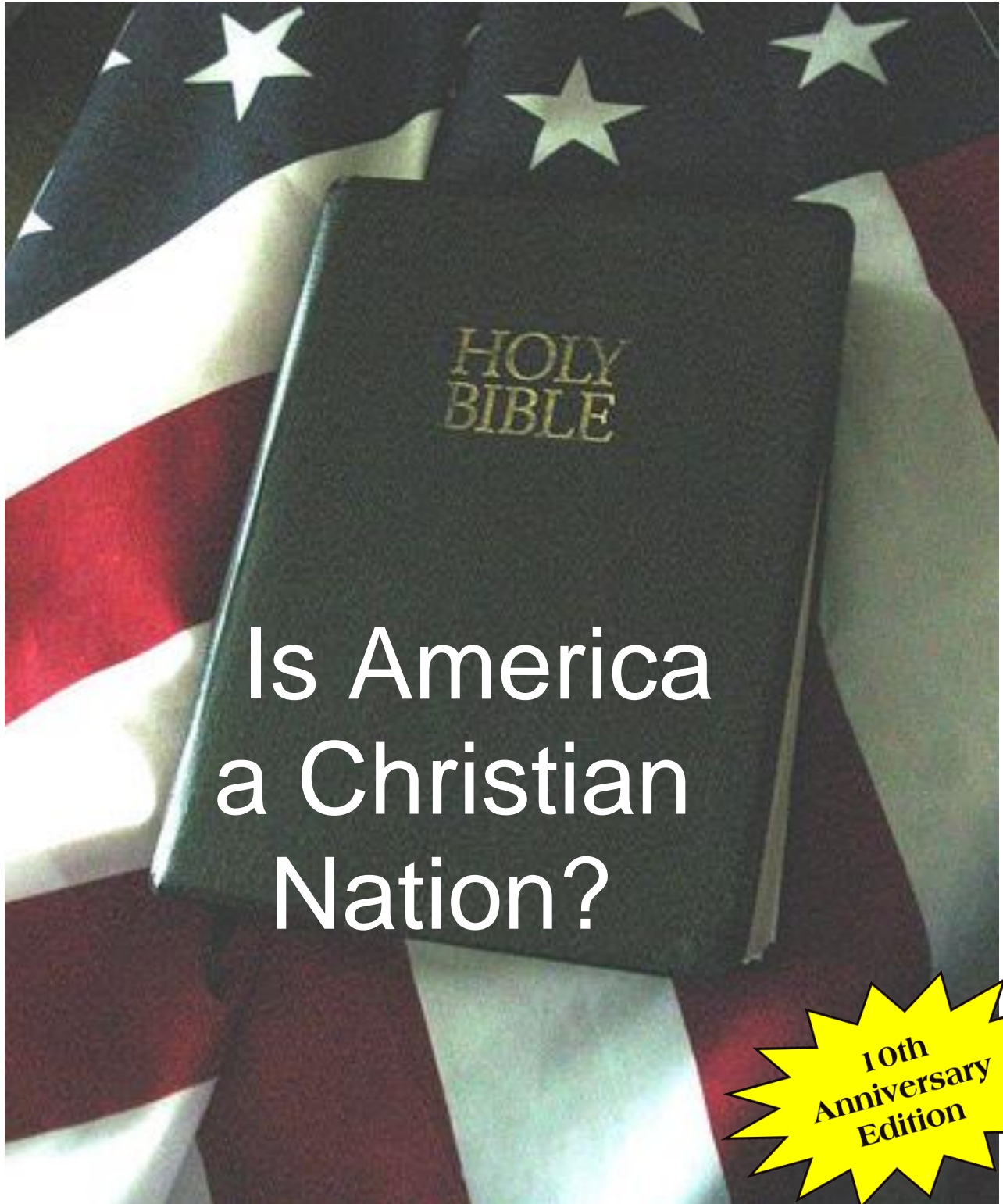


The Bible Guys

July/Aug. 2008
of Yesterday and Today 175



Is America
a Christian
Nation?

