

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

July 2010

“Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 1:7). I pray that God is blessing you abundantly. The Lord is coming very soon. Natural disasters are increasing. It is hard to imagine the devastation that will result from the oil leak in the Gulf of Mexico. This world is getting tired, and soon will be replaced with a “new earth” (Revelation 21:1). I pray that you will be there.

2010 Tennessee Camp Meeting: It will be held in Roan Mountain, Tennessee, October 5-9. Call 423-772-3161 for more information.

E-mail Reminder: Let us know if you would like *Present Truth* by e-mail.

What Denomination Should I Join?

by Lynnford Beachy

Today, there are over 30,000 Christian denominations in the world, each with some distinction that sets them apart from everyone else. Most of the followers of these denominations think that theirs is superior to all others and have reasons for this assertion.

So what are we to do? How can we know which denomination to join, or even if we should join a denomination?

Denominations tend to put barriers between people, and can cause persecution. During the Dark Ages, the Roman Catholic Church engaged in crusades to gather up all “heretics” (anyone who disagreed with their man-made doctrines) and force them to recant or be killed. Their plan was to have unity by destroying all opposition. Yet, this plan backfired. The more “heretics” they killed, the more new ones emerged, until there was a great Protestant

Reformation, and today there are nearly as many Protestants as there are Catholics.

Emo Philips wrote a hypothetical story that illustrates the unreasonableness of so many divisions among Christians. He wrote,

I was walking across a bridge one day, and I saw a man standing on the edge, about to jump off. So I ran over

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and said, "Stop! Don't do it!" "Why shouldn't I?" he said. I said, "Well, there's so much to live for!" He said, "Like what?" I said, "Well, are you religious or atheist?" He said, "Religious." I said, "Me too! Are you Christian or Buddhist?" He said, "Christian." I said, "Me too! Are you Catholic or Protestant?" He said, "Protestant." I said, "Me too! Are you Episcopalian or Baptist?" He said, "Baptist!" I said, "Wow! Me too! Are you from Baptist Church of God or Baptist Church of the Lord?" He said, "Baptist Church of God!" I said, "Me too! Are you from Original Baptist Church of God or are you Reformed Baptist Church of God?" He said, "Reformed Baptist Church of God!" I said, "Me too! Are you Reformed Baptist Church of God, Reformation of 1879, or Reformed Baptist Church of God, Reformation of 1915?" He said, "Reformed Baptist Church of God, Reformation of 1915!" I said, "Die, heretic scum!" and pushed him off.

This story could be replaced with any denomination to illustrate it in your own experience. Few people would take the last step of this story, but many are willing to put up barriers to keep from communicating or mingling with those of other denominations. Are these separations healthy, or biblical?

God's Church

To understand the answers to the above questions, first of all, we must have a biblical understanding of what the church is. The Bible says, "Ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and

church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven" (Hebrews 12:22, 23). According to the Bible, God's church is made up of those whose names are written in heaven, in the Lamb's Book of Life.

There are many people who attend the Roman Catholic Church whose names are written in the Book of Life. There are also many people who attend the Roman Catholic Church whose names are not written in the Book of Life. This is also true of the Baptist church, the Methodist church, the Presbyterian church, etc. Only those whose names are written in the Book of Life will enter into the kingdom of heaven. There is not a denomination in this world whose members will all go to heaven. If you are a part of a particular denomination, it will not guarantee that you will enter into heaven. Neither will being separate from a particular denomination exclude you from going to heaven.

Many people really think that because they are a member of a particular denomination they will be given access to the kingdom of God, and if they separate themselves from that denomination they will have closed any possibility of entering into heaven. This idea is without foundation in the Bible. The only criteria for whether anyone will enter into the kingdom of heaven is whether their name is written in the Book of Life. "There shall in no wise enter into it [the New Jerusalem] any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Revelation 21:27).

Although it is true that being a part of a particular denomination will not

ensure that we will enter heaven, there will come a time very soon when being a part of certain denominations will cause us to be guilty by association, and will cause us to be lost. The Bible says, “Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins: keep thyself pure” (1 Timothy 5:22). It is possible to be a partaker of other men’s sins by approving of them. God said, “When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers” (Psalms 50:18). Allowing things to go on around you, and consenting to them, will result in becoming guilty yourself.

If we are in a denomination where evils are being practiced and condoned, doctrines of devils are being taught, and souls are being misled, God calls to us “saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (Revelation 18:4).

Loving One Another

Many people choose denominations based on how they are treated by people rather than by whether they teach the truth or not. There is a biblical precedent for this mentality, for Jesus said, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35). The way we are treated by those who claim to be Christians is important, and truth should have an elevating effect on the characters of those who believe the truth. Yet, Satan himself can portray himself as an angel of light to trick people into accepting deadly errors (2 Corinthians 11:14).

One day a friend and I visited a Sunday church to get to know people in the area. We arrived just as the services

were ending, and were met with friendly greetings. Everyone was kind to us, and they invited us to come back next week. Then, my friend asked the pastor about the trinity. Immediately the atmosphere changed, and the people were very unkind. The pastor raised his voice and told us to get out and never come back. It was shocking to see the drastic change.

Kindness is not a sure test of loyalty to God and the truth. Unfortunately, unfriendliness is also sometimes manifested among those who hold the truth. Paul spoke of people “who hold the truth in unrighteousness” (Romans 1:18). Jesus commended the Pharisees for the portions of truth they held and encouraged others to adhere to those things that the Pharisees taught that were in harmony with the Bible. Jesus said, “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not” (Matthew 23:2). Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for their unkind and hateful attitudes. He said to the Pharisees, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone” (Matthew 23:23).

So, love, or the lack thereof, is not a sure sign one way or the other regarding whether a denomination is following God. They may have all the truth in the Bible but have not allowed that truth to change their characters so they misrepresent the truth they hold. This is sad but

true. Conversely, a denomination can demonstrate very kind characters but at the same time teach dangerous errors.

Miracles

Some people think that if a minister can perform miracles it is a sure sign they are following God. They think that if they were not following God, they could not perform miracles. Yet, keep in mind that even Satan's followers can perform miracles. When Moses performed miracles before Pharaoh, Egyptian magicians mimicked several of those miracles, including turning a stick into a living serpent.

One of the gifts that God gives to His church is the working of miracles. However, notice the order in which God gives gifts to His church. "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" (1 Corinthians 12:28).

