

**ARTICLES
FROM
THE PERSUADER
VOLUME VI**

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ARTICLES FROM **THE PERSUADER**

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The articles in this book appeared in our bi-monthly paper, **THE PERSUADER**, from 2003 to 2008. They were written by Edgar Lee Paschall, Pastor of New Hope Baptist Church, unless otherwise designated. These articles are designed to persuade one to take a fresh look at TRUTH and to RIGHTLY DIVIDE God's Word. If we can be of help in any way, please feel free to call or write. If you need more copies of this book or any of our other books please write to the above address. These books are free as long as funds are available to keep printing them. Use the material in this book any way that brings honor and glory to our Lord.

Because of Calvary,

Edgar Lee Paschall

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RIGHTLY DIVIDING MATTHEW 7:13-14

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Mat. 7:13-14

Paul told Timothy in II Tim. 2:15 to, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” “Rightly dividing” means to teach the truth directly and correctly. I would like to do this with the words Jesus spoke in Mat. 7:13-14.

1. Dilemma or problem we face.

1) Wrong interpretation.

You can read commentaries, most of which say that the narrow way is a result of going through the strait gate. Granted there is a narrow way after you are saved (go through the strait gate), but the Scripture states plainly in verse 14 “narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life.” “Leadeth” is a continuous action verb which indicates a movement along the narrow way which brings one to the point he has life. “Life” is not just referring to heaven but to the point of salvation when a sinner is saved--a new creation in Christ. (II Cor. 5:17: Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.) Therefore, there is a narrow way that leadeth unto life.

2) Preachers and people wrest the Scripture.

“As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.” II Peter 3:16 “Wrest” means to twist or turn. Many twist the Scripture to suit their own situation, and to back up what they think or believe. Many have wrong beliefs due to false teaching and preconceived ideas about salvation. What a dilemma we are in!

2. Direction we need to travel.

Jesus spoke of two directions and called them ways--the broad way and the narrow way. These ways lead to two gates--the wide gate and the strait gate. “Strait” means a narrow restricted passage.

The broad way is wide enough to allow you to carry your sins and to stay with your so-called friends. On this way you can “do your own thing” as the world teaches today. Also, you can have the “come as you are” attitude (by this they mean, dress and live anyway they want to with no respect for the house of God) that many churches promote today. Many say we are all worshiping the same God. All of these practices are popular today but all these practices are on the broad way which is the wrong way--wrong direction.

The direction you need to follow is the narrow way--the right way for it leads to the strait gate where salvation occurs and life is given. The strait gate can not be found on the

broad way. So there must be an exit from the broad way to the narrow way before one can be saved. The sad thing about this turning to the narrow way is that many claim that as their salvation experience. That is not their salvation for they have not been through the strait gate, which is where salvation occurs.

Let us look at what happens to you as you travel the narrow way to the strait gate. First, the Holy Spirit will teach you in the narrow way. (Psa. 25:8: "Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.") How much teaching do you need? Enough, so the Holy Spirit can convict and convince of sin, righteousness, and judgment. (John 16:8-11: "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.") This work is a must for one to be saved.

Second, the Holy Spirit will give you understanding in the narrow way. How much understanding do you need? Enough, so that the Holy Spirit can convict and convince of sin, righteousness, and judgment. This work is also a must for one to be saved. In the parable of the sower, Jesus said that those on the good ground "understandeth." (Mat. 13:23: "But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.") The good ground hearers were the only ones saved in the parable and it was because they had understanding in the narrow way. Jesus said in John 6:45: "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." "Cometh" is a continuous action verb which means to travel along the path of understanding which leads "to me"--the Lord Jesus. When you get to Him you have life. Pro. 21:16 states that one must travel this path of understanding if he is to be saved. (Pro. 21:16: "The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.")

Thirdly, the Holy Spirit causes you to seek the Lord. I know Rom. 3:11 says "There is none that seeketh after God." That is true of the natural man without the influence of the Holy Spirit. But when He awakens you and teaches you, and gives you understanding, you will begin to seek the Lord. It is His work and not yours.

When you get on the narrow way (headed in the right direction) you will arrive at a

3. Destination.

Those traveling the broad way will also arrive at a destination--wide gate--destruction--hell. But those on the narrow way, who allow the Holy Spirit to work in their life, will arrive at the strait gate where life is (which is the point salvation occurs) and will eventually arrive in heaven. Both heaven and hell are real places.

4. Difficulty we have in these verses.

Jesus said in verse 14, "few there be that find it." This is not talking about the strait gate but the narrow way. In other words few find the narrow way that leads to the strait gate. Jesus also said in Luke 13:24 ("Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.") that many of those who seek (these are those who found the narrow way) will not be able to enter the strait gate because they did not strive to enter in. This is not talking about works for salvation but it means when you get on the narrow way, you must put forth a strong effort (this can only be done by the aid of the Holy Spirit) to overcome obstacles placed before you by the devil, flesh, and

world. Therefore, Jesus is saying that few of the few will be saved. This is difficult for the religious world to except.

You say preacher you make salvation too hard! No, I make it impossible with man but all things are possible with our Lord. This is what Jesus said to His disciples in Mat. 19:26 after dealing with the rich young ruler. (See Mat. 19:16-26)

5. Danger or warning following these verses.

(Mat. 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.") What a sad time it will be when these words (verse 23) will be spoken to those in religion, even Baptist, even preachers who never entered the strait gate. Please do not reject the light (truth) of these verses rightly divided and be one to whom our Lord spoke in Mat. 7:21-23.

I pray the Lord will give us ears to hear and a heart to heed these verses rightly divided. This article is just a skeleton of the message we have preached from time to time. If you would like a tape of this message please let us know. It is yours for the asking. We love you and are your friend.

THE PERSUADER - July-October, 2003

WHAT WAS BEHIND THE MANIFESTATIONS OF THE LORD IN THE SCRIPTURES?

As we read the Bible we see great things happened in the lives of men when the Lord manifested Himself in power and glory. Many of these instances were physical deliverance of a person or a nation. These can be applied as spiritual deliverance for "all scripture is profitable for doctrine." (II Tim. 3:16) Also there were times the Lord manifested Himself to save the person from sin, yet the Bible did not give specific details about those saved. Why? Because He knew we would try to imitate those experiences. What I want to deal with in this article is "What was behind the manifestations of the Lord in the Scripture?"

Many men have come up with their own thoughts as to what caused the Lord to show up--manifest Himself. When they think they have the answer, it becomes their hobby horse and they try to make the Lord show up and save someone. When they do this they put God in a mold and usually all that happens is that false professions are made. Therefore, I want to look at what some would say is behind the Lord manifesting Himself by using an incident in Scripture to back it up.

