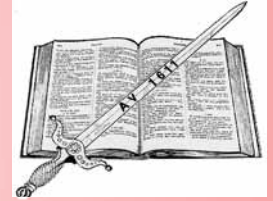




Bible Believers' Bulletin

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



Vol. 37 No. 8

Bible Baptist Church, P.O. Box 7135, Pensacola, Florida 32534

August, 2013

DISCOURAGEMENT: *The Great Killer*

Dr. Peter S. Ruckman
(Part 2 of 2)

We have been discussing the reasons why millions of American Christians get discouraged while trying to serve their Lord. The reasons discussed so far have been *criticism, lack of praise, dead services, and lack of visible results*. We continue here with *watching the conduct of other Christians*.

Spending time observing other Christians has caused many a believer to get discouraged and quit. They look at how the other Christians “mistreat” the Lord, and they get mad and quit. They figure, “If the Lord’s not concerned enough about it to take care of it, why should I be concerned enough to keep going on and doing right? After all, it doesn’t matter one way or another.” Let me ask you something: if all your siblings treated your daddy wrong, would *you* do it?

A common alibi you hear in personal work is: “I don’t want to join the church; there are too many hypocrites in it.” Well, don’t let that bother you; there’s always room for one more.

The Apostle Paul compared Christian service to a *race* (1 Cor. 9:24). Well, in a race, if you are going to win, you can’t always be looking at the other fellow’s lane; you’ve got your own lane in which to run. You have to stay in your lane, or you are disqualified.

Listen, brethren, you can’t

quit just because someone else quits, and if all you do is sit and watch other Christians, you’ll get depressed and discouraged and finally quit. If all you do in Christianity is just go to church twice on Sunday and once on Wednesday, and sit and watch, and sit and listen, you will never amount to a hill of beans for the Lord. All you are is a spectator in a passive state, and *some of you don’t even do that*.

You’re not a participator, and you’ll never learn how to participate just by sitting and listening to the pastor talk. Are

you trying to win sinners to Jesus Christ? I could preach to you fifty years about it, but until you *try* it, you’ll never know about what I’m talking. There has to be *movement*; there has to be *action*.

The last three generations of Americans have been raised on television, where all they do is *sit and watch and do nothing*. They’re passive: they can’t move; they can’t act.

The fellow who shot George Wallace got off several shots before anybody stopped him. Continued on 5

The Saint and SUFFERING

By Tom Waddle

Thanks to the first “free thinker” (Eve) the *entire* human race now has to deal with the problem of *suffering*. No one is immune from it. Young or old, rich or poor, black or white, male or female, saved or lost, you are subject to suffering. Getting saved does not dismiss you from the ranks of the suffering saints. As a matter of fact, if you live for the Lord, you are given a promise that you’ll suffer.

“**Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution**” (2 Tim. 3:12).

I am a Bible believer. I believe every word in that Book, and I know that “**all things**

work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28). “**All things work together for good**” for HIS purpose. God has a purpose in doing what He does.

Haven’t you ever had to stand back, scratch your head, and say, “What is going on here?” Nowhere in His word has the Lord obligated Himself to tell us *why* He does what He does, and *that’s what we want to know*.

“**Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and**” Continued on 6

Fragile Saints

By Robert Militello

“**Great peace have thy which love thy law: and NOTHING SHALL OFFEND THEM**” (Psa. 119:165).

Fragile, according to Webster’s Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary, implies extreme delicacy of material or construction and need for careful handling. How is it that real, old-fashioned Bible preaching has come to be looked upon as hate speech? You may assume that this is the view of the unsaved listening to truth, but vast numbers of blood-bought saints in America can’t handle bold, blunt Bible messages. What has happened to the Body of Christ?

Is not the word of God “**sharper than any twoedged sword**”? Should it not cut us to the heart and cause us to bleed when the convicting power of the Holy Spirit attends the preached word? How often does the enemy of truth hinder our ability to repent after hearing a convicting message by having the saint find fault with the preacher’s tone of voice? Did the Pharisees feel comforted by John the Baptist’s tone of voice? Hypersensitivity is the result of spending too much time getting in touch with yourself. You are not that important, and truth stands by itself, regardless of how you or anybody else feels about it.

Jews have the same fallen nature as Gentiles, but in some ways, they are far ahead of the Gentile when Continued on 3

STUDENT'S CORNER

The Five Wills of God

(Part 1 of 2)

"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17).

In the above verse, Jesus told the unbelieving Jews of His day that if they wanted to know whether the doctrine He preached was from Himself or from God, then they needed to do the will of God as it was already revealed to them before the Holy Ghost would reveal anything further (see Matt. 13:12 for this principle laid down by Christ). The will of God must be very important then if it can open or shut the door of revelation to you, depending on what you do with it. Bob Jones Sr. used to say, "The man in this life who is a success is the man who finds out what God wants him to do and *does it*." So here for the student of the Scriptures, we will discuss *the will of God*.

Now, the Almighty God has *five wills* for the believer. The first of these is what is known as the "directive" will of God; it is what God wants above everything else for an individual. The second will of God is what is called the "permissive" will of God; it is what God *allows* to happen, sometimes under certain conditions for certain reasons, that He does not necessarily approve. Letting the Devil run the earth all through the Church Age (Luke 4:6) is an example of the permissive will of God. Then there are three more wills of God listed for the Christian in Romans 12:2.

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that GOOD, and ACCEPTABLE, and PERFECT, will of God."

The child of God has three

kinds of wills of God open to him. He can do that which is "good," but the Lord *doesn't* accept it at the Judgment Seat of Christ. He can do that which God *will accept* at the Judgment Seat of Christ, but it is not the "perfect" will of God for that individual believer.

Now those are the five wills of God that have gone virtually undetected by the vast majority of scholars and teachers for over *nineteen centuries*. There is no doubt about God having a will for every believer.

"For this case we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be FILLED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (Col. 1:9).

"Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may STAND PERFECT AND COMPLETE IN ALL THE WILL OF GOD" (Col. 4:12).

The question is not only *what* is the will of God; it is, are the circumstances through which you are going from God or from the Devil? Sometimes, they are so close together that you can't tell them apart.

Take, for example, David numbering the children of Israel back in the Old Testament. In 2 Samuel 24:1, you read that the *Lord* moved David to do that, but in 1 Chronicles 21:1, you read that it was *Satan* who provoked David to do it. That is what some stupid scholars would call a "contradiction" in the Bible, but that's because he never read (or took seriously) the book of Job.

