

The Remnant

*“Even so then at this
present time also there
is a remnant according to
the election of grace.”
Romans 11.5*

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THE ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION OF ALL THINGS

The historic Baptists have always contended for the complete and unconditional sovereignty of Almighty God over all of his creation. On page twenty of *The Remnant* the reader will find the *Statement of Principles* which serve as the guide for the writings contained within its pages. Each and every one of the fifteen principles listed are filled with the truth that Jehovah has revealed to his people. These truths are most precious to those blessed to receive them.

Articles number three and four in this statement serve to impress upon us the power and sovereignty of the Most High God over all that he has created and governs. The supreme will of the Three In One God is absolute, independent, complete within himself, and unchangeable, for it is not based or conditioned upon anything outside of God himself. Without him nothing could be. “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created (Revelation 4.11).”

When all causes within the sight and comprehension of man are exhausted there remains only one supreme first cause. The will of God is the first of these and all other causes are set in motion by his will. Again, when man has ascended in his thoughts to the will of God, he can go no higher. God is surely the great First Cause of all other causes. “But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doeth (Job 23.13).”

The will of God we might say is the beginning point of every other thing that has ever occurred in all of creation and history, right down to this very moment in time. If we could slip away from our temporal world and enter the realm of eternity it might be possible for us to see that all things in eternity, as well as all things in time, flow from the sovereign will of Jehovah. The occurrence of every incident is the bringing to pass of the will of God. Predestination or foreordination is the will of God his determination or decree of what shall come to pass. “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will (Ephesians 1.11).”

The First Cause

For man to comprehend certain concepts he must first reduce those things into factors or expressions that his feeble, finite mind can understand. For man to attempt to comprehend the immensity of something like the will of the Supreme, Almighty, Incomprehensible Creator of the universe he must break this idea down into words and concepts that he can grasp.

The limited comprehension of man has distorted and perverted the unlimited attributes of the Great God of Creation. Try as we may, frail humanity can only *attempt* to understand the being and ways of an infinite God. The will of God may be perhaps best thought of in terms of that which God has not been pleased to reveal to man, his **secret will**. “The secret things belong unto the LORD our God...(Deuteronomy 29.29).”

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Contents

The Absolute Predestination of All Things by Elder Bruce Atkisson.....	1
A Discussion on the Resurrection, Part 2 Elder Stanley Phillips and an Inquirer.....	8
Postscript to the Resurrection Discussion by Inquirer.....	13
God Is Not the Author of Sin by Elder Woodrow W. Hudson.....	14
Worship, Part I by Elder C. C. Morris.....	15

(Continued from page 1)

Those things that God has made known in his written word and by his Spirit to mankind are called God's **revealed will**. These are the things with which man is to be chiefly concerned. "...but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law (Deuteronomy 29.29)."

These terms should never be understood to express two different and distinct wills of God because they certainly do not. Just as the phrase "Three In One" does not mean three separate Gods, but seeks only to express an idea in the terminology of man. Just as there is one God, there is also only one will of God.

When God is pleased to manifest his will to mankind through the word of prophecy or the works of his providence, it becomes his revealed will. As God is unchangeable and his will is within him and unconditional, it follows that he does not have to alter his will in any way. His omnipotence and omniscience insure that, though all things change in his creation, he himself never changes nor do any of his attributes. The will of God is eternal as well as immutable.

All things created by God are subject to his sovereign will. If one thing can be named that God did not create, whether spiritual beings such as angels, or mankind, animals, plant life, the weather, etc., then he might not exercise control over it. However, this is a silly notion because God certainly has created all things and governs everything by the word of his power. "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will

in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou (Daniel 4.35)?”

All things regarding grace and salvation proceed from the sovereign will of Jehovah. “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will (Ephesians 1.3-11).”

All things pertaining to life and godliness are blessings from God according to the good pleasure of his will. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us (Romans 8.28ff)?”

The experiential children of God love to contemplate the mercy and goodness of God toward them. They are often made to wonder why such a holy and righteous being would have any mercy toward such a corrupt and sinful race. They are enabled to rejoice, from time to time, when God blesses them with spiritual insights into his wonderful redemption in Christ Jesus. Truly his grace toward sinful man is amazing.

What about sin?

There are many of the children of God who love to give all the praise and honor to the High and Lofty One that inhabits eternity whose name is Holy, but recoil in shock and disgust at the thought of a righteous and merciful God having any dealings with evil or sin. However, these same people who are horrified that God’s holiness may in some way be diminished, if he indeed has a purpose in the sin and iniquity that occurs in the world, continue to contend that he is the Sovereign Ruler of all creation. This position is inconsistent. He is either Lord over all, or not at all.

We will now briefly examine some positions concerning the relation that Jehovah has to evil and sin in the universe.

First, we would consider the judgments of God upon those in the world. The judgments of God which consists of various punishments, chastenings, and afflictions are certainly by the will of God. Upon his elect children, they are appointed for correction and instruction for their good and thus are gracious in their design and purpose.

The elect are never punished by the Lord, but are chastised by the hand of their loving and gracious heavenly Father for their correction, instruction, and maturity while in this temporal life.

These chastenings from the Lord are all determined in regard to the means, duration, effect, and final result. All things that occur in nature, providence, and grace to the elect are so that they may grow in the grace and knowledge of their Lord Jesus Christ. “But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen (2 Peter 3.13).”

The children of God are not to lose hope or feel cast away because of these afflictions and chastisements, for they are for their good. Though the correction of the Lord is certainly not a thing to rejoice in at the time, in due season it becomes a thing most cherished.

“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 (Hebrews 12.11).” The Lord’s chastening is a portion of the saint’s experience and produces the good works of God in them. Please read article number ten of *The Remnant’s* statement of principles.

Those whom God has freely chosen to withhold the spiritual knowledge of himself, and determined not to bestow upon them his saving grace, he most certainly punishes for their sins and acts of iniquity. This punishment proceeds from the will of Jehovah as the righteous judge of all creation.

As an act of his sovereign will, God has chosen to reject and withhold grace from a certain portion of mankind. This is known in theological terms as *reprobation* and is designed for the glory of God. God is the Judge of all the earth and views these persons not chosen in Christ from eternity as subjects of his creation, and rules and reigns over them accordingly.

As righteous ruler it is his sovereign will and right to judge those not redeemed by the blood of the Lamb by sending temporal judgments upon them. These judgments consist not only of calamities (tornadoes, floods, earthquakes, war, etc.), but disease, injuries, and even death (murder, suicide, unintentional death). "And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD slew him (Genesis 38.7)."

Again we find, "Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him. And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband (Acts 5.4-10)."

