



Bible Believers' Bulletin

Vol. 41 No. 12 "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17) December 2017

The Wall Builders

By Brian Donovan

Throughout the known history of mankind, man has been adept at building walls, most notably for protection from his own kind. But as we near the time of the Lord's return, we find that men believe more in building bridges to get everyone together. The thought of separation and division is far too negative, even for the professing Christians. An instructive thought for the child of God to consider is that the word "bridge" cannot even be found in the King James Bible. In one of his poems, Robert Frost ridiculed the saying that "good fences make good neighbors", with the implication that anyone who builds a wall, does so blindly without thinking about why he is even building it. Frost's poem says, "before I built a wall, I'd ask what I was walling in or walling out". That is a good question, as long as you continue to build the wall after you figure out why it is needed. But Frost tells us that "something there is that doesn't love a wall", and also lets us know that to build a wall is "an offense", without telling us whom it offends. There most certainly is

"something that doesn't love a wall", but what or who would that something be? The spirit of this age, led by the "god of this world" (II Corinthians 4:4) is to get everyone together and any wall builder is a troublemaking divider who goes contrary to that spirit. What this generation does not realize is that this breaking down of walls so that everyone can get together will be to their own destruction under the leadership of a coming world dictator called the antichrist. A Bible believer recognizes a great need for building walls and is always going to go against the spirit of "inclusion". One of the great advantages of being a Bible reader is gaining the discernment to see the need to separate, to come out (II Corinthians 6), and to refuse to go along.

Some six hundred years before the First Coming of Christ, Nebuchadnezzar had the Great Walls of Babylon built that went completely around the forty-square mile city. The ancient historian Herodotus claimed that these walls were thick enough to allow four chariots abreast to ride on top, and were ninety feet high, with the Euphrates River cutting diagonally through the city, underneath the walls. The Medo-Persian enemy, led by Darius, was unable to scale the walls around the city, so they diverted the

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Christmas Carols

By Dr. Peter S. Ruckman

“And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him” (Heb. 1:6).

When Jesus Christ was born into this world, we are told that **“there was . . . a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men”** (Luke 2:13–14). Most people think those angels were singing, but that is not what the text says. It says, **“praising God, and saying.”** But there is support in the scriptures for connecting praise with singing; see Judges 5:1–3; 2 Chronicles 5:13, 20:21–22; Ezra 3:11; Nehemiah 12:46; Psalm 7:17, 9:2, 21:13, 28:7, 30:12; Isaiah 42:10; Jeremiah 20:13 for just a few examples. The songbook of the Old Testament (Psalms) is replete with verses about it, so many that I don't have the space to list all of them here. So I am not going to split hairs over whether or not the angels sang the morning Christ was born. I believe their praise was expressed in *song*.

I wish I could have been there to hear that music on that first “Christmas” morn. I know Jesus Christ wasn't born on December 25, but that doesn't change the fact that He was born. And when He was born, **“the angels of God”** worshiped Him in song.

I have always enjoyed good music, and I have always prided myself for having good taste in music. Maybe you don't care for my taste in music, but I believe I know good music when I hear it. I would love to hear about 400,000 angels sing about my Saviour. Someday I will not only hear it, I

will be a part of it (Rev. 5:8–14).

I like to put on Handel's “Messiah” in my house and turn the stereo up “full blast.” I close all the doors and windows, I turn off the lights, and I lay down and listen to it. Sometimes I get the wild feeling that I've “left the frame” and am in heaven listening to it. You talk about “bringing down the house,” man; that's it.

Luke 2:13–14 was the first “Christmas” music. Ever since then, whenever and wherever the birth of Christ has been celebrated, it has been celebrated with *music*. I want to look at four things about “Christmas carols.” Maybe I will spoil some of your Christmas music for you, I don't know. But if you are going to honor the birth of the Saviour, you had better make sure the music with which you do it actually has something to do with Jesus Christ and why He came.

First, the song of the angels that first Christmas morning was to *praise God*. If the Christmas music to which you listen doesn't praise God, it is the wrong kind of music. The scourge of Christmas is the trite, cheap, ungodly music played at malls and stores during the holiday. What in the world does “Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer,” “I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus,” and “White Christmas” have to do with God, Jesus Christ, or the Bible? Not one cotton-picking thing on the face of this earth, man.

Such music isn't fit for *any* season of the year. I would be ashamed to have such music in my house. Things have gotten worse in the last few decades. I mean, there was nothing holy or edifying about those songs to begin

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with, but at least the instrumental music itself wasn't particularly bad. Now, all the music is rock, even some of the "country" stuff. So now you have to be assaulted by the lyrics and the music.

And some of the so-called "Christian artists" aren't much better. When a Christian singer sings, it ought to remind those who hear it of the Lord. You should never hear a Christian sing and think, "My, what a wonderful performance." A Christian doesn't sing to "perform" for an audience; he or she sings to *glorify his or her Saviour*. If the music you sing and to which you listen at Christmas doesn't praise and glorify Jesus Christ, it isn't Christmas music at all; it's a godless mess.

I'm not much of a singer myself, and I know it. I sing some songs in some of my sermons, but that is to "make a point"; it sure isn't to show off any ability or talent I have to sing. But I know good music when I hear it. When I was over in the army of occupation in Japan after World War II, that was my job at radio station JOAK: to listen to and judge the Japanese music to censor any nationalistic elements out of it.

When Christmas rolled around, the Japanese were going to have a special performance of Handel's "Messiah" for General Douglas MacArthur and the Americans. I was in the office before that when my Japanese interpreter brought in a big Jap named Arima. Arima was furious about something, and you rarely see a Japanese man that angry. Arima was fuming, and Yokoi, my interpreter, was talking to him.

Finally, Yokoi told me Arima's

"problem." The conductor the military had brought in for the concert was a Japanese who had defected to London during the war. He had married a British wife while there, and now he was back trying to assert himself on his former countrymen. Yokoi said, "Japanese no like." I guess they didn't! Every member of the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra had signed a petition (66 names altogether) saying they wouldn't play if that fellow conducted. I tried talking Arima into putting up with that conductor, but it wasn't just the defection with which the orchestra had a problem. Arima told me through Yokoi that the guy couldn't conduct; he could only beat out time like a metronome.

So I went over to my major with Arima, and we went round and round over that thing. When I came into the major's office, there was that Japanese renegade with his British wife, and that set Arima off again. In the end, the major said, "This man *will* conduct the orchestra, and those musicians *will* play." I saluted and said, "Yes sir!" and went out.

All the way back to the radio station, Arima was grumbling. I asked Yokoi, "What are they planning to do?" Yokoi said, "You can't make them play." And I knew that was true. The Army would force those musicians to be physically present at the concert, but when it came to *playing right*, there was absolutely nothing that could be done. All they would have to do is tune their instruments about a half note off from where they should be, and there would be the most horrendous discord you ever heard.

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I wasn't about to hang around for that, so I went AWOL from the theater of operations and went to Honolulu and laid around on the beach drunk for a couple of weeks. When I got back, I found out what happened. During that performance of the "Messiah," little Japanese children in cardboard wings were let down from the ceiling singing, "Boop boop didum datom whatumchew." That was a popular song with the American G.I.s called "Three Little Fiddies," so the excuse for that fiasco that Arima gave was the Japanese were just trying to please the Americans. I am glad I wasn't there to see it.

But I was called into the colonel's office and reamed out. Of course, there was nothing he could do about it because I had gone over his head and gotten a general's signature on my leave papers. But that cost me my promotion, and I was sent home. But after I got back to the United States, every year for ten years I got a Christmas card from Arima saying, "Will never forget your kindness." I had "gone to bats" for him when no one else would, and he appreciated that. I had tried to do something for him, even though nothing came of it.

When I got saved, I thought about that. Isn't that an example for a Christian? "Never forget your kindness, Lord." Jesus Christ didn't just try to do something to save you; He did it. **"It is finished"** (John 19:30). He completed the atonement that can save your soul. He said He came to this earth **"to give his life a ransom for many"** (Mark 10:45), and He did it (1 Tim. 2:6). So at Christmas, when

you honor His coming, *never forget His kindness.*

Second, the song of the angels was to *welcome a King*. Charles Wesley wrote, "Hark! the herald angels sing, Glory to the newborn King." A song to welcome a monarch isn't this modern music in churches. It's not all "lovey-dovey," "kiss me—hug me," "God is just wild about me and can't live without me." It's loud and majestic.

The British Coronation Anthem is a piece by Handel called "Zadok the Priest." It's all about Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet crowning Solomon in the place of David. It starts out with trumpets and right in the middle, the whole choir shouts, "God save the King! God save the King! God save the King!" I tell you what, it makes you want to stand up and shout at the top of your lungs, "God save the King!" You don't feel like swaying and waving your hands, brother.

Now that is how Christmas music should make you feel. If it doesn't remind you of Christ coming to die for sinners, then it should remind you that one day, your Lord is coming back to reign over this world. It should make you long for that day when God's King sits on God's throne, and I don't mean the one in heaven, either (see 1 Chron. 29:23; Jer. 3:17). And brother, when that day comes, the music at His coronation is going to be LOUD (Psa. 98:4). Revelation 19:6 says it will be **"the voice of a great multitude"**; it will be like **"many waters"** and **"mighty thunderings"**; and it will be: **"Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth"**!

