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THE BAPTIST HERITAGE

VOLUME XXVI ISSUE 7

JULY 20, 2002

Obtaining a Boos Report

Psalm 33

13 The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. 14 From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth. 15 He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works. 18 Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; 19 To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

Though the God of Heaven, with an inescapable, all-knowing eye, does indeed see the inhabitants of the earth, knowing each action of their bodies and the entirety of the thoughts of their hearts, and though, with an unavoidable, all-hearing ear listens to every word from their lips, Jehovah God examines and holds humanity accountable individually, not collectively.

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this and that

Editor and Staff

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This issue is sent with the prayer that it will be used by the Holy Spirit to touch someone's heart in such a way as to move them to seek and to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior and that it might motivate those believers who read it to be faithful in the darkening days that lie ahead. I believe that the coming of the Lord Jesus is sooner than we believe. We have lost the knife-edge expectancy of the imminence of His call that will bring His Own to meet Him in the air even as it begins to bring this old world into judgment. I believe

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that the word of God portrays the days between now and then to be darkening, not brightening, to be a time of apostasy, not of revival.

I will address the ruling of the court on the Pledge in the next issue, the Lord willing. However, may I encourage each believer not to be moved from the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus over this soon to be reversed decision. Loose no sleep, develop no ulcer over this Pledge issue. By the way, invest no

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this and that

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money in the vain attempt to restore this land as a Christian nation.

In recent days, I have received a number of prayer requests from believers, especially preachers, who are in the thick of battles. For some, there is an external pressure beyond belief. Others have physical burdens on themselves or their wives or children that exceed bearing. Still others have expressed a sense of such heavy oppressiveness that it must indeed be of satanic nature.

Brethren, and dear Sisters in the Lord, we need to carry each other to the Throne, for we have no other place to go.

We here pray for those who receive this paper and seek your prayers for us.

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riage just to find their 'lives.'

"He that findeth his life shall lose it" is not an idle threat. The way of the transgressor is hard.

Believer, in the face of vilification and even facing execution, with the world, the flesh, and the devil all in battle array against you, you will be well served to be faithful to the God of heaven and not to some paltry search for personal satisfaction or safety.

Good reports are not given to any except those who walk by faith and die in faith. There will be no "Well done" to an unfaithful believer.

Matthew 24

46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

Matthew 25

21 Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

That "Well done" will be the good report—is it the report that God shall give about you?

—Pastor Manley

**Reprint permission always granted;
acknowledgment appreciated.**

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Psalm 14

2 "The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God."

His report of His surveillance and observation is that (*Psalm 14:3*) "They are all gone aside." Intentionally and purposefully turning aside from the truth, they have determined a course of life that willfully ignores God, with the result that "they are all together become filthy." The totality of the sinfulness of the individual and of collective humanity is such that: "there is none that doeth good, no, not one." By nature, as a descendent of Adam, and by the exercise of choice, all humanity—and that includes you and me—"has sinned and come short of the glory of God."

The Apostle Paul gives us a clear explanation of this in the third chapter of the *Epistle to the Romans*.

10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth.

That is a wonderfully descriptive word "understandeth": it means "to put together": that is, 'to obtain information, then to consider carefully and thoroughly that knowledge and to reason with those facts in such a way as to form a right and proper comprehension that produces a sound, good, and right conclusion.' The report of God is that none of their volition chooses to do this and, therefore, none "understand." The result of this deliberate, willful failure is a conscious

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choice of a life of calculated ignorance. Read the indictment that God presents *against humanity, against us, against you and me.*

The passage continues:

“There is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood: 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways: 17 And the way of peace have they not known:”

The conclusion of this thorough examination by God of humanity—of you and of me—is a most negative, evil report. God summarizes all of the charges against the descendants of Adam in one simple sentence, comprised of single syllable words, with only one exception that has two syllables.

