

REMINDER

Volume XV

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Number 35



Faithful

by Dr. Paul Chappell, Pastor
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"In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled" (Matthew 26:55-56).

Your faithfulness to God will depend on your daily commitment to Him. Have you ever wandered through a graveyard and read the headstones of those who had passed on? Most give a day of birth, day of death, and perhaps a short description of their lives. "Beloved Mother, Grandmother, and Friend" "Friend to All, Foe to None" "A Great Fisherman" - the essence of a person's life is many times summed up in a few short words on a tombstone.

I remember visiting an old cemetery back East one time. As I wandered through the tombstones, I came upon one that caught me off guard. There was no day of birth, no day of death. No picture or fancy inscription. There was a single word carved into the tombstone over that body. The tombstone simply read "**Faithful.**" The word that summed up that person's life was faithful.

As I read that tombstone, I wondered what that person had done to earn the title of "faithful." How much had they sacrificed to earn that title? What had they endured to be worthy of such an honorable word? But more than that, I wondered if I could be described as faithful at the end of my life. Would people look back and remember that I had faithfully served my Lord, even during the difficulties of life?

Think about the Christians who have remained faithful through history. Paul was beaten, stoned, left for dead, and suffered unbelievable difficulties. Yet he remained faithful. Early church leaders were persecuted for their faith, and some were even killed, yet they remained faithful. The Waldensians and many during the Middle Ages were threatened with unthinkable torture for

(continued inside)

professing Christianity, yet they remained faithful. John Bunyan was beaten and imprisoned for preaching the Gospel, yet he remained faithful. John Wesley was chased out of churches for his biblical views, yet he remained faithful. Early Pilgrims had to leave their homes and travel to a new land to freely worship, yet they remained faithful. So many Christians who have gone before us have endured the harshest of treatment yet have remained faithful to God. What would it take to turn us away from the Lord?

One of the saddest moments in biblical history is relayed in our verses today. Notice the end of verse 56, "Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled." The men into whom Christ had invested three years of His life, the men Jesus had personally chosen to accompany Him, the men over whom Christ had labored, decided that standing with Christ wasn't worth the cost. They chose to turn from the Lord rather than suffer.

Too often Christians follow God when it's convenient for them. They want God's blessings so they attend church and read their Bibles when things are going well, but the minute Christianity begins to cost them something, they give it up. They aren't committed to God; they aren't faithful.

Take a minute to think about this question: What would it take to make you turn **from** Christ? What would have to happen in your life for you to turn your back on God? Like Peter, so many people refuse the thought of denying Christ, but stronger Christians than us have fallen in times of adversity. Only those who are completely committed to God will be able to remain faithful in all circumstances.

How strong is **your** faith? At the end of **your** life will people be able to describe you as "**Faithful**"? Trials will come and difficulties will arise, but God wants you to remain faithful to Him in spite of them. Spend time right now to recommit your life to God. Commit to remaining faithful to Him, even if everyone else turns away from Him. Remember that even though all forsook Christ, He faithfully faced the Cross for you. ■



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IN DEFENSE OF BIBLICAL, HISTORICAL CHRISTIANITY

by Dr. Thomas Cassidy, Pastor
First Baptist Church - Spring Valley, California
(ninth and final installment in the series)

WHAT DID THE ANABAPTISTS BELIEVE? (Part 2)

In addition to the previous listings, W.A. Jarrell cites a paper read before the American Society of Church History, which adds the following distinctives:

(17) **The Authority of the Scriptures.** Anabaptists held the Bible to be the only authority in matters of faith and practice.

An interesting question is, "Which Bible?"

"The Waldenses translated the Bible into the Romance and Teutonic languages early in the thirteenth century, the Baptists retained these versions of the Bible two hundred years after Luther's version. The oldest German Bible is of Baptist origin." (J. T. Christian, page 91). This German Bible is the Tepl Version from the 14th century which **"differs considerably from the Latin Vulgate, used by the Roman Church, and resembles the German translations in use from the introduction of printing to the making of Luther's translation, which latter shows many signs of its influence, as does still more a later translation again, used for a century by those then called Anabaptists and Mennonites."** (Broadbent, page 112). These Waldensian Bibles were directly related to the ancient Old Latin translation (150 A.D.) and marked the 'living stream' whereby God preserved His pure Word.

(18) **Salvation Through the Blood of Christ.** Jarrell rightly notes that **"This demonstrates that they were not Universalists or Unitarians. Since there can be no human blood atonement for sin, they certainly were sound on the deity of Christ."**

(19) **Missions.** The Anabaptists sent forth a multitude of missionaries. According to W. W. Everts (as cited by Jerrell), **"they were the most determined colporteurs and missionaries throughout Europe."** **"To the Anabaptist the religious life was to be an active, even aggressive, discipleship. One feature of this mission outreach was mass baptisms. At Munster in 1534 there were 1,400 in a week and at times nearly whole villages would be baptized in one ceremony."** (Anderson, page 50).