Such are the judgments of God upon sinful men who are not redeemed by the Surety and Sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The question for some remains, is God the cause of sin? Since the will of God is the First Cause of all causes, then we must honestly and sincerely say that he must be. I realize by making this statement that this writer will be vilified by many. Many writers and

preachers of the past have been vilified by others because of this stand, so the writer is in good company. Now we shall, God willing, elaborate on this subject more fully.

Sin could not exist if it were the will of God that it should not. Therefore it is the will of God that sin does indeed exist. Since God has a purpose in everything that exists and takes place, he must surely have a purpose, though unfathomable and often hidden from the understanding of man, in the existence of sin.

The Lord has created everything to fulfill his eternal purpose. "The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil (Proverbs 16.4)."

By definition, sin is the transgression of the law of God. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law (1 John 3.4)." The Holy Scriptures, which are the only inspired word of God and his revealed will for man, are the only rule of faith and practice. All the oldest and best statements of faith among the historic Baptists declare this to be true.

As stated earlier in this article, the revealed will of God is the standard of obedience for mankind. It speaks to both Jew and Gentile. For the elect it is the savor of life unto life, but for the reprobate the word of God is the savor of death unto death, though they know it not.

Man stands accountable to his Creator and God, to follow the precepts recorded in the Scriptures of Eternal Truth. Though sin has corrupted man to such an extent that he is neither desirous nor capable of obedience to the commands of God, he remains under obligation and is accountable to his Creator for the same.

It has often been said that, though a man owes a million dollars to a bank, and he is unable or unwilling to pay, he is accountable for it still.

Though through the secret will of God all things operate, the revealed will of God is the rule by which man is to live. Murder is forbidden by the law and the gospel, yet murders take place every day. Bearing false witness against or lying about our neighbor is against God's word, but this one is commonly broken. To man these transgressions are forbidden. The conclusion to which we must come is that they must be the will of God because they do take place.

It is the **secret will** of God that they should occur because he has a purpose and design in their coming to pass, as in the case of Joseph and his family. "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive (Genesis 50.20)." Man acts upon the evil and corrupt impulses of his own sinful heart to fulfill his terrible desires. He is not aware that in so doing he fulfills the design of a sovereign God. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain (Acts 2.23)."

Man lives each day thinking that he is in complete control of his destiny, safe in his knowledge that he is the seeming master of his fate. His much acclaimed free will makes him a sovereign creature in his own mind, and that of much of the world. He fulfills the lust of the flesh, makes all decisions in regard to his daily plans of life, never conscious that he lives, and moves, and acts, all within the designs of the awesome Master of the universe. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being...(Acts 17.28)."

The Ancient of Days designs that all created things should be to the praise of his glorious grace. Sinful man only believes that he fulfills his own selfish will. The elect often are unaware of the purpose of God in their lives and their daily actions. Though they are capable of committing grievous sins at times, God is able to take the worst and make the best of them. This is incomprehensible to the minds of puny man, but we must know that God is able to accomplish all things even through such weak and sinful vessels as his children. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose (Romans 8.28)."

This writer does not believe that the holy and righteous God, who is represented throughout the Bible to be a hater of sin and iniquity, is the author or approver of sin in man. Since sin is the transgression of the law of Jehovah, it is impossible for God to be charged with violating the law he has given to his creatures. God is always declared to be perfectly righteous in all his ways. "The LORD is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works (Psalms 145.17)."

The Bible records that Adam was made free of transgression but evidently capable of sinning against his creator. "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath

made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions (Ecclesiastes 7.29)." Adam was not under the compulsion of God to disobey his command. All the circumstances were determined by the Lord; even the serpent that tempted our first parents was present by the will of God. The Lord neither compelled Adam to, nor restrained him from, disobedience to his command in the garden. The man simply followed the impulses of his heart within the circumstances in which he found himself.

These desires and actions were in contradiction to the revealed will of God. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren (James 1.13-16)."

The proof that the fall of man was the will of God is that it occurred just as it did. As God works all things after the counsel, or decree, of his own will, the fall came to pass by the will of God.

As stated previously, sin was to play a major part in the purpose of God. Therefore sin must be introduced into the universe by some means. Again, it was the will of the All Wise God that sin should enter the world for the glory of God. Without sin there could be no redemption. In no greater way is the grace and mercy of God demonstrated to man than in the redemption provided by God in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. The secret will of God determined and designed all things related to the entrance of sin into the world, yet he did not compel Adam to disobey him. The will, decree, foreknowledge, and providence of God caused everything to occur just as it did.

God does not force man to sin, but man operates completely from his fallen corrupt nature in his actions. God is pleased not to prevent it, but rather restrains the evil of man within the designs of, and for his own purpose. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain (Psalm 76.10)." If it is done in time, it was decreed from eternity to take place. Man acts freely within the concrete bounds of the will, providence, and purpose of God.

In our weak way we make these observations upon the workings of God. This writer is fully aware that

these are only attempts to comprehend the ways of an incomprehensible Being. The systems of theology formulated by man are only feeble attempts at understanding the being, character, workings, and truths of God. We believe all of these systems and schemes fall infinitely short of determining the essence and actions of the One Supreme God. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out (Romans 11.33)!"

The will of God is his desire of what he wishes accomplish. The end, or that which God shall ultimately accomplish, is his purpose. The question may be asked, if the will of God is the beginning and the purpose of God is the end, by what means does God put his will into action and accomplish his purpose? The answer is by his decrees or predestination (foreordination) and his providence.

Predestination

The best scriptural definition of the word predestination is *to mark out, limit, or determine before*. For God to decree or predestinate something is for him to determine from eternity who, what, when, where, how, and even why someone, some thing, or some event shall be. In this decree all the circumstances surrounding the person, thing, or event are included. This decree is totally and completely (absolutely) certain to be just as God desires. God's decrees are based upon his almighty, immutable, perfect, and eternal will.

The foreknowledge of God is based upon the will and decree of God. He desires a thing, determines every circumstance surrounding it, and in his own good time brings it to pass, and this all from eternity. His causing it to occur in time is his providence. The workings of God such as his will, decree, foreknowledge, and purpose cannot and must not be divided or separated. We only observe these things in a particular order so that we may better understand them. Since man is a finite creature of time, he can only understand things in such a manner.

Well might we say that the foreknowledge of God is based upon the predestination of God. He knows that certain things shall come to pass because he has decreed or predestinated that they shall be just that way and no other. Rightly speaking, we may say that with the Eternal God all things are open to his omniscient

mind. "...all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do (Hebrews 4.13)." There is no past, present, or future with him for he himself is outside of linear time for he is, "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy (Isaiah 57.15)." All things with God are ever present, and ever known.

