when our only recourse is to believe what the scripture says, and realize that God simply must be worshipped. When rest from the battle and work seems like it is not there, **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"** (Matthew 11:28). When forgiveness of sins seems out of reach, **"For thou Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee"** (Psalm 86:5). When the troubles of this life begin to overwhelm, **"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God"** (Philippians 4:6). When the fears start to well up and cause anxiety, **"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind"** (II Timothy 1:7), and **"What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee"** (Psalm 56:3).

The fourth element of worship is with our words (Psalm 105:2 **"Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him:**

talk ye of all his wondrous works").

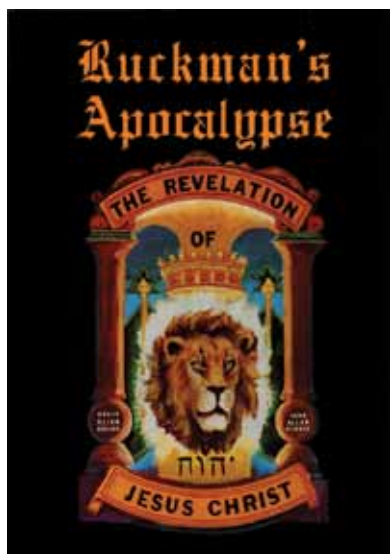
A couple of dozen times alone in the Psalms, David uses the phrase **"sing praises"** to the Lord, as well as many times with instruments (harp, cymbals, etc.). The saints of God love to brag on His works, both in the world and the heavens that He has created, and in our personal lives. We agree with Peter and John saying, **"We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard"** (Acts 4:20).

Our worship comes forth in praise from our lips as we meditate on our great God. Praising the Lord is not merely saying the phrase, "Praise the Lord" as if some kind of mantra, but speaking of specific things He does in our everyday lives. Words can be cheap, and the Lord Himself said that **"This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me"** (Mark 7:6). Christians have chances to worship the Lord by speaking up in public for Him to others who do not know what a great Saviour He truly can be. If you will but look for the opportunity, there are chances to worship the Lord by using your mouth to testify of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

When the Book comes to a close and the apostle John falls down at the magnitude of the prophecies that he has been shown, the angel that has been taking Him through these things simply says, **"worship God"** (Revelation 22:9). That is our calling, our reason for being alive another year. It matters not what happens to your health, your finances, your family, your friends, your ministry, your country...Worship God. Christian, no matter where you are, you have been given a chance to worship God in your Meditation, your Obedience, your Faith, and your Words.

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(Plus Postage—page 18)

Real Climate Change

By Robert Militello

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding" (Prov. 9:10).

Climate change is a hot topic lately. Some swear by it and others remain skeptical. What is observable fact is that the spiritual climate in our land has changed dramatically over the years. Recently, New Jersey became the second state after Nevada to legalize sports betting. The online gaming industry in America is booming. The U.S. Supreme Court has now legalized sports gambling in all fifty states, so cash hungry states were handed a new pie to cut up and fill their hunger for revenue. For years, wagering was limited to casinos and racetracks. You had to go to a physical location to indulge your avarice. Then lotteries came along, and your neighborhood convenience store was now the place to accommodate your passion. There was a time when you had to go to a dingy movie theatre to see filthy films. Now, you can swim in the Devil's toilet (filthy imaginations) on your computer or smart phone. In most of our pulpits, no alarm has been sounded. The moral climate has changed significantly since the King James Bible disappeared from church pews. God's holiness seemed to get watered down the more preachers talked about how much God loves you.

In a convenience-oriented society such as we have today, accessibility to sin and its pleasures is growing like the number of fast-food outlets along our highways. The need to satisfy our cravings has created an

immoral society, and an obese one to go along with it. Self is casting off all the old constraints. Physical bodies are being over powered by the stimuli of the five senses. Instant gratification has hit America like a storm surge along a coast where a hurricane has moved onshore. Believers are not living victorious lives.

Paul gave this exhortation in Romans 12:1—**"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies A LIVING sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."**

After 42 years in Christ, I have never seen a believer become a soldier for the Lord without putting his or her flesh into a harness. The lack of praying power today in the body of Christ is the result of not offering up the body upon God's altar of service.

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord WILL NOT HEAR ME" (Psa. 66:18).

Fear is how you grow in grace and get a prayer life that actually amounts to something.