10th
Anniversary
Edition

The Bible Guys

of Yesterday and Today

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The People of Truth
A Holy Nation

With 10 years behind us, The Bible Guys looks ahead

By David M. McNabb

This issue marks 10 years of The Bible Guys publication. Over that time we have watched this outlet of the ministry continually grow in scope and distribution. In July of 1998, The Bible Guys was a 1-page church bulletin with a distribution of about 25 in our local church in Western Massachusetts. That quickly grew, and was soon being sent all across the United States, and to several foreign countries. Today, The Bible Guys is more than a bulletin, and has a distribution of around 1500 and continues to grow. Praise the Lord.

Over the years, we have written scores of articles on many different subjects. The Bible is truly inexhaustible in its scope of the wisdom and knowledge of God. While one might not see eye to eye with us on every topic, most, if not all, readers have been blessed in the broad range of topics we have covered.

As we see the day of the Lord's return drawing ever nearer, we will continue to watch the signs of our times, and highlight them in this forum. Still, there are many things that are contained in the manifold wisdom of God, and all of it is beneficial to every believer and to all mankind. As God continues to bless us in this endeavor, we will be diligent to search His word, and declare it here, in the pages of this monthly publication.

Yes, I did say "MONTHLY." Since the end of last year, we have been in transition, moving our base of operations from Massachusetts to central Oklahoma. In the process, we have printed The Bible Guys bi-monthly (and sometimes late at that). Now, as things have settled down, we can now resume monthly publication!

Adding to the difficulties we found in the move alone, our Savin copier/printer (already showing signs of wear) started becoming less and less reliable: more paper jams, less quality. Also the printing process was tedious, first printing to the copier, then a second step on an inkjet to print the color, then printing mailing labels, and finally folding, assembling, and labeling. So, as we start our eleventh year, we do so with a new laser color copier. With the built-in folding unit, and the use of the mail merge feature, The *new* Bible Guys will come out of the printer practically ready-to-mail!

Not only will you see an improvement in the overall quality of The Bible Guys look and feel, but we can further enhance the readers' experience with more flexibility in graphics and pictures, something I have hoped to do more since the beginning. In upcoming issues, we will be looking for ways to "get more graphic."

You can be a part of another area I would like to improve: reader participation. I would like to see more of your input. Whether you have a letter to the editor, a general question, or something you would like to see published (a poem, a picture, or a topic that you have written on), please submit it. Anything that is appropriate for this publication is more than welcome.

Some other exciting changes are being made as well! The People of Truth website (www.tpot.org) is in the early stages of being updated. The new site will have a bulletin board, links to news headlines, Bible tools, and much more. When all of the changes are in place, you might even want to make it your home page!

A lot is happening, and there is much more to come. Be a part of it. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, let us know. May God continually use this publication to bless, inform and inspire you for a long time to come!



A Christian Nation?

Every July, we celebrate the birth of the United States of America. There is a great debate as to whether the founders ever intended for America to be Christian in nature. Was their intention to maintain a strict “wall of separation” between the new country’s religious and political spheres? And just what, if any, was the religion to which the founders so often referred? To be sure, America was never wholly Christian, for at no time were all of her citizens or elected officials born-again believers. As to the vision which the founders and early shapers of this country had for it, you decide: were they mere deists, if anything, as the historical revisionists propose, or was it the God of the Bible to whom they looked? What did they have to say for themselves?

“It is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor.” **George Washington**, *First President of the United States and Signer of the Constitution*

“We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.” **John Adams**, *Second President of the United States and Signer of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights*

“And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever.” **Thomas Jefferson**, *Third President of the United States and Signer and principal author of the Declaration of Independence*

“Is it not that in the chain of human events, the birthday of the na-

tion is indissolubly linked with the birthday of the Savior? – that it forms a leading event in the progress of the Gospel dispensation? Is it not that the Declaration of Independence first organized the social compact on the foundation of the Redeemer’s mission upon earth? – That it laid the cornerstone of human government upon the first precepts of Christianity?” **John Quincy Adams**, *Sixth President of the United States*

“The Bible is the best of all books, for it is the word of God and teaches us the way to be happy in this world and in the next. Continue therefore to read it and to regulate your life by its precepts.” “Providence has given to our people the choice of their rulers, and it is the duty, as well as the privilege and interest of our Christian nation, to select and prefer Christians for their rulers.” **John Jay**, *First Chief-Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court and Co-author of the Federalist Papers*

