

NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK

10:50 a.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Volunteer Needed!
Cradle Roll 2: Volunteer Needed!
6:30 p.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Volunteer Needed!
Cradle Roll 2: Volunteer Needed!
Wed. Evening Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Shirley White
Cradle Roll 2: Volunteer Needed

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

Week of April 23, 2017

Sunday School ----- 19
Sunday Morning Service ----- 23
Sunday Evening Service ----- 18
Wed. Eve. Service, 04/26/17 ----- 7

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

Week of April 23, 2017

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 785.00
Total Received for Week of 04/23/17: \$ 785.00

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed
to operate the church EACH WEEK,
as a minimum = **\$ 1,400.00**



**GIVE OUT A GOSPEL
TRACT THIS WEEK!**



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WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. **Admit that you are a sinner.**
2. **Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.**
3. **Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.**
4. **You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).**
5. **By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.**



**Please Remember To
Be Faithful To Give!**

As with everything else, the costs of keeping a church going never go down - they always go **up**. Bills wait for no one, and churches are no exception to this. An extra, sacrificial gift today by everyone present would go a long way...

We encourage all of our membership to practice obedience to God by being faithful every payday to give back to Him His tithe (10%). *If every family in our church would practice this one simple discipline, we would never have weeks where we have to put off paying some bills until the following week!*

Everything is expensive, especially for a small church like ours, but ours is a BIG God, and He LOVES to bless His children when they are obedient to Him!

If you are already a tither, we thank you, and encourage you to also give offerings as well. If you're currently not tithing, won't you please start **today - OK?** Thank you.

Church Directory

Todd W. White ----- Pastor
Mickie Shatwell ----- Pianist
Lois Mae Floyd ----- Pianist/ Organist
Rayna Crawford ----- Greeter
Shayne Hooper, Brian Crawford, Charity Crawford, LeAnna White -- S.S. Teachers
Larry & Mary Byars, ----- Outreach
Bertha Segebart ----- Custodian
Flowers ----- Shirley White, Charity Crawford

SOUTH HEIGHTS BAPTIST'S WEEKLY
REMINDER

Volume XXIII

April 30, 2017

Number 14



**IN DEFENSE OF BIBLICAL,
HISTORICAL CHRISTIANITY**

by Dr. Thomas Cassidy, Pastor
First Baptist Church - Spring Valley, California

There is much confusion today caused by reading histories of Christianity that were written from decidedly different perspectives. It seems that many historians have written very biased histories of those early Christians that were considered enemies of the historian's "Church." These biased "histories" have caused much confusion regarding the true doctrines that were held by our Christian forebears.

The following is a defense of our forebears gleaned, not from the biased writings of their enemies, but from their own writings.

Most of the names used to identify these early Christians were given to them by their detractors in an attempt to identify them with men, rather than with the Lord Jesus Christ. It must be understood that all who went by the names below were not always orthodox, but within the ranks of these historical movements, the true churches of Jesus Christ were present, and the "faith once delivered unto the saints" was preserved for us today.

THE MONTANISTS

The second century of the Christian era saw the rise of a group of Christians called **Montanists**. In most church histories the Montanists are classed as heretics (as were all groups that tended to hold doctrines that did not agree with the writer of the history book, most of which were either Catholic, or liberal Protestant). However, a careful study of their beliefs and practices reveal they were orthodox, and a part of our Baptist heritage. Montanism was the first general stand against the drift away from church purity and spirituality.

The Montanists were named because of the preaching of a man named **Montanus**. He had been a priest of the pagan cult of Cybele, but was converted to Christ about 150 A.D. Montanism began in central Phrygia (now called Asia Minor) in a town called Ardabau, but its teachings quickly spread to Europe and Africa. Montanism was found in Rome, and Lyons, France, in 177 A.D.

Montanus began preaching in 156 A.D., and gathered many followers, including two women of prominence, Maximilla and Priscilla.