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I can't wait for that day—the day *Jesus Christ gets what He deserves*. He didn't get it when He came the first time. The crown He got was one of thorns; His scepter a reed; His robe was that of a religious whore (Matt. 27:28; John 19:2 cf. Rev. 17:4). He was beaten, spat on, and nailed naked to a cross to be mocked by sinners. That's not how it will be next time. Then, it will be bow down and kiss His feet, or else (Psa. 2:6–12). And to that I say, "Aaaamen!" Let 'er rip, boy!

I have nothing against any church having a choir, but the truth is, the whole congregation should be singing loudly, to the best of its ability, during the song service. No one should sit back in the pews and expect the choir to do all the singing or the "special music" to do it all. Every Christian ought to be involved in praising God through "**psalms and hymns and spiritual songs**," and the song should come from the *heart* (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

Years ago, when it was still allowed, every Christmas season, our church would go down to the local mall and sing Christmas carols. Afterwards, people would come up to our members and compliment them on the "choir." Well, there is no "choir" at the Bible Baptist Church. The *congregation* is the choir. That was just a bunch of the members who had gotten together and practiced, then went down and sang their hearts out in honor of their Saviour and King. That's how it should be.

Third, the first Christmas carol was to *welcome a baby*. But that baby

wasn't just any baby; it was *God's baby*. Even a great king like David had to admit: "**Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me**" (Psa. 51:5). But not Jesus Christ. His Father wasn't some sinner from Adam like the corrupt translations lead you to believe in Luke 2:33. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost of God (Matt. 1:18–20; Luke 1:35) and was "**the Son of the Highest**" (Luke 1:32). And Mary may have been the vessel by which Jesus Christ came into this world (Gal. 4:4), but even she had nothing to do with Christ's human nature. The writer of Hebrews says God Almighty prepared the physical body of Jesus Christ in the womb of the virgin Mary (Heb. 10:5), so He inherited no sin nature from either His mother or His foster father.

That baby grew up and was tempted of the devil and became the only man ever born who whipped Satan (Matt. 4:1–11; Luke 4:1–13). He was tempted of men trying to trap Him in His words (Matt. 16:1, 19:3, 22:35; John 8:6), but He never sinned in word or deed. The man who betrayed Him said He was innocent (Matt. 27:4); the judge who tried Him could "**find no fault in him**" (Luke 23:4, 14; John 18:38, 19:4, 6). One of the criminals who died with Him recognized He hadn't done anything wrong (Luke 23:41), and the soldier who executed Him declared Him to be "**a righteous man**" (Luke 23:47). This baby, at any age, was "**holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners**" (Heb. 7:26), and His Father was "**well pleased**" with Him (Matt.

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3:17, 12:18, 17:5). Isn't that a baby worthy of song and praise? I think so!

That baby fulfilled prophecy. God foretold the coming of that baby 4,000 years before He showed up (Gen. 3:15). The Holy Spirit told you where He would be born (Mic. 5:2), what would herald His birth to the Gentile peoples (Num. 24:17), and the events that would accompany His birth (Hos. 11:1; Jer. 31:15).

That baby fulfilled 48 prophecies at His first coming (at least), which were written anywhere from 400 to 1,500 years before He was born. The chances of that happening are one in ten with 157 zeroes after it. There aren't that many electrons in three universes the size of this one. If the chances of a thing taking place are one in ten with fifty zeroes after it, that thing will *never* take place, according to the mathematicians, but Jesus Christ fulfilled odds three times that many. He was a *supernatural* baby.

From a practical point of view, did you know exposing a baby to music while it is still in the womb improves its ability in life to learn. I think even after the child is born, the songs he hears from his mother go with him and influence the rest of his life. The song that was sung that night by the angels over the manger of Bethlehem must have had a great effect on that baby.

The Czech composer Antonin Dvořák wrote a piece one time called "Songs My Mother Taught Me." I couldn't repeat in a mixed audience the songs I remember hearing my mother sing. I don't recall learning one Christian song from my mother. If your little baby, *momma*, is coming

up in a Bible-believing church, you had better thank God that child is hearing the right kind of songs while his character is being formed.

One time, Horatius Bonar, the famous Scotch preacher, went to a hospital to witness to some of the patients. He started to deal with a wounded soldier there, and that fellow said, "Don't you talk to me about religion; I don't want to hear it!" So Bonar closed his Bible and began to sing a song that began "O Mother dear, Jerusalem, When shall I come to thee?" That dying soldier listened to Bonar sing that song through, and when he was finished, the soldier asked, "Where did you learn that song?" "From my mother's knee," replied Bonar. "Well that was where I was taught it too; go ahead and talk," said the soldier. And Bonar talked to him and led him to Christ. That mother singing that song to her little baby didn't realize it would make the difference someday between heaven or hell for that little one, but it did.

Somebody asked a housewife one time what she did for a living, and she said, "I'm an author." "Oh, what are you writing?" "I'm writing two books. The name of one is Jimmy, and the name of the other is Ruth." Christian *momma*, your job is to write on the hearts and minds of your children everything they need to know, and one way to do that is through good Christian music.

Finally, the first Christmas music was *to proclaim a Saviour*. If a Christmas song doesn't talk about Jesus Christ, I would get rid of it. Those angels didn't sing about Jingle

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Bells or Frosty the Snowman or Suzie Snowflake; they sang about **“a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord”** (Luke 2:11).

Liberals and “emergents” have all kinds of ideas about why Jesus Christ came. Well, I don’t have to wonder or speculate about why the Son of God showed up on this earth. He told me why Himself, and I don’t need to consult Rob Bell or Bart Campolo or Rick Warren or Joel Osteen or anyone else. I can get it “straight from the horse’s mouth.”

“For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10).

That’s a comforting thought. Are you weak and stupid and obscure and unnoticed and handicapped and unpraised? Then I’ve got good news for you: Jesus Christ came to die for you. The prophecy says:

“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be LITTLE among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting” (Mic. 5:2).

When I was a boy, I used to love sleeping under the Christmas tree. I remember laying under that tree and listening to a record we had, play, “O Little Town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie.” And years later when I got back from overseas and was working at a radio station in Mobile, Alabama, I was going through some bad trouble. Around Christmas, I was walking down Government Street after work, drunk, when I came to a nativity scene outside of a Catholic church,

and I stopped because the music box was playing “O Little Town of Bethlehem.” It was followed by “Joy to the World, the Lord is Come.” The Holy Spirit used those Christmas carols to tear me up. I ended up walking into the priest’s office and found him reading a Bible. You could have bowled me over with a feather. I said without ever thinking about what I was saying, “What does the Good Book say, Father?” Without looking up, he read the next verse.

“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon” (Isa. 55:7).

I didn’t get saved that night, but that’s when the Lord started dealing with me. I can’t help thinking at this time of year, there’s someone walking the streets just like me; alone in the world without any hope and without God, depressed, life falling apart, and having never heard the gospel. I was 27 years old before I ever heard a clear presentation of the gospel. I had been to New Orleans and New York City on New Year’s Eve. No one even handed me a gospel tract. But the thing is, I knew those Christmas carols. A lot of unsaved folk are like that. Maybe you can call to their remembrance “the everlasting Light” about which the song tells.

Wesley’s song “Hark, the Herald Angels Sing” goes on to say: “Peace on earth, and mercy mild, GOD AND SINNERS RECONCILED.” Won’t you give someone **“the word of reconciliation”** (2 Cor. 5:19) this Christmas season?

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water of the Euphrates River enough to send their army underneath the walls, defeating the Babylonians and bringing to pass the "handwriting on the wall" (Daniel 5) against Belshazzar and destroying the Babylonian kingdom.

Another ancient wall is the "Western Wall" (often referred to as the "Wailing Wall") in Jerusalem. Built by Herod in 19 B.C. to expand the Temple Mount area, this wall is 187 feet long and 62 feet high at its exposed section, and the Jews today still mourn and pray at the wall, as they remember the loss of their temple and city that took place in 70 A.D. when the Romans came in under Titus' army. More recently, the nation of Israel built a Security Wall in an effort to protect their citizens from being slaughtered by the Muslim suicide bombers. Begun in the late 1990's and finished in 2003, this Wall immediately reduced the suicide bombings from 73 to 12, the Jewish dead from 293 to 64, and the Jewish wounded from 1900 to 445. Due to their inability to deal with facts, the average American college educated ignoramus refers to this Wall as "The Apartheid Wall". Imagine what these clowns would say if each year, 293 Americans were killed and 1900 were wounded by enemy attacks?

Perhaps the most well known of all walls is the Great Wall of China dating back to the Ming Dynasty of around 1300 A.D. Ranging between fifteen to thirty feet high and about twenty feet wide, it traverses over four thousand miles, counting the natural barriers of mountains, cliffs, and tamped dirt that make up parts of it. The Chinese built

the wall to protect themselves from the Manchurian and Mongolian tribes, who would often attack.