In the book of Job, God gave *permission* (as in the *permissive* will of God) to Satan to do what he did to

Job in chapters 1 and 2. The Lord even confessed that Job had done nothing wrong to deserve it (see Job 2:3). But you see, God had something else in mind for Job's troubles about which neither Job nor the Devil knew. That is always the case in the permissive will of God.

When crimes are committed, the Lord knows all about them. *Well, why does He allow them?* No disaster takes God by surprise. *Then how come He lets them happen?*

Why does God let men be deceived? I mean, He said if they want to be deceived, *He'll deceive them* (read Ezek. 14:1-11; 2 Thess. 2:11-12). Don't say He wouldn't do a thing like that when He says He will; look up the passages and READ THEM! But why do it at all?

What makes you think God isn't the author of *disease*? After all, He said, **"I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I HAVE BROUGHT upon the Egyptians"** (Exod. 15:26). What would make you think that the Lord isn't the one behind *wars* when He is called **"a man of war"** (Exod. 15:3) and His Son is called **"the captain"** of your salvation (Heb. 2:10)? What makes you think He wouldn't send a man to Hell to burn forever when He said He *would* (Matt. 25:41; Mark 9:44, 46, 48).

Brethren, the greatest problem you will ever have in your Christian life when opposition comes is determining for yourself whether it is *God warning* you, *Satan hindering* you, or *God testing* you to see if you'll go on. Now there are certain things of which you can be sure when following the will of God, because they are stated clearly in the Scriptures.

For example, God is "NOT



Dr. Peter S. Ruckman

President, Founder, and Teacher of the Pensacola Bible Institute, Pensacola, Florida.

WILLING that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9). That is the *directive* will of God for every man, woman, and child who has ever lived on the face of this earth. If God had His way, everybody would repent and trust Christ. The fact that *most don't* (Matt. 7:13-14) is indicative of the fact that they are not following the *directive will of God* for their lives.

Sinner friend, if you perish, you are *out of the will of God*: you have *disobeyed God's will* if you go to Hell. It wasn't God's will to put you in the Lake of Fire; that place of torment was **"prepared for the devil and his angels"** (Matt. 25:41), NOT YOU. The directive will of God for your life was to wind up in Glory.

You say, "Then why do people go to Hell?" *Because they get out of the directive will of God for their life*. They refuse to repent of their own righteousness and accept Christ's righteousness. They set *their will* over *God's will*. Jesus said to that bunch of Jews who rejected Him and had Him crucified, **"how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, AND YE**

Continued on 4

Fragile Saints

Continued from 1
it comes to opportunism. Rarely will a Jew let his or her sensitivity get in the way of advancement and personal achievement. Gentiles tend to put much more emphasis upon their feelings than do the Jews. This observation finds support when examining Luke's account of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus who had an encounter with the risen Jesus.

Luke 24:13-35 is a case study in the Jewish desire to learn while ignoring the teacher's lack of sensitivity, tone of voice, or condescending manner of instruction. The Jew puts the priority on learning, while the Gentile puts the emphasis upon how his or her feelings are being respected, or not respected for that matter. This is a general observation, but live a while among Jews and Gentiles and notice how each one manages to take advantage of life's opportunities and learning experiences. There are noticeable differences.

Jews love conversation. They are rarely at a loss for words. Put two Jews together, and you'll come out with three opinions on almost anything. Two Jews (one named Cleopas) are bewildered and sad over what happened to Jesus of Nazareth a few days ago in Jerusalem. These are men who have had their theology shaken (see Luke 17:21). A "stranger," the Lord Jesus Christ, pulls alongside and takes an interest in their conversation, while noting their sadness.

Cleopas is surprised that the stranger who has entered into the conversation is not aware of what took place in Jerusalem recently. Jews are always keen to keep up with the latest developments in their communities, and especially those things that affect their personal well being. It is considered to be a serious

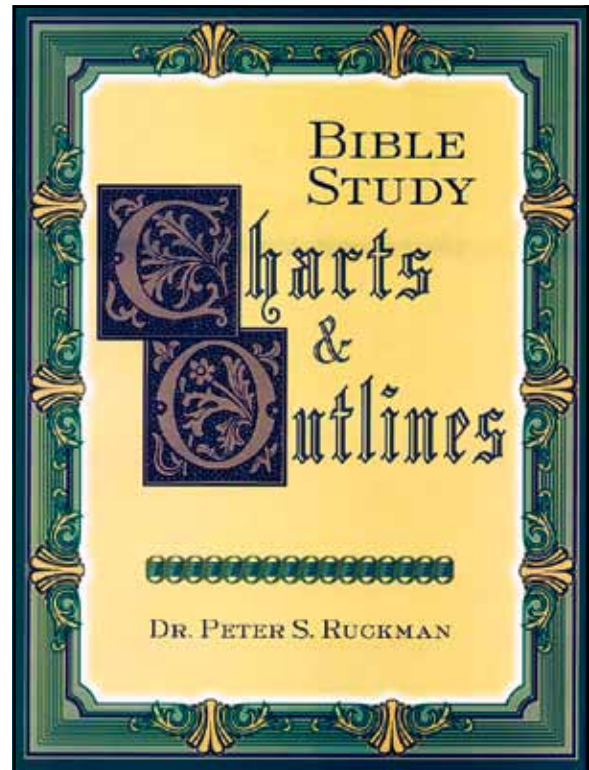
deficiency when a Jew meets another who is uninformed and ignorant. This condition may lead to "put down," an insult, and an affront to one's sense of self-esteem. Note how Jesus dealt with a master of Israel, Nicodemus, when this ruler of the Jews wanted to get a theological question answered privately. John 3:1-10 is an example of the classic Jewish put down: "Haven't you gone to school?"

Well, after giving the Lord, whom they imagined to be just another curious Jew who liked to mind everyone else's business, the reason why they were sad, Cleopas and his fellow traveler got tired and looked around for a motel. They probably felt good about performing a "mitzvah," a good deed, by satisfying the curiosity of an uninformed stranger. These two bewildered and befuddled Jews had been set up. They were to receive a blast from a stranger whom they had just met and took into their confidence. Cleopas and his friend would now be repaid with an insult: "**O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken**" (Luke 24:25). The mild-mannered stranger, a gentle lamb, suddenly became a lion. I'm thinking about the Judgment Seat of Christ right about now—how about you?