“One of the beautiful boasts of our municipal jurisprudence is that Christianity is a part of the Common Law ... There never has been a period in which the Common Law did not recognize Christianity as lying at its foundations ... I verily believe Christianity necessary to the support of civil society.” **Joseph Story**, *U.S. Supreme Court Justice (placed on the Court by James Madison)*

“We are a Christian people ... not because the law demands it, not to gain exclusive benefits or to avoid legal disabilities, but from choice and education; and in a land thus universally Christian, what is to be expected, what desired, but that we shall pay due regard to Christianity?” **Senate Judiciary Committee Report**, *January 19, 1853*

“At the time of the adoption of the Constitution and the amendments, the universal sentiment was that Christianity should be encouraged ... In this age there can be no substitute for Christianity ... That was the religion of the founders of the republic and they expected it to remain the religion of their descendants.” **House Judiciary Committee Report**, *March 27, 1854*

“Let every student be plainly instructed and earnestly pressed to consider well the main end of his life and studies is to know God and Jesus Christ which is eternal life (John 17:3) and therefore to lay Christ in the bottom as

the only foundation of all second knowledge and learning. And seeing the Lord only giveth wisdom, let every one seriously set himself by prayer in secret to seek it of Him (Proverbs 2,3). Every one shall so exercise himself in reading the Scriptures twice a day that he shall be ready to give such an account of his proficiency therein.” **Harvard**, *1636 Student Guidelines*

“All the scholars are required to live a religious and blameless life according to the rules of God’s Word, diligently reading the Holy Scriptures, that fountain of Divine light and truth, and constantly attending all the duties of religion.” **Yale**, *1787 Student Guidelines*

“There is no dissonance in these [legal] declarations ... These are not individual sayings, declarations of private persons: they are organic [legal, governmental] utterances; they speak the voice of the entire people ... These, and many other matters which might be noticed, add a volume of unofficial declarations to the mass of organic utterances that this is a Christian nation.” **Unanimous Supreme Court decision in the case of Church of the Holy Trinity v. U.S.**, *1892*

“Why may not the Bible, and especially the New Testament, without note or comment, be read and taught as a divine revelation in [schools] – its general precepts expounded, its evidences explained and its glorious principles of morality inculcated? ... Where can the purest principles of morality be learned so clearly or so perfectly as from the New Testament?” **Unanimous Supreme Court decision in the case of Vidal v. Girard’s Executors**, *1844*

Was America ever universally Christian? No. But was it intended to be a Christian nation? What did the political and educational founders say? The word of God declares that “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God” (Psalm 9:17).

God bless America? God’s own word shows how that can happen: “Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord” (Psalm 33:12a).

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2 Chron. 7:14). ☞

The Fields are White Again

By C. Elden McNabb

King Solomon passed along a good bit of wisdom to the children of God, in Ecclesiastes 9:10, saying, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.”

Whoever we are, and whatever our calling in Christ Jesus, we will spend much our lives in the work of God working at what our hands find to do. God does not micro-manage our life’s work in His service, but He does direct our steps. From time to time He will actually give specific instructions to us by the Holy Spirit, either directly or through another of His saints. And when we move in the direction the Holy Spirit is leading, God will “work things out” as we go along.

Then there are those special times of important, grand scale fulfillment of prophecy concerning God’s work in the Church. Whenever such times arise, God always raises up a Director who, in turn, will establish the offices required by the relevant prophecies, and ordain the people necessary to the proper and effective execution of the work involved. It happened in the first century A.D. among the Jews, and prophecy requires that it happen again; this time among the Gentiles, thereby setting the stage for the grafting in again of the Jews, just about the time of the coming of the Bridegroom (Rom. 2:6-11).

God had set seventy weeks of years (490 years), from the release of Judah from their captivity in Persia, unto their dissolution from being a nation (Daniel 7:24-27). Those “weeks” were divided as 7 weeks, 62 weeks, and 1 week. The first 7 weeks were most likely for Judah to prove that they would then begin to keep the seventh year sabbath. The next 62 weeks, made it a total of 69, and brought them to the worse moment in

their history: they crucified the Son of God.