1. Some say crying out.

Some would say the “crying out” of the children of Egypt in bondage caused the Lord to manifest Himself to Moses at the burning bush. (Exo. 2: 23-25; 3:9-10) The Lord told Moses to go deliver the children of Egypt and he went. Moses had to find out what wouldn’t work so he could find out what would. The first nine plagues; water turned to blood, frogs, lice, flies, murrain on cattle, sore boils on men, fire mingled with hail, locusts, and darkness did not cause Pharaoh to let the people go. But the tenth plague, death of the firstborn in the house where blood was not applied, worked and they were delivered. The people cried out and the Lord manifested Himself.

Blind Bartimaeus cried out in Mark 10: 47. No doubt he had to find out what wouldn’t work so he could find out what would. I’m sure he had cried out to doctors and others until he desperation set in and then Jesus passed by. This time when he cried out the Lord manifested His power and healed him.

2. Some say fasting.

The king of Nineveh proclaimed a fast when Jonah came preaching destruction. And the Lord manifested Himself and did not judge them. (Jonah 3: 4-10)

3. Some say faith.

In Mark 2, four men came to where Jesus was bearing a paralytic. They tore the roof off because they could not get in the door for the multitude of people around Jesus. They let the paralytic down at Jesus feet. And Mark 2: 5 reveals that when Jesus saw their faith (faith of the four as well as the paralytic), He manifested His power and healed the man.

4. Some say singing and praising.

We see the account of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, besieged by Moab, Ammon, and Mt. Sier. The king was outnumbered and appointed singers to praise the Lord. The Bible says when they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushments against the enemy. The Lord manifested Himself, defeated the enemy, and it took three days to gather the spoil. (II Chron. 20: 15, 21-22, 25)

5. Some say Preaching.

Philip preached at Samaria and revival broke out because the Lord manifested Himself. (Acts 8: 5-8)

6. Some say Praying.

They use Pentecost as an example by saying those in the upper room had a ten day prayer meeting and the power of God fell and 3000 were saved before the day was over. (Acts 1: 13-14; 2: 1-2) This truly was a great manifestation of our Lord!

7. Some say by giving thanks.

When King Darius signed the decree that anyone caught praying to any God or man except the king would be thrown into a den of lions, Daniel gave thanks before his God as he was accustom to doing. True to the petition, Daniel was thrown into the den of lions and the Lord manifested Himself by closing the lions’ mouths and Daniel was safe through the night. (Dan. 6: 9-22)

8. Some say Continue in His Word.

Jesus told a group of Jews who believed on Jesus with the head and not the heart, that if they would continue in His word they would come to know the truth which would be equivalent to being saved, which would take a manifestation of the Lord. (John 8: 31-32) The woman with an issue of blood did what she knew to do at the time and she continued and the Lord manifested His power to her and healed her. (Mark 5: 25-29) The man at the pool of Bethesda had continued coming to the pool for years hoping to be healed when the angel stirred the water. And one day the Lord came by and manifested His power to him and healed him. (John 5: 5-9) The Syrophenician woman in Mat. 15: 22-28 continued and would not take no for an answer and the Lord manifested His power and her daughter was made whole that very hour.

9. Then we see there is nothing recorded behind some manifestations of the Lord.

The Lord manifested His power to the maniac of Gadara and cast out a legion of demons and saved him. (Mark 5: 1-13) Then we see Zacchaeus had climbed a tree to see Jesus and the Lord manifested Himself to him and saved him. (Luke 19: 3-6) Also in John 9: 1-3, 6-9 the Lord manifested His power and healed the man born blind and then later came by and manifested Himself to him and saved him. (John 9: 35-38) A sinful woman met Jesus at Jacob's well and He manifested Himself to her and saved her. (John 4: 4, 25-26)

Now let me ask a question. What was behind the manifestation of the Lord in the Scripture? Is it crying out, fasting, faith, singing and praising, preaching, praying, giving thanks, or continuing? A look at all these instances in the Bible lets up know there has been a common denominator. In math, before you can add fractions, you have to have a common denominator. And before you can answer (add all this up spiritually) this question, you must have a common denominator. What is it? I can tell you. It is the Lord Jesus Christ coming on the scene.

He has a time for all things. It is His work. He will be on time--His time and He always has been "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." (Gal. 4: 4)

In every one of the instances we dealt with in this article, when the Lord manifested Himself, there were more things behind the scene than what I mentioned. These were just the major themes of these instances. Take for instance, the praying before Pentecost. Luke 24: 49-53 reveals that they were not only in the upper room for ten days but they "were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." They were not in a ten day prayer meeting as we have been taught. They did not pray the power of God down as we have been taught. The Lord had already promised to send the comforter--the Holy Ghost. (John 14: 16-17) And just before He ascended, He told the disciples not to depart from Jerusalem for the fulfillment of the promise of the Spirit would be "not many days hence." (Acts 1: 4-5) Then, like He promised, the Holy Ghost came on Pentecost.

We need to do what we know to do at the time, whether it be crying out, fasting, faith, singing and praising, preaching, praying, giving thanks, or continuing in His Word as long as it is in the will of God. Then when the Lord manifests Himself, we will not be able to say look what I've done. No! He will get all the glory and that is the way it should be. So just do what you know to do and He will show up right on time. He will manifest Himself to you.

THE MISSING PRINCIPLE IN MANY PROFESSIONS OF SALVATION

Rom. 4:1-13

The churches of our day are in a mess due to a missing principle in many professions of salvation. I call that missing principle the **Abraham principle**. Rom. 4:3: "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." When did this happen? Paul is quoting Gen. 15:6 ("And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.") which occurred nine years after Abram entered the land of Canaan. Yet Heb. 11:8 states he left the Ur of the Chaldees by faith. (Heb. 11:8 "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.") That raises a question. What kind of faith did he have? One thing we know for sure, it was not saving faith.

In Rom. 4:12 the "steps of faith" Abraham walked are mentioned. What are these steps of faith? First, there has to be an intellectual faith that God is or exist. (Heb. 11:6: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.") For this faith to be imparted to a person there has to be a human instrument that proclaimed truth to them. Does not Rom. 10:14 state, "How shall they believe in him they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" This is God's way. We do not know for sure who came and proclaimed truth to Abraham when he was in the Ur of the Chaldees. I believe it was Shem who lived several years into Abraham's life. And when he believed God existed, the Lord spoke to him and told him to, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall shew thee." (Acts. 7:3)

James 2:20 states, "that faith without works is dead." Therefore, intellectual faith worked a seeking faith in Abraham for Heb. 11:10 states, "He looked (seeking) for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God." Therefore, he left Ur but he did not do as the Lord said for he took his father and nephew with him and settled at Haran--which is still in his country. He may have stayed there as much as 32 years without the Lord speaking to him, at least it is not recorded if He did.