With no regard for their feelings, the stranger lectured them on Scriptures they should have learned in Hebrew school. "The Messiah was to suffer and then enter into his glory—why didn't you know that? Didn't you study Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 in school? Who was your teacher—he should be fired." Exchanges among Jews are generally very lively and have some drama mixed in them. That's the reason Jews have done so well in Hollywood (at least that's my opinion).

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The Five Wills of God

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WOULD NOT!" (Matt. 23:37). God's will was to save them, and they would have none of it.

When you reject Jesus Christ, you are *out* of the will of God. If you go to Hell and "**perish**," you are *out* of the will of God. Christian, if you are not trying to keep others from perishing, you are not doing what God told you to do (2 Cor. 5:20).

Now Jesus *did* what He was supposed to do. According to Isaiah 53, it was the directive will of God that He die for sinners. He came to earth to do just that. He said in the prophetic Scriptures, "**Lo, I come to do thy will, O God**" (Heb. 10:9). What was that "**will**"? Hebrews 10:10—"By the WHICH WILL we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." The Bible says he "**became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross**" (Phil. 2:8) "**that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man**" (Heb. 2:9).

In regards to your salvation, Jesus Christ fulfilled God's directive will. Have you? What's your part in the directive will of God for your salvation? You are to *repent* (2 Pet. 3:9). You are to turn from following your own works and righteousness to get to Heaven and admit you are a sinner under the just condemnation of God. You are

then to *believe* in Jesus Christ and what He did for you on the cross and *receive* Him as your personal Saviour (John 1:12; Rom. 10:9-10). Jesus said, "**This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent**" (John 6:29).

The man or woman who does not accept Jesus Christ as Saviour is a tragic flop in life. Those are the kind of people whom the news media make gods for you to worship and follow. When judged by the *directive* will of God, the following sinners were *complete and utter failures*: Princess "Di," Frank Sinatra, JFK, Bobby Kennedy, Mahatma Gandhi, Albert Einstein, Karl Marx, Charles Darwin, the Beatles, Michael Jackson, Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela, Sigmund Freud, Mother Teresa, and Elizabeth Taylor.

You take Martin Luther King Jr. In the biography by his widow, *My Life with Martin*

Luther King, she said her husband was not concerned with the temperature of Hell or the furniture of Heaven, but *with what men do on earth*. According to the Lord Jesus Christ, that's the will of *Satan*, not God (Matt. 16:23). King went to one of the worst Liberal, Bible-rejecting Seminaries in the United States: Crozer Theological Seminary. He said the "Promised Land" was *not* Israel or New Jerusalem; it was *racial equality*. He said the "ultimate reality" was not God, Jesus Christ, or Heaven; no, the ultimate reality was "personality." That's a *Nobel Prize winner*; he had no more idea as to the directive will of God than Edgar Cayce or Alistair Crowley.

Do you know what the Bible says is the directive will of God?

First Thessalonians 4:3—"**For this is the will of God, even YOUR SANCTIFICATION, that ye should ABSTAIN FROM FORNICA-**

TION." People like the Beatles, Michael Jackson, and Elvis Presley were completely out of the will of God their entire careers. They were all *drug addicts* (Elvis Presley was described as a "walking pharmacy" by the doctor who gave him the drugs) who practiced fornication on a regular basis.

The Christian is also told: "**In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you**" (1 Thess. 5:18). If you are constantly griping and complaining, you are *out* of the directive will of God. You are to thank God in every circumstance of life. You are to give "**thanks ALWAYS for ALL THINGS unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ**" (Eph. 5:20).

Bob Jones Sr. used to say, "When gratitude dies in a man's heart, that man is well nigh hopeless." Do you have
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DISCOURAGEMENT

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Well, in the crowd he was in, anybody could have stopped him in two seconds. Two or three men could have jumped the fellow and knocked him down, but they just stood there while he fired. Blam! "Look, he's got a gun." Blam, blam! "Oh, it's a real gun." The crowd was frozen; they weren't used to acting.

There was a famous case up in New York City involving a Lesbian bartender named Kitty Genovese. She was murdered by a guy named Winston Mosley. Mosley stabbed Genovese out in the street, and something like thirty people saw it through their windows and heard it happen. Mosley went off down the street, and Kitty Genovese was out there screaming for help. Not one person came out to help that woman. After a while, Mosley came back and finished the job. What was the problem? *Nobody wanted to get involved.*

If all you do is sit and take everything in and never do anything about what you hear, you are like the Dead Sea. The Dead Sea takes in water from the Jordan River, but no water flows out from it. As a result, the salt content has built up and killed everything in it. Nothing lives in the Dead Sea, and birds will faint if they fly over it.

Now of all the things that can discourage a Christian, I consider these last two to be "legitimate." They are *sickness* and *death*. I can understand how sickness and death can discourage any Christian, especially if the disease is debilitating like Lou Gehrig's Disease where there's nothing you can do about it. If you ever get confined to a hospital or an old folks home, there is very little you can do. Now if sickness or death in the family gets you down, I wouldn't judge you. Maybe the Lord



would, but I wouldn't because I'm a sinner just like you.

I know of a case over in Baton Rouge, Louisiana where a twelve-year-old girl had a kidney transplant which didn't work. She had to be put on a kidney machine, and her momma and daddy spent \$33,000 (which was a lot of money at the time) to keep her alive. That girl was a fine Christian girl, and her momma and daddy were fine Christians. While that girl was on that kidney machine, they never missed a church service; a nurse would come in and take care of that girl and keep the machine working right. Through all of that, that little girl had a cheerful disposition. She even showed me herself how her kidney machine operated.

One fellow who knew the situation of that family said to me one time, "I don't see why that momma and daddy don't just pull the plug on that kidney machine and let that little girl die. She'd be in Heaven anyway."

I told that guy, "I know what you mean, but it's easy for us to talk about doing that. She's not our kid. If it were one of my little boys or girls, I'd probably do just what they're doing. I'd probably be willing to empty my bank account to keep my child alive."

I can understand how cir-

cumstances like that can be very discouraging, but they didn't discourage that momma and daddy. They must have known something the average Christian doesn't.

This world is built up to be "a great big, wonderful world we live in," and then trouble comes and tears it down bit by bit around you. After a while it gets really bad, and pretty soon, "the years draw nigh,

when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Eccl. 12:1). That's when the stock in this world goes so far down that it's not worth four cents a share.

I wouldn't trade my faith in Jesus Christ for ten worlds the size of this one. This world has been sliced into so many pieces for me that I no longer have any interest in it. I realize there's nothing to it; I'm ready to go home. Like the old song says, "Goodbye, world; goodbye!"