Obviously Jesus’ ministry occupied the last half of that 69th week of years. The whole volume of that period of 70 weeks requires that we consider that God began that 69th “week” by sending forth John the Baptist to prepare the way of the Messiah: the Son of God. Then, in about the middle of that 69th week (commonly known as the 62nd week), when John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, officially launching His ministry. He shortly ordained His twelve apostles, and a little later, His 70 prophets.

At the end of that sixty-two weeks, and after His resurrection, Jesus appointed Peter to take the leadership of the Church, (John 21:15-17; Matt. 24:45-47), and for seven years (the seventieth week), Peter *confirmed the covenant with many* (Daniel 9:27). During that week of years, Peter brought the Jewish Church to its fullness and shortly thereafter, with the “Keys of the Kingdom of heaven,” he opened the door for the Gentiles to receive redemption, beginning with the house of Cornelius (Matt. 24:45-47; Matt. 16:13-19; Acts 10:1-48).

In the middle of that seventieth week, an amazing event took place in the process of prophetic fulfillment. “The overspreading of abominations” among the Levites had angered God so very much that He annulled His covenant with Levi; finalizing the dissolution of His “marriage” to the nation of Israel at Sinai, making them desolate (Romans 7:1-4). [The covenant with Israel at Sinai was annulled at the death of Jesus on the cross at the end of the 62-week period, and was officially replaced by the New Covenant: the fourteen commandments which are given to us in full in Matthew 5:21 – 7:20.]

By the end of that seventieth week, it had become obvious that the Church of the Living God had become “The Church of the Firstborn,” replacing Levi (Hebrews 12:22-24). God had cast the shadow of it when He elected, and took the tribe of Levi from among the tribes of Israel, in-

stead of the firstborn of every family (Numbers 3:12-13). Accordingly, when the Grace Age came, and Christians began to multiply, it soon became obvious that there was a distinct separation between the “Kingdom of Heaven,” and “the Church: the Sanctuary” (Psalm 114:1-2).

The rules were not the same for all Christians. When Ananias and Sapphira died, because they laid a corrupted offering “At the Apostle’s feet, great fear came upon all the Church, and upon as many as heard these things.” The penalty for touching the Old Testament Altar with a tainted offering was death, and the New Testament Altar was the Twelve Apostles (1 Kings 18:31; Acts 5:1-2; Heb. 13:10). “And by the hands of the Apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon’s porch. And of the rest durst [dared] no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them. And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women).”

By the end of that seventieth week, the Church of God had reached its fullness. From then it was only a matter of waiting for the fulfillment of the last part of Daniel 9:27. “He shall make it desolate, even unto the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate (natural Israel).” The desolation came in about thirty seven A.D.: about three and a half years after the ascension of our High Priest. The loss of their husband was finalized. Then God waited until 70 A.D. to “pour upon the desolate” that which He had already determined.

Sometime after the Church had reached perfection, as is shown by the terror of the Lord which came upon them all, God began phase 2 of the Grace Age. Jesus appeared to Saul of Tarsus and enlisted him in the service of God to be a light of the Gentiles,” to do whatever was necessary to establish that work in such a manner that it would sustain the message of Jesus Christ, and provide “salvation unto the ends of the earth” (Isaiah 49:5-6). The Apostle Paul could not

fulfill all 2,000 years of that prophecy, therefore, we know that God will raise up a Gentile Apostle to finish its fulfillment.

Paul later told the Church of God which was at Corinth, “A dispensation of God is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God: even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles” (Col. 1:25-26).

In Romans chapters 9-11, Paul told us of a far future date for which we wait “Until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob” (Rom. 11:23-26).


By the allegory of “the harvest,” in “the parable of the tares” Jesus revealed that there is a 49-year period at the end of the Grace Age, saying, “The harvest is the end of the world.” During that 49 years, He will “gather first the tares (false Christians), and bind them into bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my [His] barn” (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43). Of course, you will need to apply the fact that Israel was commanded to keep a sabbath year every seventh year, in the planting and harvesting of their crops. The cycle was then finished by taking another sabbath during the fiftieth year, which God called “The Year of Jubilee” (Lev. 25:1-11).

God was not simply thinking things up to try their faith, although this commandment certainly did that, as is revealed by the fact that they never once carried out this commandment, except possibly during the first “seven weeks” of the 70 weeks. That 50-year cycle is a prophecy of the last 50 years of the 6,000 years from Adam to the be-

ginning of the reign of Jesus on the earth.