The Berlin Wall was built by the Communists in 1961 to keep East Berliners from fleeing to their freedom into West Berlin. Only about ninety-six miles long and twelve feet high, the concrete wall was about four feet thick. JFK, the media god of the early 1960's, used the wall as a political pawn during the so called "Cold War", telling the Germans in a speech of June 1963, saying, "Two thousand years ago the proudest boast was to say, "I am a citizen of Rome"; today, in a world of freedom the proudest boast is, "Ich bin ein Berliner" ("I am a Berliner"). As the crowd roared, thinking that he actually meant what he was mouthing, they were ignorant of the fact that he gave the exact words a year earlier in New Orleans, only changing the last part to "the proudest boast is to say, I am a citizen of the United States". As every politician, Jack was all things to all men that he, by all means, might sucker all. The Berlin Wall eventually was torn down in 1989 among the media hype of Ronald Reagan's famous speech saying, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall". No less the politician than JFK, ole Ronnie also said in that same speech, "I come here today because wherever I go; whatever I do, Ich hab noch einen Koffer in Berlin" ("I still have a suitcase in Berlin"). Reagan no more kept a suitcase in Berlin than Marlene Dietrich kept one in Nebraska.

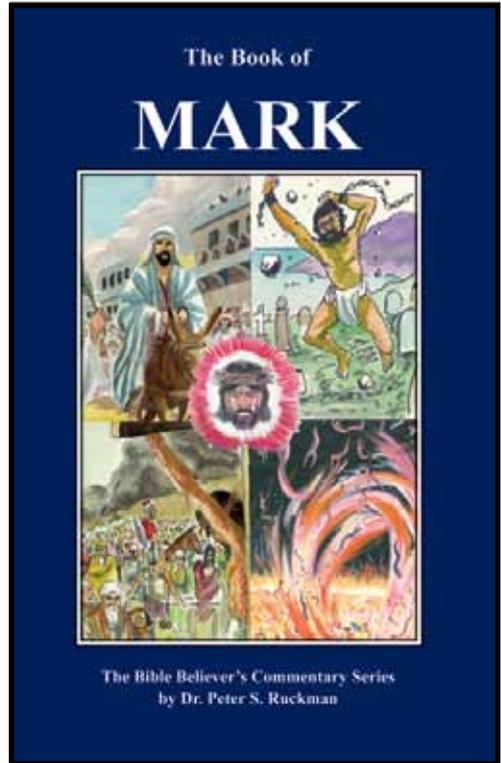
In May 1626, an official of the Dutch named Peter Minuit, bargained with the native Indians to purchase the

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MARK COMMENTARY

The Bookstore is pleased to offer the volume completing Dr. Ruckman's comments on the entire New Testament. Based on Dr. Ruckman's Sunday school teaching, the work covers the textual distinctives of the Gospel of Mark, with the attacks of the textual and higher critics discussed and refuted. The doctrinal progress of the gospel message from the ministry of Christ to its proclamation in the Acts of the Apostles is traced. Roman Catholic teachings on the Passion Week and the Crucifixion are shown to be legends and myths. As in all the commentaries in this series, Dr. Ruckman, in his own signature way, makes practical application to the life of the believer as well as an evangelistic emphasis for the lost.

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The Wall Builders

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island they called "Manahatta". The myth that the island was bought for a trade of beads persists today, even though the Dutch government wrote that the amount was sixty guilders (about \$24 by 1626 standards), and was not in cash but in goods such as axes, cloth, kettles, etc. The original agreement was for the Dutch to settle on the island among the Indians, however, an overzealous replacement of Minuit named Kieft, waged war on the tribe when they refused to pay him taxes. This war caused the Hudson Valley Indian tribes to band together against the Dutch and resulted in many deaths and the need to replace him as governor, this time with Peter Stuyvesant in 1647. Under his direction, "New Amsterdam" discriminated against allowing Jews and the English Quakers to settle there, encouraging them to head out instead for Rhode Island, "the sewer of New England", (according to the Dutch Reformed minister of New Amsterdam), where the Baptist colonists, taught and led by John Clarke and Roger Williams, gladly welcomed Jews, Quakers, and every other so-called sect.

Thanks to Kieft's war against the Indians, a twelve-foot stone wall had to be built from east to west across the southern portion of the Island (from the East River to the Hudson River) to protect the Dutch from Indian invasions. As the English became more powerful in the area, they took over Manhattan under Cromwell's threat of war, and in 1685, built a street along the base of the stone wall, eventually becoming known as Wall Street. Over one hundred years later in 1789, the fledgling country

of America would inaugurate its first president, George Washington, on this same Wall Street at Federal Hall. Though the wall is long gone and the country's capital has moved to D.C., the street remains with the same name, but is now known for housing the New York Stock Exchange.

Yet the greatest of all the wall builders was not Nebuchadnezzar, or Herod, or the Emperor of China, or the Dutch of New Amsterdam, or the East German Communists. By far the greatest wall builder of all time is the Lord Himself. In Revelation 19:7-21, we are told that the Lord has built a city whose walls are 216 feet high, and enclose an area of 1500 square miles. He built this wall for His bride that He not only "**purchased with his own blood**" (Acts 20:28) to clean her, but built this wall to protect her for all eternity. The Bible believer understands that the Lord is a divider, a separator, and a segregator. In the Old Testament, the Lord God set apart His people Israel as a vine that He fenced in (Isaiah 5:1-2), and He set up "**bounds**" for the Gentiles to live within as well (Deuteronomy 32:8).

The modern Christian seems to be completely ignorant of this work of the Lord in wanting His people to be separated (II Corinthians 6). His church should have marked divisions of doctrine and practice that a lost sinner should see. Whenever a lost sinner enters a Bible believing church, he should notice that there is a wall between heaven and hell that he cannot get over, under, or through. Instead of being told the lie that God loves him and is everyone's Father, he should hear that between him and

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his Creator is an unassailable wall that can only be broken down by the blood of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:14). The doctrine of Christ (II John 9) is a wall, the new birth (John 3:3-10) is a wall, and the fellowship of Christ is a wall between light and darkness. The saved should know that to live for the Lord requires building walls and it is always harder to build and maintain walls than it is to let them fall apart. The backslider will tolerate preaching as long as it never lands on his sins and demands that he separate and build walls. Walls are not only for separation but for safety. A loving parent will make sure that their young child is protected at night behind walls and locked doors and windows. No loving parent in their right mind would open up their doors for anyone to enter the house and molest his child. But as Robert Frost wrote, "Something there is that doesn't love a wall." We agree with Mr. Frost, and in this case, it is the one trying to destroy your child that "doesn't love a wall."

When Nehemiah took on the work of building up the walls around Jerusalem that were fallen down, he found there were some folks who did not care for the idea. Sanballat and Tobiah laughed (Nehemiah 2:19), and mocked (Nehemiah 4:1-3), thinking he could never finish the job. But when Nehemiah proved that he meant business and took his calling seriously, they tried to hinder him. Nehemiah thought that building a wall was a "**great work**" (Nehemiah 6:3), while the enemies of the Lord were the "something there was that didn't love a wall". Would to God that

more Christians were in agreement with Nehemiah in understanding that wall building is a "**great work**". Many saved parents who would never go to sleep without making sure their children were safe behind walls, nevertheless, let the enemy enter right into the bedroom through the computer. "Something there is that doesn't love a wall" and if there is anything that this computer age has accomplished, it would be to knock down every single wall of separation through a worldwide web of contact.

In these last days, wall building is a ridiculous thought. Inclusion and tolerance are the philosophies constantly preached and forced on Americans today. The United States of America is called "The Melting Pot". The walls of separation are non-existent, as are any "**bounds of their habitation**" (Acts 17:26). Entering New York Harbor over the last two hundred years have filed millions of immigrants of all nationalities, with more entering this country through New York than all other entry points combined. In the mid 1700's, two Sephardic Jewish families surnamed Lazarus and Seixas, settled in New York City with one of the patriarchs leading the city's oldest synagogue, Shearith Israel. Over the years, the families became much more secular and by the time Emma Lazarus was born in 1849, the synagogue and the Old Testament were nothing more to her family than ties to the Jewish community. Emma grew up in Manhattan as a privileged Jew but rejected both the Jewish prophets and Moses. At eighteen years of age, she met a sixty-five-year-old man who would become her mentor and

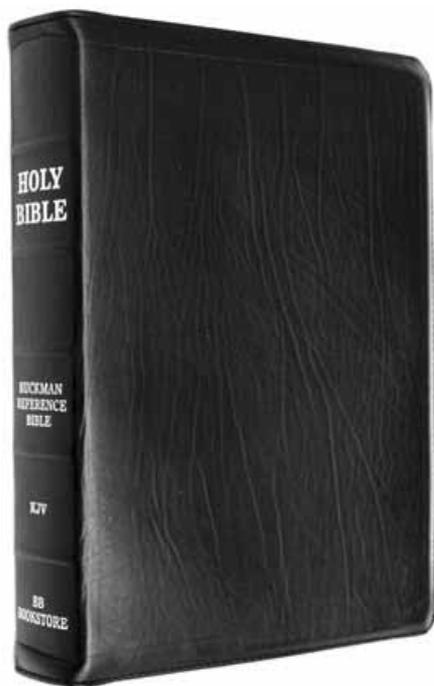
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Christmas Special