His predestination and foreknowledge are not based upon anything in time. God is eternal; thus all of his works are eternal. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world (Acts 15.18)."

If he based any of his works upon his creatures and their actions, this would imply that there was something that he did not know or had not considered from eternity. Since it is declared in scripture that "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning (James 1.17)," we must stress that God is not conditional nor does he ever change.

The eternal predestination of God reaches forth to establish all things that come to pass in the universe. The world and all things in it, and the circumstances of them were brought to pass by the decree of God. They were created and established by the ordination of God from eternity, according to his good pleasure and will.

The heavens and the earth and all things in nature with all their circumstances and effects were brought forth by the word of God's eternal decree. Winds and weather, rivers and oceans, the sun, moon, stars, and planets all exist by the word that has gone forth out of his mouth.

Every individual from Adam to the last person born on earth, owe their existence to the firm decree of Almighty God. Every thing that befalls the entire population of the earth is due to the predestination of Jehovah God.

Wealth or poverty, affliction or prosperity, the times of birth and of death, and every other condition and circumstance of life is owing to the determinate counsel of God. All earthly, natural, temporal concerns are in the hands of God and established by his firm, all wise decree.

The eternal plan of redemption from before the foundation of the world unto the time and circumstances of the birth of Christ, the afflictions of his life,

and the circumstances of his death, burial, and resurrection were all determined by the will and word of Jehovah.

“But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law (Galatians 4.4).” All the sufferings of his sacrificial death: “The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done (Acts 4.26-28).”

The election of the children of God in Christ from all eternity is the result of the foreordination of God. “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will (Ephesians 1.4-5).”

The reprobation or rejection of the remainder of the human race is also the direct result of God’s eternal decree. “What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory (Romans 9.22-23).”

The Conditionalist Primitive Baptists have essentially reduced predestination down to the decree of election. They use the two words synonymously, while denying the reprobation of the non-elect. “Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth (Romans 9.18).”

Every action of man and every thought that he can conceive is established by the absolute decree of God. The will of man is not free in the sense of the modern use of the word. When one speaks of free will this day and age, it is readily assumed that he is speaking of the total independence of a person to think and act without any influence or motivation outside of that person. This absolutely cannot be the case with man. Man is influenced by a myriad of factors and circumstances upon him and around him constantly. A person might change their mind about some simple thing a dozen times between breakfast and lunch. God is the one

sovereign independent being in the universe, and there is only one God. His will and purpose shape all created things while he himself is affected by none. The works of God cannot be frustrated or defeated in any way. “For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back (Isaiah 14.27)?”

Summary

In summation, the most wise, sovereign, and eternal workings of God spring from within himself to establish and obtain his most glorious purpose. It has well been said by saints of old that the single purpose of God displayed in all of his works is the manifestation of his glory. Contained within himself is everything sufficient to bring about and achieve his wondrous goal. These things begin with his will or desire to accomplish his purpose, and are brought to pass by his determining exactly how, and by what means it shall be brought to fruition. The working out and actual occurrence of these things in time is his Divine Providence, in order that his purpose be fulfilled.

Again we emphasize that the order of these things are formulated by man for his better understanding of the high and mysterious ways of his God. We certainly believe that the will and decrees of God are contained within himself and are one with his eternal being. For man to completely understand such a being is impossible.

The will of God is indeed the first cause of all causes and this will is immutable, as are all the works of God. The eternal decree or predestination of God determines who, what, where, when, why, and how all things whatsoever come to pass. His knowledge of all things is based upon his determining all things. His Almighty Divine power brings what he has determined, to come to pass in order to fulfill his eternal will and accomplish his great and glorious purpose.

This ultimate purpose is the glory of a righteous, just, and merciful God. “That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Philippians 2.10-11).”

We shall end this article with a verse from the Lord Jesus to remind us that it is no detached, cold, impersonal force of nature that moves all things, but a sovereign, loving, caring Heavenly Father who

causes and works all things in accordance with his eternal, sovereign, unchanging will.

“Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows (Matthew 10.29-31).” May he bless and keep you, dear reader.

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DISCUSSION ON THE RESURRECTION PART 2

Being a continuation from *The Remnant*
of November-December, 2003,
of Elder Phillips' and Inquirer's remarks

Hereafter, the style of the discussion between Elder Phillips and “Inquirer” changes. More in dialogue form than the exchange has been to this point, Elder Phillips intersperses his own answers and comments with his Inquirer's questions and statements. The Inquirer's remarks are shown [by bold type in square brackets] as shown here.—Editor

[Inquirer: Further evidence of the fact that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven is written in the book of Genesis, 3.19: “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” (And it does not say, for a short period of time.) And again, in Ecclesiastes 3.19-20: “For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.” And certainly we do not believe that the

beast is raised, and yet the Scripture says that man hath no preeminence over the beast. To my understanding, these verses pertain to the natural man and the beast as formed of the dust of the earth. The way in which man is superior to the beast is that he possesses a soul, and that is the portion of the humanity of man that will inhabit heaven and immortal glory, in the glorified body, the image of the heavenly, which is like unto the glorified body of Christ.]

Reply of Elder Phillips: Occasionally one advancing the annihilation of the body as a ground to deny the future resurrection will turn to Solomon's philosophical works in Ecclesiastes and Proverbs. Their choice passage is as follows: “For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath' so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.”

I know our correspondent does not wish to take that text as far as one could take it. But, if it is used to deny the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians and the bodily resurrection of our changed, but previous, vile, weak, and corruptible bodies, then this passage can equally be used to promote the annihilation of both body, soul and spirit. For Solomon says “that man hath no preeminence above the beast,” and both “go unto one place,” and “all turn to dust again.” Taken in an absolute sense, that would be the end of both!

But, Solomon is promoting a particular lesson. That is, that all “beneath the sun” (that is, on earth) is “vanity and vexation of spirit.” I believe the lesson is given that we may be humbled before the Lord, and is designed that we not be puffed up in the flesh. But be that as it may, the next verse should not be left out: to wit, “Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?” (Verse 21). It appears to me, that the point our correspondent is making is that the spirit or soul of man goes downward to the earth, and stays there until the non-resurrection event, when it will then go to God. (I fully admit that I may be wrong on that particular, but that is the way I understand his position.)