When Abraham was 75 years old, his father died and the Lord spoke to him again. "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee. (Gen. 12:1) He left the country but took Lot with him. Yet, the Lord was good to speak to him again when he entered Canaan land. "And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him. (Gen. 12:7) This is the first time "thy seed" was mentioned and he did not fully understand. When a famine came, he went to Egypt and passed his wife off as his sister for fear of his life. The Lord caused Pharaoh to send Abraham away. The Lord also caused the circumstance to arise that separated Lot from Abraham. (Gen. 13) And then the Lord enlarged the promise to him. Gen. 13:14-17: "And the LORD said unto Abram, after that

Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee."

During the first nine years in Canaan, Abraham made some mistakes, but he did some right things such a building altars and calling on the name of the Lord even though he was not yet saved. He trained 318 servants that were able to deliver Lot and his family from Chedorloamer who had captured Sodom. (Gen. 14) The main thing he did right was that he never went back to his homeland.

Therefore, the Lord spoke to him again, nine years after he entered Canaan, in Gen. 15: 1: "After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Abraham still did not understand the promise the Lord had told him. One cannot believe something they do not understand. So the Lord explained who the seed was and granted him saving faith and Abraham was saved in Gen. 15: 6 ("And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.") nine years after entering Canaan. He had "walked the steps of faith"--intellectual faith leads to a seeking faith, which leads to a saving faith. I call this the **Abraham principle** which is missing in many professions of salvation.

1. The Lord taught this principle.

One day in John 8, the Lord Jesus was speaking to a group of Jews which included the Pharisees. After He revealed Himself as the light of the world (John 8: 12: "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.") and told them the truth, the Bible says "many believed on him." (John 8: 30) The Lord who knew their heart knew that this principle was missing for He told them, "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8: 31-32) The result was that these Jews who said they believed on the Lord, got angry and said, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?" (John 8: 33) They did not exercise seeking faith nor continue in His word and the result was that Jesus said in John 8: 44, "Ye are of your father the devil."--they were not saved. Therefore, the Abraham principle was missing in their professions.

2. Paul experienced this principle.

When Paul, in Acts 7, heard Stephen preach and pray and watched him die, he was pricked in his heart. Paul already had intellectual faith--that God existed. And he immediately started doing what he knew to do--making havoc of the church. In doing this, he was seeking to find something to fill that emptiness and void inside. He thought he was doing right until he met the Lord Jesus on the road to Damascus. The Lord revealed Himself to him that day but he was not saved until three days later on the street called Straight in Damascus. How do I know that? By Acts 22: 16 when Ananius come and said "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22: 16) His sins had not yet been washed away (by the way, this does not occur in the baptism water but by calling on the name of the Lord)--he was not

saved until that point. What happened at that point? Saving faith was granted to him and Paul believed unto salvation. Paul experienced the **Abraham principle** in his salvation experience--walked the steps of faith--intellectual faith leads to seeking faith, which leads to saving faith.

3. We need to practice this principle.

Jesus taught this principle, Paul experienced it, and we need to practice it as we deal with others. For if we fail to practice it, we will short circuit the work of the Holy Spirit in sinners' lives. And they will come up with a false profession due to the missing principle--the **Abraham principle**--in their lives and we will have their blood on our hands.

The **Abraham principle** is missing in many professions of salvation. This article just skims the surface of this truth. If you would like to have more information concerning this topic or any of the sub-topics contact us and we will be glad to send you either the article, tapes, or cds dealing with this principle. They are free for the asking. You can also find this material on our web-site www.the.persuader.org. If we can be of help please let us know. We care.

THE PERSUADER - April-June, 2006

WHY DO "GOOD MEN" REJECT TRUTH?

To answer this question I must first describe what I mean by "good men." The Bible is very clear that there "is none that doeth good" not even one. (Rom. 3:12: "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Psa. 14:1: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good." Psa. 14:3: "They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Psa. 53:1: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good." Psa. 53:3: "Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.") Therefore, I use this term "good men" from the standpoint of the world. A good man is one who has character, is honest and dependable, pays his bills on time, is good to others, has a tender heart, and is looked up to by others around him as being a "good man." Now the question--why would such a man reject truth? Many do, but why? There are several reasons but I just want to mention a few.

1. Captured by Tradition.

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Col. 2:8 Tradition is defined as that which is handed down from generation to generation. Tradition can be good or bad and most of the time when the Bible mentions this word, it is used in a bad sense. Therefore, we are warned to beware of the traditions of men lest we be captured (spoiled) by them. Our Lord told the religious crowd that they rejected the commandment

of God to keep their tradition. (Mark 7:9: "And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.") Thus, they made the Word of God of none effect because of their tradition. (Mark 7:13: "Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.") Tradition captures "good men" and causes them to reject truth.

2. Blinded by the Devil.

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." II Cor. 4:3-4 The devil, who is the god (note: little "g") of this world, blinds a person's mind so that they cannot see (spiritually) the truth of the gospel--the way of real salvation. Also the devil controls those he blinds, which is true of every person before they are saved. This is plainly stated in Eph. 2:2. ("Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Eph. 2:2) Because of this condition, when truth is presented to "good men," it is rejected.

3. Void of the Spirit.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I Cor. 2:14 The natural man is one who is not saved, thus, he is void of the Spirit--does not possess the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 8:9: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.") The Bible is clear that one who possesses the Holy Spirit will be guided into all truth. (John 16:13: "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 shew you things to come.") Many "good men" receive the things of God but not the things of the Spirit--stated in I Cor. 2:14. Thus, they are void of the Spirit and reject truth when it is presented to them.

I know of "good men" who practiced easy believism (another gospel) in the past and now they realize that easy believism did not work and also they state that now they have come to an understanding about the truth of the things of the Spirit--the truth of real salvation. You might say "that is great." But let me ask you a question, "Why did they go for years practicing easy believism if they were saved?" Does not the presence of the Holy Spirit guide one into truth? (John 16:13) Yes, He does! Thus, we would have to conclude that a person who practices easy believism for years is not saved. And if he embraces the doctrine of the truth of real salvation without a complete work of godly sorrow and reproof (Holy Ghost conviction) he is still not saved--void of the Spirit. A mental change of doctrine is not evidence of a heart reception of the Spirit.

Then, there are "good men" who are adamantly against the 1-2-3 repeat after me type of easy believism and plainly state that it takes the Holy Spirit to work salvation in a person but they reject the truth of the need of completed work of Holy Ghost conviction which included repentance and faith. It is true that what the Lord Jesus did at Calvary was complete but that work has to be completed personally in every person for them to be saved. Therefore, a person who rejects truth is void of the Spirit--he is not saved.

We conclude by saying the main reason that "good men" reject truth is because they

are not saved. Many "good men" we have encountered know that if what we preach and practice is truth, then they are not saved and they will not even consider that possibility. Thus, they reject truth instead of examining themselves ("Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" II Cor. 13: 5), getting honest, and allowing the Holy Ghost to complete a complete work in them. They had rather die and go to hell than admit they were lost. So they reject truth.