November 1 — December 15

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The Wall Builders

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idol named Ralph Waldo Emerson, a flunky Unitarian minister turned poet, who rejected the divinity and salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ. Between the two of them was a secular Jew who rejected the scriptures of the Old Testament and a nominal "Christian", who rejected the scriptures of the New Testament. Emerson encouraged the young girl in her poetry and an early poem revealed the spiritual darkness of her soul as she wrote, "I waited but the message did not come; no voice addressed my reason...the lifeless rites no comfort could impart, charged with no answer for my discontent". Her poor lost Jewish soul knew nothing more than the dead rituals of religion, which can never bring salvation. By 1882, her confusion of true Biblical Christianity with the Roman Catholic and Russian Orthodox Churches was evident. In another poem that was meant to cry out against the horrible slaughter and rape of the Jews during the Russian pogroms of the 1880's as she wrote, "Once more the sword of Christ is drawn... when the long roll of Christian guilt is known...what oceans can the stain remove?" As most people today who are completely ignorant of biblical Christianity, and spend all their time allowing the media to think for them, Emma Lazarus equated the professing anti churches of Rome and Russia, (whose members persecuted and killed the Jews) with true Christians. What she never found out was that her people would find help, not from the Pope and his killer Jesuit henchmen, or from the pagan Russian priests, but from the Bible believing, born again Christians who know what the Lord says in Romans

11:28 regarding the Christian view of the Jewish people, **"As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes."**

After making a trip in 1881 to Ward's Island in the East River off Manhattan's shore, to see firsthand the plight of the Russian Jewish refugees, Emma complained that Jews put too much emphasis on their spiritual state, and not enough on improving their physical condition, and soon began calling for a Jewish state. She would eventually be called upon to write something that might be fitting for the "tremendous" gift from France to the USA in 1883. The Statue of Liberty was designed by Bartholdi and built by Gustave Eiffel in Paris, which pictured the Roman goddess of liberty and would later be placed on a prepared pedestal on Ellis Island in the New York Harbor, where millions would enter the land of their hopes and dreams. Lazarus wrote, "The New Colossus" that was engraven on a plaque and placed at the foot of the pagan goddess. "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore, send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me", she cried. And the masses continued to pour into this country, but instead of Lazarus' "air-bridged harbor", the majority of them were huddled into filthy tenements of disease ridden, dark and crime infested buildings. The Irish potato famine of 1845-47 ended up killing over one million Irish while forcing another

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The Wall Builders

Continued from 13

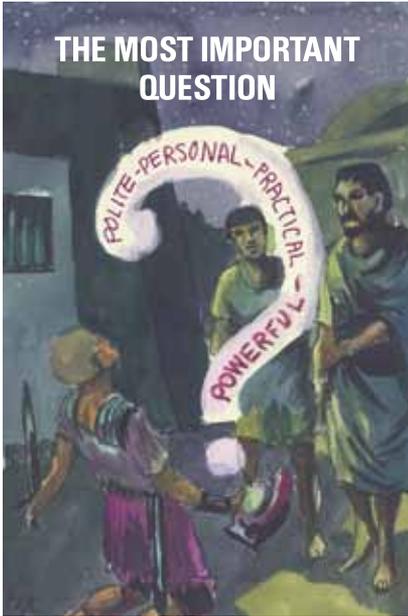
1.5 million to emigrate to America. Of those, 950,000 entered through New York. These "tired and poor yearning to breathe free", to whom Lady Liberty opened her arms, had to live in the filthiest tenements without running water, that were ovens in the summertime, and freezers during winter. If they did find work, it was the lowest paying, hardest labor, and least secure. Within a few decades, the Italians would replace the Irish as the "wretched refuse of your teeming shores", also trying to just survive. Without Christ and without hope in this world (Ephesians 2:1-3), they died and entered eternity...lost. The Irish, the Italians, the Germans, the Eastern Europeans, the Jews, the Africans, the Shemites of Japan, Korea, China, etc, all piled together into one country without walls and therefore, without protection, all trying to "make a living", without ever finding out what that means. Emma Lazarus may have died in relative American luxury, but as for her soul, she died no different than the millions of those "huddled masses" she wrote about. **"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"** (Mark 8:36). Having a chance to better your lot in this life is not a final goal for the Bible Believer. Yet, in the "American dream", that is all that matters. As Solomon said so long ago, **"For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other"** (Ecclesiastes 3:19). You see, the so called "great experiment" called "America", is ab-

solutely useless without salvation. The "great experiment" would be to have a saved sinner wake up and fulfill his calling to bring pleasure to the God who created him and he is told how to do that in a perfect Book.

So now, at the last, the USA has effectively ridden itself of the Lord God and His Book, the King James Bible, as well as that Book's commands to separate, not integrate. Americans lightly scoff at and ridicule any Christian who would dare to take the Lord God at His word and try to preach it and live by it. The modern Christian actually mistakes the long suffering of the Lord with His approval and due to his almost complete ignorance of the Bible, believes that the God of the Bible is on the side of the USA. He most certainly is, but only in the sense that He was on Babylon's side in Jeremiah 25, Egypt's side in Exodus 1-2, Assyria's side in II Kings 25, and Rome's side in Matthew 2. This country has refused to build the walls against idolaters, all kinds of sexual perverts, murderers, etc., and the result is the darkness that pervades this land. The USA has broken down every single wall of decency, all in the name of tolerance and freedom, while rejecting the truth that can make them free. But the "truth" is a wall that they cannot accept. The floodgates are wide open and the only way to fix it is for the Lord Jesus to return and take it by force, which He will soon do in spite of the scoffers. In the meantime, the Lord's people are to be involved in **"doing a great work"** (Nehemiah 6:3), namely, to build walls, and then **"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel"** (Mark 16:15).

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where the next war is fought, no matter who wins the Super Bowl, no matter how high inflation goes, or whether “man” gets to Venus or Jupiter. What could be more practical than getting ready to die and face God when that is what will happen to every man, woman, and child? “Prepare to meet thy God” (Amos 4:12).

III. IT WAS A PERSONAL QUESTION

He wasn’t asking about still births, Mongoloid babies, morons, or “the heathen who never heard”; he was asking about himself. There is no “we,” as in Acts 2:37. The nation of Israel in Acts 2:38 is told to repent and be baptized. The unsaved Gentile is told nothing of the kind; he is told to “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

IV. IT WAS A POWERFUL QUESTION

A man’s eternal residence is dependent upon the answer, and if the answer given is wrong, the residence will be wrong. Wrong answers given by Satan from the Scripture include Matthew 16:18–19; Acts 2:38; Matthew 5–7; Psalm 23; 1 Corinthians 13; John 20:23; and 1 Peter 3:21. If “the gospel” is “the POWER of God unto salvation” (Rom. 1:16), then you had better make certain that “the gospel” you received is not the “gospel” of Matthew 24 or Acts 2 (see Gal. 1:6–9). It had better be “the gospel” of 1 Corinthians 15:1–4 and Acts 15:11. You can go to Hell on the Scriptures as quickly as you can on bootleg liquor or murder.

In Acts 16:30–31, God has just performed a miracle. He has opened all of the cells in “slam city,” but none of the prisoners have left. You don’t have to tell a warden or jailer that this is a miracle; he knows a “miracle” when he sees one. So the jailer is under conviction. He asks Paul and Silas, “What must I do to be saved?” It is the most important question for any unsaved man to ask in any age, and the answer is not Acts 2:38 or Matthew 24:13, contrary to the religious nonsense put out by the Mormons, Charismatics, Catholics, and Campbellites.

I. IT WAS A POLITE QUESTION

It is prefaced with the word “Sirs”: “SIRS, what must I do to be saved?” The surest proof that most men are led and controlled by Satan is their response to a discussion of spiritual matters: “I never discuss religion or politics,” “You do your thing, and I’ll do mine,” “I’m good,” “I’ve got my church and you’ve got yours.” “We’re all trying to get to the same place.” (Yes, and if you’re not careful, you’re going to get there.)

II. IT WAS A PRACTICAL QUESTION

The most intensely practical question is not “Where will the next war be?” or “What’s on the next White House tape?” or “When will man inhabit the moon?” or “Is there life on other planets?” The most intensely practical question has to do with LIFE after DEATH, because you will die no matter

APPLICATION: “What must I do to be saved?” Well, it’s not repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38), because no one in Acts 2 asked what to do to be saved. The answer to the most important question is: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

Have you trusted Christ as your personal Saviour? If you haven’t, you can do so now and know you have eternal life. Just come to Jesus Christ in simple faith and sincerity, saying something like this:

“Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and unless you save me, I am lost forever. I come to you the best way I know how, believing you died for my sins and rose again to give me eternal life, and asking that you save me. I receive you as my Saviour and trust you to forgive and justify me, and present me without fault before God’s throne in the day of Judgment.”