He wrote: “**Further evidence of the fact that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven is written in the book of Genesis, 3.19: ‘In**

the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.’ (And it does not say, for a short period of time.)” All of us who believe that there is a resurrection of the dead believe this is so. Taking both texts together, it is certain if you take a gun and blow a man’s head off, and then blow his dog’s head off, “under the sun,” the results are exactly alike. Common observation is that this is so. One does not need faith, or a revelation from God, to ascertain this natural observation. But one does need both to believe that the “man’s spirit goes upward, while the beast’s spirit goes downward,” and to believe of the man’s flesh—of which Job said, “And though AFTER my skin worms destroy THIS body, yet in MY FLESH shall I see God: whom I shall see FOR MYSELF, and MINE EYES SHALL BEHOLD, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me (Job 19.26-27)” —“it is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body (1 Corinthians 15.42-44).” Only faith can embrace this glorious revelation. No atheist, unbeliever, communist, worldling, etc. can truly believe it. It is to the carnal mind absolutely preposterous!

Our friendly correspondent says of the text in Ecclesiastes 3.19-20, “And certainly we do not believe that the beast is raised, and yet the Scripture says that man hath no preeminence over the beast.” Right here, he must stop. If this is taken literally of those things “above the sun,” his problem is greater than he can bear. “Under the sun,” it is so by the consideration of Solomon’s observation and in his context. But out of his context, it is not true.

As Paul wrote, using it as an argument, “But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visited him? Thou made him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands,” etc. (Hebrews 2.6-7). Paul used that text to prove the superlativeness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Lord said, “Is *{sic}* not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head

are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows (Matthew 10.29-31).”

This then is apparent: Solomon is speaking as Paul did when Paul said, “I speak as a man.” But in reality, from God’s viewpoint, man is worth more than many sparrows, and thus has preeminence over them. And, in nature, we know that this is so. It is evident all around us that man rules this world as a viceroy under God’s sovereignty. And if man, made up of “body, soul, and spirit,” is greater than the beasts and sparrows, then he will be resurrected, while they are not. The whole of Paul’s argument in 1 Corinthians 15 is to this very point: Man will be CHANGED, and man will be RESURRECTED or “raise up again from the dead.”

The argument that “flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven” does not negate all the other arguments Paul put forth to establish the fact that he will be “raised” on the last day. As he is in his flesh, the man has no inheritance in that kingdom, but this does not disannul the fact that in Christ the saints “have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will: that we should be to the praise of His glory (Ephesians 1.11).” We obtained that glory by divine adoption, as presented earlier. We have “received the Spirit of adoption” (Romans 8:15). Then Paul adds: “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, WAITING FOR THE ADOPTION, TO WIT, THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODY (verse 23).” So while Adam’s fleshly offspring have not a sonship claim on the kingdom of heaven, as adopted and predestinated to it, they become heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. As Christ arose from the dead bodily, with a glorified and changed body, so the members of His body likewise “will be like Him” and “see Him as He is, and be satisfied.”

From: Stanley Phillips, 3 September 03

Subject: Observations regarding answers to queries and Elder Trott’s article.

In looking over the queries to my response to one inquirer relative to what part of man was born again, I noticed that while I gave an exposition of the issues, I did not directly answer the queries from “Inquirer.” I apologize. I don’t want to be as so many elders, that when asked a simple question, carry you all over the

backside of the Sinai desert, and never answer the question. To do this, and let the readers know what question of **Inquirer's** I'm answering, I will place his in brackets [], and mine outside of the brackets.

[Question: What does the "new creature" consist of, if none of the "old man" is regenerated, born again or changed, but simply something added to him?]

Answer: The "new creature" is the spiritual man, that is begotten directly of God by the Holy Spirit in divine quickening. He is referred to in the scriptures as that "which is born of the Spirit is spirit," the "new man," and the "inner man." He is spiritual, and hence is not marked by the characteristics of natural man; but possesses, and demonstrates characteristics of God in man: i.e., He has a spiritual love for God that moves him in obedience to God's commands; he discerns spiritual things; he loves the brethren with an unique love totally different from that of his natural affections; he loves the truth of free grace, and hates freewillism; his understanding is enlightened; he knows the truth when he hears it, before he ever heard it. He is in subjection to the commandments of God; and he has no confidence in the flesh—either his, or others'. He is a follower of God and not of man: he needs no gurus. God says it, he believes it, and that settles it; and therein he is by dictionary definition, "a hardshell."

[Question: What is the "whole man" now, of what does he consist?] Look at anyone around you. That is what you see—the "whole man." Of what does he consist? Answer: the natural body, the natural soul, and the natural spirit that all men possess, elect or reprobate.

[Does the "old man" (body, soul and spirit), which has not been changed, enter into heaven with the new creature which has been added to him, with all of the sin and corruption of his natural state?]

Answer: The question is not asked appropriately for an answer. Nothing of the "old man" enters heaven unchanged. "This corruptible must put on incorruption; this mortal must put on immortality." Again, "We shall be changed." However, I think I know what the question is designed to draw out, and here is my answer. The "old man" goes into the ground, and there he decomposes. His spirit and soul returns to God who gave it, which are united to the "new creature" and there rest with God until the resurrection. At which time God brings "ten thousands of His saints," and the

bodies of His people are reconstructed in true holiness and righteousness, and united with their souls, are forever with the Lord. The corruptible will have put on incorruption, and the mortal shall have put on immortality, and they will be like their Lord and will be satisfied.

[Question: If not, what has been done for the old man, who is lost and undone in his natural state?]

I need not comment here after commenting above. I will add, much has been done for the old man, if that old man is one of God's elect. He is blessed with all spiritual blessing in Christ from the foundation of the world; he is a subject of a kingdom prepared for the saints from the foundation of the world; he is blessed with the indwelling Spirit of the Creator God; he has an extraordinary power within him that restrains him from all sins not covered by the blood of Christ; he is preserved in Christ Jesus and called to sainthood; and he is blessed immeasurably by the presence of the Holy Spirit in such a manner, that he (the old man) can also rejoice when his spirit rejoices in the hope of eternal salvation.

He is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last day. He has been "born from above," and is blessed to be in that number of the **its** that shall be changed in the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15 et al). He is blessed to be able to walk circumspectly before his brethren in the church or kingdom, and "glorify God in his body," which is the Lord's. He is adopted into God's family.

[Question: What did Christ come to the earth for, if not to seek and to save that which was lost, which was the old man, to save him there must, of necessity, be a change in him, from his fleshly state of sin and corruption, because the scriptures state (I Corinthians 15:49) "But as we have born the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly" and surely the old man is not in this image here in this time world.]