From this you can see the order of importance God places on these gifts. The first is apostles, then prophets, then teachers, and "after that miracles, then gifts of healing." You see, the working of miracles is not a sure test of whether a person is right in doctrine or whether they have their lives right with God. Jesus said, "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" (Matthew 7:21).

Here Jesus is talking about people who did many wonderful works, and even cast out devils in Christ's name. Yet Jesus says to them, "depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Their lives were not right with God, yet they were performing miracles.

Not all miracles come from God. In fact, the description the Bible gives about the last days indicates that there will be more visible miracles done through satanic agencies than through God's agencies.

In Revelation chapter 13 we read of a satanic power that "deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast" (Revelation 13:14).

In the last days the manifestation of miracles will be more and more common, but many of these miracles will be designed to deceive people. John wrote, "I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty" (Revelation 16:13, 14).

Satan is working with signs and lying wonders to deceive men as quickly as he can because he has but a short time. "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (Revelation 12:12). The

Bible tells us that in the last days we will see the “working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved” (2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10).

The only safeguard against being deceived in the last days, by Satan’s miracles, is to receive the truth, love the truth, and follow the truth. Jesus said, “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Matthew 24:24). Satan’s use of miracles to deceive, in these last days, is focused upon God’s people. Satan would have little success among God’s people if he were to get a witch doctor from a tribe of headhunters to perform his miracles. All Christians would recognize these miracles to be of Satan. Satan seeks to use ministers of the gospel to work his miracles, because he knows that many people will trust a minister, who performs miracles, to tell them the truth. In this manner Satan can convince Christians of some of the most ridiculous falsehoods, merely because the people are willing to trust their eyes over the Word of God.

The Bible says, “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20). We are to compare everything with the Bible, no matter how reputable the source is from which we received it. Though Paul was an apostle, he commended the Bereans for searching the Scriptures for themselves to see if what he told them was the truth. (See Acts 17:11.) “The spirits

of the prophets are subject to the prophets” (1 Corinthians 14:32). In other words, no matter where you hear something, you must compare it with the Word of God before you accept it.

Paul wrote of those whom Satan uses to masquerade as ministers of the gospel as, “false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (2 Corinthians 11:13-15).

We cannot trust ministers just because they are able to perform miracles. This is the primary tool that Satan uses to deceive God’s people in the last days. As Christians, above all, we must be more diligent than the world around us to examine the Bible, and more cautious when we see miracles performed. Unfortunately, many Christians see miracles as a sign that God is with a person, yet it should make us more cautious than if no miracle was performed, because we have been warned that miracles will be one of Satan’s primary means of deceiving God’s people in the last days.

An example of false miracles can be seen in many of the faith healers on Television. Often they wave their hand or touch someone, and people fall down and start shaking. They call this “slain in the spirit.” Yet, in the Bible we have no examples of this ever happening when someone received the Spirit of God. Instead, the only time this ever happened in the Bible is when a person was possessed of a devil. The Bible says, “And as he [a child] was yet a coming, the

devil threw him down, and tare [convulse violently] him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father” (Luke 9:42).

Burning in the Bosom

Some people think that when you are in the right church you will feel a burning in the bosom or some tingly feeling to confirm that you are in the right place. But the Bible says we are to “walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7). God does not always give you a feeling to confirm that He is with you. Satan also can give you a feeling so, you must not depend upon feelings to tell you what is right. The Bible is the best source to turn to for guidance, not your feelings. Our feelings must be subject unto the Word of God. “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9).

God Uses Unfaithful People

There are places in the Bible where God used people, and even groups of people, who were not living up to the light that God had given them, and were walking contrary to His law. I will give a few examples.

“And it was told Saul, saying, Behold, David is at Naioth in Ramah. And Saul sent messengers to take David: and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. And when it was told Saul, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. And Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also.

Then went he also to Ramah, and came to a great well that is in Sechu: and he asked and said, Where are Samuel and David? And one said, Behold, they be at Naioth in Ramah. And he went thither to Naioth in Ramah: and the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on, and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah” (1 Samuel 19:19-23).

Here is an example of the Spirit of God coming powerfully upon people who were in open rebellion against God; who had murder in their hearts. God was still able to manifest Himself in these people, although it was under unfavorable circumstances.

Another example of where God used a man who was in direct rebellion against Him is the story of Balaam. The Moabites were troubled by the presence of the Israelites, and their king, Balak, sought out a prophet to curse the Israelites. They found a prophet by the name of Balaam. Balaam agreed to consult God as to whether he should go curse these people or not. “And God said unto Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed” (Numbers 22:12). At first Balaam was faithful to this command and told the representatives of Balak to return home. But Balak did not like to hear this report, and he sent more honourable princes to talk with Balaam, and they said, “Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me: For I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people” (Numbers 22:16, 17).

Balaam, knowing the command of the Lord but being desirous of honour

and riches, decided to press the issue with God. He said to the princes, "I pray you, tarry ye also here this night, that I may know what the LORD will say unto me more. And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them; but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do. And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. And God's anger was kindled because he went: and the angel of the LORD stood in the way for an adversary against him" (Numbers 22:19-22).

God allowed Balaam to choose earthly honour and riches over God's commands, but God was not happy about this and sent His angel to be his adversary. Then Balaam's ass that he was riding spoke to him, rebuking his madness.

Instead of cursing Israel, Balaam blessed them, much to the dismay of Balak. "And Balak said unto Balaam, What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them altogether" (Numbers 23:11). Balaam chose riches and honour above the commandment of God, but he didn't even receive the riches and honor. Balak refused to promote Balaam, but sent him back home. Balaam was eventually killed for his sin.

"Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them" (Joshua 13:22). Peter commented on this man's wickedness when He wrote of those who, "have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of

unrighteousness; But was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet" (2 Peter 2:15, 16).

God can use people, or groups of people, who are living in rebellion against Him. This does not mean that we can live in rebellion against God and expect to receive blessings or gifts from God. Just because we can see that God uses a particular person or group does not mean that we should join that group or follow that person. We must each study the Bible for ourselves, and not trust our salvation to any man. "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent" (Acts 17:30).

Who We Worship

The sad fact is that most Christian denominations worship a different god from the God who is revealed in the Bible. Many serve a god whom they think is cruel enough to burn people for billions of years, even though the Bible says, "the soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4, 20), and that the wicked "shall be as though they had not been" (Obadiah 1:16). Many serve a god who is so lenient that He is content to have His children continue sinning until the Lord comes, even though Jesus said, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever" (John 8:34). And Paul wrote, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" (Romans 6:16).