Why do "good men" reject truth? The main underlying reason is that they are not saved!

If you are in this condition, I beg you to find truth, embrace truth, continue in truth, preach truth, and practice truth instead of rejecting truth. Jesus said if you would continue in truth (Word) you shall be saved--know the Truth who is the Lord Jesus. (John 8: 31-32: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.") For a person to be saved he must call in truth (Psa. 145: 18: "The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.") Therefore one who rejects truth will never be saved if they continue to do so. I care for you and understand how easy it is to reject truth because I did it for years, ignorantly. But the Lord was longsuffering and good to me by giving me understanding of truth. Therefore, I will love you in the condition you are in and stay with you by the grace of God, until you are enabled to embrace truth.

THE PERSUADER - July-Sept., 2006

IT IS ALL ABOUT HIM!

By Him, I mean the Lord Jesus Christ--the virgin born Son of God who gave Himself on Calvary that we might have our sins forgiven and have eternal life. He is the central theme or scarlet thread that runs through out the Bible from cover to cover. He is the One who created all things. (Col. 1: 16: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.") He is the I AM who met Moses at the burning bush. He is the smitten Rock out of which came water for the children of Israel in the wilderness. He is the fourth man in the furnace. He is the Word who was God and became flesh and dwelt among us. (John 1: 1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1: 14: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.") He is the One who was, is, and is to come. (Rev. 1: 8: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.") It is all about Him--the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet, there are many who magnify or worship something other than Him. I want to deal with just four, even though I am sure there are many more, but I think these four will make my point--It is all about Him!

1. Some worship man instead of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Rev. 22:8-9 (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 shewed 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."), when John had been shown by an angel thing which must shortly come to pass, he fell down to worship him, not knowing who he was. But the angel said he was only a fellowservant. Thus, he was saying do not worship man, worship God. I thank the Lord for the men He allowed to cross my path. I respect them and love them but I do not worship them. The Lord uses men in every person's life that is saved for that is His way. (Rom. 10:13-15: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?") Men are just ministers or human instruments the Lord uses in every believer's life. (I Cor. 3:5: "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?") Yet, men are not perfect, only the Lord is. Every man preaches with a margin of error because he has his flesh to contend with. Therefore, you should never worship a man but God. It is all about Him!

2. Some worship the local church instead of the God of the local church.

The word for church means a called out assembly of baptized believers who meet together to worship and glorify the Lord. The church is a local visible body not some invisible, universal body. Some take this truth to the extreme and worship the local church instead of the God of the church. I am a local church man and I respect the local church but I do not worship the local church. By the way, the building is not the local church. Once I was on the mission field, I witnessed some coming to the building where the church met and they bowed down and kissed the dirt floor of the building. Do not worship the building. Many say I would never do that yet in their preaching they lift up the local church more than they lift up the Lord Jesus; thus, they are worshiping the local church. Some will shout over being a Baptist and will not even say amen to the message of the cross. Worship God. It is all about Him!

3. Some worship the KJV Bible instead of the God of the Bible.

I use the KJV and that is the only version I will ever use. I believe that the KJV is God's preserved word for English speaking people today. God breathed it (II Tim. 3:16: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.") and moved on holy men of old (II Peter 1:21: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.") to pen down the original Scripture. Where are the original writings today? They are not around in completed form. Why? Because the Lord knew if He allowed them to still be here, someone who enshrine them and worship them; therefore, He was good to us not to let us have the original Scripture. But if you are saved, you have something better than the original Scripture--the Holy Ghost of God who is the originator of the Scripture who lives in you and will guide you into all truth. He also has given us a Bible, the preserved word of God (KJV) which we can carry in our hands. If we had the original we could not pack it. Thank the Lord for the preserved Word we have. But the Lord never intended us to worship the Bible but worship the God of the Bible. Yet,

some today are lifting up the KJV Bible above the Lord. One day I was preaching about the cross and a missionary was present but about asleep. I mentioned the KJV 1611 and he almost shouted and then slumped back down in his seat as I continued preaching about the cross. That was a good example of someone worshiping the KJV instead of the God of the KJV. Thank the Lord for the preserved Word for it is the record one must believe but it points you to the Son and in Him there is life. (I John 5:10-12: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.") Jesus told the Pharisees, life was not in the Scripture but in Him. (John 5:39-40: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.") It is all about Him!

4. Some worship a doctrine instead of the God of the doctrine.

Thank the Lord for true doctrine (teaching) but there are some today who embrace the doctrines of grace and magnify those doctrines about the Lord. Those who do so want to discuss those doctrines all the time, yet many of them at one time practiced easy believism and saw that did not work for it fill our churches with lost people. Then when they came to grips that that did not work, they embraced the doctrines of grace and went in the ditch on the other side of the road. The sad part about it, they never admitted they were not saved when they practiced the easy believism so all they have done is embraced a doctrine instead of the God of the doctrine. Paul rebuked the church at Corinth for coming together having a doctrine. (I Cor. 14:26: "How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.") "Edifying" means to build up or lift up. Jesus said in John 12:32 ("And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.") that we need to lift up Him not a doctrine. It is all about Him!

The Lord laid this on my heart sometime ago for this paper. It bothers me when men worship a man instead of the Lord, when men worship the local church instead of the God of the local church, when men worship the KJV Bible instead of the God of the Bible, and when men worship a doctrine instead of the God of the doctrine. (Mat. 13:9: "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.") Listen to what the Lord is saying to you. Do not get in a ditch. It is all about Him--the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE PERSUADER - Oct.-Dec., 2006

RIGHTLY DIVIDING

HEBREWS 6:4-6

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put

him to an open shame." (Heb. 6:4-6)

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." (Heb. 6:4-6)

This portion of Scripture has caused many to scratch their head due to spiritual blindness, misinterpretation, and erroneous teaching. Therefore, we need to rightly divide this portion of Scripture. (II Tim. 2:15: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.") "Rightly dividing" means to teach the truth directly and correctly. To do that we must understand the context.

I believe Paul was the human instrument the Lord used to pen down the book of Hebrews. Even if he was not the one the Lord used, it is still God's Word written to the early Hebrew professors of Christianity. When Christ died on the cross, the veil in the temple was rent, opening up the Holy of Holies and putting an end to the old Hebrew economy. The new covenant was now in force, yet the Hebrew nation repaired the veil and continued their worship, though it was only in form, for the Lord no longer met with the people in the Holy of Holies in the temple. Thus, this epistle was written to the professors of Christianity because some of them were thinking about going back to the OT economy and its shadows, which would cause those who did so to leave the real--Christ.

Paul had said, "Let us go on to perfection" (Heb. 6:1) by leaving the principles of Judaism. His strong warning of Heb. 6:4-6 is a result of his fear of apostasy (falling away from truth) of those who did go back.