Answer: I don't know what the question is here. So I'll just make comments on the passage. Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost, all of him, and not just his "soul"; and this He did two thousand years ago. The Spirit in time brings this "life and immortality" to the "old man" by the indwelling of the Spirit in the "new man," or "new creature." And the gospel brings it to light to him. The old man is not now changed

by this experience of grace in his nature; but the presence of the indwelling Spirit does in fact make him change in his outward deportment, and enables him (rather: compels him) to walk in righteousness, bringing him into subjection to the principles of righteousness added to him.

[Question: This being true, verse 50 says, “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” If this be true, then the body of flesh does not experience the resurrection, and the natural spirit of man has no part in the resurrection, for the Holy Spirit is the inspiration of the new creature from its birth.]

Answer: The argument does not support the conclusion. In fact, the conclusion goes directly against the very argument the Apostle is using to prove the contrary. I quote from Paul in 1 Corinthians: “It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body,” verse 44. He is talking of the same “it” that is sown that is also raised. So the conclusion is without foundation in the argument. Again in verse 51, the following verse after the one quoted in the query says: “Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.”

Let’s finish this quote in case someone has not read all the context: “In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead” (what is dead? The old man, or the new man, or just the soul of man?) “shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” Why would the “new man” need changing?

Why would the spiritual man need changing? What does need changing? Why, of course, the one “sown in corruption”! And he proves it thusly: “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality,” and when this is done in the resurrection, “death is swallowed up in victory.” The last would not be true if the dead did not rise. And in this change, it did not take place because the old man inherited these blessings. He received it only because he was adopted into the same family in which he was spiritually born into from above.

[Question: The Apostle Paul lamented, “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” His hope was to be delivered from this fleshly body of death.]

Answer: And in the resurrection of his changed and immortal, incorruptible body, he will achieve it!

In fact, he said: “Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?” They are still around today, and what he said has never yet convinced them. They just will not have it. It seems so ridiculous to believe the dead shall rise! “But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ: whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.” That is powerful argument.

If you do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, according to Paul you are yet in your sins, and everyone that believes and has “fallen asleep in Christ are perished,” verse 13-18.

Paul has never written more on one single subject in one section of scripture than on this subject. Why is it so difficult to be believed?

[What is the soul of man, and how is it involved in the plan of salvation of the saints?]

First, there is no “plan of salvation.” Men “plan,” but God purposes.

Second, and to the point. I understand that the soul is an integral element of a living man, that makes him a rational creature, accountable to His Maker, and different from all other creatures that came from God’s hands among the animal kingdom. The word “soul” is often used interchangeably with the “spirit” of man; and it often is used for the “body” of man, or the “person.”

The “soul that sins, it shall die,” I understand as referring to the man himself. But regardless as to how it is used, the soul or spirit of man is possessed by elect and reprobate alike in their natural state. “Who knoweth the things of the spirit, save the spirit of man that is in man?”

[Question: Is it quickened, or changed in the new man, or in the resurrection?]

Answer: the natural soul nor spirit is quickened to life until the resurrection. It is not changed, per se, in quickening, but in the resurrection it, and the body and spirit are all (as one) regenerated, changed, and resurrected, and become one in essence with that which is spiritual, or immortal.

[Question: Or, is it (he speaks of the soul here) the one part of the man that exist in both realms as the same entity, ...]

Answer: all of the man will exist in both realms.

[(Inquirer, continuing:) ...the part of man that experiences the life of the natural realm, with all of the sin and corruption, and also the life of the new creature in Christ, realizing how, and from whence his salvation came, and which is able to worship God because of his grand and glorious deliverance from his former state of sin and corruption?]

Answer: And why should we accept the premise that the natural soul can enjoy this, while the natural body, changed and fashioned like unto His glorious body, cannot? Again, the man that is saved by the shed blood of Christ is the same man that will be in heaven and immortal glory, changed and glorified—body, soul and spirit. It takes all three for a man to be a man. Otherwise he is a dead inanimate object, or a homeless ghost floating around somewhere.

[Statement: If the above interpretation be correct, concerning the resurrection, only the soul of the natural man, which is the very essence of his being an individual, will inherit heaven and immortal glory.]

Answer: The {Inquirer's} interpretation denies all that Paul wrote in defense of the bodily resurrection of the dead in both Romans and in 1 Corinthians. It ignores divine adoption of our bodies, it denies the redemption of our bodies, and most of all, it denies the resurrection of the dead. For the soul is NOT left in the grave. It never gets to the grave. It returns to God when the spirit leaves the body. Only the body can be "raised up." And ALL that Paul said is contradicted. If so, then nothing corruptible is made incorruptible, nothing mortal is made immortal, nothing weak is made powerful, and it assumes Paul was wasting a good bit of time writing on the subject. Hence, it denies the inspiration of the Bible itself.

[Statement: It (the soul is still the subject here) will indwell the spiritual body, which is like unto the glorified body of Christ, with the Holy Spirit.]

Answer: Where did this "spiritual body" come from? Paul says "IT" is sown "a natural body and IT is raised a spiritual body." Is Christ's body that went into the tomb the same that came out of it, glorified, but with the nail prints and the wound in his side still presently the same? I think so. So why so much

wiggling to leave our body in the tomb and find another one somewhere else? This one is ready made, waiting in hope of the resurrection, so why abandon it?

[Statement: This is the man that will be finally resurrected, a fit subject for the climes of glory.]

I hope not. I still want to go there too!

[Otherwise, there is nothing done for the man as he exists in this world, the man who Jesus came to seek and to save.]

Answer: I can't follow this reasoning. It appears that is what I should say, because the man Jesus came to seek and to save was the old man! "YE must be born again," He said. YE who? The man, body, soul, and spirit, and this man is the child of the resurrection, changed and glorified, and made like unto the Son of God.

[Statement: Elder Trott mentioned this subject in his article regarding the soul of man; he said, "For I cannot believe that whatever is not born again of God can enter the kingdom of heaven to participate in the glory of Christ. Whilst what ever is born of God through Christ, the only begotten of the Father, must partake with him in glory. Hence IF I BELIEVED that only the souls of persons were the subject of regeneration and the new birth, I must believe that only their souls enter heavenly glory...."]

Answer: I concur with Trott's conclusion, but I do not conclude that what is quoted here denies the resurrection, nor accepts the premise that only the souls of men go to heaven. I did not understand Trott to be denying the resurrection of the dead. He put an "IF I believed...." It is strange that two men can read Paul and one see a bodily resurrection, and the other deny the same; or one can read Trott, and conclude that he believed a "man must be born again" and not just his soul; and the other understands him to believe that only a soul goes to glory. Strange, strange world indeed.