Many Christians serve a god whose commandments are so weak and

meaningless that “one day in seven” is as good as “the seventh-day,” which is “the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.” Most serve a god who is “one god in three persons,” otherwise known as the trinity, even though the Bible says, “But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him” (1 Corinthians 8:6).

Most serve a god who claims that he sent his son into the world to die, when in reality he sent his companion into the world to pretend to be his son and then pretend to suffer and die, thus making their god out to be a liar. God says, “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” (1 John 5:10). Contact us for Bible studies on these and many other topics, or read them on our website.

I could continue with many other such blatant contradictions, but this is enough to show the reality that most Christians serve a god who is not revealed in the Bible. Therefore, it would not be truthful, nor ethical to put them all in one denomination and claim that they are all the true followers of Christ. Moreover, if different views about God are accepted and permitted in God’s true church, then we might as well admit the Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, etc., into the Christian church as well.

It would be wonderful if every professed Christian would follow the written Word of God, and be obedient to all its commands for our lives. If this were the case, then we would only have one

Christian church in this world, and we could all go by the same name.

In the Bible we find no record that God set up denominations. In Christ’s time there were Sadducees and Pharisees in the Jewish religion, but Jesus rebuked both parties. In the New Testament we learn about Christians, not Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, etc, just Christians.

The History of Denominations

Let us examine the evolution of denominations. God established His covenant with Abraham and His offspring. This nation became known as the Israelites and later, the Jews. They served God for a while, but apostasy came in through their kings whom they had chosen instead of God. When an evil king came to power he would lead the nation into idolatry and paganism. Sometimes a good king would arise and lead the kingdom back to the worship of the true God, but this was less frequent than the apostasy.

For their rejection of God, Israel was led captive into Babylon. They were finally permitted to go back to the land of Israel, but were given 490 years “to finish the transgression, and to make and end of sins” (Daniel 9:24). Just as prophesied, the Messiah came in the final period of this 490 years (Daniel 9:25), and instead of accepting the the Son of God, they condemned Him and nailed Him to the cross. At His death, the veil of the temple was torn in two by an angel, signifying that their time was up and their services were no longer valid. Jesus said, “Your house is left unto you desolate” (Luke 13:35).

God established the continuation of His church through the newly organized

Christian church, which was a merging of converted Jews and Gentiles.

In 70 AD, Jerusalem was invaded by Roman soldiers and the Jewish temple was destroyed, and their people dispersed. To this day their temple has not been rebuilt. Amazingly, no Christian died in the siege of Jerusalem.

The new Christian church faced much opposition, first from the Jews, and then from pagan Rome.

At its infancy the Christian church maintained a moderate level of purity, both from its close proximity in time to Christ's incarnation and from the purging of hypocrites that persecution tends to accomplish. When you are faced with the possibility of having your possessions confiscated, imprisonment, torture and even death for professing Christ, you are much less likely to make a hypocritical profession. Millions of Christians died in the Roman coliseum, killed by gladiators, lions, water, and other evil tortures.

In 306 AD a pagan Roman emperor came to power by the name of Constantine. He decided to end persecution of the Christians and unite his realm under one religion. He endeavored to merge paganism with Christianity. Many pagan rituals were introduced into the Christian faith and the state power began to be used to enforce these new dogmas. This newly emerged union of paganism, Christianity and the state power came to be known as the Roman Catholic Church. Constantine was the first ruler of both the state and the Christian church, and called himself Pontifex Maximus. To this day, the pope bears the title, "Pontifex Maximus." A gate to the Vatican has the inscription, "Benedictus XVI

Pont[ifex] Max[imus] Anno Domini MMV Pont[ificatus] I ("Benedict XVI, Supreme Pontiff, in the year of Our Lord 2005, in the first year of his pontificate").

The union of paganism with Christianity was so thorough that today many pagan practices are commonly thought to be entirely Christian. However, such practices as Easter, and Christmas are directly carried over from paganism. Have you ever wondered why bunny rabbits and Easter eggs are associated with a supposed Christian holiday? They came from paganism as a symbol of fertility in honor of Ishtar, the goddess of fertility. Christmas also comes from paganism. December 25th was considered the birthday of the sun, for it marked the end of the winter solstice, where the day began to get longer instead of shorter. It was recognized as the birthday of the sun by many pagan religions who worshiped the sun. Jesus was born in the fall of the year, not in the winter.

The merging of paganism with Christianity was so blatant that several idols from pagan temples were removed and placed inside Christian churches. One of the most notable pagan idol came out of the temple of Jupiter and was placed in St. Peter's Basilica. They changed the name at the bottom of the idol to "Saint Peter." Today the toes of this idol are worn off because so many Catholics have kissed its feet, not realizing they were kissing the feet of the pagan god, Jupiter.

Pagan teachings came into the Christian church through Catholicism, some of which are the trinity, Sunday sacredness, eternal torment, consciousness of the dead, prayers to dead people, etc.

Many Christians would not submit to this new paganized Christianity. The new state religion began persecuting all who would not submit to the Catholic Church, and more Christians died at the hands of the Catholic Church than by all the pagan emperors combined. Faithful Christians fled to the mountains or hid in the catacombs of Rome. They began to be called the Waldenses, Vaudois, Albigenses, Cathari, etc. A remarkable characteristic of these Christians is that they were non-trinitarian, Sabbath keepers. They could not accept the Catholic's pagan god nor their pagan day of worship. For this they were severely persecuted, and many millions lost their lives. During the Dark Ages the Bible was on the forbidden list, and many portions of the Bible that were faithfully reproduced by the Waldenses were gathered and burned. The Catholic Church was afraid that if people were able to read the Bible for themselves they would discover the errors of the church.

Nearing the end of the Dark Ages God raised up people like John Huss, John Wycliffe, and Martin Luther to challenge the Roman Catholic doctrines and begin the Reformation. This started a branch of Christianity called Protestantism, which got its name from its protest of Catholic doctrine. Doctrinal differences between the different reformers spawned several protestant denominations, which later spawned others and still others, until today there are over 30,000 denominations.

Since Constantine's time, God's faithful people have always been in the minority among professed Christians, and are often called heretics. Paul

confessed, "After the way which they [the Jews] call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers" (Acts 24:14). Jesus said, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets" (Luke 6:26). If you are to be faithful to God, you can expect to be in the minority and called a heretic. In fact, if this is not the case with you, "Woe unto you," you may be worshipping "you know not what" (John 4:22).