There is no doubt to whom Paul is referring here. Notice his use of the word "those" in verse 4 while he had used the word "us" in verse 1 and "we" in verse 3. "Us" and "we" refer to Paul and the professors to whom he was writing. Paul always gave benefit of doubt to a person who said he was saved but he always called for examination because he knew many of the professors, even in the early church were not saved. "Those" refers to those who had professed Christ as Lord but were not saved. These were not your ordinary everyday "professors." In fact, they were a class who had enjoyed great privileges.

1. They "were once enlightened."

"Enlightened" means to give light or knowledge by teaching. This means that as these Hebrews listened to the message of the NT, the Holy Spirit enlightened their minds and hearts to clearly understand the message. They had been filled with saving knowledge and had a clear understanding of the gospel. The scales had been pulled from their eyes. (II Cor. 4:3-4: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.) "Once" means once for all--they did not need any more understanding to be saved. They just needed repentance and saving faith granted so they could obey the gospel by repenting and believing unto salvation.

2. They "tasted of the heavenly gift."

“Tasted” means to have a personal experience. A person can taste food and never eat it. Thus, you experience it but it never gives you one bit of strength. “Heavenly gift” = refers to the ministry of the Holy Ghost of John 16: 8 (“And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.”) whereby they became acquainted with the gospel. It is called “heavenly” because it comes from heaven and leads one to heaven, which Judaism could not do. Tasting does not include eating, much less digesting and turning into nourishment what is tasted. Those described here had, to a certain degree, understood and relished the revelation of mercy. And like the stony ground hearers they received the word with a short lived joy. Also like the children of Israel at Kadesh Barnea, they saw the land and had the very fruit in their hand but they turned back.

3. They “were made partakers of the Holy Ghost.”

“Partakers” in context means to have with, to go along with a companion and refers to being under the influence of the Holy Spirit in the work of reproof--Holy Ghost conviction. This word is a different Greek word from Col. 1: 12 (“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.”) where real Christians are spoken of. This word in context here does not mean these are saved. In fact, the tense indicates that the Holy Spirit did not come on the inside to live. The Holy Spirit could have chosen a word and tense that said the Holy Spirit came on the inside, but instead He chose a word that said these people have been under the influence of the Holy Spirit. They were convicted but did not experience completed conviction.

4. They “tasted the good word of God.”

They only “tasted” but did not eat the Word of God. This means they experienced that God has been faithful to His promises and they enjoyed, as much as a lost man can enjoy, the blessings and advantages which flow from promises fulfilled. Sinners can enjoy messages and enjoy studying the Bible after the seed has been planted in their soul and yet not be saved.

5. They tasted “the powers of the world to come.”

The early church had been personal witnesses of the miracles of Christ, and also of the wonders that followed His ascension, when many glorious manifestations of the Spirit were given. These “professors” had experienced these manifestations as well as the “processors.” Lost men, who have been enlightened in a good service, know he is in the midst of the power of the world to come. These “processors” Paul is referring to were no ordinary “processors.”

6. Now the warning.

If they shall fall away it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance. “Fall away” means to turn aside or to deviate from the right path which is the “narrow way” which leads to the “strait gate.” (Mat. 7: 13-14: “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”) Paul presents a hypothetical case warning these Hebrew professors not to “fall away.” These “processors” were at the very threshold of salvation but if they turned back and totally abandoned the light they had, they would never be brought to the

place they were again. The Holy Spirit would quit dealing with them and they would be lost forever. This kind of turning back refers to a willful rejection--knowing what you are doing. Therefore, if a man comes to this kind of conviction (experienced these five things) and willfully turns back, he will never find repentance.

The phrase "crucify the Son of God afresh" becomes a reality when one confirms the judgment of the actual crucifiers, declaring that he, too, has made a trial of Jesus and found Him not to be the true Messiah, but a deceiver and therefore, worthy of death. This puts Christ to "open shame" which means to bring disgrace and dishonor on Him. If one, who has been exposed to this kind of work of the Holy Spirit (the five things mentioned in these verses), departs from the truth (turns back) he declares Christ to be an imposter, thus exposing Him to disgrace and dishonor, making a public example of Him. This person does more to dishonor Jesus Christ than His murderers did, because they never professed Jesus to be the Christ. Therefore, these would be irreclaimable if they fall away.

These verses are not teaching that a person can be lost after they have been saved. That doctrine is foreign to the Scriptures. Also these verses are written for us (II Tim. 3:16: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.") even though not to us. Do not try to discount Scripture because it does not fit your theology, just rightly divide it.

This is only a condensed message concerning these verses. If you would like to receive tapes or cds on the book of Hebrews, please let us hear from you. They are free for the asking. We love you and are your friend.

THE PERSUADER - Jan.-March, 2007

THE ROOT PROBLEM MUST BE DEALT WITH!

A person goes to the doctor after many days of a low grade fever and he tells him to take an aspirin and rest. He sends him home without running any test and the man dies because the root problem was not dealt with. Sometimes this is the case in the medical world. The doctor tried to mask the root problem with a "band-aid" approach. There had to be an underlying root problem causing the fever and that was needed to be found and treated, either with medication or surgery. The root problem must be dealt with.

In the spiritual realm this type of situation occurs in a larger percentage than in the medical realm. A person who has made a profession comes to the preacher and says "I doubt my salvation." Instead of dealing with the root problem, many pastors use the "band-aid" approach by telling him "That is just the devil making you doubt." They also try to reassure him that he is okay because he had "asked Jesus into his heart" or that they were there when he was saved or that they believe him to be saved because of what he does and etc. Yet, they never deal with the root problem causing the doubt.

I heard one preacher say the reason a person doubts their salvation is because there is sin in their lives or they are not in the bride of Christ. The sin he was referring to was sins of the flesh such as lying, stealing, drinking, and adultery which are just four of the 726

sins listed in the Bible (according to some theologian). Concerning the bride he spoke of, he was referring to belonging to (being baptized by) a church which can trace its roots all the way back to Jesus. Therefore, if a person is not a member of that kind of church then he is not in the bride so he doubts his salvation--according to that preacher. Let us look at the Bible concerning that statement.

In Rev. 21 the New Jerusalem, which is where the Bride of Christ dwells, is described and verse 27 states plainly that those not in the book of life will not enter. (Rev. 21:27: "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.") Therefore, if a person is not in the bride of Christ, he is not saved. So the root problem must be dealt with.

Others say the reason a person doubts their salvation is because they are not adding to their faith the seven things mentioned in II Peter 1:5-7 (And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."), in other words not growing in faith. James 2:17 ("Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.") states faith works and adds in some degree just as the good ground of Mat. 13:23 brings forth fruit in different degrees. ("But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.") Thus, when this approach (II Peter 1:5-7 just spoken of) is used it gives assurance to a person who has never been saved and the root problem has not been dealt with.