I can understand how sickness can get a Christian down to the point where all he wants to do is quit and go home to Heaven. Paul himself said, "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:23).

Why did he think that? Because for Paul, "to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21) because "to

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The Saint and SUFFERING

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grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim. 1:9).

God has a purpose; God has a plan. If you are a saved, born-again child of God and still breathing—and I assume you are if you are reading this—there is a reason and purpose for your suffering.

You should never go to unsaved psychics or psychologists to get your answers. It is a tragedy that Christian Colleges are no longer turning out preachers. Instead, they are training "counselors." They are trained to "rap" or "share" with their congregations on how to "cope" and have "meaningful

relationships." *Bible preaching* is out, and that's what you need! The best counseling, guidance, and comfort that a Christian can get is through *straight, hard, Bible preaching*, and certainly NEVER "sharing." You would do well to get "hooked up" with a Bible-believing church that has a Bible-believing preacher who will, as they say, "shell the corn and then throw the cob at you." The Bible is what the Author of life, God Almighty, has to say about whatever situation you are in. The Bible not only *has* the answer, it *IS* the answer.

It is useless to talk about suffering apart from knowing

where you came from and where you are going. *Without the Bible*, there is no purpose; there is no answer. To listen to unsaved "Philosophy of Religion" College professors talk about "Why is there suffering?" is *unbearable*, and I mean *painfully* unbearable. Ephesians 2:12 describes them well: "**having no hope, and without God in the world.**" They make an effort to explain suffering with no promise in sight and no God to help them. My, *what a calamity.*

The Christian is told: "**For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake**" (Phil. 1:29)

"Forasmuch then as

Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: For he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;" (1 Pet. 4:1).

Exit Job's three friends. Suffering comes for many reasons. Sometimes suffering comes just so *God will get the glory.* Notice what Jesus said about a certain blind man:

"And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him" (John 9:2-3).

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A Brief Analysis of Missionary Authority

By Jonathan Richmond

(Editor's Note: Jonathan Richmond is the director of the Bible Baptist Mission Board.)

An issue concerning a couple of Bible versions (Luther's German Bible—1545, and Reina Valera—1602, 1865), as compared to the *King James*, has come to light. The espousal of a particular translation being equal to or superior to the *King James* leaves one in a precarious position in relation to Bible believers versus the Alexandrian Cult.

Bible believers believe that the *King James (Authorized Version)* is the perfect, inerrant words of God and is the final authority. It is the standard to which all versions and translations are compared. And since the AV is the standard, it is superior to anything and everything that is compared to it. Stated another way, nothing compared to the standard is equal to or superior to the standard. English is the standard for time, place, distance, size, quantity, volume, language, etc. When the English standard showed up, both the

German and Spanish Bibles should have been corrected and/or updated with the English.

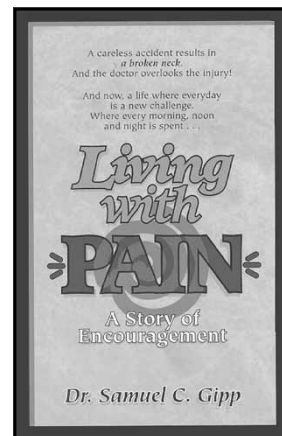
The Greek *Textus Receptus* (any edition) is not superior to English. It was an interim, early New Testament, a stepping stone to the purification of the words of God in English. The world does not speak Greek and never will again. Therefore, the Valera (1602, 1865), having been translated from the Receptus, is *inferior* to English. Luther's German Bible is not superior to the English. It was an interim stepping stone to the purification of the words of God in English and was used to bring about the Protestant Reformation. The world does not speak German and never will.

To say that Luther's German Bible or the Valera Bible of 1865 is equal to or superior to the AV is to espouse ANOTHER standard. So then *your* brain determines which is correct; *your* brain is the final authority; *you* have made *yourself* equal to God.

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Fragile Saints

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What was the reaction of these two Jews who just had their ignorance revealed? Did they get offended? Did the stranger have the right to address them in such a manner? How would a Gentile in the Twenty-first Century living in America handle this uncomfortable situation? The Jewish reaction (vs. 29) is a classic example of why the Jew dominates the Gentile.

Paying no attention to their feelings, the travelers to Emmaus pressed their acquaintance to remain with them. Education, instruction, and enlightenment were more important than their personal feelings. The message is primary, and the messenger is incidental. If a Jew can pick your brain and learn something to advance himself, insults will roll off him like water off a duck's back. Every believer should desire the Holy Spirit to instruct him in whatever manner the Holy Spirit sees fit. Is this the mindset of most Christians today? What do you think?

Why do so many of my brothers and sisters in Christ put a premium on a "loving" church, a "friendly" church, or a "nice" church with a "nice" preacher? I'm not interested in having my feelings catered to. If learning and then submitting to God's word means my feelings might get hurt along the way, let those feelings go in the dumpster where all human vanity belongs.

"Abide with us . . ." (vs. 29), those Jews said to Jesus; and their reward for letting Him blast them with truth that they should have known was to have their eyes opened. "And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:32).

That's what made them ask Jesus to abide with them—

burning hearts, hungry for truth, esteeming the words of God more than their necessary food (Job 23:12). Is that what you will find in the thousands of Fundamentalist and Evangelical churches that hold services every Sunday morning? Don't hold your breath. Fool's gold looks like the real thing. That's what many pastors put out each week. There's a reckoning coming!

Our nation is filled with fine folk who want a blessing without a blasting. These two Jews met a Jew on the road who wanted to bless them both, but knew that they first needed a good Jewish blasting. They got one. Jewish prophets are not going to stay up late worrying about their messages offending someone.

Now what do you find among many believers today who might have gotten an unexpected blasting on Sunday morning? You'll hear the following, "I didn't appreciate the preacher's delivery," or "I didn't feel a sweet spirit this morning." "There's a lack of love here," or "you'll get more with honey than a stick." All this is Gentile horse manure coming from the mouths of believers who got nothing from the sermon because their mind was on what they were going to eat when the service was over (see Phil. 3:18-19).