The gathering of the tares began in 1962 when Pope John XXIII launched the Ecumenical movement. That leaves us only a short time to “Gather the wheat into (His) barn.” We are living in that last seven year period of those forty nine years, and God is setting the stage for the forming of the Gentile Church in the mirror-image of the Jewish Church which we read about in the New Testament (Eph. 4:11-13).

The Apostle Paul told us, that “[God] will render unto every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: for there is no respect of persons with God” (Rom. 2:6-11).

The time is upon us. Let us rise to the occasion, put our hands to the instruments of harvest, and make ourselves ready to meet the Bridegroom, for His coming is very near. 

The Importance of Faith

By David M. McNabb

As we have explored the subject of faith, its meaning, and its source, we have revealed that the term “faith” (from a biblical perspective) is one of the most misunderstood and misused terms in religious circles. The world defines faith as any belief system, so the term faith is used for all religions from Shinto’s ancestor worship to witchcraft.

While many Christians generally have a similar understanding of faith, they use (and often misuse) the term differently within their own circles.

The “Word of Faith” movement is one such abuse of the term of faith. Influential preachers have drawn the conclusion from certain Scripture passages that God wants us to be happy, and is at our beck and call to give us whatsoever we ask for – if only we believe. Jesus truly said, “What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them” (Mark 11:24). That certainly *sounds* like a modern “name it – claim it” sermon. On this verse, and others like it, one could surely lay out a message exhorting the saints to simply desire something, truly believe that they will get it, and “the Scripture says” that they will have it. However, I would like to take a better look at the context of this verse.

In verses 12 through 14, Jesus and His disciples had come upon a fig tree. The Word of God says, “And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry: And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it.” The next morning, as they passed that same fig tree, they found it dried up from the roots, and were amazed. Jesus said to them, “Have faith in God,” and told them that faith can move mountains, and that whatever they desire, they can obtain if they believe.

You might say that it *still* seems to confirm the promotion of the “name it – claim it” folks, but we have not yet looked at the complete context of the passage. This event occurs as Jesus is going in and out of

Jerusalem just a few days before His crucifixion. He is making His final appeal to the people and rulers of Israel. After leaving the withered tree, they went back into Jerusalem and were asked of the priests, scribes and elders, "By what authority doest thou these things? And who gave thee this authority to do these things?" Before Christ would answer their inquiry, He tested them with regards to John the Baptist. They failed His test, and neither did He answer their question.

The question, however, is valid, and speaks to the point of the entire passage: authority. How could He speak to the fig tree and cause it to wither? He told His disciples, "Have faith in God." Where does faith come from? It comes from the Word of God. Jesus was not whimsical. The great Creator of the land and the sea and all that is in them would not capriciously curse a tree. In fact, it was not even the season for figs!

Still, the Old Testament – the Law and the Prophets – gave Him the authority to effectually curse the fig tree. Where? In Jeremiah 8:8-13, "How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Lo, certainly in vain made he it; the pen of the scribes is in vain. The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them? ... From the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely. For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. ... Therefore shall they fall among them that fall: in the time of their visitation they shall be cast down, saith the LORD. I will surely consume them, saith the LORD: there shall be no grapes on the vine, *nor figs on the fig tree, and the leaf shall fade*; and the things that I have given them shall pass away from them." (See also Ezek. 17:8-10.)

Jesus did not curse the tree on a whim, it was an illustration in which, once again, the Scriptures were fulfilled. The Son of God had come to Israel, and Israel had left His hunger for a righteous nation unfulfilled. Therefore, He proclaimed its demise, on the authority of Scripture, and knew that the Word of God could not fail. He said that Jerusalem would be compassed about with armies, and that it would be utterly destroyed. All of that came to pass, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

We must come to understand faith's meaning and its source because of the importance of faith. Hebrews 11:6 puts it in very clear terms, "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."

Israel professed a belief in God, but denied His messengers. They defined their faith, and their self-defined faith was not enough to gain God's favor. If we are to please God, we must lay hold on faith as He has defined it in the writing of the Holy Scripture.