Looking back in history, a major political event helped change the spiritual climate in our nation. In the summer of 1960, the Democratic Convention in Los Angeles nominated a Catholic Senator from Massachusetts for president. John F. Kennedy, a notorious womanizer, a Catholic of convenience, and son of a bootlegger would put a crucifix in the Lincoln bedroom and bring to an end the succession of 33 non-Catholic men cursed by the Coun-

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cil of Trent because they rejected the doctrines of Rome. An evil, east wind began to blow upon our land. By 1965, the pope would find conditions here suitable enough for him to visit New York, address the United Nations, and meet with President Johnson and Cardinal Spellman in New York's Waldorf Astoria. Climate change, spiritual that is, was now an accomplished fact. Nations, like people, reap what they sow. The Vietnam War was the first harvest of woe following Pope Paul VI's "blessing" on America.

Evidence of spiritual climate change popped up in the sixties with the establishment of state lotteries. Originally opposed by Gov. Nelson Rockefeller, the New York State Gaming Commission in 1967 put a statewide lottery into operation. There's a sucker born every minute, and the formidable odds against winning did nothing to discourage those who admired the Martin Luther King quip, "I have a dream." To promote the lottery, the Gaming Commission spent millions on television spots using this effective exhortation: "You've got to be in it to win it!" Pastors and community leaders who fought the lottery because they rightly surmised that it would hurt the poor were told that lottery proceeds would be used for better schools. Public education actually deteriorated in the state, but by then, lottery fever was part of the New York experience. By the way, the first modern lottery sanctioned by politicians looking for more tax revenue began in 1934 in Catholic Puerto Rico. Make the connection,

please!

This new year will melt away more of the fear of God that yet remains in our population. Those Jews who believe a messiah must come, use a spiritual barometer to gauge the time of his coming. Psalm 92, verse 7, is their measurement.

"When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed for ever."

An orthodox Jew not knowing the grace that we receive in Jesus Christ talks readily about judgment. From the Torah, he knows of the readiness of the God of Israel to punish evil. He is ahead of most saints in this regard. In Laodicea, the holiness of God is not a subject that is "trending." The Jew connects Psalm 92:7 with Genesis 6:5.

"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:1-7 what the weather forecast was for the church on earth prior to the rapture. The arrival of 2020 is nothing to celebrate for a Christian who knows his Bible. God's word warns us and comforts us at the same time.

"And that KNOWING THE TIME, THAT NOW IT IS HIGH TIME TO AWAKE OUT OF SLEEP: FOR NOW IS OUR SALVATION NEARER THAN WHEN WE BELIEVED" (Rom. 13:11).

Sadly, the year just past saw a frightening rise in suicides and a growing plague of opioid use. Men-

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tal health budgets in all levels of government are severely underfunded. Hopelessness in our society, like dry rot in a house not adequately maintained, is destroying families and driving millions to seek escape in the pleasures of sin. Our government seems overwhelmed. States are legalizing marijuana, admitting that the war against drugs is, for all practical purposes, lost. No one likes to be the bearer of bad news, so pulpits in America are largely silent about where we are heading. This is the case especially in evangelical and fundamental churches where the desire to see America made great again causes pastors to go SPIRITUALLY blind. We are not being made "great" again. The fear of God has departed and the name *Ichabod* is written over every church that promotes the flag over the word of God. An insidious form of amnesia has emerged in these last days. The saints are forgetting that their citizenship is in heaven. Making the world a better place to live in was not on the Lord's agenda, nor is it our calling. Patriotism is commendable, but not idolatry.

At twelve years of age, the Lord made it clear to His own family what road He planned to take: ". . . **wist ye not that I MUST BE ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS?**" (Luke 2:49). Is that how you are living your life? How else do you hope to be approved of the Lord when He comes for His bride?

Right now, no one but the Lord knows what judgments will come upon our nation for sin. You must

reap what you sow. We have been blessed like no other nation in history. We have grown fat, forgetting from where our blessings came and have become sinfully self-indulgent. When reading in Exodus the way God punished Egypt, you see to what extremes the Lord can go to punish pride. Every time we have a disaster where billions in property have been destroyed, you hear the familiar, "We will rebuild." New York was a proud city under Mayor Giuliani, and its pride was laid low by crazy Muslim fanatics sent by God. Did anyone publicly talk about judgment from God when the Twin Towers fell? Are you kidding? Our nation has grown harder towards God and His word, not softer, since New York City was attacked. What can we expect?