Here's Paul the Jew striving to dispel Gentile ignorance: **"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant" (1 Cor. 10:1). "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant" (1 Cor. 12:1). "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant" (2 Cor. 1:8). "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep" (1 Thess. 4:13).** God's people need sound teaching and sharp preaching now more than at any time since the thirteen colonies told

Continued on 12

The Death of Biblical Doctrine

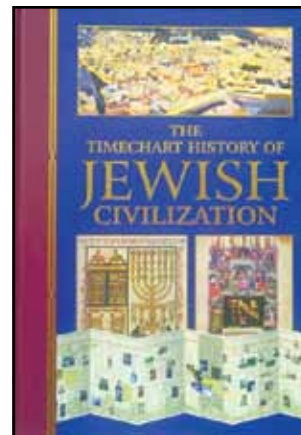
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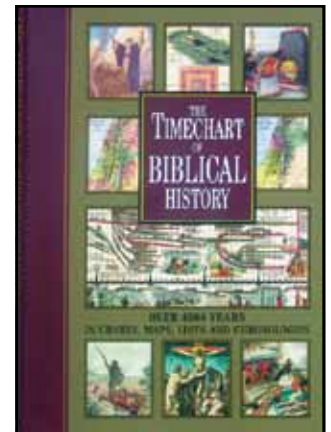
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DISCOURAGEMENT

Continued from 5
be absent from the body” is **“to be present with the Lord”** (2 Cor. 5:8).

When Paul got stoned there in Lystra (Acts 14), his soul got **“caught up to the third heaven”** (2 Cor. 12:2), and the Lord wouldn't let him stay. Paul spent the rest of the book of Acts with a “death wish.” He was downright *reckless* in his service for Christ. He was trying to get stoned again (or die some other way) so he could get back up to Heaven.

Courage, brother! In *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Paul Baumer, the German infantry man who is the main character of the book, reviews his lifetime as a young man (nineteen years old). Having seen nothing but torn and mutilated bodies, dying men screaming and crying, the bodies of those who had died from poison gas, shot, and shell, and the amputated limbs, he says, “When we were young and coming up, we were on the threshold of living. Carried away by a stream, the oncoming flow of dream, the privileges of youth, we were caught upon the tide; and the first bombardment blasted our world all to pieces.”

World War I showed him that the world was artificial. All the science, the art, the culture, the religions were just a screen. As Scofield says, “In times of real crisis, the world is only held together by *armed force*.” Bob Jones Sr. used to say, “War is God's judgment on sin here; Hell is God's judgment on sin hereafter.” It's going to take *courage* to make it through such a mess.

The time in my life where I was discouraged beyond measure was after my second wife deserted me. Here I am still in the ministry after 62 years, but it was touch and go there for a while. When my first wife deserted me, I tried to get out of the ministry, and I was on

my way out when God put me back in. When I got remarried, I resigned the church, but the Lord wouldn't let me quit, so I ended up having to start a new church. When the second wife left, I was so discouraged that I was ready to quit again.

I told one of my good friends in the ministry, Bobby Ware, “I'm quitting.”

He said, “You can't quit.”

“Yes, I can,” I said.

“No, you can't,” he said.

“Why not? I asked

“Because you're the champ,” he replied.

“Oh, come on; get off it,” I said. “There isn't a preacher in this country who would trade places with me right now. After a second failed marriage, there isn't any preacher who would want to be in my position, and you know it.”

Ware nodded his head and said, “That's right, but I'll tell you something: about 500 preachers are watching you right now to see what you're going to do. If you quit, they're going to quit.”

“I don't understand,” I said.

“Well,” he said, “you're the champ.”

“What do you mean I'm ‘the champ’?” I asked.

“Do you remember the fight between Frazier and Cassius Clay over in the Philippines?” he asked. Well, I wasn't real familiar with it, but I vaguely remembered it. Ware went on and told me this: “Did you know that at one point Cassius wasn't going to get up and finish the fight? He was ready to throw in the towel.”

Cassius Clay told his trainer, “I can't get up; I'm staying on the stool. When the bell rings, I'm not going out.”

The trainer said, “You've got to go out.”

“I'm tired, and I can't stand up,” Clay told him. “I'm going to fall down.”

His trainer said, “He's just as tired as you are.”

“Well, can he quit?” Cas-

sius asked.

“Yeah, he can quit,” said the trainer, “but you can't.”

“Why can't I?” asked Cassius.

That trainer told Cassius Clay, “Because you're the champ. You've got to go out.” And Cassius Clay went out and won the fight.

I stayed in the ministry and wound up pastoring 500–700 people, with a school training 100–200 students five nights a week. The church ended up sending 54 families overseas preaching in seventeen languages on twenty different fields. My ministry actually “took off” after my second wife left. The Lord got me into several prisons every summer winning anywhere from 200–500 adult sinners to Christ. The Lord paid off the house, He paid off the church, He paid off the land, He paid off the gym, and He paid off the Bookstore. Why? Because I didn't quit.

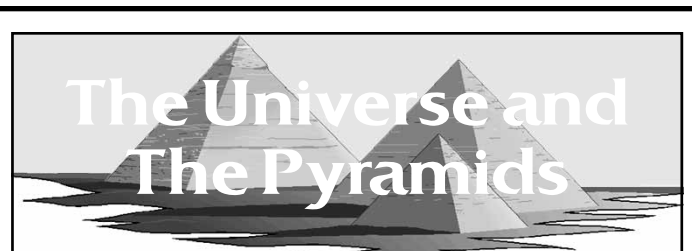
“Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities

of our God: and the LORD do that which seemeth him good” (2 Sam. 10:12).

We may not win. We may get knocked flat. If that is what seems good to the Lord, then okay: flat it is. But don't quit until you're knocked flat. And when you're knocked flat, don't quit until the other fellow is standing on your chest where you can't get up. If you fight to that point and get discouraged and quit, then I wouldn't say anything.

I mean, if you've gotten to the point where you did all you could and can't move another inch, then God bless you, brother. You are where you ought to be, and the Lord knows all about it.

Joab told his troops, **“let us play the men.”** Even if you are down and discouraged, you can act like a man and see what the Lord does with it. Joab's “storm troopers” ended up winning the battle, despite being outflanked and outmanned (2 Sam. 10:13). May your fortune be as good as his.



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The Saint and SUFFERING

Continued from 6

There is no lack of faith anywhere in the text to all of you crazy, Charismatic, goofball nuts; you need to read your Bible. That man was suffering just to reveal God's works.

Talking to Christians, the Apostle Peter said, "**Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy**" (1 Pet. 4:12-13).

We may not understand God's purpose for our suffering now, but bless God, someday we will.

Many times, suffering comes *from our own sin*.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

You could be suffering because of all that *junk food* you've been eating. Overworking, not enough sleep, not exercising—i.e., *failing to take care of your body*—will bring suffering.