Still others' entire ministry is dealing with edifying the saints (those who have professed faith). They rejoice in the Saviour and heaven which is right and good. But the one who only professes to be saved is blinded and deceived so he musters up all the emotion he can to rejoice in the person of the Lord Jesus and heaven. He desires that because the Holy Spirit has put a longing deep inside. Yet, he gets no real eternal help from such preaching because the root problem is never dealt with.

Many preachers get stressed out trying to get their congregation to live right. The reason for this is that the root problem has never been dealt with in the congregation's life. If a person has been saved the preacher doesn't have to spend all his time trying to get people to live right, the Holy Spirit does that.

There are other examples I could use to reveal that the root problem is never dealt with in most of our churches today. And like the man who had a "band-aid" approach used on him when he went to the doctor--he died because the root problem was not dealt with. So will those "professors" who never have the root problem dealt with--they will die the second death and be separated from God forever in the lake of fire.

The root problem must be dealt with! Thus, the question "What is the root problem?" The root problem is the sin of unbelief which is the cause of all sins (726 if that theologian is right) of the flesh. Most preaching and practice just deals with the fruit and not the root. The majority of the children of Israel did not enter into the promise land because of their unbelief--root problem. (Heb. 3:17-19: "But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.") They heard the gospel but did not mix it with faith--remained in unbelief. (Heb. 4:2: "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as

unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.”)

Peter stated in his second epistle that if a person did not grow in faith to the degree he should--“lacketh these things”--the seven things he mentions adding to one’s faith, he “hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.” (II Peter 1:9) He knew what he was talking about because on the night he had fled from Jesus when He was arrested and later warmed by the fire of Jesus’ enemies, he denied the Lord three times. He had forgotten he was purged from his old sin--this means he did not have on the forefront of his mind his conversion experience but when his eyes made contact with Jesus’ eyes, he remembered and went out and wept bitterly. (Luke 22:61-62: “And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.”) He did not doubt his salvation but for a short time allowed himself to forget the time and result of the root problem of unbelief being dealt with in his life.

When John the Baptist was baptizing at Jordan, many came to be baptized but John stated plainly that the root problem must be dealt with--the axe must be laid to the root of the tree if there is to be good fruit. (Mat. 3:8, 10: “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.”) This means that a person has never been saved unless the root problem has been dealt with and that is the work of the Holy Spirit in reproof (conviction). (John 16:8-9: “And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me.”)

The sad thing in many who profess to be saved is that they have never had the root problem of unbelief dealt with by the Holy Spirit due to the fact that most preaching does not deal with the root problem. No wonder there is so much doubt among “professors.” The root problem of unbelief is still present and the Holy Spirit is trying to get them to realize their problem but they listen to the majority who say, “that the devil is making you doubt.” No! No! It is the Holy Spirit trying to get your attention.

You may say, “What do I need to do about this in my life?” Get honest about your real condition and do not allow some doctor (preacher or personal worker) to apply a “band-aid” when you need surgery by the Holy Spirit to take out your “unbelief”--root problem.

I do not want to be guilty of applying a “band-aid” when surgery is needed. And I do not want you to settle for a “band-aid” when surgery is needed.

The root problem must be dealt with. This is just a shorten paper of a message preached on this subject. If you would like to receive a tape or CD of this message, we would be glad to send it to you for the asking.

The root problem must be dealt with!

THE PERSUADER - April-June, 2007

THE TROJAN HORSE PRINCIPLE

IS OPERATING IN OUR CHURCHES

“For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” Jude 4

Most of us have heard of the legend of the Trojan horse. Some say it is a myth but it is recorded in the encyclopedia. The Greeks besieged the city of Troy (in present day Turkey) for ten years but could not overthrow it. Therefore, they resorted to a plan to deceive the inhabitants of Troy. A Greek spy (Sinon by name) had slipped into the city while the Greeks built a large, hollow, wooden horse and left it outside the city filled with warriors while the rest of the army sailed away. Sinon persuaded the Trojans to take the horse into the city, convincing them that to do so would mysteriously make Troy invulnerable. They did so and that night Sinon let out the armed Greek warriors, who killed the guards and opened the gates to let in the Greeks who had returned. As a result Troy was captured and burned.

Also there is a computer virus called the Trojan horse. It is sent in a hidden manner but when you open up the attached file containing the virus, your computer will be destroyed.

In like manner Satan has spies who have infiltrated every facet of our lives and then set a Trojan horse before us. And if we are not careful, we'll take in the Trojan horse and open it up and allow the enemy to outnumber us and destroy us.

Let me say, most facets of our lives have already been infiltrated and are in the process of being destroyed or are already destroyed. Our government has already been infiltrated as well as our public school system and our churches for the most part. Also our homes and even our hearts have been infiltrated.

In this article I want to deal with the Trojan horse principle operating in our churches. Mat. 16:18 says that the church should attack the gates of the enemy (Mat. 16:18: “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”), but we have failed to do so the last 50 years. Thus, we have been besieged by the enemy for years. Also we have been infiltrated by false professors who have persuaded churches for the most part to take the Trojan horse of the enemy inside our walls and open it up which has allowed divers gospels to be preached which are contrary to the Scripture. Paul said if any man or angel preach any other gospel than what he preached, just let them go on to hell. (Gal. 1:8-9: “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”)

I believe that the gospel I call “easy believism” has already destroyed most churches. It would take 10 books to describe the various forms of this false gospel and then there would be many variations unmentioned. When preachers tell you all you have to do is “believe” and leave out repentance and Holy Ghost conviction, they have been captured by the Trojan horse principle. Some say raise your hand and repeat after me--captured. Some use the Roman Road “so called” plan of salvation but short circuit the work of the Holy Spirit--captured. Some say you are saved by works--captured. Some say speak in tongues--captured. Some say just be baptized--captured. Even some who say you have

to repent have changed the definition of real Biblical repentance--captured. Some preach basic truth then turn around and practice "easy believism"--captured. And on and on we could go. The Trojan horse principle is operating in our churches.

Then, you have churches who speak of "grace." Grace is a good word and a good thing. But, Jude warned in our text verse that those who crept in unawares have turned the grace of God into "lasciviousness." Those who have done so have the Trojan horse principle operating in their churches.

I will try to explain "lasciviousness" to you. The word is defined as unbridled lust and shamelessness. One who practices such acknowledges no restraints and refuses to acknowledge the authority of God's Word. Their so called liberty is used as a license to sin. (Gal. 5:1,13: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.")

An example of "lasciviousness" is fornication, which is misdirected physical desires or sensual sins. Fornication is a general word for wrong sex relations of any kind--incest, pre-marital sex, homosexuality, sex with animals and corpses, and it includes adultery. (Heb. 13:4: "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.")