Conclusion

Today, God has His people in many denominations. Yet, He is leading them beyond the limitations that denominations place upon people. This leading will bring them into opposition with their church creeds, because creeds often contradict the Bible. God may lead you to join a denomination, or He may lead you out of all denominations into a home church. The early Christian church had many home churches (Romans 16:5; 1 Corinthians 16:9; Colossians 4:15).

Church leaders often try to keep their followers from investigating and questioning their denomination's doctrines. Yet, God wants us to study for ourselves. The Bible says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). Remember, never reject or accept anything without investigation. "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him" (Proverbs 18:13).

Whatever you do, seek the Lord first (Matthew 6:33).



You May Freely Eat?

by Jim Raymond

(Brother Jim Raymond has been a food scientist for many years, and has agreed to share some of his knowledge with us. *Editor*)

From Where Does Food Come?

Early in my study of Foods and Nutrition, I read a shocking report in a sociology of food textbook. The authors claimed that the vast majority of children raised in the cities are so disconnected from their agricultural roots of food production that they do not know the animal origin of milk. I was skeptical, and decided to do a little experiment and ask my four-year-old son.

“Derek, from where does milk come?”

I’m sure he thought I should have known this by now, yet he patiently replied: “From the grocery store.”

“Oh, no!” I thought, “this will never do!”

I grabbed the phone and called the local Dairy: “Yes, we’re milking... bring him on down here; we’ll show him the right answer.”

So I grabbed a book out of my study and gave him a crash course in the gross anatomy of a cow. (To me gross is the only kind of anatomy a cow has.) Within minutes we were heading down the road to the local dairy.

From the roadways, cattle never seemed to intimidate him, but nose to nose was a different story. He was horrified! I was his only ladder to safety and in a fit of hysteria, he was heading to the top. I managed to get him tucked

under my shoulder and it was impossible to dislodge the child from my rib cage. His unwillingness to be disconnected from me greatly disappointed the dairyman. He really wanted Derek to experience the “thrill” of fresh warm milk dispensed directly from the cow’s nipple. Honestly, I did not find that idea at all “thrilling” and I was glad we’d both avoided that “thrill”—or so I thought. Our dairyman was a determined chap and he decided that he could still bless the child with this experience. With good aim and a firm squeeze he thought he could reach us. Before I could object, he started squeezing. His aim with this bovine squirt gun proved to be deplorable. He made up for what he lacked in accuracy with a steady rapid fire technique that shocked me and the cow. The larger of the two of us, I wore more than my fair share of the stuff. With no sign of a cease fire in sight, we (I and my parasitic rider) left the scene at a brisk pace. Many years have passed—and neither of us has forgotten the true source of milk.

In the latest issue of *Food Technology Magazine*, the current president of the Institute of Food Technology made an impassioned plea for funding for food science education and research which included this declaration: “A strong need has emerged for food scientists to pull it all together—to make food from the science.... The future of food is in the science...”

Perhaps most food scientists have been raised in the cities and have forgotten from where food comes. Being disconnected from agriculture disconnects us from the Creator so nothing about food is sacred. When it's just another part of the evolutionary equation, there is no perceived problem with a supposed totally autonomous humanity to take liberties with the food supplied by the Creator "to make food from the science."

In the aforementioned magazine, I found a disturbing announcement about a new food science R&D (research and development) project purposed to look for food processing enzymes from distasteful, albeit "natural," sources.

In past "You May Freely Eat?" columns we have warned about insect derived ingredients routinely tainting otherwise wholesome foods. Those who rely on the mass food processing and distribution systems frequently feast on insect derived food additives on fruit and vegetables, in dairy based products, candies, sweetened beverages, and even fruit juices. Porcine (pig) enzymes are used extensively to make cheese. The number of GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms) products continues to grow rapidly.

GMO production involves the amalgamation of genetic material from any or all combinations of plant, animal, human, and bacterial sources. This technology is being used to grow plant, bacterial, or animal cells which are modified to have the needed genes to force the modified cells to produce chemicals foreign to the originally unmodified cells. A very recent example: Professor Henry Daniel has genetically modified lettuce with human genes so it

makes insulin. The purpose of these experiments almost always seems to have good motives. We all want to beat diabetes. What we don't know is what effects (damage?) will result when this lettuce pollen mixes with other lettuces. We are seeing a marked rise in allergies in general. Even more concerning, is the leap in allergic reactions caused by foods in people who were not previously reactive to that food. No one knows for sure the cause of this problem, but many conservative scientists point to the increase in GMO foods as a probable cause. GMOs represent the epitome of what it means "to make food from the science."

You'll never guess what's next on the R&D project list, but coming soon we may have to be on the look-out for food processing enzyme ingredients made from spider and snake venom. This is not a joke! Macabre? Yes; but serious none the less. The four year project is being funded by the Danish Council for Strategic Research. Several food companies and research institutions in Denmark, Finland, Poland, Brazil, and China are already selected to study the potential use of enzymes derived from snakes, spiders, and carnivorous plants for use as food ingredients and processing adjuvants.

It is still not difficult to meet optimal nutritional needs in modern grocery markets, yet it is increasingly harder to avoid the toxins and contaminants. Optimal health requires not only that nutritional needs are met, but also that toxins and contaminants are minimized. As processors increase the ways they "make food from the science" the avoidance of contaminants will be less

likely to succeed for all who rely on these products.

So, what is the solution? With or without “the science,” the future of food is in agriculture, and the future of health is eating as close to the field as possible! We each already know at least parts of the solution, the question that begs for an answer is when will we move forward on those parts? The following looks at only the fresh garden produce part. We can focus on other parts of the solution like preserving food, avoiding problems relative to fortification, cooking technique, non-food toxins, and so on. All of the parts will need a larger time investment and or preplanning and organization.

We can start by growing as much of our own produce as possible. We can't wait until we can move to the country. Maybe we can be creative and move the country closer to us. Several years back, I took a business trip to New Orleans. I visited a substantial fresh produce “farmer's market,” still within the borders of the old city. I was impressed by the quality and the variety, and especially the convenient location. The place was so well situated that after the tour, we decided to walk to a restaurant that was just a few blocks away in the heart of the tourist area. Very close to our destination restaurant, less than half a block off the main street, we were surprised to find a tightly organized “farm plot” on a small (maybe 6 by 8 foot) second floor balcony. I've never seen such a densely packed production garden. Lush green plants walled in the entire perimeter of the balcony from the floor to next balcony up. Obviously the plants were in containers that were

being rotated frequently. In light of this elevated agriculturist's success, I can not blame my choice not to garden on my location, horizontal or vertical. Whether we can't, or won't, grow our own, we can seek a farmer's market or a natural foods co-op where we can ask the grower questions to see if the grower's processes meet our standards.