[Statement: To my understanding, this is true, because flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, and the natural spirit certainly does not, so, unless the soul, as it is, enters heaven, nothing has been done for the sinner]

Answer: I covered this subject in my last e-mail. Flesh and blood does not inherit the kingdom of God, neither here, or above; but for the elect, they—their whole persons—are adopted into God's family also,

and upon this ground, they “shall be changed.” Again, I cannot see that if only his soul gets to glory, that nothing was done for him on earth. That defies my reasoning ability. It appears that if only his soul got there, that nothing Christ did helped the poor man out for “whom Christ came to seek and to save.”

[Statement: The soul is the very essence of his being.]

Answer. I have no way to refute this or to confirm it. It is a philosophical point not biblically expressed. I see much more of the bodies of men than their souls. In fact, I’ve never seen one’s soul. It certainly is not the most dominant element in his earthly existence. I would be hard pressed to empirically prove man had a soul. I believe it because the Bible teaches it; but I could never, outside of my faith, prove it to anyone.

[Statement: and it is not changed in the new birth.]

Answer, The querist may not have meant this as it came on my e-mail. Or I don’t get his argument here. I fully agree that he is right, but I don’t think he is agreeing with me on the point, so it must be a misprint.

[Statement: The Spirit makes the change in the man when it enters the man and dwells therein.]

Answer: that is the reason I think it is a misprint. Most people believe that the “new birth” is when the “Spirit enters the man and dwells therein.” Maybe the querist meant that this way?? But, this view is that the man “is born over again,” which I don’t believe. I believe a man must have both a natural birth as well as a spiritual birth, but I can’t see the old man himself being born all over again.

[Statement: Then the soul and the Spirit comprise the new creature in Christ, and the body is changed in the resurrection, coming forth in the glorified image of the heavenly, which is Christ Jesus.]

Answer: I’m glad he believes this, but it seems to me to contradict much of the nonresurrection arguments in the e-mail. Just citing one, he wrote this: “If the above interpretation be correct, concerning the resurrection, only the soul of a natural man, which is the very essence of his being as an individual, will inhabit heaven and immortal glory.”

Now he has put the glorified body there too, and thus we now agree.

—Stanley C. Phillips

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POSTSCRIPT FROM INQUIRER

Just a note to clarify the impression that may be left in the mind of anyone who reads this article. There is much rhetoric, in the above, and I don’t know if I come through with my proper interpretation, or not.

I do believe in a bodily resurrection of the saints of God, the only difference that I can see regarding that is in what that difference is. Is it as it is here in time, or has it been changed, and, if so, in what way.

Elder Phillips wrote, “The whole of Paul’s argument in I Corinthians chapter 15 is to the very point: Man will be changed, and man will be resurrected or raised up again from the dead.”

I believe that the man will be changed, and will be resurrected, and one way in which I believe that it will be changed is that it will not be flesh and blood, as it existed in this life. Christ was changed, in his physical being and appearance when he came into this world as a man, given a body that he might have the sins of man imputed unto himself, and I believe that man must be changed before entering heaven, it might possibly liken unto his image before he came into this world, because he had a glorified image at that time. I don’t know what that body will be like, but it will not be as it is, here in time.

Please let us know if you found the discussion between the Inquirer and Elder Phillips to be of interest to you, and tell us if you would enjoy seeing other discussions such as this in future issues of *The Remnant*.—Editor

GOD IS NOT THE AUTHOR OF SIN

The Scriptures speak of deceiving spirits or spirits of the devil. These deceiving spirits cause one to believe that God is the author of sin. We think of this as a strange or deceiving doctrine.

The purpose of Satan is to dull the conscience; “having their conscience seared with a hot iron (1 Timothy 4.2).” This means some have no conscience, no feeling of doing bad things. The thief does not feel bad by stealing. The killer does not feel bad by killing other people. “But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived (2 Timothy 3.13).” “For many deceivers are entered into the world...(2 John 1.7).”

Those who really believe that God is the author of sin will attempt to hide their sins behind the predestination of God. “As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God (1 Peter 2.16).” “For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness; God is witness (1 Thessalonians 2.5).”

David did not attempt to hide his grievous sins behind the predestination of God. Notice his prayer in Psalm 51.1-4: “To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba. Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.”

Years ago, I heard a minister say: “It was all right for Paul to persecute the Christians because God predestinated it.” Do you see where this false or unprofitable saying would lead? Was it all right for Cain to kill Abel because God predestinated it? “Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments (Psalm 119.137).” Such ministers cause the truth to be evil spoken of. “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by

reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not (2 Peter 2.1ff).” “But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; and shall receive the reward of unrighteousness, as they that count it pleasure to riot in the day time. Spots they are and blemishes, sporting themselves with their own deceivings while they feast with you; having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children (2 Peter 2.12ff).” In connection with this, let us quote Romans 3.8: “And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.”

“And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him (Revelation 12.9).” Notice that this Scripture states that Satan deceives the **whole world**. “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world (1 John 4.1).” It takes the Spirit of God to bless us to try the spirits. At times it takes much prayer, and still we do not know if we are directed by the right Spirit or not. We only have a hope that God is directing us.

“Carried about with every wind of **doctrine** (Ephesians 4.14); “As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach **no other doctrine** (1 Timothy 1.3),” by which Paul means the *other* doctrines that are not taught by the Scriptures, as sound doctrine is: “For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is **contrary to sound doctrine** (1 Timothy 1.10).”

“For the time will come when they will not endure **sound doctrine**; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables (2 Timothy 4.3f).” “Having

itching ears” is to hear the doctrines of Satan, such as the false doctrine that “God is the author of sin.”

“But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men (Matthew 15.9).” “Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and *commandments of men*, that turn from the truth (Titus 1.14).” Let us not be asleep, but keep in mind that the commandments of men turn from the *truth*. “...the commandments and **doctrines of men**...(Colossians 2.22).” I believe that Satan is the direct source of the commandments and doctrines of men, just as well as these two Scriptures teach: “...seducing spirits and **doctrines of devils** (1 Timothy 4.1),” and “**strange doctrines** (Hebrews 13.9).”

“...intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind (Colossians 2.18); “...meaning judging of things not according to the word of God, but according to his carnal reason and the vanity of his mind, and being puffed up by his fleshly mind, he feels he has the ability to penetrate into, and find out things which were not seen and known by others.” (From John Gill.)

“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will (2 Timothy 2.25f).” Those who advocate that God is the author of sin are really opposing the truth, and they are caught in the snare of the devil.

“We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error (1 John 4.6).” Those who advocate that God is the author of sin are deceived by *the spirit of error*.