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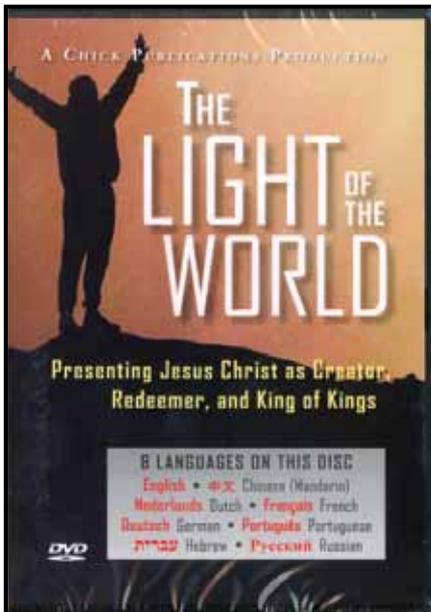
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Bro. Donovan's Meeting Schedule

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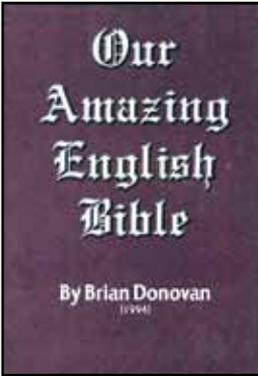
Bible Believers Baptist Church
3857 Hartley Road
Jacksonville, FL 32256
Pastor David Peacock
(904) 334-5783

December 8-10

Bible Baptist Church
16503 State Rt. 3.
Catlettsburg, KY 41129
Pastor Dennis Miles
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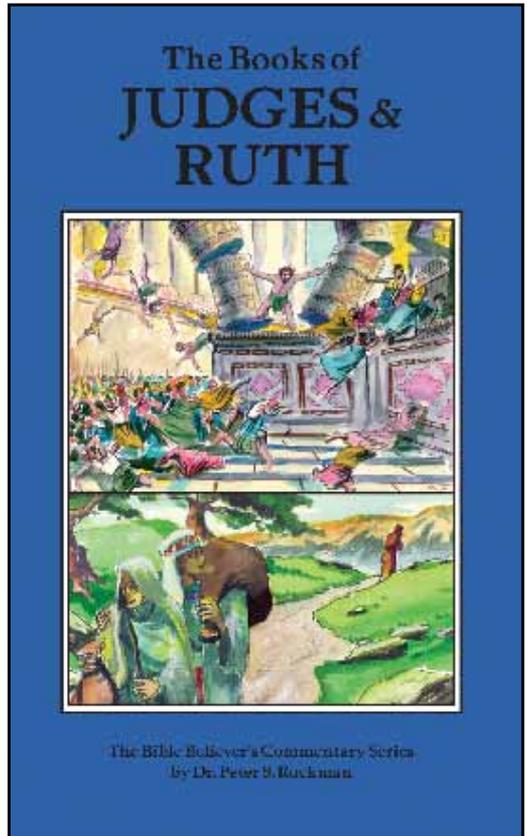
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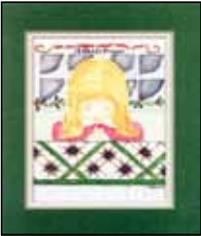
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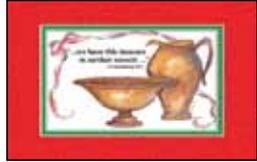
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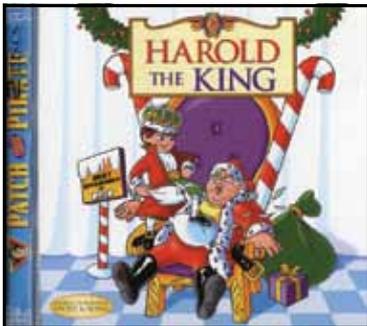


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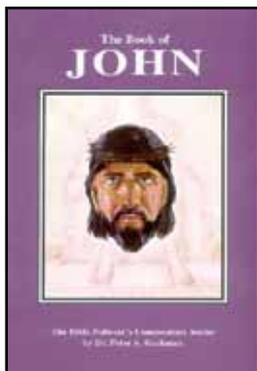
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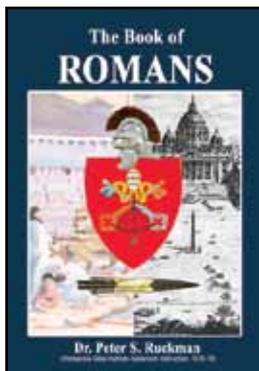
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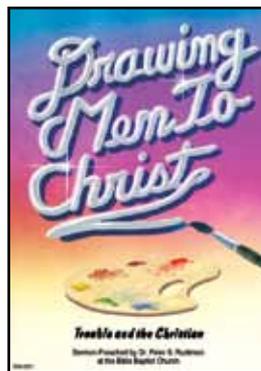
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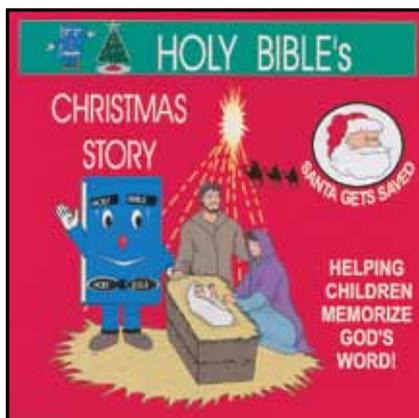
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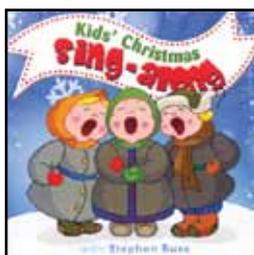
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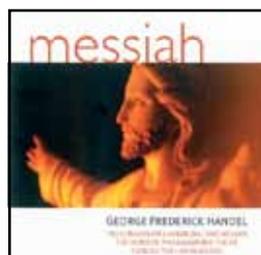
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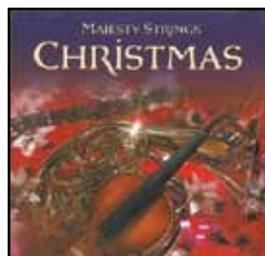
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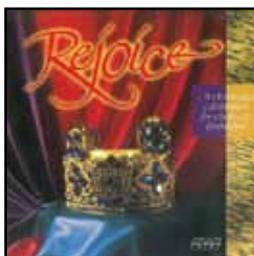
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New Commentary on Mark—see page 9

Christian Persecution

By Zack Colvin

The history of persecution in the body of Christ takes us all the way back to the book of Acts. As a matter of fact, within the same year of Christ's death and resurrection, persecution of the body of Christ had already begun. Some isolated persecution of the disciples took place with Peter and John in Acts 4, when the big shots in the temple couldn't deny what had taken place with the healing of the lame man but didn't want the account of it spreading any further. In other words, they didn't like what was being done; they couldn't answer with sound, factual truth; so the only way they knew to stop them was to threaten to beat them. It would take a lot more than that to stop Peter and John from preaching Jesus Christ after what they had seen and heard during their three-and-a-half years with Him. In fact, the Jews' threatenings only increased the disciples' boldness. This scenario became a regular pattern for the persecution of Christians over the next 2,000 years.

Later in the book of Acts, in chapter 6, there were some men from around the regions of Palestine and Asia Minor who were disputing with the recently ordained deacon, Stephen. When Stephen answered their disputing with sound doctrine, the Bible says, "**they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake**" (Acts 6:10). Any man with a clear conscience would stop and consider why he had no answer, but not these men. These crooked men suborn other crooked men to lie about Stephen and eventually stone him to death. You see,

this is the pattern throughout church history. This is how religious and educated people handle the truth—just like the Pharisees did in the book of John when they couldn't answer Christ's preaching: "**they took up stones to stone him**" (John 10:31).

No Bible-believing preacher should ever get upset when he gets resistance to the truth he's preaching. When a preacher has spoken the truth and a man or woman flies off the handle and goes into a rage over what is being said, the Bible believer should be assured that he's probably saying the right thing. So many Christians nowadays are so concerned about making sure they say things in a way so as not to offend anybody, but the only way to keep from offending anybody is not to say anything negative. As you know, the truth is negative about 75% of the time. I have noticed that usually when a person gets upset about the truth of the scripture, it's because he can't refute it with truth. Very rarely does a man get upset if he knows the truth. Men get upset and fly into a rage when they're speechless against the truth, and they think that losing their temper will threaten you into backing down from the truth.