Reliance on simple, minimally processed foods is a critical component of an optimally healthy lifestyle. Following a truly natural whole-food diet in the industrialized world is increasingly a struggle. Family and friend based agriculture could go a long way toward solving this problem. The more we grow for family and friends, the fewer toxins and contaminants we have to eliminate.

From the Creator's garden comes the food of which “You may freely eat”. Yanked from the hands of the Creator and adulterated in the laboratories of Satan comes food made “from the science” of which you may “Eat at your own risk”!

If you have experience relative to moving to a more natural diet, securing or raising wholesome contaminate free foods that could be helpful to others, please send them to me so I can share them as “tips” in future articles. Sharing warnings regarding what not to do can be as important as sharing what works. I plan to credit reader submissions with first or last name and location (country, city, province, or other). If you do not want your name listed please say so. For letters, use the return address on this issue, or email me here: jim@presenttruth.info.

Blessings! JR

The Gospel in Creation (Part 17)

by Ellet J. Waggoner

The Seventh Day: Resting with the Lord

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made” (Genesis 2:1-3).

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it” (Exodus 20:8-11).

This is the grand summary of creation, and the account of the celebration of it. The days of creation are sufficiently designated by being numbered, but the day that celebrates creation complete is honored by having a name. The name of the seventh day is “Sabbath.” Thus a double purpose is served. By the naming of the seventh day it is distinguished from all other days, and by the numbering of the others without naming them, the fact that the Sabbath is a definitely-recurring day is made prominent. But the text tells its own story as to the day which is the Sabbath; and it is one of the sure commandments of God, which “stand fast forever and ever” (Psalm 111:8). What we are to do here is to call

attention to the spiritual lessons to be learned from the giving of the Sabbath to man.

Christ, as we well know, is the great Creator. He is the wisdom of God and the power of God. “For in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him; and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist” (Colossians 1:16, 17, R.V.). “Without Him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:3). When the record says that in six days God made the heavens and the earth, it means God in Christ, for Christ is the only manifestation of God that is known to men.

Therefore, also, we know that it must have been Christ who rested upon the seventh day, after completing the work of creation, and that it was Christ who blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it. Thus the Sabbath day is in an emphatic sense the “Lord’s day.”

Why was the Sabbath made? “The Sabbath was made for man” (Mark 2:27). It is for him, in the sense that it is not against him. It is not an arbitrary thing imposed upon man—something for him to keep simply because God says so—but something that is given him for his help. It is a blessing that God has bestowed upon him. It is among the “all things that pertain unto life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3), which His divine power has given unto us.

Why was the sabbath given? The Lord, through the prophet, gives the answer in these words: “And hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between Me and

you, that ye may know that I am the Lord your God” (Ezekiel 20:20). Mark, it is a sign by which the people are to know God. Therefore there is no room for the supposition that the Sabbath was simply for the purpose of distinguishing the Jews from other people. It was made before the Jews had any existence. It was that they might know God; and that which would serve to make them know God would serve the same purpose for all other people. It was given to Adam in the beginning for the same purpose—that he might know and remember God.

But how would the Sabbath be a sign that men might know God? The answer to this is found in the Epistle to the Romans: “Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from [or, ever since] the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” (Romans 1:19, 20). We have only to recall some of the things noted in the preceding pages to see how God is known by His works.

Yet again the question comes, How does the Sabbath make us know the true God? Why, we have just read that the eternal power and Godhead of the Creator are seen from the things that He has made; and the Sabbath is the great memorial of creation. The Lord rested upon the seventh day, after the six days of creation, and he blessed and sanctified the day, because that in it He had rested from all His work. So we read, “The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. His work is honorable and glorious; and His righteousness endureth forever. He hath made His wonderful works to be remembered: the Lord is gracious and full of compassion.” Some versions give, more literally, “He hath

made a memorial for His wonderful works” (Psalm 111:2-4).

The one thing necessary for man to learn in this life is God. The poet may tell us that the proper study of mankind is man; but the Lord tells us that the proper study of mankind is God. “Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord” (Jeremiah 9:23, 24). Knowing Him, we have all that is worth knowing, for He is the truth, and all the truth. Jesus Christ is the wisdom of God, and in Him are contained “all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Colossians 2:3).

The Sabbath is for the purpose of keeping in mind the creative power of God, which is His distinguishing characteristic. But creative power is the power of the gospel, so that that which celebrates creation also celebrates redemption. Christ is the Redeemer, because in Him were all things created. He bestows the grace of God to men by His creative power. The power that saves men is the power that created the heavens and the earth. So when the psalmist says that the Lord has made a memorial for His wonderful works, he immediately adds, “The Lord is gracious and full of compassion.” In Christ the grace of the Father is revealed. “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” (John 1:14). He imparts His grace, which affords help in time of need, by the same mysterious and mighty power by which He created the earth; by the same power by which the sun’s rays impart life to the plants on the earth.

Note how inseparably Christ is connected with the Sabbath. It is by Him that all things were created, and that they all are upheld. But the works of God reveal His eternal power and Godhead; and Christ is the power of God, and in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Therefore the works of creation show the power and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Sabbath is the great memorial of the wonderful works of God in Christ, and so it is the great sign of the divinity of Christ. To keep the Sabbath as God appointed it at creation is to acknowledge the divinity of Christ. Just to the extent that one fails to keep the Sabbath of the Lord in spirit and in truth, does he fail to recognize the divinity of Christ and to receive the benefit that comes from the fact of His divinity.

This is indicated in the words of Christ to the Pharisees who unjustly accused Him and His disciples of breaking the Sabbath, because they satisfied their hunger on that day, and because He healed a man on the Sabbath. Said He, “The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day” (Matthew 12:8). It is no small thing that He is Lord of the Sabbath day. To be Lord of the Sabbath day means that He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth—that He is Lord of all.

There is a special blessing connected with the Sabbath. It is true that very many who profess to keep the Sabbath do not receive that blessing; but that is because they do not really know of it. The statement of the Scripture is, that God blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it. He blessed the day. There is no day of the week when men may not be blessed by the Lord. Indeed, both good and bad are alike the subjects of the blessings of God every day. Not only so, but those who seek the Lord may find special blessings at any time. The Lord is always near at hand and is always ready to bless, but there is a

blessing that goes with the Sabbath day that cannot be found anywhere else. It is the Sabbath blessing. God has put His blessing upon the Sabbath, and the Sabbath blessing goes only with the Sabbath. Nobody can find a thing where it is not. The Sabbath blessing has not been placed upon any day except the seventh; therefore it cannot be found anywhere else.