God created Satan for His own purpose. The Lord determined the fall of man before man was created. The Lord predestinated the death of Jesus before the world began. “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain (Acts 2.23).” “For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and **thy counsel determined before to be done** (Acts 4.27f).” “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the

book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13.8).”

In closing, let us understand that we cannot think or understand as the Lord does. “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts (Isaiah 55.8f).” “O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether (Psalm 139.1ff).”

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WORSHIP (PART I)

Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness (Psalm 29.2). Worship God (Revelation 19.10, 22.9).

Some of the old-timers among the Primitive Baptists used to say, “I’d rather be on the creek bank fishing, and thinking about being in church, than to be in church and thinking about being on the creek bank fishing.” It happens both ways, and most of the people of God at one time or another have probably experienced both of these situations or something similar. But, when one is so blessed, there is yet another way: It is to be in church, thinking about being in church, and worshipping God as He has revealed Himself in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

WHAT IS WORSHIP?

Worship is reverence paid to a divine being, or an act of expressing such reverence. *Reverence* is honor or respect, felt or shown (Webster).

Showing worship and *worshipping for show* are two vastly different things. One might feel a spirit of worship toward God and not show it, while another might show worship toward God and not feel it.

The works systems of worldly religions generate a false worship and a self-satisfaction to go with it: It is therefore quite possible to worship God in vain: “But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men (Matthew 15.9).” Works based on the carnal commandments of men, then, are not an acceptable form of worship.

True worship is a genuine awe toward our Creator, a meditative submission of one’s heart, soul, mind, and spirit to His majesty and power.

Worship is not thinking and planning what we can do for God, since true worship will bring a sensible realization that without Him we can do nothing. Before the spirit of worship is through with a person, he or she will be hungering and thirsting after a righteousness rooted in a loving desire for more knowledge of God and communion with Him.

“...Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me (Luke 10.38-40).” As necessary as cooking, cleaning, and other household chores are, worship is not a Martha’s bustling about the kitchen, preparing a big dinner for her guests. One can worship while doing these things, or while plowing a field, or driving an automobile, or sitting on a creek bank fishing.

Some may think of Martha’s cooking as an act of worship toward God, because she was “cooking for Jesus,” but it was not. “God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men’s hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things (Acts 17.24f).”

Service, then, is not worship of God. Physical activity around a congregation’s building is not worship. One may worship while mowing the cemetery or sweeping the building, but the mowing and sweeping, in and of themselves, are not worship. One could maintain a church’s meeting-house every day for a lifetime and hate every minute of it.

“And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away

from her.” Worship is Mary’s sitting at the feet of Jesus, content to gaze on Him and hear His gracious words. Worship is anticipating such fellowship and friendship with the Creator for all eternity.

Do not entertain the idea that Martha had rather work in the kitchen than to be with Jesus, hearing His gracious words; don’t be too critical of her. She was doing what she knew must be done. Somebody has to cook and make the beds and clean the bathrooms. There’s been many a sister in Christ who, while some of us were driving the long road home after a weekend meeting blessed of the Lord, she was washing the dishes from which we ate, and washing the bed-linens on which we slept, and lovingly preparing her guest room for her guests during the next special meeting. “And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

Worship will lead to growth in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Therein we will be given to know ourselves better as we are blessed to know Him better. Truly being with the Lord will not make one think he is better than others; it will make him see himself as worse than others. It is not comparing ourselves with Christ; it is being given first to see His perfection, His beauty, and His eternal glory and then to see our sinful selves in sharp and painful contrast to Him in His glory.

The order is always seeing Him in His glory first, before seeing oneself in contrast to Him.

This was Isaiah’s experience: “In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory...*Then* said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts (Isaiah 6.1ff).” Isaiah did not see his own sinfulness until first he saw the Lord on His throne in all His glory. Then, and only then, he saw himself, sinful, undone. This he attributes directly to—as he says, “for [meaning *because*] mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”

This was Peter's experience. "Now when He had left speaking, He said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto Him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord (Luke 5.4ff)." The natural mind of man might expect Peter to propose that Jesus and he could go into the fishing business together: "With my boat and equipment and your power, we could make a killing in the fishing industry!" but such was not at all the case. Instead of embracing Jesus in casual familiarity, trying to get closer to the source of Power-fishing, he, seeing the contrast between Jesus' glory and his own sinfulness, fell before Jesus and bid him to depart lest his own sinfulness somehow defile the Holy One before whom he knelt.

True worship knows nothing of the flippant, frothy, frivolous, buddy-buddy, giddy shallowness of modern oom-pah oom-pah religion with all its bells and whistles, frenetic eight-to-the-bar boogie-woogie jazz quartets and screaming rock bands for Jesus, nor does that crowd know anything of true worship. When any person is brought into direct face-to-face contact with the Christ of the Living God as was Peter, the result is the same for that person as it was with him: First, he saw the external miracle of the great draft of fishes. Then he saw the internal weakness, darkness, and emptiness of his own heart and soul. Then, and only *then*, "When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord (Luke 5.8)." So far from making one casually think he is part of God's inner circle of special friends, a spirit of worship will devastate the flesh as it did Peter's, with a sense of unworthiness even to be in His presence.

WORSHIP AND THE LAW OF GOD

Worship, as a love, respect, and appreciation for God should involve the realization that the law of God is not cruel. God was not unkind to give the

ten commandments and the sermon on the mount. Didn't Christ say, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath"? Just suppose for a moment that it is actually good for us, as He implied, to have one day a week of rest and worship, of meditation on God and godliness. Could it also be that avoiding the worship of false gods, idolatry, blasphemy, disrespect of one's parents, murder, adultery, thievery, lying, and covetousness might also be to our benefit, and such are not merely prohibitions God gave to man to keep him from having fun?

Worship is more than going to church to see our friends and family. Worship is more than dressing up and going on a Sunday morning to hear a *sermon* that makes us feel warm and cozy inside. Worship is at the opposite extreme from going to church out of a sense of obligation and a desire to get it over with, wondering what to do with the half-day that is left. It is more than sitting and quietly listening to the preacher but thinking with a vague dissatisfaction that you are missing a round of golf or a family get-together on a beautiful Sunday morning.

Worship is more than sitting in church thinking about how you are going to miss the noon kickoff and the first quarter of your home team's game against their arch rivals, hoping that after eating out you probably will get to see the last half.

Worship is more than going to church out of a sense of obligation or the thought of paying God back with a little of our time: "After all, He's been so good to me, I can afford to give Him a couple hours a week."