Rom. 12:1 states that we are to present our bodies holy--separated from the world and separated unto God. (Rom. 12:1: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.") Paul said "grace" will teach you to deny some things and teach you how to live. (Titus 2:11-12: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.") "Lasciviousness" refuses to acknowledge the authority of God's word. God's Word has something to say about how you clothe your body. Men and women are to dress in modest apparel. This means your clothing is not to draw attention to the flesh and curves of your body for that causes the opposite sex to lust. This means men's pants are not to be too tight so as to show his privates. Also, he is not to bear his chest in public. This would forbid shorts and tank tops. Women are not to wear in public low cut blouses, swimming suits, shorts, short skirts or dresses, and blue jeans and pants for they are immodest. You say preacher that is "legalism." No, that is right according to God's Word and not to practice such would be "lasciviousness"--refusing to acknowledge the authority of God's Word.

Men are not to have long hair (I Cor. 11:14: "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?"), tattoos, body piercings, and ears pierced (Lev. 19:28: "Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD."), for those who do such are identifying with the world and the homosexual movement. (Rom. 12:2: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.") Women are to have long hair (I Cor. 11:15: "But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering.") and not to have tattoos and body piercings (this includes pierced ears; Lev. 19:28: "Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD."). We are not to be gluttons (Pro. 23:1-2: "When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee: And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man

given to appetite.") nor wine bibbers--this includes social drinking for the Word says not to even look on it, let alone drink it. (Pro. 23:31: "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.") We are not to play the lottery or games of chance, or go to the casinos. All of this is according to what God says in His word. The music we listen to should not be country, rock, or rap even if it has "so called" Christian words to it. Our music should be according to Eph. 5:19: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."

You say I'm under grace, not law, and I have liberty. It is true if you are saved you are not under law but it is also true you are not to use your grace and liberty as a license to sin. For if you do, that is "lasciviousness"--refusing to acknowledge the authority of God's word. If you and your church practice these things, you have opened the Trojan horse of the Devil and are allowing that principle to operate in your churches.

The outcome is destruction just like the city of Troy was destroyed. Read Rom. 1:19-28 and you will see that if you practice "lasciviousness," what light you have will be turned into ignorance and God will pull back the hedge He has around you and you will be given over to "uncleanness," "vile affections," and "reprobate minds" which means you are not saved and will "not inherit the kingdom of God." (Gal. 5:21: "Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.") The Lord admonished His people in Jer. 6:16 to "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." But they plainly said, "We will not walk therein." Now that you have been admonished "What will you say and do?"

I am not condemning you but just trying to let you see that the Trojan horse principle is operating in our churches and it will destroy them. All I'm trying to do is hold the fort to have a place where truth will prevail. I'm vexed and grieved when I see "lasciviousness" being practice by those who claim to be saved. Also, let me say there is good news for there is hope and help at the foot of the cross. I long to say like John in III John 4: "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

This article is a very thin skeleton of a series called "The Trojan Horse Principle" I preached in our church. I would be glad to send you the series on cds or cassette tapes without charge. Also the series is on our web site www.thepersuader.org under video messages. If I can be of help please let me know.

THE PERSUADER - Oct.-Dec., 2007

HOW MUST THE GOSPEL COME TO ONE FOR THEM TO BE SAVED?

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. . ." I Thess. 1:5

The gospel is the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ's death on Calvary, His burial, and His resurrection. This definition is clearly set forth by Paul in I Cor. 15: 1-4: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." The gospel involves the virgin birth and sinless life for if Jesus had not been born of a virgin, He would have had the sin nature of Adam and therefore could not have qualified as our sin bearer on Calvary. It also involves His ascension, His ministry of intercession, and His bodily coming back for His own. Also the gospel includes the "sanctification" work of the Holy Spirit which is labeled as Holy Ghost conviction. This is a must for one to be saved. (II Thess. 2: 13: "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.") Now the question: "How must the gospel come to one for them to be saved?"

1. In Word.

When I Thess. 1: 5 states that "our gospel came not in word only," Paul was not saying that the Word was not necessary in one's salvation for it is. But he is saying there is more involved than just the Word. Our Lord in the parable of the sower in Mat. 13 spoke of the seed sown as being the Word of God. If you will examine Christ's explanation of the parable you will find that only one of the four types of ground brought forth fruit--saved. That was the good ground which had been prepared to receive the seed. This parable lets us know it takes more than just the Word--not Word only but also:

2. In power and in the Holy Ghost.

I put these two together because you cannot have one without the other. Acts 1: 8 states: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The Holy Ghost is the one who empowers. He is the One who makes the preached Word sharp. (Heb. 4: 12: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.") Paul declared plainly in I Cor. 2: 4: "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." The power on the preached Word makes the soil of the heart good ground so the seed can find lodging.

The Holy Ghost works reproof in three areas. (John 16: 8-11: "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.") "Reprove" means to lay blame on someone for the purpose of correction sharply and sternly using evidence at hand to persuade one of the righteousness they really need (not self-righteousness but Jesus who is the righteousness of God; I Cor. 1: 30: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."), and convict one of the sin of unbelief--the root problem. This parallels godly sorrow which is a

deep, God caused grief over one's sin which leads one to repentance which is necessary for one to be saved. II Cor. 7:10: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.")

Without power and the Holy Ghost in one's experience, all they have is Word only which is another gospel. Paul said if one preaches or receives another gospel, let them go on to hell. (Gal. 1:8-9: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.") Jesus told the Pharisees in John 5:39-40 that they had Scripture--Word only but not Himself. John 5:39-40: "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 1:4: "In Him is life." I John 5:12: "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

When the gospel comes in Word, in power, and in the Holy Ghost, a person has had the human instrument cross their path with truth and then they will be able to call on the Lord in truth and be saved. Rom. 10:13-15: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" Psalms 145:18: "The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." The gospel comes in Word, power, the Holy Ghost, and:

3. In much assurance.

Assurance means entire confidence. Paul had that. (II Tim. 1:12: "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.") John said you have that too if saved. (I John 5:13: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.") The Holy Ghost bears witness to it. (Rom. 8:16: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.") Isaiah 32:17 states it is forever not just a few days. ("And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.") Notice our text verse says "much" assurance and that means a whole bunch. This is the opposite of what many say and preach today. I read in one Baptist church's statement of faith concerning assurance this and I quote, "Many Christian people often doubt their salvation. This, in itself is pretty good evidence that you are saved. Before you were saved you knew you were lost. There must have been some change made or you would have nothing to doubt." End quote. This is not true. This is a false statement, opposite from what the Bible declares. Our gospel comes with "much assurance forever." A person does not doubt what God does! Statements such as this one I have just quoted are made to give hope that the one who wrote it and ones who use it for a spiritual prop, are saved. The honest truth is that they will try to give the Lord excuse one day as to why they should enter heaven and the Lord will say "depart from me, I never knew you." (Mat. 7:22-23: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.")