What is this blessing for? It is for the same purpose that all the blessings of God are given. “Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities” (Acts 3:26). God blesses men, not because they are good, but in order that they may become good. All His blessings are for the purpose of turning them away from sin to Himself. If men do know the Lord, then the blessings that He bestows are for the purpose of drawing them still closer to Him. So it is with the Sabbath. It is to turn men to God, by reminding them of His goodness and of His gracious power. The power of creation is the power of Christ. Christ is of God, “made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” The power by which He gives us these things is the power by which He created the worlds. Therefore we find a deeper meaning in the words of the Lord, “Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them” (Ezekiel 20:12). The blessing of the Sabbath is the blessing of sanctification. As the Sabbath is the memorial of God’s creation, so is it to make known to us the power of God, to make us entirely new creatures in Christ.

To be Continued...

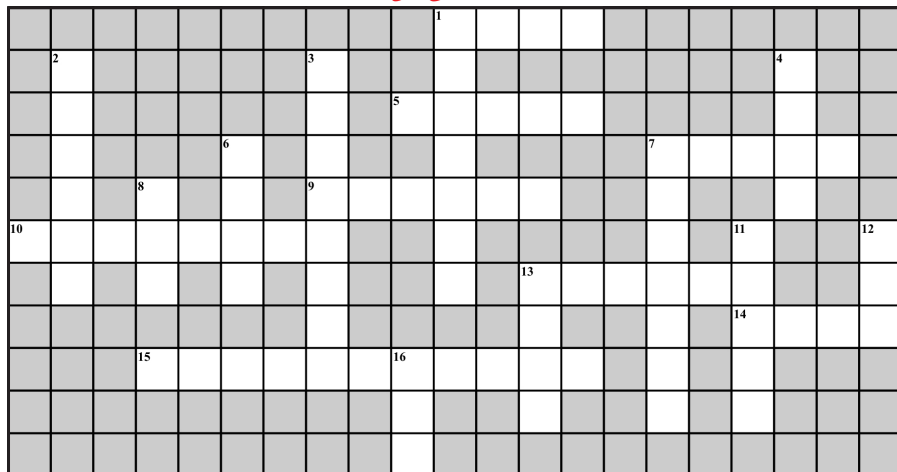
(This article was taken from pages 151-160 of the book entitled, *The Gospel in Creation*, by Ellet J. Waggoner.
Editor)

Present Truth

Something for the Young at Heart

We would like to give you an interesting and easy way to study the Bible, so we are including a crossword puzzle for you. In order to maintain the flow of the study, this crossword puzzle is not split into Across and Down sections—Across or Down is indicated at the end of each line. (The KJV is required.)

The Divinity of Christ (Part 2)



Answers will be printed on the back page of next month's issue

➤ God said that Moses would be made a ____ to Pharaoh. Exodus 7:1—**8 Down**

➤ God said to His children, "Ye are ____." Psalms 82:6—**14 Across**

Note: In the Bible, the word "god" has several different meanings. In a very limited sense, even men are called gods. Both the Greek word *theos* and the Hebrew word *elohim*, which are most often translated "god" are used in reference to men. When the word "god" is used in that sense, then there are hundreds and thousands of gods.

➤ Paul said there are some "that are ____ gods" in heaven and in earth. 1 Corinthians 8:5—**2 Down**

➤ Paul said "there be gods ____..." 1 Corinthians 8:5—**13 Down**

➤ Man was made a "little lower than the ____." Psalms 8:5—**9 Across**

Note: The word "angels" in this verse comes from the Hebrew word *elohim* (gods). The way *elohim* is used here it denotes a type of being that is higher than man, but it is still used in a limited sense, and with this definition there would still be many gods, for there are many angels.

➤ In the beginning was the _____. John 1:1—**4 Down**

➤ The Word was made _____. John 1:14—**5 Across**

➤ This "Word" is "the only ____ of the Father." John 1:14—**10 Across**

➤ In the beginning the Word was ____ God. John 1:1—**6 Down**

➤ "The Word ____ God." John 1:1—**12 Down**

Note: Here Jesus is called "God," yet there is a clear distinction between Him and "God" whom He was with. The God who Jesus was with is God, the Father.

Jesus was not the same “God” He was with, but rather, Jesus was God in the sense of being divine just like His Father. The Father is God, so, necessarily, His Son is God by nature. Biblical Greek Scholars generally agree that the second time the word “God” is used in John 1:1, it is used as a “qualitative noun” to describe the qualities of “the Word.” Harner says that nouns “with an anarthrous [no article] predicate preceding the verb, are primarily qualitative in meaning” (*The Journal of Biblical Literature*, Philip B. Harner, article “Qualitative Anarthrous Predicate Nouns: Mark 15:39 and John 1:1.”) “The clause could be translated, ‘the same nature as God.’ This would be one way of representing John’s thought, which is, as I understand it, that *ho logos* [‘the word’], no less than *ho theos* [‘the God’], had the nature of *theos*.” (*ibid.*)

➤ Before coming to earth, Christ was in the ____ of God. Philippians 2:6—
1 Across

Note: In reference to Christ, the word “god” is used to denote His nature as being on the same level as His Father—something that cannot be said about any other being in the universe. But even when the word “god” is used of Christ, it is used in a somewhat limited sense, because Christ has a God who is “the head of Christ,” “above all,” and “greater than” He. (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 4:6; and John 14:28) When the word “God” is used in its absolute and unlimited sense, there is only one person to whom it can apply, and that is God, the Father, alone. Jesus said that His Father is “the only true God.” (John 17:3) Paul said, “there is none other God but one... God, the Father.” (1 Corinthians 8:4, 6) Of the 1,354 times the word “god” is used in the New Testament, more than 99% of the time it refers exclusively to God, the Father, while it only applies to His Son four

times. (John 1:1; John 20:28; Hebrews 1:8; 1 Timothy 3:16)

So, to clarify, there are many gods when the word “god” is used in a limited sense, to include men and angels. When the word “god” is used as an adjective to describe the nature of God, as in the last part of John 1:1, then there are only two divine beings, God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son. The Son of God is completely divine by nature because His Father is divine, just as I am completely human, because my parents are human.

When the word “god” is used in its absolute sense, to denote “the most high God,” “the Sovereign of the universe,” or “the only true God,” then there is only one God; God, the Father, beside which there is no God.