September 11, 2001, was a local disaster, but what might soon come could be a national disaster from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Read in Exodus 10, beginning in verse 21, the tenth sign God performed on Egypt when Moses stretched out his hand toward heaven. Ten is the Gentile number, and Egypt was the power of its day. How best to frighten a nation without destroying the lives of countless civilians? World Wars I and II killed millions, and much of the continent of Europe was devastated. The Lord caused an extreme darkness to fall upon Egypt, but not in Goshen where the Hebrews lived. It was a darkness like no other: ". . . **even darkness which may be felt**" (Exod. 10:21). I'm not sure of just what this was. Did not the Egyptians

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have candles? Something mysterious and supernatural happened here. For three days, Egypt was paralyzed with fear. No one moved—see verse 23. Can the Lord do something like that to us to get our attention? Sure He can. He certainly got the attention of the city I worked for from 1973 to 2001. Thank God, I was out of there before the Towers fell. My office was only a block and a half from those buildings. Judgment, when it comes, so often comes suddenly; especially when things seem normal, or even favorable.

Losing the fear of God brings on a deadly complacency. Barking dogs in the middle of the night should wake a sleeper, but pastors all over this country and on “Christian” TV have put their congregations to sleep. On Sundays, these men, and, God forbid, women, serve up heavy doses of spiritual melatonin—“God loves you, God loves you, and again, God loves you!”

Have you considered what panic would ensue if the Lord turned off the lights in our nation? Egypt survived the three days of darkness, but what a wake-up call that was. I’m sure most Egyptians, by then, couldn’t wait for the Hebrews to pack up and get out of town. Like the Germans under Hitler, Egyptians were bound under a maniacal Pharaoh and had to pay an awful price for the free labor they got out of their Hebrew slaves. God rewards nations just like He rewards people. He can put bitter things on your plate, and you’ll have to swallow it, wheth-

er you like it or not. It’s nice to say, “God bless America,” and you would rather hear that than “God judge America, amen? We put “In God We Trust” on our currency. Is the God we trust holy? If He is, then what can your nation expect to receive from His hand when citizens pay taxes to build schools where His name isn’t mentioned and His commandments can’t be displayed. Those ten commandments tell me I’m a sinner and God hates sin. So we are without excuse. When judgment falls, don’t display your willful ignorance by asking, “Why did God let that happen?”

Enemies of the United States are busy seeking ways to hurt us. We all know that. There are ways to cripple our nation without killing us. Our economy and our way of life is dependent upon power. You really don’t know how miserable life can become when the lights go off and the computer screens go dark. What about your cell phones? Imagine the anxiety and fear that will come if you can’t communicate with loved ones. The gods of science and technology do not impress our God. He may soon show us in a real way of what He thinks about our gods. Our nation has never experienced a panic situation that affected everyone directly at one time. Pearl Harbor was a long way off from California and a lot farther away from Washington, D.C. New York City had to deal with a disaster limited to a few blocks downtown in the financial district. Those in Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Staten Island got only as close to the disaster as their TVs

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would allow them. When hurricanes fail to deliver the fearsome punch that many expected, we hear this said: "We dodged a bullet." America has gotten used to the gracious mercies of God. Beware; our drift away from the word of God will gain more momentum in 2020. Then what?

"Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver" (Psa. 50:22).

We have taken too much for granted for along time in America. The world has become a much more dangerous place since the new millennium. Our CIA, FBI, and all the intelligence agencies spent billions on spying and technology tools keeping tabs on our enemies leading up to the attack on New York City. Nothing availed. We were blindsided, and the Lord chose not to wake us up. Somehow we failed to note the Muslim men who got visas to come here legally and go to flight school to learn how to fly civilian aircraft. Everyone today is in favor of "red flag" gun control legislation that will alert the authorities as to who may be a potential risk as a gun owner. All attempts to thwart mass shootings will fail. Evil will find a way to come up out of hell as often as the Lord permits, because **"... men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil"** (John 3:19). If our population continues to love that which brought the Son of God to earth, why should we be surprised if the Lord decides to shut our lights suddenly? Men love darkness; then let them have it. I know that the Lord

is not willing that any should perish and that every believer ought to seek to win souls, but longsuffering has a limit. Millions of souls that the Lord suffered to go on living while all efforts to bring light to these souls was rejected were at some point cut off and allowed to fall into hell. Did these souls stop to think that their next breath of air depended on the grace of God?