Soon after the apostolic age, great changes began to occur in many of the churches. Some of these changes were: a drift toward ritualism; the rise of a clergy class; a lack of spirituality, and a developing laxity in discipline and church membership standards. Montanism was in reality a crusade to restore churches to their spiritual simplicity - to get them back to the New Testament basics. The Montanists were sarcastically called "Spirituals." Montanus laid great emphasis upon the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers and the churches, and declared that the clergy had no franchise on the Gospel. He was an enemy of worldly philosophy and religion.

Apart from emphasizing the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the Montanists held the following beliefs and practices: a regenerate church membership; believers baptism, by immersion only, and re-baptized those who came to them from the "established" churches;

(continued inside)

holiness of life, opposing second marriages, laxity in fastings, and flight in persecution; church discipline, their creed stated, “Against a mortal sin the church should defend itself by rightly excluding him who committed it, for the holiness of the church was simply the holiness of its members.” They believed in Trinitarian theology; the complete Word of God, accepting all the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments; premillennial eschatology, looking for the soon return of Christ to set up His millennial kingdom on earth. These chiliastic views were also held by Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Tertullian.

It may be that the unpopularity of the Montanists contributed to the demise of premillennialism in the early years of the church. The Montanist churches were not popular with the “established” churches, so, much of what was said about them was unkind, to say the least. Recent historians in general have sided with the opponents of Montanism, and several charges have been laid against them. The most common charge was that the Montanists were “ancient holy-rollers.”

It is claimed that Montanus said he was the Paraclete, and that his followers claimed extra-Biblical revelations. Unfortunately there is no proof to support these charges. The spirituality and life of Montanist churches so contrasted with the formality and deadness of the main-stream churches, that such conclusions may easily have been drawn. If a Roman Catholic or High Anglican came to a Bible-believing Baptist church today, he would probably think it was very emotional too, what with strong preaching, and an invitation at the end!

The Lutheran historian Mosheim accuses Montanus of calling himself the Paraclete, but the translator of his history, McLean, adds the following footnote: **“Those are undoubtedly mistaken who have asserted that Montanus gave himself out that he was the Holy Ghost”** (Church History, Mosheim, Vol. I, Page 188).

Armitage concludes, **“For this reason Montanus was charged with assuming to be the Holy Spirit, which was simply a slander”** (Armitage, T.; A History of the Baptists, page 175).

W. A. Jarrell cites Tertullian's explanation of an “ecstasy” and concludes that he probably meant nothing more than what David said - “My cup runneth over.”

Tertullian, referring to visions and extra-Biblical revelations said: **“But truly according as the Scriptures are read, or Psalms are sung, or addresses are given, or prayers are offered, thence, from that medium are materials by which we are assisted by visions.”** The context of this statement clearly indicates what we would call “illumination” today. Nothing “extra-Biblical” about that! It is generally admitted that the Montanist churches accepted the received doctrines of the “established” church - their only differences being that of emphasis and practice.

It is possible, but not conclusively proven, that some Montanist churches did hold to questionable or unscriptural practices, such as ordination of women. Some churches may have allowed women to preach because of their belief that the gifts of the Holy

Spirit are dispensed to Christians of every condition and sex, without distinction.

Triune immersion may have been practiced in some Montanist churches.

Some of the Montanist Pastors may have remained celibate, but no conclusive statement to that effect can be found, however, it may have been the more practical precaution in time of persecution according to I Corinthians 7:26-29 (compare to verses 8 and 9).

They were accused of practicing harsh asceticism by those who lived very liberal life styles, and that they practiced harsh church discipline. It should be noted that each of these practices, even if true, are not unknown in some Baptist churches today.

The preaching of the Montanists had far ranging results. Tertullian was a noted convert to Montanist ideals, who helped to refine those teachings and left a legacy in North Africa (Tertullianists) which would later give rise to the Donatists.

Several church councils were called against the Montanist movement, and it was finally officially condemned by the “established” churches. The influence of this movement may be seen in the Novatian schism, the Donatus schism, and through its contacts in Armenia and the rise of the Paulicians.

Several defenders among historians may be found for the Montanists, some of whom are cited here:

1. The conclusion of an early historian, Dr. William R. Williams, is that it was hard to find doctrinal errors in their teaching. Their emotionalism stemmed from their belief that a true experience of grace is evident in the believers life, as many other teachers have stressed in much later periods of reform.