➤ John wrote his gospel so that we might believe that Jesus is the ____ of God. John 20:31—**16 Down**

Note: As the actual Son of God, Jesus has, by right of inheritance, the same nature as His Father.

➤ In Christ “dwelleth all the fulness of the ____ bodily.” Colossians 2:9—
7 Down

➤ “For it pleased the Father that in him should all ____ dwell.” Colossians 1:19 (KJV spelling)—**1 Down**

➤ The Son of God is called the ____ God. Isaiah 9:6—**13 Across**


➤ Jesus is also called the ____ Father. Isaiah 9:6—**15 Across**

Note: Some have gotten confused because Christ is called, “the everlasting Father.” Yet, there is no need for confusion. Jesus Christ is not His own Father, but the Father of “the children whom the LORD [His Father] hath given” to Him (Isaiah 8:18 compared with Hebrews 2:13). He is called “everlasting” even though His Father “hath given to the Son to have life in himself” (John 5:26). This life He received from His Father is

everlasting life. Now, Jesus is “alive for evermore” (Revelation 1:18).

➤ God was manifest in the flesh, and then received up into _____. 1 Timothy 3:16—**7 Across**

➤ Jesus has the name _____, which means “God with us.” Matthew 1:23—**3 Down**

➤ Thomas said to Jesus, “My Lord and _____.” John 20:28 (2 words)—**11 Down** 

The National Sunday Law (Part 19)

by Alonzo T. Jones

(The following is a portion of an argument of Alonzo T. Jones before The United States Senate, December 13, 1888, opposing the Blair Bill that promoted a Sunday law. *Editor*)

Judge Cooley said:

“...it appears to us that if the benefit of the individual is alone to be considered, the argument against the [Sunday] law which he may make who has already observed the seventh day of the week, is unanswerable.”

Senator Blair: But he also holds that for the general, the public good, Sunday laws are Constitutional.

Mr. Jones: Yes; and to be sustained upon authority. For the next sentence says:

“But on the other ground, it is clear that these laws are supportable on authority, notwithstanding the inconvenience which they occasion to those whose religious sentiments do not recognize the sacred character of the first day of the week.”

It is something unusual for persons to undertake to answer an unanswerable argument. But Judge Cooley employs here the only means by which an unanswerable argument can ever be answered: and that is, “on authority.” That is the way the papacy has done it from the days of Pope Zosimus, A. D., 418, who, when asked for the reasons for certain of this arrogant actions,

exclaimed: “So it has pleased the Apostolic See!” That was a sufficient answer to all inquiries, and even to unanswerable arguments.

England fastened upon the American colonies the Stamp Act. Our fathers presented unanswerable arguments against it; but the Stamp Act, like Judge Cooley’s Constitutional Sunday laws, was supportable “on authority,” and that was enough. England proposed to enforce it. But our revolutionary fathers refused assent to any such method of answering unanswerable arguments. So we refuse our assent to Mr. Cooley’s answer to that which he himself pronounces an unanswerable argument.

Senator Blair: It does not follow that there is no unanswerable argument in support of Sunday laws, I take it.

Mr. Jones: There is the authority.

Senator Blair: There is authority for the Sunday laws. It does not follow because the Sunday laws are supported by authority that therefore there is no sufficient argument upon which to base them.

Mr. Jones: What authority is there for Sunday laws?

Senator Blair: That is what you have been discussing; but you seem to say that because Sunday laws are supported “by authority,” it is the only argument in favor of a bad law that there is authority for it. But there may be good authority for the Sunday law.

Mr. Jones: That is what is shown here, that there is no good authority for it when it unjustly punishes a man for his belief. There cannot be any good authority for unjustly punishing any man for anything, much less for unjustly punishing him for his belief.

Senator Blair: He does not say it is bad.

Mr. Jones: But it is bad. Is there any good answer to an unanswerable argument?

Now, I propose to find out what authority there is for Sunday laws.

I before referred to the decision of the Supreme Court of Arkansas, and have shown from a statement of the committee on "law and law reform," of which the members of the Supreme Court were members, that decision was unconstitutional. I have shown that the principle upon which their decision rested was that of the omnipotence of parliament. In this, however, the State of Arkansas only followed the decisions of other States. In 1858, the Constitution of California said, in Section 4: "The free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship without discrimination or preference shall forever be allowed in this State." There was a statute passed by the legislature enforcing the observance of "the Christian Sabbath," on the first day of the week. A Jew in Sacramento kept his store open on Sunday; he was arrested, convicted, and sent to jail. He sued out a writ of habeas corpus on the ground of "the illegality of his imprisonment by reason of the unconstitutionality of the law." The majority of the court sustained the plea by decisions separately written, whose soundness, both upon Constitutional principles and upon the abstract principle of justice itself, can never be successfully controverted. Mr. Stephen J. Field, now Associate-Justice of the

Supreme Court of the United States, was then a member of the California Court. He rendered a dissenting opinion, taking the same position as the Supreme Court of Arkansas as to the omnipotence of the legislature, and soberly maintaining that the term "Christian Sabbath" in the act was not a discrimination or preference in favor of any religious profession or worship. He declared that "moralists and statesmen," "men of science and distinguished philosophers," have pronounced the rule of "one day's rest in seven" to be "founded upon a law of our race." But he omitted to state what scientist or philosopher or moralist or statesman has ever pronounced upon what law is founded the rule of two days' rest in seven for the man who chooses to rest some other day than Sunday!

In his written opinion, Mr. Field said that he had found that in twenty-five States of the Union, Sunday laws had been held to be Constitutional. That this is so there can be no doubt. On this subject, as on that of blasphemy, which I have already noticed, the younger States, both in legislation and judicial decisions, have followed the example of the older States; these have followed the decisions of the oldest, and the oldest followed the example and the precedents of the colonies; and every one of the colonies had Sunday laws because every one had an established religion. These followed the precedents of the English system, which is wholly a church-and-state system. The church-and-state system of England severed itself from the papal rule when Henry VIII renounced allegiance to the pope, and put himself at the head of the church of England in the place of the pope. The British system at that time was the papal system; the papal system was established by the mutual craft, flattery, and policy of Constantine and the

ambitious bishops of his time, when the first Sunday law was enacted. This, in a word, is the genealogy of the Sunday laws of the United States. They belong with an established religion,—a union of church and state. And in this country they have been almost universally sustained, either upon the British principle of the omnipotence of parliament, or upon the church and state principles of the colonies, of the British government, and of the papacy.