18 There is no fear of God before their eyes.

In those nine common English words, we find the most accurate description of the “lifestyle” and the character of humanity, collectively and individually, that has ever been penned. There is no instinctive, innate, inherited understanding of the person and character of God that produces within man a “natural” fear of God. *There is no fear of God before their eyes.*

That is the written report of how the holy Creator

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in heaven. 34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

You have that sword and so do I. It is in my hand and it is on your lap. It is the word of God. It divides the world. It separates humanity.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. 36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. 37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. 38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. 39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

America is filled with individuals trying to find their lives. A preacher recently spoke to me of staff member whose spouse decided to “find life”—“after all God wants me to be happy.” Not long ago, I sat in the foyer of the church and listened as a wife said she needed to “find life” and therefore requested to have her name removed from the church roll so she could go do what she knew would be a violation of the covenant of the church. Preachers and their wives by the scores throw away twenty, thirty, forty years of testimony and mar-

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the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.

In the face of vilification, the believer is charged to deliver the word of God faithfully and fully and to do so without fear. Yet, even more stringent warfare than verbal assault is possible, even likely, for the faithful believer.

28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Keep your perspective and your priorities right—Fear God and not any humanity whether individual or collective. Serve God even if doing so means vilification, slander, persecution, and death itself. Count not the cost too great—the good report is worth the price.

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. 30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.

If a tiny sparrow cannot escape the eye of the Father, then you may be assured that He will have His eye on you.

32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is

*(Continued on page 21)**Obtaining A Good Report**(Continued from page 4)*

God describes his creature as He looks on humanity from heaven. It is, undeniably, a bad report. It is the result of rejecting the word of God and, instead accepting the opinions of other humans. The word of God is given to us (and the Ten Commandments specifically are given) to teach us to fear God.

Deuteronomy 4

10 Specially the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children. 11 And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness. 12 And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice. 13 And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even ten commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stone.

However, humanity rejects the word of the Lord, casting it aside, and thereby deny Him any authority in their lives. For this decision, God holds them—and us, you and me—fully accountable.

Romans 1

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven

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against all ungodliness and *unrighteousness* of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him from 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:

The consequence of rejecting the revelation of God is that wisdom is forsaken and that foolishness is adopted. Read the record of what man has done since the expulsion from the Garden, and continues to do even now.

21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

Isaiah well describes the substitute 'wisdom' that humanity accepts in the place of the infallible, inerrant, inspired, and inviolable revelation of God.

Isaiah 29

13 Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near *me* with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.

Spurning the wisdom that God provides, humanity seeks the 'wisdom' of peers. It is indeed, 'the blind leading the blind'. Those who refuse to 'receive' "the love of the truth" reject the truth and are inexorably destined

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you in their synagogues; 18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. 19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

(This is a promise to martyrs not to preachers on Sunday morning.)

20 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. 21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. 22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. 23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come. 24 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. 25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household? 26 Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known. 27 What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in

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staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. 22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness.

That, my friend, is exactly what you need for salvation. You must believe that God is able to do and will do exactly what He has promised—that He will save all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; 24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.

Salvation is the gift of God in Christ Jesus.

Ah, but there is more to obtaining a good report than salvation. That is the start and faithfulness is the course. Faithfulness is not attending a Sunday School picnic; it is being on the battlefield, engaged in warfare. You also need to understand that a declaration of war against you will follow your declaration to serve God.

Matthew 10

16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. 17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge

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to believe a lie.

2 Thessalonians 2

10 because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

John gives the motivation that prompts the terrible rejection of “the fear of the Lord,” which is “the beginning of wisdom.” It is an ugly motivation.

John 3

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. 21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Accepting the revelation of God as truth and light is described in terms of ‘coming to God’ and is exemplified very clearly in the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, chapter 11.

1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. 2 For by it the elders ob-

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tained a good report.

The person who comes to God by faith, which is believing God, obtains from God "a good report. In that context, the Holy Spirit has Paul demonstrate this 'holding the truth in righteousness' (Righteousness is doing right.) in terms of verbs of action. Follow along as we focus on these verbs as found in this chapter

4 By faith Abel offered

5 By faith Enoch was translated

7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark

Noah built the ark because he feared God. He feared God because he believed the word (warning) of God.

8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

Abraham believed the promise of God and that faith caused him to obey.

9 By faith he sojourned

10 For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

11 Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised.

Sara accepted the promised word of God and be-

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counted for righteousness.

There, my friend, is your real problem. You do not see that you are ungodly. You cannot please God by works because you are ungodly. Your works are ungodly. Sinners cannot do righteousness.