Illegal activity can bring suffering,

"But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters" (1 Pet. 4:15).

Suffering can come because of *other men's sins*.

"And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled" (1 Pet. 3:13-14).

Your suffering may be the result of someone showing their hatred toward Jesus Christ and all that are connected with Him. The Lord gives instructions what to do

when such animosity comes.

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing" (1 Pet. 3:15-17).

Sometimes, suffering will come in the form of *the Lord trying to get us "back on track"*; that's the Lord dealing with us as sons.

"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" (Heb. 12:6-7).

Chastening will bring correction. The Lord will discipline His children by *His word* (John 15:3), by *"pruning"* (John 15:2), and by **"a thorn in the flesh"** (2 Cor. 12:7). Sometimes God will discipline His children by just a plain old "whoopin'" (that's *physical discomfort* for you uneducated College graduates), and if that doesn't work, He'll use *death* (1 Cor. 11:30; Rom. 8:13). The problem is how we respond to the Lord's correction. The right response is just to get right.

"Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed" (Heb. 12:12-13).

God's **"purpose"** (Rom. 8:28) is to produce holiness and righteousness in us.

"For they verily for a few days chastened us after

their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb. 12:10-11).

It seems the only way God can produce holiness and righteousness in us is through *suffering*. **"For he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin"** (1 Pet. 4:1).

David said, **"It is GOOD for me that I have been AFFLICTED [ouch!]; that I might learn thy statutes"** (Psa. 119:71), and **"Before I was AFFLICTED I went astray: but NOW [i.e., after the affliction] have I kept thy word"** (Psa. 119:67).

Suffering always seems to be *the cure for getting your*











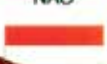
roots in too deep down here on earth. We are instructed: **"Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth"** (Col. 3:2). It is sad, but many times, the Lord has to "get our attention" through some tragedy, or even a hospital bed. It is at these times that most of us aren't thinking about the latest gadget or new car; we are thinking about *getting right, getting well, getting out, or else going up!*

Suffering may come *to enable us to help others*.

"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And

Continued on 15

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How To Please God

By Dr. Peter S. Ruckman

“And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are PLEASING in his sight” (1 John 3:22).

The above verse tells us that one way to get our prayers answered is to **“do those things that are pleasing in his sight.”** That being the case, I thought I would look up in a concordance and see what the Scriptures say about pleasing God.

Now what does it mean to “please” God? Well, like the word *bles*, if you try to “please” someone, you do something to make that person *happy*. Throughout the Old Testament, you see the command over and over again to **“bless the LORD”**; that is, say something to make Him happy.

So here is what the Bible says a Christian should do to “please God” and to make Him happy. Of course, I am taking for granted that a Christian wants to please his Lord. In this day and age, that may be taking too much for granted, but that is how a Christian *should* feel, whether he does or not.

1. The first way anyone can please God is to *fear Him*. Psalm 147:11 says, **“The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.”** That Book says, **“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom”** (Prov. 9:10). The wisest man who ever lived, at the end of his life, came to this conclusion: **“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man”** (Eccl. 12:13).

That command to fear God isn't just an Old Testament thing either (see 1 Pet. 2:17). When John said **“perfect love casteth out fear”** (1 John

4:18), the **“fear”** in that verse has nothing to do with fearing God. According to the verse right before it (1 John 3:17), that **“fear”** is a fear of *going to Hell*. John is saying that if you have trusted the propitiation of Jesus Christ for your sins (1 John 4:10), you need not fear going to Hell ever again. He's not saying you shouldn't fear God, nor is he redefining fearing God as “godly reverence” when *it's not* (see Heb. 12:28). As a lost sinner, you are to fear a God powerful enough to send you to the Lake of Fire forever (Matt. 10:28). As a saved believer, you are to fear a Daddy who will take the “belt” to you if you get out of line (Heb. 12:5–7). Either way, it pleases the Lord for men to fear Him to the point of avoiding sin (Job 28:28). The last “good news” preached on this earth before the return of the Lord Jesus Christ consists of the command to **“Fear God, and give glory to him”** (Rev. 14:7).

2. It pleases God when you approach Him *in faith*. **“But without faith it impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him”** (Heb. 11:6).

You are to believe that *God exists*. Only a *fool* is an atheist (Psa. 14:1), for he has not come up to the level of a *devil* (James 2:19).

You are to believe Him enough to **“diligently seek him.”** Of course, that is not a *natural* thing for a sinner to do (Rom. 3:4). But any sinner can respond to God in faith according to the light God has given him. When the Holy Spirit pricks the heathen's conscience through His word in nature (Psa. 19:1–3) and the law of God written in the sinner's heart (Rom. 2:14–15), that lost man can believe and act on the light he has received until the Holy Spirit

gives Him more light through the Scriptures and the Gospel (see the definitive case of Cornelius in Acts 10).

It delights the Lord when someone believes what He says (Matt. 8:6–13). According to the context of 1 John 3:22, the belief that pleases God in regards to salvation is *belief in His Son* (1 John 3:23).

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that BELIEVE ON HIS NAME” (John 1:12)

“These things have I written unto you that BELIEVE ON THE NAME OF THE SON OF GOD; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may BELIEVE ON THE NAME OF THE SON OF GOD” (1 John 5:13).

“But these are written, that ye might BELIEVE that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that BELIEVING ye might have life through his name” (John 20:31).

3. God is pleased when a sinner repents and turns from his sin (Ezek. 18:32, 33:11). If God had His “druthers,” no sinner would go to Hell; they would all repent and trust Christ (2 Pet. 3:9). Sinner friend, if you die lost and go to Hell, it's nobody's fault but *your own*, because *you* won't repent and receive the means of salvation God provided for you.

A repentant sinner makes God happy. Jesus said, **“like-wise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over nine-**

ty and nine just persons, which need no repentance” (Luke 15:7).

4. A sinner can be pleasing to God when he is no longer **“in the flesh”** but *in Christ through the Holy Spirit* (Rom. 8:8–10). Before salvation, it is impossible for a sinner to please God because he is dead in his sins, a child of wrath, and a child of disobedience (Eph. 2:1–3). He lives in a body of sinful flesh that is totally corrupt (Rom. 7:18).

But when the sinner trusts Christ, the Holy Ghost comes to live in his body (1 Cor. 6:19). The sinner is translated **“from the power of darkness . . . into the kingdom of his dear Son”** (Col. 1:13). The Holy Spirit takes the saved sinner and baptizes him into the spiritual Body of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). As a member of the Body of Christ, Jesus Christ is in him, and he is in Jesus Christ (Col. 1:27).