This article is just a skeletal outline of a message preached at New Hope. Also we have a series called the "**Road of Light**" that explains more in depth this teaching. If you would like the message and/or the series on cassettes or cd's, just let us know. They are without charge--just for the asking. We love you and care for your soul.

THE PERSUADER - Jan.-March, 2008

THE VOICE OF THE LORD

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." John 6:63

The phrase "The voice of the Lord" is used 47 times in our Bible. In Psalm 29, the Psalmist David used the phrase seven times describing "the voice of the Lord" as being "upon the waters" (verse 3), "powerful" and "full of majesty" (verse 4), able to "breaketh the cedars" (verse 5), "divideth the flames of fire" (verse 6), "shaketh the wilderness" (verse 8) and "maketh the hinds to calve." (verse 9) This Psalm simply says the Lord is in control and what He speaks will come to pass.

We read in Gen. 1 concerning creation that "God said" eight times and "it was so"--it came to pass exactly like He said. In Deuteronomy, Moses used the phrase, "The voice of the Lord" 14 times as he gave the law to the generation of Israel that did not die in the wilderness. With repetition he exhorted the people to hearken and obey "the voice of the Lord." Basically, it stated that they would be blessed if they obeyed and cursed if they did not obey "the voice of the Lord." If the Bible uses the phrase "the voice of the Lord" 47 times, I believe it is something we need to understand and to heed.

Just what is "the voice of the Lord?" The first answer we would get is "The Bible is the Word of God." It is true that the Bible is the Word of God. Others might say "When the preacher preaches the truth he is in Christ's stead; therefore, that is the "Word of God." It is true that Paul said he was in Christ's stead (means in behalf of) in II Cor. 5:20. (II Cor. 5:20: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.") But "the voice of the Lord" you need to hear comes from the Lord through the Holy Spirit directly to your heart.

You can read the Bible and you need to, but unless the Lord quickens what you read to your heart you have not heard "the voice of the Lord." "The voice of the Lord" is not the mere voice of Christ in the Scripture. Our gospel must come with power and the Holy Ghost and not just in Word only. (I Thess. 1:5: "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. . .") The Bible must be clothed with the Holy Ghost. And unless the Holy Ghost gives a voice to the voiceless letters and takes that truth out of the Bible and rivets it on our hearts, the Bible is no more to us than any other book. Some say the Word is sharp--only if the Holy Ghost sharpens it, otherwise it is just ink on paper. (Heb. 4:12: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.")

The preacher can preach the truth gun-barrel straight but if the Holy Ghost does not quicken that truth to your heart, then all you will hear is just a bunch of words that mean nothing to you. It is true God uses a human instrument in one's life if they are to be saved. (I Cor. 3:5: "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" Rom. 10:13-15a: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" Yet, the Holy Ghost must quicken that truth to you for you to be saved. Many make false professions by doing what their preacher says. Having confidence in their preacher is good, but if the Lord through the Holy Ghost does not speak to you, you are in trouble if you just obey the voice of the preacher.

Jesus said in John 6:63. Notice, "The words that I speak are life." Not the written Word, not just the words of some preacher, but the "Words that I speak." One must be awakened by the Holy Spirit to hear His voice. "The voice of the Lord" reveals to you your lostness, and then the reproof of sin, righteousness, and judgment. He speaks to you about your lifestyle, condition, and your need for righteousness--not self-righteousness, but Jesus who is the righteousness of God. (I Cor. 1:30: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteous-ness, and sanctification, and redemption.")

What does He speak? Promises, warnings, and threatenings. When one is awakened he turns from the broad way to the narrow way which leads unto life and begins to seek the Lord who will be found at the strait gate. As the lost seeker seeks to enter the strait gate he walks the narrow way of Mat. 7:14. (Mat. 7:14: "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.") There are ditches on both sides of the narrow way. The ditch on one side is despair while the ditch on the other side is presumption--venturing without positive permission. "The voice of the Lord" gives the seeker promises to keep them out of the ditch of despair and also threatenings and warnings to keep the seekers out of the ditch of presumption. All the while teaching the seeker in the narrow way. (Psa. 25:8: "Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.")

Also "the voice of the Lord" brings faith. (Rom. 10:17: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.") The Greek word that is translated "word" is not "logos" which is usually used to represent the Bible. But the Holy Ghost used "hrema" which means "utterance." Thus, "the voice of the Lord" brings faith, whether it be intellectual, seeking, saving, or serving faith.

How does "the voice of the Lord" come? I know the Lord can speak through circumstances, storms, catastrophes, and such like, but sometimes He speaks through a still small voice as He did to Elijah when he was in Mt. Horeb. (I Kings 19:11-12: "And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.") At times He speaks in our mind and heart with literal words. We have proof of this in Acts 13:2 where the Holy Ghost spoke (said) to the church at Antioch concerning the missionaries, Barnabas and Saul. (Acts 13:2: "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and

Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.”) When this happens it is so plain and clear that you carry on a conversation with the Lord in your heart and soul. Also, at times some things come together in our hearts (it just clicks) and that brings complete peace concerning what the Lord wants in your life.

Let me say that any voice you hear and however you hear it, if it is of the Lord it will not disagree with the Bible. Therefore, you need to heed the warning of I John 4: 1: “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

The devil and his demons are liars. (John 8: 44) They will even tell you they are God, or the Lord Jesus Christ, or the Holy Ghost so they can lead you astray and deceive. How do you know the difference? What the Lord tells you will not change but what the devil tells you will change. He tries to pull you this way and then that way and that leads to confusion. Pro. 24:21 says, “Meddle not with them that are given to change.”

Paul, as a saved man, cried out in Phil. 3: 10, “That I may know him.” “Know” means to experience; therefore, Paul wanted to experience communion with the Lord as He spoke to him from time to time. So do I.

The Lord spoke a conditional promise to a group that believed on Jesus with the head (they had intellectual faith but not saving faith) and not with the heart in John 8: 31-32: --“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” Those people could have been saved if they would have met the condition He spoke of--continue in my Word. They refused to do that and Jesus said in John 8: 44: “Ye are of your father the devil.” Some would say they could not meet that condition due to their depraved condition. That is true within themselves but the Lord will enable you to obey the voice He speaks to you if you just respond to the light He gives you. Then you’ll have to say that was just grace, grace, grace!

Have you heard “the voice of the Lord?” You say I read His Word every day and I hear the preached word every time the church doors are open. That is good but that is not what I asked. Have you heard “the voice of the Lord?” If you haven’t, then all you have is a “profession” and not a “possession” of Him. (I John 5: 12: “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”) John 6: 63: “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

This is only a skeleton of some messages we have recently preached. If you would like to have a cd or cassette just let me know. Also we have a series call “The Road of Light” that gives the specifics of what this article says. We love you and care for your soul.

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