In verse 5 of Hebrews 11, we read, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God." Look at the faith of Enoch, the Lord had shown him something concerning the demise of the wicked generation that had risen. He believed the word of the Lord, and named his son Methuselah, which means "at his death, judgment" or "at his death the flood." If you count the years in the generations of Adam (Genesis chapter 5), you will find that that is just what happened: the flood came just around the time of Methuselah's death. This is just another thing that serves to prove the faith of faithful Enoch. Enoch was not declaring his wishes and expecting

God to act on them, he was proclaiming the word of the Lord, knowing that God would do all things according to what He had said.

When Jesus presented Himself to John to be baptized, John protested and said that he needed to be baptized of Jesus. Jesus replied, "Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt. 3:15).

According to the Gospel of John, John the Baptist was a man sent from God with a message to God's people. Jesus, though He was the Son of God, came and dwelt among men, living the human experience. The word of God repeatedly reveals God's way, His protocol, when it comes to the leadership of God's people. When God set the tribe of Levi apart to do the service of the House of God, He ordained that they should be funded by the tithe of the increase of the people of Israel. This He justified because Levi "paid tithes in Abraham" (Heb. 7:9-10).


Likewise, Jesus must needs have first submitted to the ministry of the man whom God had sent, before He could justifiably be followed Himself. Being the Son of God did not mean He was exempt from following God's protocol. On the contrary, being the Son of God, He did all things according to the will of the Father. Jesus' faith in God's word and in God's way motivated Him to "fulfill all righteousness." He was not presumptuous or proud. In obedience to the Father, He submitted Himself to the baptism of John – not because He needed repentance, but out of obedience.

God acknowledged the great faith of Jesus of Nazareth, as He came up out of the water, by a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased" (Matt. 3:17).

God is no respecter of persons. Whether you are the Son of God come down from heaven, or the vilest sinner saved by grace, without

faith it is impossible to please God. Jesus, the Author and the Finisher of our faith, even endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down at the right hand of the throne of God. He had faith in God, and was faithful unto death. Through Jesus' own great faith, His life became a sacrifice, well pleasing to God.

Such is the importance of faith. If we are going to be pleasing in the eyes of the Lord, we must have faith – not just any belief system, but the faith that was once delivered unto the saints. God's own Son, through faith in God, fulfilled all the righteousness of the Word of God concerning Him. Let us also live by faith, who were sometime alienated and enemies in our mind by wicked works, yet now being reconciled in the body of our Lord's flesh through death, that He might present us holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in His sight: if we continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which we have heard. Amen.

In our next installment, we will conclude this subject as we discuss the Power of Faith. 

We Have a Rule

By C. Elden McNabb

In July, 1945, when I was ten years of age, I was born again by the love, and mercy, and grace of God in a "Holiness" church in Delano, California. About two weeks later, I received that wonderful experience which both Paul and Peter called "Sanctification of the Spirit" (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2).

I had attended that "Church of the Nazarene" for about five or six weeks, when an evangelist came for a revival there. I can still envision him somewhat when I think about those precious days. I suppose I shall never, in this life, forget his

full head of handsome, silvery white hair, full in the back, and reaching about halfway down his neck. Although, he probably would not remind you of Billy Graham at all, his hair was about the length which Bro. Graham kept his.

You may be aware that "Holiness" groups, of whatever roots, generally have a standing list of the things which Christians either must or must not do. Apparently the customs of that Church of the Nazarene were a little different from the "Holiness sects" in the part of Oklahoma in which we presently live.

I was not aware of all that business of "church rules" when God reached out and drew me unto Himself. I simply fell in love with God and His word, and plunged myself into a life dedicated to God and His word. It was not too long until I discovered that there was some considerable disparity between the Word of God and "the rules." Of course, that applies to "the rules" of all denominations. Some sects maintain a list of rules which are far too restrictive, and others have a list that is far too liberal, or no list at all.

For many years I made a special effort to read the entire Bible each year, and engaged in various studies besides. I married when I was twenty, and was blessed with a wife who loved the Word of God even as I did. To this day we search the Word of God together; feasting on its inexhaustible riches.

In my early years with Christ Jesus, *I gradually became aware of the contest which was in progress between the Word of God and "the keepers of the rules."* I discovered that "The Rules," both social and doctrinal, were considered sacrosanct, the Bible notwithstanding. One of the largest Pentecostal/holiness organizations at that time, of which we were members, would tenaciously hold to traditions of error over Scripture, even as they were looking

at the relevant passages and saw the truth.