"In addition to the above, they also believed in the sin nature of all men, the security of infants, strict church discipline, and the right of each church to select its own pastor (local church autonomy).

"The (Ana) Baptists of the reformation period have been referred to as the 'second front' and the 'left wing' of the protestant reformation. Although somewhat inaccurate, such titles do reflect the radically differing opinions of the protestants, who sought to **reform** Rome using the Bible, and the Baptists who sought to **replace** Rome **with** the Bible. Although initially supportive of

what the reformers were doing, the Baptists soon despaired of the course of events and quickly found themselves 'offside'.

"Before long, Baptists were facing persecution from two quarters - the Catholics and the Protestants. The Diet of Speyer (Lutheran) in 1529 decreed the death penalty for Anabaptists. In 1536, Luther signed a memorandum written by Melancthon assenting to the death penalty for Anabaptists.

"Only the Lutheran prince Philip, the Landgrave of Hesse, refused to kill Anabaptists. He was a true libertarian, and his lands provided haven for many Baptists.

"It was Zwingli's angry outburst, *'Let those who talk of going under go under indeed!'*, which gave rise to the method of death by drowning of Anabaptists. Frustrated by his early debates with the Anabaptist leaders, Zwingli and the Swiss authorities became unmerciful in their extermination of Baptists and great numbers of them perished.

"Those that escaped fled to regions of relative safety - Moravia, the Netherlands, and areas along the Rhine. By 1535, the Anabaptist movement in Switzerland had been overcome. John Calvin was a despiser of Anabaptists who advised that *'Anabaptists and reactionists should alike be put to death.'* Calvin's fiercest theological conflicts were with ... Servetus, ...the Anabaptists, the Socinians, etc. ... heresy he could [do] away with, and he soon decided that the only efficient argument against it was the fagot or the sword." (Newman, page 223).

The influx of Waldensian believers had made the Netherlands one of the most liberal areas of reformation Europe. All kinds of beliefs were tolerated there, but up to 1533 the Anabaptists (often called Mennonites in Holland) were the most prolific. From 1555 Jesuit intrigue brought the Inquisition to Holland, and the Duke of Alva desolated the country from 1567-73. Great atrocities were committed against Calvinists and Anabaptists alike.

William of Orange was the one who saved Holland, and the Union of Utrecht proclaimed that *"every individual should remain free in his religion, and that no man should be molested or questioned on the subject of divine worship."* This was the result of the Baptist heritage in the Dutch Republic.

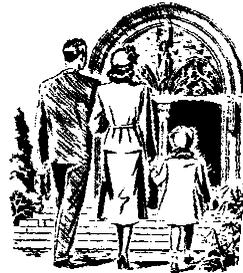
By order of the emperor Ferdinand I of Austria, many Anabaptists were burned and drowned in that country. Jakob Huter took up the mantle of Blaurock and held many meetings in hidden locations. Despite the most awful sentences of torture and death, churches continued to grow throughout Austria and Hungary. Huter was finally burned at the stake in Innsbruck in 1536 and the baton fell to Hans Mandl who courageously carried on the great work of the Lord.

Balthasar Hubmaier published a tract in 1524 which said: *"The burning of heretics cannot be justified by the Scripture. Christ Himself teaches that the tares should be allowed to grow with the wheat. He did not come to burn, or to murder, but to*

give life, and that more abundantly. We should, therefore, pray and hope for improvement in men as long as they live. If they cannot be convinced by appeals to reason, or the Word of God, they should be let alone. One cannot be made to see his errors by fire or sword."

CONCLUSION -

From the earliest days of the first century until today, there has always been a representative people who held to the true doctrines of the Word of God, and thus represented the true New Testament church. We, as Baptists, are *not* protestants, reformed, or something new that arose in the 16th or 17th century. We are an ancient people, following the precepts of the Lord, in a 'trail of blood' that leads from the time of Christ's earthly ministry down through the ages until today. That is our Baptist Heritage. ■



HOW TO CONDUCT YOURSELF DURING PREACHING

"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."
- 1 Timothy 3:15

1. SIT RESPECTFULLY AND ALERTLY

Examples of what not to do: leaning on your elbows with your head down and chewing gum. Such things send signals that you are not interested in what the preacher is saying. Remember that others are watching you. Your attitude and very bodily posture affects the preacher, those sitting around you, and the entire atmosphere of the service.

2. DON'T DISTRACT OTHERS

Examples of things that distract others are talking and writing notes back and forth between persons, making noise (i.e., cracking your fingers), playing with babies, and children looking at the people behind them. Parents need to be aware of what their children are doing and make certain that they are not distracting someone.