The sinner is now a new man in Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:4; Continued on 13

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Fragile Saints

Continued from 7
King George III of England to get lost.

Obviously, there were times when Paul had to talk plainly to the overly sensitive, carnal babies of his day. **“But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge”** (2 Cor. 11:6). When a Jew wants to get something across to you that you badly need to hear, he is not likely to apologize for upsetting your refined sensibilities. Live among Jews a while, and you’ll be “culturally enriched” by a good dose of Jewish “chutzpah” (boldness with a unique Jewish flavor). We need that.

Long gone are the days when our elected leaders spoke boldly. Political correctness has spread through the body politic like the bubonic plague. Voter sensitivity has effectively muzzled the tongues of those living off our tax money. There’s not only a famine for the word of God in America, but there is also a serious famine for plain speaking. **“They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly”** (Amos 5:10).

Look at the reward God gives the soul that loves truth. **“Great peace have they which love thy law”** (Psa. 119:165). Not just peace, but great peace of heart and mind comes with loving the word of God. What child of God would not be anxious to have that great peace God promises to lovers of truth? We read God’s word, meditate on it, and study it; but do we really delight in it? If you are not able to delight in the word, something is amiss in your relationship with your Saviour.

Those Jews on the road to Emmaus had their hearts burning within them when Jesus spoke to them (Luke 24:32). They were exhilarated by Scriptures being opened to

them that were previously not known or understood. Pray before you read your Bible. Acknowledge your stupidity and ask, **“open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law”** (Psa. 119:18). The Lord won’t give you a stone if you ask for bread. Tell the Holy Spirit that you will not get offended by a little chutzpah, and if you get a blasting, remember to say, “Thank you, Lord.”

Enjoy your Bible. It is far more valuable than anything else you have in your house. **“Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name”** (Psa. 138:2).

Bro. Donovan’s Schedule

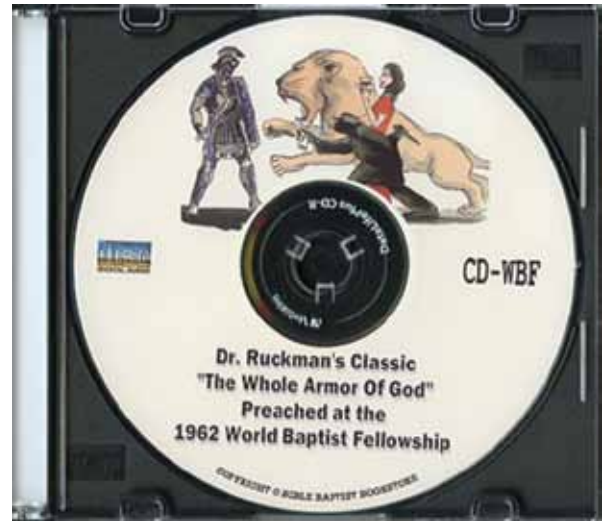
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How To Please God

Continued from 11
2 Cor. 5:17). To prevent that new man from being corrupted by the body of sinful flesh as Adam was when he sinned, the Spirit of God cuts the Christian's born-again spirit from his sinful flesh through "the operation of God": it is a "circumcision made without hands" (Col. 2:11–12).

The Christian now has the potential to please God, because although he is still in the body of flesh geographically, he is no longer in that body spiritually. He is spiritually with his Saviour at God's right hand (Eph. 2:5–6). Practically speaking, the Christian can please God when he mortifies the deeds of the flesh and lives according to the Spirit of Christ living in him (Rom. 8:13–14; Gal. 5:16–25).

5. God is pleased when you obey Him rather than men

(Gal. 1:10; Acts 5:29). Paul said we are not to serve God "with eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Eph. 6:6; see also Col. 3:22).

6. We please God when we follow Him in our daily Christian walk (1 Thess. 4:1). That opens up a long list of commandments for Christian living which Paul gives us in his epistles. We are to "walk in truth" (3 John 4), and of course, that "truth" is the *Scriptures themselves* (John 17:17). We are to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). We are to walk "after the Spirit" and not the flesh (Rom. 8:1; see also Gal. 5:16, 25). We are to "walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7). We are to "walk honestly" (Rom. 13:13; 1 Thess. 4:12). We are

to walk in *good works* (Eph. 2:10; Col. 1:10). We are to so walk in our daily lives that we are a good testimony of God and what He has called us to do (1 Thess. 2:12; Eph. 4:1). We are to "walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8). We are to walk "in wisdom" (Col. 4:5; see also Eph. 5:15). We are to "walk in love" (Eph. 5:2; see also 1 John 3:23). And we are to walk after the example laid down for us by the Apostle Paul (Phil. 3:17; 1 Cor. 11:1). That is how we "walk" to please God.

7. Children please God when they obey their parents (Col. 3:20), and God promises a long life to those who do (Eph. 6:1–3).

8. We please the Lord when we sing praises to Him and offer up thanksgiving to Him (Psa. 69:30–31). One of the things that sets Bibli-

cal Christianity apart from Mohammedanism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and every other "world religion" is our *hymn book*. People sing about what they love and what makes them happy. I have a hymn book here with 500 songs about a dead man, and another hymn book with an additional 100 songs not found in the first. Why would anybody sing 600 songs about some fellow who died 2,000 years ago unless that man did something no other man could do?

There are no songs about Mohammed. If Mohammed is such a big boy as Allah's "prophet," why does no one sing about him? It must be that Mohammed didn't do "nuthin' for nobody."

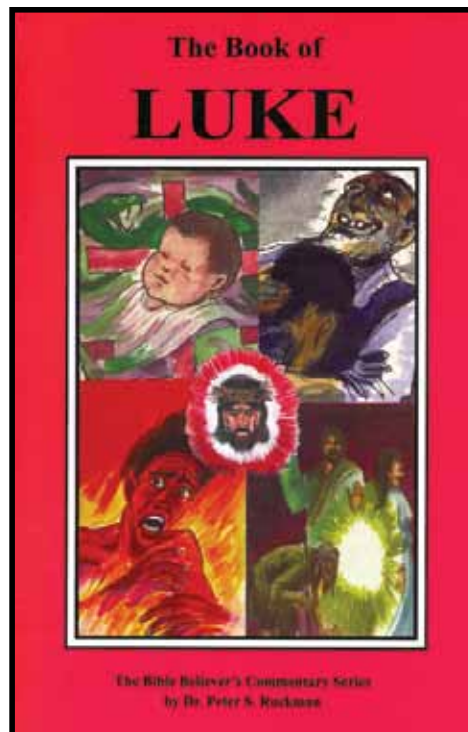
If Mary is the one who can get you to Jesus Christ, where are all the songs about

Continued on 14

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How to Please God

Continued from 13 Mary? Oh sure, the Catholics have a handful, but for every song about Mary, there are 100–200 about *her Son*. It must be that Mary would be a perfect blank without her Son; it must be that her Son can do something for you that Mary can't do.