How well did the Lord teach a proud New York City that its safety depended not on the CIA, but on the grace of God? Has America drawn the right conclusions from that tragedy of 9/11? Where is the fear of God in our land today? It was retired years ago like the old rotary dial phones in all our houses and shops—gone forever, unless you find one in an antique store, a garage, basement, or attic. The fear of God, unlike the old phones, is easy to find if you have a King James Bible. Acquiring that fear involves spending time in a book, and that is not what is "trending" today in "America." Folks are looking at screens and not words in a book. Now ask yourself, would God be just if He decided to darken everyone's screen? Maybe reading a King James Bible by candlelight would bring a peace to your soul you never experienced before. Don't fear to ask the Lord to surprise you—be adventuresome!

Clearly, the greatest piece of evidence showing how drastically the spiritual climate in America had changed was the celebration that followed the June 26, 2015 Supreme Court decision legalizing sodomite

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marriage. Hollywood partied, the media (most outlets) cheered, politicians wanting to be re-elected presented themselves as “gay friendly,” and the millions who hold God’s word in contempt, smiled. If you didn’t know then that the spiritual winds in America had shifted, it was because you lived in a bubble and no longer knew the difference between day and night. There are lots of folks in that condition, sad to say. I call it “spiritual dementia.”

Let me submit one small item that shows how far we have put the fear of God from us over the years. When I was a child, my dad had gotten a TV. It was a small screen, black and white, that glowed in the corner of the living room. In 1950, TV was innocent like a child. Comedy was clean, variety shows were entertaining, and live dramas were regularly presented on the three networks. My mom allowed me to watch the puppet shows and cartoons. Her only admonishment was to tell me not to sit too close to the screen because it was bad for my eyes. The most popular show for kids was *Howdy Doody*. All the time I stared at the glowing screen, I was transfixed by the antics of the residents of Doodyville. Childhood is a magical time, made so by the laughter of little hearts not yet oppressed by the cares and troubles of adult life. There were lots of shows for children then. They kind of served as temporary babysitters for the millions of children born after World War II. I was in that first class of “boomers” born in 1946.

Now, what I saw and heard at the

end of the *Howdy Doody* show on Saturday mornings was proof that the gentle influence of the Holy Spirit was still felt in our land. At the very end of the hijinks of those shows, the camera would zoom in on Buffalo Bob Smith who dressed in a cowboy outfit. He was the show’s narrator and the voice of *Howdy*. Buffalo Bob would look straight into the camera and with a most friendly expression on his face would say, “Kids, make sure you ask mom or dad to take you to church on Sunday.” Do you see how drastically the spiritual atmosphere has changed since? In 1950, divorce was rare. Most moms stayed at home, and no television show would dare allow words like *damn* or *hell* to be uttered. There was a respect for seniors—that’s gone. Teachers in school were feared, and being sent to the principal’s office meant real trouble. Cops on the corners of my neighborhood in Brooklyn were instantly obeyed when you were told to move on with your buddies. TV channels began their morning program with the National Anthem and signed off at midnight with a brief homily by a priest, rabbi, or minister. What happened these past seventy years? America’s morals have been corrupted, and preaching on sin, judgment, and hell is out of fashion. So now, we reap, and what a harvest is coming on. God help us!

If Dr. Ruckman were still here, I’d ask him what our spiritual forecast was for 2020. He would likely answer, “Turn or burn,” or “There’s no hope in the pope”! Yet, we are told to be of good cheer. A Bible

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believer is a positive thinker. We know everything will eventually get fixed. Nothing that is happening in my country today really surprises me. The Holy Spirit wrote down the long-range forecast a long time ago. Salt was used as a preservative, and because the pulpits of America no longer remind congregants that God hates sin, we've become a ran-

cid slab of meat in the eyes of the Lord. I don't understand why we are still here. God's longsuffering is an enigma to me. There are lots of reasons to believe this year will be the year we graduate. Paul knew his departure was at hand—see 2 Timothy 4:6. Peter knew also—see 2 Peter 1:14. Because of this, I believe some saints may receive advance notice
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THE CREED OF THE ALEXANDRIAN CULT