Another example is leaving the service to go to the restroom. Parents should make sure that their children don't develop this distracting habit. It is extremely dishonoring to the Word of God that is being preached. There is plenty of time to go to the bathroom before and after the services. Of course, if an individual

has a medical or health problem that requires him or her to leave the service, that is a different matter altogether. Such a person can sit in the back and slip out quietly.

3. LISTEN WELL

❑ **LISTEN WITH COMPASSION TOWARD THE PREACHER** - God uses all kinds of men and not all are powerful, fascinating speakers. It appears that Paul wasn't (2 Cor. 10:10). Jonathan Edwards preached one of the most famous of sermons, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," but Edwards was not a great speaker. In fact, he simply read the sermon. The preacher who was instrumental in the conversion of Charles Spurgeon was not a mighty speaker. Spurgeon described him as a very simple, uninteresting speaker, yet how greatly God used him! Remember that God can use weak men. An example is Solomon. He had tremendous problems, but God used him to write three important books of the Bible, including the book of Proverbs, which is the book of wisdom. Our eyes must be upon God and not upon the preacher. Listen to the preacher as you would want people to listen to you. Avoid a critical attitude.

❑ **LISTEN PRAYERFULLY.** Nothing significant is accomplished apart from prayer (Rom. 12:12; Eph. 6:18; Col. 4:2; I Thess. 5:17). Pray for yourself. Pray for the preacher. Pray for others who are in attendance.

❑ **LISTEN ATTENTIVELY.** Listen as if Jesus Christ were speaking. I Peter 4:11 says the speaker is to be the very oracle of God, meaning His mouthpiece. If you listen carefully and seek something from the Lord, you can be edified even from a seemingly boring message. Don't let your mind wander to other things. Don't do something else when you should be listening to the preaching. I have seen people read novels in church! More often they read the hymnal or pass notes or other such things. You won't get anything from the preaching if you don't listen attentively.

❑ **LISTEN WITH AN OPEN, SUBMISSIVE HEART.** God's invitation is extended throughout the message and not merely at the end. Let God speak to you, reprove, rebuke, and exhort you. Don't think that the preaching is for someone else. Don't make excuses for your sins and faults.

❑ **LISTEN WITH FAITH (Heb. 4:1-2).** The Word of God is ineffective unless it is "mixed with faith." Some listen to preaching as a form of entertainment. They enjoy it but they don't believe it enough to change how they live. This was how the Jews were listening to the prophet Ezekiel: "*And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not*" (Ezek. 33:31-32).

❑ **LISTEN DISCERNINGLY.** The Bible warns that we

must not put our trust in man (Jer. 17:5). We must carefully test all preaching by the Word of God (Acts 17:11; I Cor. 14:29; I Thess. 5:21).

❑ **LISTEN STUDIOUSLY (II Tim. 2:15).** Have paper and pen ready so that you can capture something from the message. Write things in your Bible (important things, such as cross references, definitions, important thoughts). By the way, you should have your own Bible rather than merely looking on with someone else. Take notes of the important points. Write down things to study later, things to check later, and things to share with others. This will help you remember what is preached.

4. TREAT THE INVITATION SERIOUSLY

Respond to the invitation as Lord leads, and pray for others. Be careful not to distract others during the invitation. Be conscious of their needs. ■



Dr. Chuck Baldwin

Romans Chapter 13 Revisited

by Dr. Chuck Baldwin, Pastor
Crossroad Baptist Church
Pensacola, Florida

It seems that every time someone such as myself attempts to encourage our Christian brothers and sisters to resist an unconstitutional or otherwise reprehensible government policy, we hear the retort, "What about Romans Chapter 13? We Christians must submit to government. Any government. Read your Bible, and leave me alone." Or words to that effect.

No doubt, some who use this argument are sincere. They are only repeating what they have heard their pastor and other religious leaders say. On the other hand, let's be honest enough to admit that some who use this argument are just plain lazy, apathetic, and indifferent. And Romans 13 is their escape from responsibility. I suspect this is the much larger group, by the way.

Nevertheless, for the benefit of those who are sincere (but obviously misinformed), let's briefly examine Romans Chapter 13. I quote Romans Chapter 13, verses 1 through 7-

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that

doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."

Do our Christian friends who use these verses to teach that we should not oppose America's political leaders really believe that civil magistrates have unlimited authority to do anything they want without opposition? I doubt whether they truly believe that.

For example, what if our President decided to resurrect the old monarchical custom of Jus Primae Noctis (Law of First Night)? That was the old medieval custom when the king claimed the right to sleep with a subject's bride on the first night of their marriage. Would our sincere Christian brethren sheepishly say, "Romans Chapter 13 says we must submit to the government"? I think not. And would any of us respect any man who would submit to such a law?