In Acts 7, we have the record of the very first Christian martyr, the deacon Stephen. He's stoned to death at the end of a Spirit-filled sermon where his hearers are cut to the heart and are clearly under conviction about what he's preaching. But instead of humbling themselves to the truth, they drag him out of the city, pick up stones, and begin hurling

Continued on 25

Christian Persecution

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them at him. As his bones are fractured and his flesh is broken open, before he goes unconscious, he preaches one more time. He speaks words that have often been spoken by martyrs throughout the ages. They pierce through even the hardest of hearts and into the most defiled of consciences. It was the same message that Jesus Christ preached from the cross, before He yielded up the ghost, when He said, "**Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do**" (Luke 23:34). It was a message of forgiveness. Stephen said, "**Lord, lay not this sin to their charge**" (Acts 3:60). This is a message that bothered many a persecutor over the years. Some were even saved after seeing the bold testimony of a persecuted Christian. Although we don't have many records of how persecutors responded to these martyred Christians, we have one definite account in the scripture of a man named Saul who watched Stephen's death, and we don't find out until his conversion in Acts 9 that his conscience was pricked as he watched. The response of the Roman centurion who stood watch at Christ's crucifixion was, "**Certainly this was a righteous man,**" and the Bible says, "**he glorified God**" (Luke 23:47).

The heritage of a Bible believer is that of persecuted, Bible-believing disciples of Jesus Christ. Our heritage is not a heritage of politically-correct men and women who never spoke the truth to anyone, but rather, told them what they wanted to hear so they could maintain a friendship

or a business relationship. It's not a heritage of spiritually lazy men and women who put more effort into attending sports events or entertainment venues than they do to go preach on the street. It's not a heritage of people who won't travel any distance to hear the truth while they will travel any distance to attend a business seminar that will likely bring a promotion. Modern Christians are in disgusting shape! Our true Christian heritage is that of bold, faithful, non-conforming men, women, and children who suffered much for believing the same things Bible believers profess to believe today. They could be beaten, stoned, whipped, and tortured with cruel instruments; but their persecutors could not make them conform.

Persecution began to build in Jerusalem around A.D. 34, and this began a long list of widespread persecutions that took place throughout history. Aside from the spiritual reason for the persecution (that Satan was after these Christians to try and shut them up), there were several humanistic reasons for why these Christians were persecuted. There was the political reason: these Christians would not worship the Roman emperors as if they were little gods. The Roman emperors of the early Roman Empire thought themselves to be gods and wanted worship accordingly. (Alexander the so-called "Great" said he was virgin born from the god Jupiter - "There is nothing new under the sun.") And when these Christians boldly stood up and showed their allegiance to another King (Jesus Christ)

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Christian Persecution

Continued from 25
and another city (New Jerusalem),
the emperors had them killed.

There was the economic reason: Bible believers preached against idol worship, worldly entertainment, and wicked art and literature; all of which were responsible for supporting the economy of the Roman Empire, just as they do the United States today. Acts 19 gives a great description of the uproar that would take place when the gods of entertainment and idol worship were preached against; it's the same way people react when you begin to preach against the gods of entertainment and sports of today, or the internet and social media. (I've talked to lost people who have more sense about the dangers of social media and the internet than some Bible believers to whom I've talked. When something is responsible for ruining your marriage and family, I think it's safe to say you should probably avoid it. That's what a lost man told me when his family split up. As a result, he wouldn't fool around with the social media anymore and wouldn't let his kids on it. Yet I know professing Bible believers who won't make that same admission.)

There was the religious reason: The Bible-believing Christians would not conform to the idol worship and pagan rituals of the Roman church.

But the main reason why Christians were persecuted by the thousands throughout the ages of church history was because they would not conform to the world system. In the eyes of their persecutors, they were "*odio humani generis*": they were "haters of the human race." This

was the main charge, in some way or another, that was brought against the martyrs. It's the same charge that was brought against Jeremiah when he gave the people God's words. The charge against Jeremiah was: "**this man seeketh not the welfare of this people, but the hurt**" (Jer. 38:4). Of course, we know the end of the story, and Jeremiah was concerned enough about their true welfare to tell them the truth. But since it wasn't what they wanted to hear, they said, "**let this man be put to death**" (Jer. 38:4). Eventually, he ends up in a dungeon prison. Rome, as the Jews in Jeremiah's day and as the world system in general, does not like those it can't control and those who won't conform.

Nero wanted to rebuild Rome when he was emperor, but he didn't have a logical way of making that happen. So around A.D. 64, he decided to burn Rome to the ground and start over. Eventually, word spread that the reason Rome was burning was because Nero lit it on fire. Nero began to blame the Christians for starting the flames. Since he hated Christians anyway, this was a convenient opportunity to persecute and kill them. So he tied Christians to posts in his palace garden, covered them in pitch, and lit them on fire. As they burned by the hundreds in his palace gardens, he rode around naked on his chariot, indulging himself in his own wicked pleasures, mocking the Christians whom he said were his torches to light his palace garden. Others were crucified. Some were tied up in the skins of animals and were thrown to wild dogs in the arena and mauled by

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wild beasts. This was only thirty years after the death of Christ.

After Nero came the ten imperial persecutions, beginning with Domitian around A.D. 90 and ending when Constantine took the throne in A.D. 313. In A.D. 311, the emperor Galerius issued an edict of toleration for Christians on his deathbed because he wanted the Christians to pray that he would recover from his almost fatal illness. He died anyway, six days later. For almost 225 years, Bible-believing Christians of that day suffered through crucifixions, burnings at the stake, being tied to iron chairs that were placed over burning coals so the body would literally roast and the flesh would melt into the chair. Historians writing about these persecutions said you could smell the burning flesh from miles away. Some entire church congregations were brought to the Roman Colosseum and other arenas, and were placed in a tight formation. Pitch was poured in a ring around the group and then lit on fire, while those attending the "show" began to shoot arrows with firebrands at the group of Christians. Wild beasts were let loose to ensure that anybody who tried to flee the burning ring of fire would be mangled by the beasts.

These aren't made-up stories meant to jerk at your emotions in an attempt to prove we have the right beliefs, like the Romans would have you believe. These accounts are given in history, but who reads history? Christians wouldn't be in as bad of shape as they are if they were reading history. These weren't mur-

derers, rapists, and seditionists. None of these Christians were conspiring against the emperor or the government. These Christians believed the same things you and I profess to believe. They were Bible-believing Christians who would not conform to Rome and its pagan doctrines of evils.

Around A.D. 400, the Persian king Isdigerdis and his son Geroranes, in an effort to rid Persia of every Christian and every church, tortured Christians by skinning and roasting them alive. In many cases, the perpetrators would split reeds so the edges were sharp. The Christians would be stripped naked and have these reeds wrapped tightly around their bodies. A strong man would then forcefully remove the reeds which would tear into and lacerate the naked flesh. Some were put in prison cells, naked and bound hand and foot, and rats would be let loose in the cells to gnaw on their bodies and eventually eat them alive and completely consume them.

In A.D. 456, Geroranes cast a faithful deacon of a church in Persia into prison because he preached the gospel. His name was Benjamin. He was in prison for two years when an ambassador from another country came to visit Geroranes and upon hearing the story of Benjamin's imprisonment, asked for his release. The king gave the conditions for his release: that he could not name the name of Christ or speak any more of this "Christian religion." The ambassador, thinking the miserable prisoner would do anything possible to be released, spoke for Benjamin and said

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that he would comply. But when the ambassador told Benjamin what he did to have him released, Benjamin replied, "I do not wish to do what you have promised in my name. I cannot withhold the doctrine of the light of the Gospel...." When the king learned of his response, he was enraged, and he ordered that twenty reeds be sharpened and forced between the flesh and the nail of his fingers and toes. But when Benjamin endured that punishment along with other cruelties, the king ordered that a stick be found and prepared to where the branches were cut off, but not entirely, so that short, sharp stubs would be left in place of the branches. This knotty stick was then thrust between Benjamin's legs and driven back and forth until he eventually died from the pain. His offense was that he would not conform.

In A.D. 413, two emperors, Theodosius and Honorius, issued an edict against any minister who re-baptized anyone. They were labeled "Anabaptists" because they didn't believe an infant baptism washed anyone's sins away and they would re-baptize those adults or children who believed on Jesus Christ according to the scripture. Forty years after this edict was issued, an unnamed minister of a church was beaten, beheaded, and dragged through the city as an example. His mangled body was fed to wild beasts.

Time and space would fail to tell of the thousands of Christians who suffered during the Dark Ages at the hands of wicked rulers. *Martyr's Mirror* records over 4,000 accounts of

men who had heavy stones tied to their feet and were thrown into rivers to drown, women who were suspended naked while their body parts were cut off one at a time and then burned with torches, entire families and church congregations who were led to the stake and burned because they wouldn't agree that infant baptism washed away their sins and they wouldn't agree that the literal body and blood of the Lord was in the Mass. With many of these cases, we don't even know the names of those persecuted, but we will one day learn them in eternity. For these men and women, eternity was a reality. They knew that one day they would see Jesus Christ face to face, and the reality of facing Him was more real than the torture and the fires that consumed their bodies.