6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, 7 *Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.* 8 *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*

God will forgive sin; God will cleanse sin, but He will do it only by grace through faith.

16 *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,* 17 *(As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.* 18 *Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.* 19 *And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: 20 He*

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works was faith made perfect? 23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. 24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. 25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

“By faith”—each one was moved to action. That action was the evidence of the validity of their faith. The only evidence of saving faith is coming to Jesus Christ. As long as you are trying to earn salvation, to keep salvation, or just continue to ignore the message of the atonement in Christ, you have no evidence of faith that saves—you do not have a good report.

Romans 4

1 What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? 2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath *whereof* to glory; but not before God. 3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. 4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. 5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is

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lieved God was able to keep His word.

13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

Notice that they died in faith—Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Sara—but they did not receive the promises. Abel died for his faith, so it is somewhat easy to see that he received not the promises; but Enoch was translated and did not face death, Noah did see the flood, Abraham did walk on the land, and he and Sara did have the child. They received fulfillment of certain promises, but not the promises the Holy Spirit intends us to remember.

14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. 16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac:

20 By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau

21 By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the

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top of his staff.

22 By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel; and gave commandment concerning his bones.

23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months of his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king's commandment.

24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, re-fused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; 25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; 26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had re-spect unto the recompense of the reward.

Do not read so carelessly or so quickly that you not understand that Moses knew the promise of the coming of the Messiah, the Christ. That knowledge, that hope, moved him to action.

27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.

28 Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them. 29 By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. 30 By faith the

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well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

The devils believe—they have 'faith' and they have evidence of that faith—they tremble. Where is your trembling this morning? If your faith does not bring you to fear God, then it is dead. That is, it has no effect on you.

You would not offer a sacrifice as did Abel.

You would not walk with God as did Enoch.

You would not prepare an ark as did Noah.

You would not leave Ur as did Abraham.

You would not offer the Passover as did Moses.

You would allow yourself to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

You would not forsake Egypt.

You would not choose the reproach of Christ over the treasures and pleasures of Egypt for a season.

You would not walk around the walls as did Joshua.

You would not hang that flimsy scarlet thread in your window and seek deliverance as did Rahab.

In plain language, if there is no fear of God before your eyes, if you have not come to Jesus Christ for salvation, then you do not have a good report.

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by

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with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: 8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: 9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. 10 Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come unto you:*

James continues in this passage to present an example of what he intends us to understand.

15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it profit?*

Action is required, not empty words or mental assent.

17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. 18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.

James uses yet another illustration to drive his point home. The proof is not in the claim, but in the evidence that validates the claim.

19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest

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walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.

31 By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not

32 And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: 33 Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, 34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. 35 Women received their dead raised to life again:

These all obtained and received promises, enjoying great victories as they did so; but notice that something different is written concerning certain others:

and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: 36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: 37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; 38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

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None of these saw the promised Saviour—but all believed in and upon Him, and that faith motivated them to the action that obtained them “a good report.”

39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Note again the personal testimony of these individuals as validated by the Holy Spirit:

Verse 13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

“By faith,” they lived and, “in faith,” they died. Take special note that they were “persuaded” of the truth of the word of God and that they “embraced” the word of God. They believed God’s promise of the coming of the Messiah and by that act of faith received a good report.

This is the very argument presented by the apostle James:

James 2

14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

“Can faith,” that is, can such faith as has no works, actually “save” a person. Will the mere verbal profession of

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having faith save? Such faith, that kind of sterile, fruitless faith, faith without works, cannot save. It cannot save because it is a “faith” that is claimed but is not actually possessed. James argues that a faith that did not motivate to action would not have been sufficient for any of the Old Testament saints.

A faith that did not bring an acceptable offering would not have saved Abel.

A faith that did not move Noah to build an ark would not have saved Noah or his family.

A faith that did not cause Enoch to walk with God would not have saved Enoch.

A faith that let Abraham stay in Ur would not have saved Abraham.

A faith that staggered at obedience in the matter of Isaac would not have saved Abraham.

A faith that did not move Moses to offer the Passover would not have saved Moses.

A faith that did not motivate Rahab to hang that scarlet thread in the window would not have saved Rahab.

A faith that does not cause you to come to Christ will not save you—this is the argument of Paul and James and Peter:

1 Peter 1

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried

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