So, there are limits to authority. A father has authority in his home, but does this give him power to abuse his wife and children? Of course not. An employer has authority on the job, but does this give him power to control the private lives of his employees? No. A pastor has overseer authority in the church, but does this give him power to tell employers in his church how to run their businesses? Of course not. All human authority is limited in nature. No man has unlimited authority over the lives of other men. (Lordship and Sovereignty is the exclusive domain of Jesus Christ.)

By the same token, a civil magistrate has authority in civil matters, but his authority is limited and defined. Observe that Romans Chapter 13 clearly limits the authority of civil government by strictly defining its purpose: ***"For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. . . For he is the minister of God to thee for good . . . for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."***

Notice that civil government must not be a ***"terror to good works."*** It has no power or authority to terrorize good works or good people. God never gave it that authority. And any government that oversteps that divine boundary has no divine authority or protection. This is a basic principle of Natural Law (and all of America's legal documents--including the U.S. Constitution--are founded upon the God-ordained principles of Natural Law).

The apostle clearly states that civil government is a ***"minister of God to thee for good."*** It is not a minister of God for evil. Civil magistrates have a divine duty to ***"execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."*** They have no authority to execute wrath upon him that doeth good. None. Zilch. Zero. And anyone who says they do is lying. So, even in the midst of telling Christians to submit to civil authority, Romans Chapter 13 limits the power and reach of civil authority.

Did Moses violate God's principle of submission to authority when he killed the Egyptian taskmaster in defense of his fellow

Hebrew? Did Elijah violate God's principle of submission to authority when he openly challenged Ahab and Jezebel? Did David violate God's principle of submission to authority when he refused to surrender to Saul's troops? Did Daniel violate God's principle of submission to authority when he disobeyed the king's command to not pray audibly to God? Did the three Hebrew children violate God's principle of submission to authority when they refused to bow to the image of the state? Did John the Baptist violate God's principle of submission to authority when he publicly scolded King Herod for his infidelity? Did Simon Peter and the other Apostles violate God's principle of submission to authority when they refused to stop preaching on the streets of Jerusalem? Did Paul violate God's principle of submission to authority when he refused to obey those authorities who demanded that he abandon his missionary work? In fact, Paul spent almost as much time in jail as he did out of jail.

Remember that every apostle of Christ (except John) was killed by hostile civil authorities opposed to their endeavors. Christians throughout church history were imprisoned, tortured, or killed by civil authorities of all stripes for refusing to submit to their various laws and prohibitions. Did all of these Christian martyrs violate God's principle of submission to authority?

So, even the great prophets, apostles, and writers of the Bible (including the writer of Romans Chapter 13) understood that human authority--even civil authority--is limited.

Plus, Paul makes it clear that our submission to civil authority must be predicated on more than fear of governmental retaliation. Notice, he said, "Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." Meaning, our obedience to civil authority is more than just "because they said so." It is also a matter of conscience. This means we must think and reason for ourselves regarding the justness and rightness of our government's laws. Obedience is not automatic or robotic. It is a result of both rational deliberation and moral approbation.

Therefore, there are times when civil authority may need to be resisted. Either governmental abuse of power or the violation of conscience (or both) could precipitate civil disobedience. Of course, how and when we decide to resist civil authority is an entirely separate issue. And I will reserve that discussion for another time.

Beyond that, we in the United States of America do not live under a monarchy. We have no king. There is no single governing official in this country. America's "supreme Law" does not rest with any man or any group of men. America's "supreme Law" does not rest with the President, the Congress, or even the Supreme Court. In America, the U.S. Constitution is the "supreme Law of the Land." Under our laws, every governing official publicly promises to submit to the Constitution of the United States. Do readers understand the significance of this distinction? I hope so.

This means that, in America, the "higher powers" are not the men who occupy elected office; they are the tenets and principles
(more next week)

NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK

10:50 a.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Shirley White
 Cradle Roll 2: Merri Geroux
 6:00 p.m. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Kelsey Moreno
 Cradle Roll 2: Andrea Hooper
 Wed. Eve. Service ----- Cradle Roll 1: Shirley White
 Cradle Roll 2: Merri Geroux

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

Week of August 23, 2009

Sunday School ----- 23
 Sunday Morning Service ----- 35
 Sunday Evening Service ----- 34
 Wed. Eve. Service, 08/26/09 ----- 31

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

Week of August 23, 2009

Undesignated Tithes & Offerings ----- \$ 1,438.00
 New Hymnals Fund ----- \$ 40.00
 Total Received for Week of 08/23/09: \$ 1,478.00

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

FUND DRIVE REPORTS

NEW HYMNAL FUND

Offerings Received To Date: \$ 1,620.00

NEW PIANO FUND

Offerings Received To Date: \$ 574.00

PARSONAGE RENOVATION FUND

Total Received, To Date: \$ 449.00



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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

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 Mickie Shatwell ----- Pianist
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 Nathaniel & Rebekah White ----- Outreach
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