NEGATIVE: THOSE WHO ARE NOT TO BE WORSHIPED

1. ANGELS ARE NOT TO BE WORSHIPED

Angels, in the simplest sense, are messengers of God, for that is what *angel* means, a *messenger*. Yet, as mighty and mysterious as these spirit beings are, they are not to be worshiped. Being spiritual creatures, angels are of a higher order than men, with at least four divisions in the angelic hierarchy: angels, archangels (Jude 9), cherubs or cherubim (Genesis 3.24, etc.; Hebrews 9.5), and seraphs or seraphim (Isaiah 6.2, 6). In God's order of things, however, they are fellow servants of the apostles and prophets, in that *the carrying and delivering of*

God's messages is what angels, prophets, and apostles have in common. That is why ministers are *sometimes* called "angels" (Revelation 2.1, etc.). But preachers and the like are not second-cousin to the angelic order of spirit-beings. Those who insist on equating every biblical occurrence of the word "angel" with "Old Baptist Elders" do a grave disservice to themselves, their hearers, and the cause of God and truth.

When *real* angelic beings appear to men, they are so awe-inspiring that, if we are not kept from doing so, the temptation to worship them is overwhelming. Daniel, described his twice seeing the angel Gabriel in these words: "...when he came, I was afraid, and fell upon my face...And I Daniel fainted, and was sick certain days; afterward I rose up, and did the king's business; and I was astonished at the vision...(Daniel 8.17, 27)." "And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength...when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground. And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel...stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling (Daniel 10.7-11)."

When a mighty angel showed the apostle John some of the final events recorded in the Revelation, John was twice tempted to worship this angel. On both occasions, the angel quickly and firmly forbade John's worshipping him. "And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: **worship God**: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy (Rev 19.10)." "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to **worship** before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: **worship God** (Revelation 22.8f)."

Because of this natural tendency in men to worship angels, even in the prophets and apostles, Paul warned the brethren at Colosse against (among other things) worshipping angels: "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and **worshipping of angels**. . . Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh (Colossians 2.18-23)."

2. MEN ARE NOT TO BE WORSHIPED

If the heavenly angels of God are not to be worshiped, certainly His earthly messengers must not be worshiped. Peter refused to allow Cornelius to worship him. "And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man (Acts 10. 25f)."

Likewise, after they had healed a lame man, Paul and Barnabas refused to allow themselves to be worshiped at Lystra. The crowd would have sacrificed to them and worshiped them. They ran into the crowd shouting, "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein...(Acts 14.15)."

3. IDOL WORSHIP IS FORBIDDEN

If angelic beings and holy men of God are not to be worshiped, why then would anyone worship a dumb idol instead of the living and true God? "They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshiped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt (Exodus 32.8)." The reason for idolatry can only be found in the depravity inherent in each of us. "For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God (Exodus 34.14)."

If the saints do not understand this for the present, they will later. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth (John 4.24)." There are some among men, God's elect, who *must* worship Him. It is predestinated to be so; hence they *must* do so. And they *must* worship Him in spirit, as their spirits are thus blessed and taught by

the Holy Spirit who leads them into all truth. “Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you (John 16.13f).”

POSITIVE: ONLY GOD IS TO BE WORSHIPED

Worship is only due to God.

Twice we saw where the angel told John in no uncertain terms, “**Worship God** (Revelation 19.10 and 22.9).”

JESUS WAS WORSHIPED

Worship of Jesus Christ is both commended and exemplified, thereby proving He is God.

“And again, when He bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, He saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him (Hebrews 1.6).” Angels are spirit-beings, invisible to the natural eye, but visible in the spirit world where God dwells, and innumerable by human calculation. It has been said that, before the decimal system was developed, the largest number of which the ancients could conceive, and to which they could count, was 10,000. In Hebrew the word for ten thousand was *ribbow* and in Greek it was *urias*, this latter being brought over into English as the word *myriad*; it is in our dictionaries, and it means ten thousand.

Beyond a myriad of myriads (10,000 x 10,000, which is a hundred million) they had no expression except to add “and thousands of thousands,” sort of like saying “lots, and lots, and lots of...,” meaning a large, indefinite number, too large to calculate or enumerate. Thus, when Daniel saw Christ the Ancient of Days in His glory, he also saw that “thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him (Daniel 7.10). John the Revelator, who was given to see the same scene, said, “And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands (Revelation 5.11).” That is a minimum of 104 million angels.

“The four and twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for

ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created (Revelation 4.10f).” Falling down before Him expresses the attitude of worship: “...And the four and twenty elders fell down and **worshipped** Him that liveth for ever and ever (Revelation 5.14).” “Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and **worship** Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters (Revelation 14.7).” “Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and **worship** before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest (Revelation 5.4).” As a matter of observable fact, all nations have never yet come and worshiped before Him. Not even one nation of this earth has ever done so. There is a spiritual nation that has and does worship Him: “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, **an holy nation**, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light (1 Peter 2.9)”; but this is *not* what the text in Revelation 5.4 means. It means **all nations**, just exactly as it says.

(To be continued, if the Lord so wills)

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We believe these principles are, in the main, harmonious with the articles of faith published by predestinarian associations and churches of the old order of Baptists known as Primitive, Particular, or Old School Baptists the world over.

1—The eternal existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence, and perfections of Jehovah God; He has revealed Himself as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and these sacred Three are One; Jesus Christ was and is God manifest in the flesh, and in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

2—The Old and New Testaments in their original languages are the verbally inspired word of God, and they are the complete and only valid guide of faith and practice; the King James Version is the preferred English translation;

3—The will of the eternal God is the first cause of all causes;

4—The absolute predestination of all things;

5—The eternal personal election of the redeemed in Christ, before the world began, and their eternal, vital union with Him; their number is fixed, certain, and sure, and can neither be increased nor diminished; their fall in their federal head Adam into spiritual death, total deprav-

ity, and just condemnation; their utter inability to recover themselves from this fallen state;

6—The blood atonement and redemption by Jesus Christ are for the elect only, and are both efficacious and effectual in accomplishing the will and purpose of God to reconcile His people unto Himself;

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8—The final preservation, perseverance, and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace alone;

9—No works are good works other than those which God Himself has so designated; none of the works called good are left up to men to perform or not, at the creature's discretion; nor do the works of the creature, either before or after regeneration, result in merit accruing to his account in God's sight;

10—The peaceable fruits of righteousness are the certain result of God's working in His people both to will and to do of His good pleasure, and His people will be found walking in paths of righteousness for His name's sake;

11—The separation of church and state;

12—The principles outlined in the Black Rock Address of 1832;

13—The bodily resurrection, first of Christ, and also that of all the dead;

14—The final and eternal judgment; and,

15—The bliss of the redeemed and the torment of the wicked are both eternal and everlasting.