During the process of our searching for "God's way," in about 1979, God made us aware of "The oracles of God:" "The Doctrine of Christ" in Hebrews chapters 5 and 6. We began a diligent search of that doctrine throughout the Holy Scriptures, and we rejoice that we can now say with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, "Our doctrine is not ours, but His that sent us." According to the Apostle Paul, if you do not know that doctrine well enough to teach it, you need to find someone who does, and have them to teach it to you.

By the searching of the Word of God I began to see the error in the general focus of "our church," and churches in general. *Our focus was upon us*, and "what we think," instead of *what God thinks*. Therefore, I turned my attention even more to the word of God, and was very impressed to see that God covers every aspect of life in the Holy Scriptures.

About a year after my conversion, my father, Virgil McNabb, began to renew his commitment to God, which he had let slack for about 20 years. Soon thereafter he moved us to Salina, Oklahoma, where we began to attend a Holiness church where the aging pastor was the pastor my father had served God under in his youth.

One Sunday night, about the time of my 12th birthday, after we had prayed for a while, near the close of the service, my father suddenly stepped up onto the wooden prayer bench, and raised his hands; glorifying God. Shortly, he stepped off the bench, and walked over near one of the windows; praising the Lord. Then he broke one of "the rules." He suddenly began to speak in tongues by the unction of the Spirit of the Lord.

Naturally the pastor and his wife were very upset. The words of their wailing still ring in my mind: "Virgil has bought a package from

the devil.” They were halfway across the continent from that Holiness church where I found peace with God, but they were all in the same room in that matter. There they were, otherwise precious saints of God and avid Bible readers, crying out in blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of God; and that, in the face of the words of Jesus Himself (Matt. 12:30-33). They had their rules! They simply threw away a lifetime friendship, and offended the Holy Spirit over an erroneous and presumptuous doctrine.

I rejoice that Jesus, the authorized rule-maker, always has precedence in all matters. And what did he say? “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, *neither in the world to come.*”

Does that mean that Christians who have blasphemed the Holy Ghost have lost their redemption? It is a question we cannot answer, for we have no authority to judge. “All judgment is given unto the Son” (John 5:22). Therefore, I will neither judge the unauthorized judges, nor the ones whom they are judging.

The Apostle Paul also said, “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for *God is able to make him stand*” (Romans 14:4). As ministers, we sometimes must “reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine,” but to judge the salvation of another child of God, NEVER.

It appears to me that many “Christians” have died with sins un-

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repented of, thus un-forgiven. Therefore I ask you to please note that three times, Moses mentioned God’s great mercy toward them who had sinned in ignorance (Lev. 4; Num. 15; Deut. 21).

And did not Job, by the Holy Ghost, say, “What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold, He putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man” (Job 15:14-16).

In Matthew 6:9-16, Jesus used the terms “debts” and “trespasses” with the same meaning, and encouraged His apostles to ask God daily to forgive their debts. The implication is clear: we all sin, sometimes without even knowing it. John well said, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8).


God forgives even such sins as murder and fornication, both of which are punishable by death (Ezekiel 16:38). And Solomon said, “Whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding. ... A wound and dishonour shall he get; *and his reproach shall not be wiped away*” (Prov. 6:33). You may come to God and get forgiveness, but the people who know you will never forget. I think that also may well be

the outcome of many honest saints who have truly thought that speaking in other tongues, by the Holy Ghost, was of the devil. They may enter into “the world to come,” but at a great loss compared to what they might have had (2 John 1:8).

Did not Paul say “Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? ... If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men (Gal. 3:2-3; Col. 2:20-22)?”

The truth is, no matter how well meaning the Christian rule makers are, the rules will not keep people from tripping. It is the Word of God, and the grace of God by which we overcome the wiles of the devil, and will be able to stand victorious on the battlefield for God.

What we can do, with great effect in our service for God, is to love our Christian neighbors as ourselves, and in mercy forbear with them and hold them up before God in our prayers. May God sustain us all in this evil day.

To God be the glory. 