1. There is **no final authority** but God.
2. Since God is a Spirit, there is **no final authority** that can be seen, heard, read, felt, or handled.
3. Since all books are material, there is **no book on this earth that is the final and absolute authority** on what is right and what is wrong, what constitutes truth and what constitutes error.
4. There **WAS** a series of writings one time which, **IF** they had all been put into a BOOK as soon as they were written the first time, **WOULD HAVE** constituted an infallible and final authority by which to judge truth and error.
5. However, this series of writings was lost, and the God who inspired them was **unable to preserve their content** through Bible-believing Christians at Antioch (Syria), where the first Bible teachers were (Acts 13:1), and where the first missionary trip originated (Acts 13:1-52), and where the word "*Christian*" originated (Acts 11:26).
6. So God chose to **ALMOST** preserve them through Gnostics and philosophers from Alexandria, Egypt, even though God called His Son OUT of Egypt (Matthew 2), Jacob OUT of Egypt (Genesis 49), Israel OUT of Egypt (Exodus 15), and Joseph's bones OUT of Egypt (Exodus 13).
7. So there are two streams of Bibles. The most accurate—though, of course, there is **no final, absolute authority** for determining truth and error; it is a matter of "preference"—are the Egyptian translations from Alexandria, Egypt, which are "almost the originals," although not quite.
8. The most **inaccurate translations** were those that brought about the German Reformation (Luther, Zwingli, Boehler, Zinzendorf, Spener, et al.) and the worldwide missionary movement of the English-speaking people: the Bible that Sunday, Torrey, Moody, Finney, Spurgeon, Whitefield, Wesley, and Chapman used.
9. But we can "tolerate" these if those who believe in them will "tolerate" US. After all, since there is **NO ABSOLUTE AND FINAL AUTHORITY** that anyone can read, teach, preach, or handle, the whole thing is a matter of "PREFERENCE." You may prefer what you prefer, and we will prefer what we prefer. Let us live in peace, and if we cannot agree on anything or everything, let us all agree on one thing: **THERE IS NO FINAL, ABSOLUTE, WRITTEN AUTHORITY OF GOD ANYWHERE ON THIS EARTH.**

This is the Creed of the Alexandrian Cult.

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that Titus 2:13 is about to happen. It's just a guess, in know, but it can happen.

"And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do" (Gen. 18:17).

The context there was the Lord was about to bring judgment upon Sodom, and Abraham's nephew Lot was there with his family. None of us wants to see our loved ones left behind. We want them all saved. If the Lord revealed the date of the rapture (I believe as many other do that it is somewhere in God's word) would the saints double their efforts to get souls into the ark? The light of God's word, should shine brighter and brighter as the darkness around us increases. Yet it flickers weakly because too many saints are not

filled with the word of God and are reluctant to boldly declare the truth. Maybe, and God help us if it happens, we'll get a judgment this year that no one expects.

"The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and HIS TONGUE TALKETH OF JUDGMENT" (Psa. 37:30).

May it please the Lord to refresh your soul and renew a right spirit in you this new year, so that whatever comes you may say, AMEN, **". . . He hath done all things well"** (Mark 7:37).

Correction

In the recent December edition of the *Bulletin*, the Bible reference Daniel 2:21 (page 24, second column, end of first paragraph) should have been Daniel 7:25.



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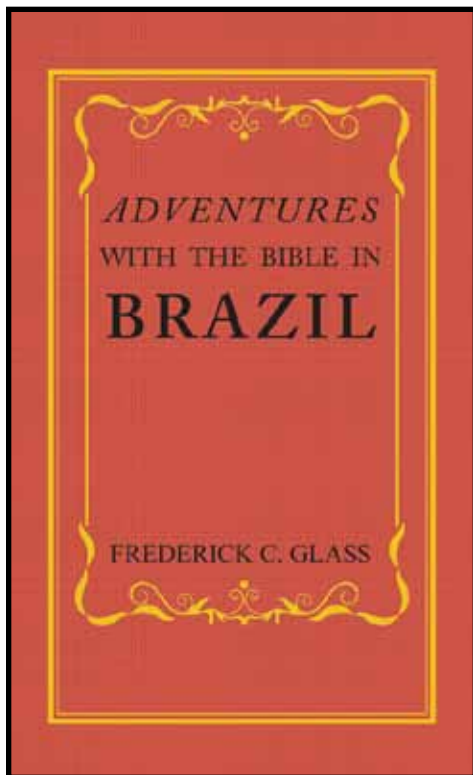
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