The law of Pennsylvania, sustained by the decision referred to by Judge Cooley, was virtually a colonial law, which was a part of the system in which nobody who did “not confess and acknowledge one Almighty God to be the Creator, upholder, and ruler of the world,” could be a citizen.

The Supreme Court of New York sustains Sunday laws by at once declaring Christianity to be the established religion of that State. This is based upon Chief Justice Kent’s decision before referred to, which cited a law of the colony which declared that “the profanation of the Lord’s day was ‘the great scandal of the Christian faith.’” That decision of Judge Kent’s made Christianity the established religion of the State of New York, by citing the precedents of the papal institutions of modern Europe and the pagan nations of antiquity.

This, again, proves Sunday laws to belong with established religions, with the union of church and state, finding their basis in papal and pagan institutions.

In every statute book in America, with scarcely an exception, Sunday laws are found under the head of “offenses against religion.” This springs naturally from the colonial legislation, where each colony deemed itself the special guardian of God and of some particular form of religion.

But according to the word of Christ, the civil power has nothing to do with either God or religion, nor with offenses against God or religion. Religion is defined by Webster as “the recognition of God as an object of worship, love, and obedience.” Another definition, given by the National Reform Association itself, is “man’s personal relation of faith and obedience to God.” Civil government has nothing to do with a man’s personal relation of faith and obedience to God. If he has no faith at all, and makes no pretensions to obedience to God, that is nothing to the civil government, so long as the man conducts himself civilly. Neither has civil government anything to do with offenses against God; the Lord himself can attend to that. A man is responsible alone to God for the offenses which he commits against God. Civil government has no business to establish a religion, and then make offenses against it criminal; nor has it any business to put itself in the place of God, and presume to declare that an offense against the governmental idea of God is an offense against God. How is the civil government to know whether an act offends God or not? The fact of the matter is, that just as soon as Sunday laws are investigated at all in the light of truth, or justice, or law it is found that they are inseparable from an established religion,—inseparable from a union of church and state.

This is further shown by a mere glance at the British system, as set forth by Blackstone in his chapter on “Offenses against God and religion.” There “profanation of the Lord’s day” is classed with such things as “apostasy,” “heresy,” “reviling the ordinances of the church,” “non-conformity to the worship of the church,” “witchcraft,” “conjuraction,” “enchantment,” “sorcery,” “religious imposture, such as falsely

pretending an extraordinary commission from heaven," adultery as an ecclesiastical offense cognizable by the spiritual court, and such confusion of civil and religious ideas as the punishment of drunkenness as an offense against God and religion. This is the company with which Sunday laws belong. The penalty for apostasy was, first, burning to death; this fell into disuse after a while. Then the penalty was that "for the first offense the offender should be rendered incapable to hold any office or place of trust."

At such legal nonsense as this the United States Constitution struck a death blow in the clause which declares that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under this Government." And by the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States, this Government utterly separated itself from the whole system of offenses against God and religion so long maintained by the British government, by the colonies, and even yet by many of the States, and which is characteristic of all church-and-state governments—governments of established religion—by declaring that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." This is sound American principle, and accords with the word of Jesus Christ. And the effort ought to be, throughout this whole nation, to lift the constitutions, the legislation, and the jurisprudence of the States up to the level of that of the national Constitution. But instead of doing that, and so carrying this whole nation bodily onward in the march of liberty, enlightenment, and progress, these people go about to bring down our national system of Constitution and laws to the level of that of the States, which is the level of that of

the colonies, which is the level of that of the British system, which is the level that of the papacy, which is the system of paganism under cover of the Christian name.

Dr. Elliott here to-day cited Edgar, Athelstan, and Alfred in support of Sunday laws. To be sure! And with equal force he can cite these and many others of the Dark Ages in support of tithes to the clergy, the supremacy of the monks in civil affairs, the "holy anointing" of kings by the pope, and for any and every other thing that belongs with the papal system. He can carry his Sunday-law precedents farther back than that: he can go back to the time of Theodosius and Constantine. He can find, and so can you or anybody else, that as Pontifex Maximus of the old pagan system, Constantine "had the plenary power of appointing holy days;" he can find that by virtue of this power, Constantine established the first Sunday-law of all time, in honor of the "venerable day of the sun," whose special devotee he was; and also that, as "bishop of externals" of the new pagan system,—the papal,—which office he assumed by virtue of his political conversion to the political Christianity of his time, he played into the hands of the ambitious bishops by giving them in that Sunday law their coveted "use of the power of the State for the furtherance of their aims" to compel men to accept the decrees, and submit to the dictates, of the church. He, and all others, will find that this is the literal truth of the origin of Sunday laws.

All this is supported by abundance of testimony of undoubted authority. So eminent a divine as Dean Stanley declares plainly that the retention of the old pagan name of "dies solis," or Sunday, for the weekly Christian festival, "is owing to the union of pagan and

Christian sentiment with which the first day of the week was recommended by Constantine to his subjects, pagan and Christian alike, as the 'venerable day of the sun.'... It was his mode of harmonizing the discordant religions of the empire under one common institution."

This same mode of harmonizing paganism with Christianity was further illustrated by his imperial coins, bearing on one side the name of Christ, and on the other the figure of the sun god, with the inscription, "the unconquerable sun." This confusion of pagan and Christian ideas and practices is what made the papacy, the union of church and state, and the confusion of civil and religious things, from which, with the exception of the government of the United States, the nations have not even yet freed themselves. This, sir, is the authority, and the only authority, for Sunday laws. Sunday has no basis whatever as a civil institution; it never had any. And the only basis it has, or ever had, as a religious institution is in that confusion of paganism and Christianity which made the papacy, with all that it is or ever was.

As authority for Sunday, and as the basis of this legislation, Dr. Johnson here to-day appealed to the fourth commandment. The "American Sabbath Union," now in session in this city, and which is working for the passage of this bill, likewise declares the basis of their whole movement to be

the fourth commandment. It is proper, therefore, to inquire, What authority is there for Sunday laws, in the fourth commandment? As this is a question of legislation and of law, I shall examine it from the stand-point of law. Suppose, then, that this bill has become a law, and the courts in construing it take judicial cognizance of the fourth commandment as the basis of the law.

Courts are guided by certain well-established rules in the construction of laws. According to these rules, what would be the result of the judicial construction of such a law upon the basis of the fourth commandment?

To be Continued...

(This article was taken from pages 165-173 of the book entitled, *The National Sunday Law*, by Alonzo T. Jones. Some editing was done for this publication. *Editor*)

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Answers to Last Month's Crossword Puzzle

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