Who ever heard a song like: "We have heard the joyful sound, Buddha saves! Buddha saves!"? You won't hear anything like that, because *Buddha couldn't save a dead horse*.

Christians sing about Jesus Christ because they love Him; they love Him because *He did something for them* (1 John 4:10, 19). My "Prophet" didn't just give me the truth; *He died for me*.

The Christian is commanded to sing and make melody to his Lord; he is commanded to give **"thanks always for all things unto God"** (Eph. 5:19–20). Praise and thanksgiving are spiritual sacrifices that please God (Heb. 13:15–16).

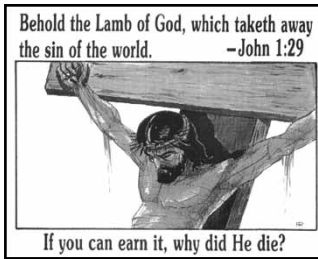
9. Now look at that last reference, specifically Hebrews 13:16.

"But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

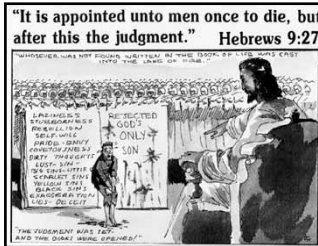
Notice that one of the **"sacrifices"** with which **"God is well pleased"** is **"to communicate."** The way that word is used in the passage is not a reference to talking or speaking; it's a reference to *giving* (Gal. 6:6; Phil. 4:14; 1 Tim. 6:18). God is pleased with *sacrificial giving*. Jesus Christ noticed that widow woman in Luke 21 because she gave **"of her penury"** (Luke 21:4). She gave to the Lord out of her extreme poverty; that took some sacrifice.

Continued on 16

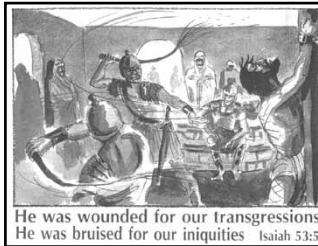
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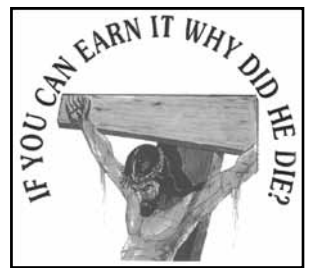
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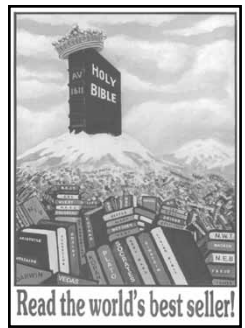
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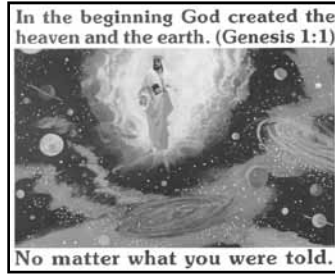
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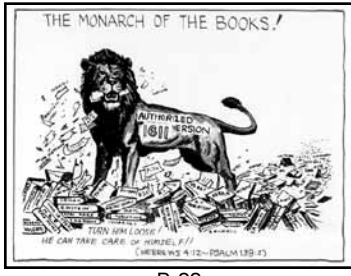
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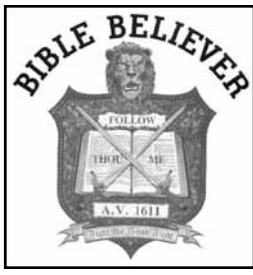
B-05



B-21



B-22



B-42

(Plus postage see page 8)

The Saint and SUFFERING

Continued from 10
whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation" (2 Cor. 1:4-6).

Is it time to shout yet?!

If you are suffering as a

Christian, think about what the greatest Christian in the New Testament said:

"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you" (Phil. 1:23-24).

Paul wanted to get out of here and be with Christ, but

the Lord knew there were people who needed him. While you are suffering, don't forget to look around. There may be a nurse, a loved one, a police officer, a doctor, a child, or a paramedic—*someone who needs the Lord Jesus Christ*—and you, by the loving hand of God Almighty, have been chosen to be placed in that person's path to accomplish *His purpose*.

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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, Zinzen-dorf, 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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CALIFORNIA		NEW MEXICO	
San Pedro—Cox Communications San Diego—Cox—Ch 24 & 18 San Diego—Time Warner—Ch16	6:30 PM Fri. 4:00 PM Wed. Time varies	Suffolk—Ch 20 Woodbury—Cable Vision—Ch 71	5:00 PM Mon. 6:00 PM Tues. 2:00 PM Tue.
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Dubuque—Media Com—Ch 81	Times Vary	York—York CATV—Ch 16	9:00 PM Mon. 3:00 PM Tue.
MASSACHUSETTS		TENNESSEE	
Springfield—Public Access—Ch 12	5 PM Mon.	Pikeville—S.E. Tenn. St. Regional Correctional Facility	Times Vary
MICHIGAN		TEXAS	
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How to Please God

Continued from 14

Not only that, but the Lord looks at your *attitude* in giving. God is not pleased with a stingy, resentful giver—no matter *how much* he sticks in the plate.

“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver” (2 Cor. 9:7).

There are different levels of God’s love. God loved all twelve disciples (John 15:9), but there were *three* that were special to Him: Peter, James, and John. Of those

three, John was known as **“the beloved apostle”** (John 13:23, 19:26, 20:2, 21:7, 20). Jesus loved John in a special way above and beyond how He loved Philip, Thomas, Matthew, Bartholomew, Simon, et al.

Now listen, do you want to “stand out” among the crowd of Christians? Well, *one way* to do that is to *give cheerfully*: **“God loveth a cheerful giver.”**

Those are the ways, as given in the Scriptures, to please God. Do you want to make God happy? *That’s* how to do it if you are interested.

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