First Peter 4:12–13 says, **"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."**

Honestly, to think of Bible-believers in modern times, including myself, having to endure the sufferings of some of the Christians in time past, is a strange thing. We don't know what it's like to have to go through those sorts of afflictions for the sake of Christ and the gospel. Sure, we have problems in the Christian life. We have family trouble, financial trouble, health trouble, deaths and illnesses in the family and in the church. But

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aren't these things common to life? These are just common troubles of life that Job speaks of when he says, "...man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7). Lost people go through these same things, just as the saved people do. I'm not making Christians' troubles out to be a thing that should be overlooked, but when it comes to real persecution suffered for the cause of Jesus Christ and the gospel, we know extremely little, and in most cases, none whatsoever. Our "troubles" become a very light thing when we consider what some others have endured and are enduring even at this present time in the Middle-Eastern countries.

One day, we will stand before Jesus Christ and give an account of the things done in the body. In light of the persecutions of Christians in time past, I am ashamed to think that

I am going to explain to the Lord that I couldn't do more for Him because of the trouble I would have had to endure if I did. To think that it only took a little reproach to cause me to shirk from some opportunities to exalt Jesus Christ or to preach the gospel, makes me feel like a real weakling spiritually. Our Christian heritage, beginning in the book of Acts, is that of men and women who forged what they believed in the annals of history by their blood. And if we are going to be able to rejoice "**with exceeding joy when his glory shall be revealed**" (1 Pet. 4:13), there needs to be a lot less whining about our pesky problems that are our fault most of the time anyway, and a lot more effort toward standing up for Jesus Christ, starting with the people we're around every day. And God help us to bear a little reproach for being outside the camp of this world.

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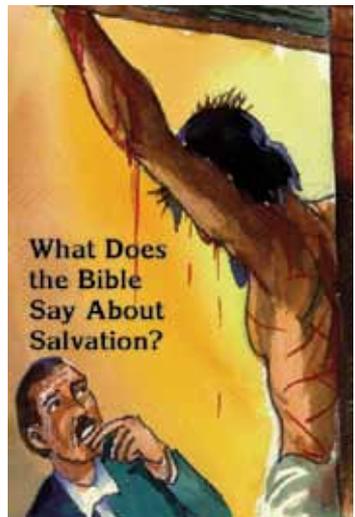
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Peace on God's Terms

By Robert Militello

“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth PEACE, good will toward men” (Luke 2:13–14).

A Jewish friend once said to me that Jesus could not have been the promised Messiah because He did not bring peace. I told this Jew that Jesus offered the kingdom of heaven to His nation, but the nation's spiritual leaders, the Sanhedrin, rejected the offer. Most times, my effort to get a Jew to see the truth falls flat at this point. Sometimes I'm able to go further and bring in scripture, but using a New Testament yields nothing. I have found Jews to be fixated, for the most part, on biblical giants: Moses, David, Elijah, Joshua, Joseph, et al. Once a Jew tore into me for reminding him that Abraham lied about Sarah being his sister and not his wife. This Jew wanted to do what the Holy Spirit does with biblical heroes in the book of Hebrews. The sins of these men disappear.

Well, the one here who gave me the best shot at getting a Jew to consider the claims of Jesus was Joseph. Joseph and his exploits hold a particular place in the development of the Jewish nation. When I worked in New York City and had many Jews around me, they all opened a conversation with “How's the family?”. This was genuine and was just as important to them as “How are you feeling?” or “What's new?”. A Jewish parent who has not had the pleasure of bragging about a successful son or daughter or grandchild is a Jew who feels cheated in life. Now, a careful reading

of the Old Testament shows that all Jewish families were dysfunctional to some degree, especially Jacob's and David's. There is a dark side to all of us, and that's because of sin. It can cause family members to turn on one another, depending upon the severity of the circumstances.

Using Joseph's life to make all the necessary subtle connections to Jesus was the most useful strategy to employ in an attempt to get a Jew to think outside the box of his tradition. Yes, Jesus did not restore the Davidic monarchy and bring peace, but why? He performed miracles, the likes of which were never seen on this earth, yet He was rejected. Jesus Christ came to His nation as a gift from God, in a plainly wrapped, unattractive package. The Jews were looking for something else. Human nature being what it is, we are drawn to those things that are shiny, bright, attractive, and able to get our notice instantly. If a little box wrapped in plain, brown paper with no bows or ribbons on it were put next to boxes that were carefully decorated, all being under the family Christmas tree, which ones would the children reach for?

“For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him” (Isa. 53:2).

No, our Saviour did not meet anyone's expectations except those whom the Father chose to receive Him. Peter's response to the Lord's question **“whom say ye that I am?”** was **“The Christ of God”** (Luke 9:20). Peter had received a divine revelation. No Jew can see this truth because of

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the spiritual veil over his eyes. God in His mercy allows for a remnant of the Jewish nation to see through the veil, and what an awesome miracle that is. So what does a lost Jew think when at Christmas time, he hears about the Prince of Peace coming to earth . . . to do what? He concludes that perhaps Jesus was a gifted teacher and an extraordinary man, but He failed to bring peace to Israel, and that is an historical fact. Here is the stumbling stone to the secular Jew who knows only some of the Torah, but little or nothing of the prophets.

Some years ago, in Brooklyn, I knew a man who was an ordained, orthodox rabbi, but was saved by believing God's word and was zealous for the Lord. Dr. Sam Stern's conversion is in print at the Bible Baptist Bookstore in Pensacola. The title of the small book is *The Victory of Light*. He's gone now. His wife, Dorothy, asked me to do his funeral, and that was a great open door to bring truth to those Jews who attended. Joseph's story was used by the Holy Spirit to connect Christ's betrayal by His brethren with Joseph's calamity. At the root of this was envy. A point I made concerning Joseph's success in Egypt seemed to resonate well. Jesus, like Joseph, became a very big man in the Gentile world after being rejected. Christmas is a testimony to just how big Jesus became in "Egypt," or the Gentile world. When a Jew gains extraordinary power and influence over Gentiles, Jews take note. It's hard to discount the hand of God in these things.

There are so many types of Jesus in the life of Joseph that any open-

minded Jew comparing the two can have that veil over his eyes drop to the floor in a moment. All that has to be said in the heart is what Peter blurted out: "**The Christ of God.**" That's who Jesus is. I wonder how well many of my brothers and sisters in Christ would hold up if they were subjected to the vicious slanders, abuse, and physical threats that were a part of Sam's and Dorothy's life together for so many years? What is it costing you today to be a member of Christ's body? Pause here and think—it's late!

"And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?" (Matt. 20:6).

So, another Christmas and another news item on the "Holy Father" in Rome praying for peace on earth. What a joke. In our day, the plea for world peace has become a sound bite for those who wish to appear pious while pursuing their own carnal desires. Whenever a beauty pageant winner is asked about her fondest desire, she says, "World peace." Isn't that touching? Well, there won't be peace in this world until the One who is peace personified comes to rule the nations, but who wants to hear that? Rather than find out what God has to say about world peace and when it will come, folks will celebrate Christmas the usual way. Dysfunctional families will pretend all is well, and the "joy" of giving and receiving (not the joy of the LORD) will once again make for a "Merry Christmas," "God bless us, everyone," as tiny Tim said in Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*.

Thank God there is a real peace

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offered to those who will trust the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour. **"Thou wilt keep him in PERFECT PEACE, whose mind is stayed on thee"** (Isa. 26:3). This is the peace one must first experience before he or she will see peace on earth.

Peace will come to all the nations that survive the great tribulation when Jesus Christ receives the glory, praise, honor, and adoration that is due Him and no one else. **"Glorify God,"** not to man, was the Christmas angels' first exhortation. We live in a time when men compete with one another in their ability to rob God of the glory due him.

Presently, the Lord is preparing the nations to receive a man who will glorify himself and blaspheme the God of heaven. He will be heaven's Christmas gift to a world that rejected the Lord's Christ. The devil's christ will bring a false peace to Israel and then kill Moses and Elijah, who will have been brought to Jerusalem to testify on behalf of the real Messiah. The world will be exceedingly joyful over the death of God's prophets. A kind of satanic Christmas will be observed on earth.

"And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and MAKE MERRY, AND SHALL SEND GIFTS ONE TO ANOTHER; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth" (Rev. 11:10).

Now there's a Christmas about which Hollywood has yet to make a film.

When the world, but especially the Jew, is reconciled to Jesus Christ, then what Christians now have can be had by all.

"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:7).

This is what the human heart longs for. Sadly, so few find it and even among God's own, many have little of that peace because they fight the Lord's attempt to control their lives. "Oh what peace we often forfeit, oh what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer." There's the great hymn, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," telling us why we can't seem to lock in on the peace of God. Prayer brings yieldedness and then comes peace. Jesus showed the way in the garden, a favorite place of prayer.

"Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE, be done" (Luke 22:42).

Peace comes after a struggle. Our will naturally clashes with God's will. This planet is swiftly moving toward a climatic showdown with its Creator. The coming clash between the nations of the world and the Lion of the tribe of Judah will not result in a draw. There will be a winner by unanimous decision.

In these last days before the church leaves to be with the Lord, we will hear more and more talk of war.

"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong" (Joel 3:9-10).