2. Dr. Dorner wrote of their movement that it was a democratic reaction of the church members against the movement to install church leaders as overlords in the church body.

3. Moller, contributor to the Schaff-Herzog Religious Encyclopedia, wrote, **“But Montanism was, nevertheless, not a new form of Christianity; nor were the Montanists a new sect. On the contrary, Montanism was, simply a reaction of the old, the primitive church, against the obvious tendency of the day, to strike a bargain with the world and arrange herself comfortably in it.”** (Quoted from : Griffith, J. W., A Manual of Church History: Volume II, page 36).

(more next week)



**GIVE OUT A GOSPEL
TRACT THIS WEEK!**

NEWS OF INTEREST TO CHRISTIANS

‘ ECUMENISTS AND NEW EVANGELICALS ARE CONFUSED ABOUT THE DIRECTION OF LOVE - The ecumenically-minded crowd, which is (often unwittingly) building the one-world church, does not understand biblical love. They are confused about the definition of love (e.g., its intimate association with knowledge and judgment and obedience, Phil. 1:9-10; I John 5:3). They are also confused about the direction of love.

The first direction of love must be toward God. **“Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment”** (Matt. 22:37-38). I must love God enough to take a stand for His Word, to fear God more than I fear man. We agree with Charles Haddon Spurgeon when he said: “On all hands we hear cries for unity in this, and unity in that; but to our mind the main need of this age is not compromise, but conscientiousness. ‘First pure, then peaceable.’ It is easy to cry ‘a confederacy,’ but that union which is not based upon the truth of God is rather a conspiracy than a communion. Charity by all means; but honesty also. Love, of course, but love to God as well as love to men, and love of truth as well as love of union. It is exceedingly difficult in these times to preserve one’s fidelity before God and one’s fraternity among men. Should not the former be preferred to the latter if both cannot be maintained? We think so” (Spurgeon, “The Down Grade - Second Article,” The Sword and the Trowel, April 1887, Notes, p. 16). The second direction of love must be toward those who are in spiritual danger. The Lord Jesus instructed Peter to “feed my sheep” John 21:16-17. I need to love the Lord’s sheep more than I love wolves.

‘ A WARNING ABOUT PETER RUCKMAN - There are independent Baptist churches that are a great blessing to this dark world, but some are cultic. And one of those is Bible Baptist Church of Pensacola, Florida, founded by the late Peter Ruckman. This twice-divorced, thrice-married pastor exalted the King James Bible as “advanced revelation” superior to the Greek and Hebrew from which it was translated. He claimed that God shut the door of revelation in 1611 (The Monarch of Books, p. 9).

In the books The Salient Verses and The Unknown Bible, Ruckman claimed to have discovered hundreds of advanced revelations in the Bible that no other man has found. He stated on page 347 of The Unknown Bible, **“Do you realize that in these last two chapters, you have learned a dozen things that were unknown to the greatest Bible teachers in the world?”** These new teachings include the idea that angels are 33-year-old males, that all believing women will receive 33-year-old male bodies at the Rapture, that when the believer is born again his soul is literally cut loose from the inside of his fleshly body, that demons are winged creatures ranging in size from that of flies to eagles, and that the soul is an invisible bodily shape.

In his tract **Millions Disappear: Fact or Fiction?** Ruckman

claimed that men are saved in different ways in different ages, by faith plus works in the Old Testament and in the Tribulation and by works alone in the Millennium.

In his book **Black Is Beautiful**, Ruckman described his belief in space aliens. He suggested that some of the medieval plagues were caused by UFOs, that a B-52 bomber was downed by a UFO and that aliens disemboweled the crew members, that a crew member of a US Navy ship was transported into the future, that the CIA operates underground alien breeding facilities (p. 256), that there are web footed aliens, blue aliens with blue blood (pp. 85, 86), black aliens with green blood (p. 244), grey aliens with clear blood (pp. 310-11), and that Adam originally had water in his veins instead of blood (p. 185).

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