One Bad Day *Part 2*

By David M. McNabb

So, in one day, Job lost all that he loved and possessed. His businesses, wealth, and children were all gone in a matter of moments.

He had trusted and feared God. Why was that not enough? Would not a loving and faithful God be interested in Job's happiness and prosperity? Is pain and suffering the reward for faithful service?

God, it seems, had himself pointed the goodness of Job out to Satan, and then removed the protective hedge from around him.

Job did not blame God, but rather worshiped Him, saying, "Naked came I out of the womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21).

But the trials of Job did not end there. Satan once again stood before the Lord, and once again he was shown Job's perfection and uprightness. Now Satan requested permission to hurt Job's flesh, thinking that Job would then forsake God.

Job's body was covered in boils, and now the physical pain and anguish only heightened his emotional suffering. Now even his own wife thought him mad. She said, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die."

Still, Job remained on the Lord's side. He answered her, saying, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"

Job did not speak foolishly. Neither did he sin with his mouth against God. His wife and his friends were of no comfort, and provided poor counsel. It was Job and God against the devil and the whole world, and yet Job's side had the advantage.

Many words are recorded in the book of Job: counsel of Job's friends, replies from Job himself, and God's own answer to the whole situation. In the end, Job's life stands as a memorial to the truth of the words of Jesus our Lord.

Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" (Luke 9:23-25).

Again He said, "Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting" (Luke 18:29-30).

Having no real reason to think that either his wealth or his health would be restored, Job remained faithful through the whole ordeal.

But God is also faithful, and, as the preacher declares, "Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit" (Eccl. 7:8).

And so, Job's end *was* better than his beginning. In all things, he retained his integrity before God, and God's grace was extended to him. His possessions were restored unto him twice as much as he had at the start.

Also, he had seven more sons, and three more daughters. Scripture records that his daughters were the fairest in all the land!

After his ordeal, he lived 140 more years, and not only did he see his children restored, but also lived long enough to see his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. God granted that this wonderful family man was surrounded by the sound of healthy, happy children for the rest of his days!

What may be the most important development in the life of Job is often overlooked. After all that happened, God tells Job's friends to bring their

sacrifices to Job to be offered. No longer would their sacrifices be acceptable, if offered on their own. No, God now required Job to act as a priest on behalf of his friends. These men, who had supposed they knew God so well, now had need of an intercessor: Job, whose right words had gotten him favor with God.


Job was not serving God so that he could experience worldly prosperity and physical health. He was serving God because it was right: because God is worthy to be praised and adored in that He exists. The loss of all of Job's earthly treasures did not change the fact that God is.

In Job's faithfulness to hold fast to the faith in God, he pleased God. Job's faith was not built on things, but on God Himself.

Satan's efforts were thwarted, not only that day, but for all time. You see, if Job could do it, so can you.

In fact, we have no excuse when we stagger in temptation, because we have an even greater advantage through salvation by the blood of Jesus Christ, and the comfort of the Holy Spirit, hallelujah!

The Lord promised that He would never leave us, nor forsake us. That promise is true today, as it was in the days of Job long ago. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever, and He will always hold us in the palm of His hand.

You may have to walk through the darkest valley, but you will never have to walk alone. Amen. 

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



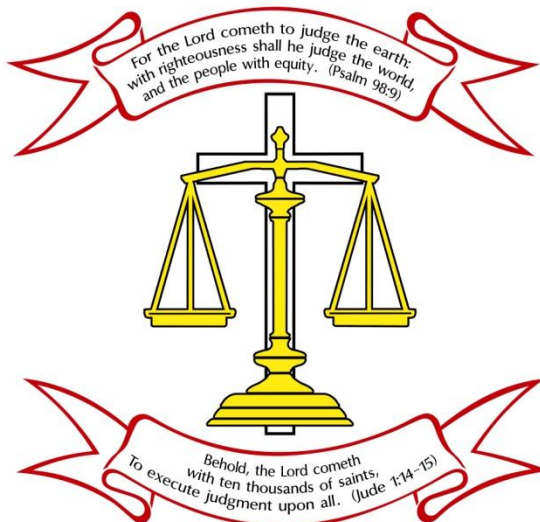
Happy is the nation, who's God is the Lord.
Ps. 33:12 Unless we return to our Christian roots, we may need to fly the American flag at half mast.

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