Look at that last phrase. Never

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in history has a small nation been able to stand up to a powerful one by saying, **"I am strong."** Weak and small nations were easily overtaken by great powers and empires. It was hard to resist the great powers of the day. Strength intimidates those who are weak. Yet look at North Korea threatening the United States. Nuclear weapons have given unheard-of strength to small nations. Israel is small, but mighty because of these weapons. Even a backward, third-world nation like Pakistan has gone nuclear, and Iran will soon possess such weapons. **"Prepare war,"** the prophet said. We are living and witnessing, in our day, the preparation for a catastrophe that the UN was created to prevent. That organization is pathetically impotent.

"For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Thess. 5:3).

The **"they"** in that verse are the nations. They are being assembled by the Lord to be crushed—see Zephaniah 3:8. All nations claim they want peace. We want peace; so does Russia, China, Israel, Iran, North Korea, etc. Everyone is for peace, or so they say. This desire for **"Peace and safety"** will become so overwhelming, the leaders of nations will be seduced by the devil into trusting a man backed by Rome who promises peace.

Israel wants to live in peace, but it needs a peace that does not compromise its security. This man will offer such a peace once the nations give him the power he must have. Some of my Jewish acquaintances may well be

alive still to see the peace that Jesus didn't bring finally come. Our Lord, the Prince of Peace, will allow His people to make a deal with the devil because:

"For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices" (Prov. 1:29–31).

"We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble!" (Jer. 8:15).

This sin-laden world will be looking for peace in 2018 more than at any time since Japan finally surrendered in August, 1945. Wars and rumors of war exasperate those who refuse to believe what God's word says about human nature. It is wicked, and man has been killing his own species since Cain murdered Abel. Science, technology, philosophy, religion, and the best efforts of all the world's diplomats cannot bring peace. The creation of the UN in June of 1945 was an effort to bring peace to the nations. It has failed as miserably as the League of Nations did before it. Some say war is a failure of diplomacy. I don't think so. War is what happens when the restraining power of the Holy Spirit is withdrawn and men assume their natural role as beasts.

"I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and THAT THEY MIGHT SEE THAT THEY THEMSELVES ARE BEASTS" (Eccl. 3:18).

All history is moving rapidly toward

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the day when men will welcome one who will perfectly reflect their own beastly nature, **"and all the world wondered after the BEAST"** (Rev. 10:3).

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10:34).

Now do you think this scripture will be expounded on Christmas morning in America's churches? As a Catholic, I was asked at Sunday Mass to pray for the "Holy Father." He was, after all, a man of peace, and he was committed to keeping the peace among nations. We were to pray that God would bless the pope's efforts to bring in world peace. No one showed me what Jesus said to His apostles in John 17:9.

"I pray for them: I PRAY NOT FOR THE WORLD, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine."

Chapter 17 of John's Gospel is the real "Lord's Prayer," and it is for believers in the church age. The prayer of Matthew 6:9–13 was for Jewish disciples still under the law. Catholics who recite the "Lord's Prayer" of Matthew 6, like I did daily, will remain cursed and under the law because they are not told their natural birth is unacceptable in God's sight and that they must be born again. Praying for peace with God is an exercise in hopeless futility unless you believe what Paul wrote, to which no Jesuit ever pointed.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast"

(Eph. 2:8–9).

What made the Lord cry as He neared Jerusalem days before His bloody execution? He cried because of the blindness of His nation.

"Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, THE THINGS WHICH BELONG UNTO THY PEACE! but now they are hid from thine eyes" (Luke 19:42).

How many millions of Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox believers in Christ's deity and the virgin birth will attend services this Christmas without having their eyes opened by God? They will go into buildings spiritually blind and come out the same way. The blindness that came upon Israel is upon them, even though they profess to be believers in Jesus Christ. Celebrating Christ's birth, or getting sprinkled or eating the wafer or believing in the Lord's resurrection, does not remove the blindness, so they can't find peace with God.

Years ago, Chick Publications put out some comics entitled *Alberto* and *DoubleCross*. In them was the story of one Alberto Rivera, who claimed to be a former Jesuit priest and was wonderfully converted by the word of God. Brother Rivera and Jack Chick were attacked by Catholics, and Christians also, who believed Alberto was a fraud. I believed the testimony of the priest was genuine, although Jesuits denied that Alberto was ever a member of the Society of Jesus. Well, what would you expect them to say? Father Rivera broke the Jesuit oath, so no effort was spared in the attempt to destroy him. What I found most interesting was how Alberto was led to the

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Lord. It involved his mother's death.

Father Alberto's mother was a devout, Spanish Roman Catholic. What upset Alberto greatly was the torment his mother went through as death approached. He could not understand why God did not give his saintly mother peace as she passed on to the next world. Her anguish and terror as death neared caused the Spanish priest to question the spiritual power of the religion in which he was raised. Sometimes one can see the difference in how a lost person leaves this world and how a saint of God leaves. Years ago, before medication and especially pain pills eased the transition from life to death, a mind not clouded by drugs was more aware of what the soul might face when death eventually took hold. Certainly, nurses and doctors who ministered to the dying before the era of modern drugs and life-supporting devices saw scenes of horror and others of sweetness and peace.

"Where was the peace of God?" Alberto asked the bishop when he saw his mother pass. Catholics who believe their church seek to be anointed and given the last rites. An attending priest can offer the communion wafer and hear confession. Does the then dying Catholic have an assurance of going to heaven? Sadly, none of them do. Mother Teresa confessed she did not know where her soul would go. Pope John Paul II's corpse has a look of terror on its face, and sometimes the best morticians can't always correctly fix the facial muscles. It is not easy to fix every corpse with a smile or semi-grin when the vast majority of those who die each day go to

hell. Catholics, not all, seek comfort from Mary and repeat the "Hail Mary" prayer which concludes with: "holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death, Amen." Isn't that sad? Calling upon a dead, Jewish woman whose body became worm food like ours will become—how tragic is that?

"There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked" (Isa. 48:22).

Growing up among Italian and Irish Catholics (my mom was a German Lutheran), all I heard when a dead person was spoken about was, "May his/her soul rest in peace." Even notorious Mafia killers were the recipients of such kind sentiments. America is a great country. Haven't you noticed that all the dead, especially celebrities and religious figures, go to heaven? Who ever went to a funeral where the preacher or priest was bold enough to say that the deceased was burning in hell? I'm sick of hearing that so-and-so went on to his or her reward. Now if I know the deceased was genuinely born again, only then can I rejoice. Folks want peace in this life, peace in death, and peace by believing the souls of their loved ones got a harp and a crown and their own puffy, white cloud on which to float. By God's grace only, those who believe God's word have gotten light to escape the vanities of the mind that grip the unsaved with false hope and demonic lies.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

As a Catholic, I was a slave to superstition and religious quackery; God's word set me free. Father Alberto Rivera went on to find the peace

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Bookstore staff has gone back into its archives and now is happy to announce the availability of recordings of Bad Attitude Baptist Blowouts all the way back to 1985. Please note these recordings are available as *digital downloads only*. Just go to our website, www.kjv1611.org, click on the Digital Downloads button on the left of the screen, and then click on Blowout Sermons and Music from the drop-down selection.

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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his mother did not find. He was a bold witness for Jesus Christ and a great enemy of Romanism.

My Jewish friends in New York, those with whom I went to college and those with whom I worked, seemed to enjoy Christmas. Gentiles seemed more friendly at that time of year. Nevertheless, those Jews viewed Jesus as a failure in that He did not bring the kingdom back to Israel. Peace to a Jew is when the Gentile world stops hating them and treats them like equals. Jews look at history (European) and see Catholics and Protestants and Orthodox, all supposed followers of Jesus, killing each other for centuries. Moslems, helplessly trying to defend the violence of Islam, point to the religious wars among so-called Christians even as recently as the riots in Northern Ireland some thirty years ago. Hindus and Moslems kill each other in India. Religion never brings peace, and as death approaches, the soul of a lost person that is not drugged becomes uneasy. Soon, that soul will experience terror. The peace the religion seemed to offer is nowhere to be found.

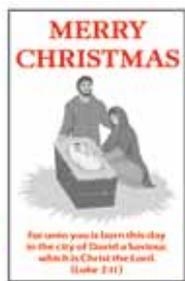
God gave this sin-cursed planet a kiss of peace that first Christmas in Bethlehem. That gift of love was found among animals in a stable with all the accompanying smells and other things that come from beasts. What a place to find peace. But there He was with the ability to bring peace to Israel. He came to fulfill the promise of the Father. He didn't fail; His nation did. That failure of His own people to receive Him opened the door to the Gentiles. I got in that open door, and so did you if you are really born again.

Over 2,000 Christmas days have come and gone with world peace nowhere in sight. This world will finally see peace not so long from now. It will be forced upon the nations that survive the wrath of God. As every parent of a rebellious child knows, it often takes a good whipping to bring peace. This planet needs peace.

"But my God shall supply ALL YOUR NEED according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19).

Christians are encouraged by embracing that promise, and they should be, but what is conveniently forgotten is that sometimes you need a good beating in order to get to where God wants you to be. Our need for peace on earth will be met after the nations get a good whipping and our God receives the glory that is due Him. Until then, **"Merry Christmas,"** and **"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus"** (Rev. 22:20).

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